

PREFACE

One of the major directions of development of modern economics and econometrics is determined by the spatial and spatio-temporal analysis. Thinking spatially in theory and practice, is becoming increasingly common phenomenon, indicating a more comprehensive and modern approach to theoretical and empirical analysis of complex, mutually interdependent phenomena. New tools of this type of research are the spatial econometrics methods and models.

Jean Henri Paul Paelinck, precursor and designer the name, "Spatial Econometrics" (1974), first stressed the importance of spatial modeling of economic variables. Combining the methods of econometrics, economics and geography, Paelinck initiated the development of new fields of knowledge - the spatial econometrics and regional economic analysis.

The first conferences on these topics have been organized by the Applied Econometrics Association: 1975 in Nice (Regional Models), 1984 and 1987 in Poitiers (Regional and Spatial Modeling), and 2001 in Palm Spring (Spatial Econometrics).

In May 2006 (in Rome) the Spatial Econometrics Association was created by J.H.P. Paelinck, L. Anselin, G. Arbia, B. Baltagi, H. Keljian, I. Prucha, P. Robinson, A. Bera and R. Florax. The aim of the Society is to promote the development of this field of knowledge, both theoretical tools and application methods in the study of economics, geography and regional science.

In 2007, the first World congress of SEA in Cambridge was held. The next congress of SEA will be held in Toulouse, France in 2011. and Department of Spatial Econometrics, University of Lodz would like to continue our Scientific Conference on Spatial Econometrics and Regional Economic Analysis in 2012.

Sevenfold increase in the number of publications in the period 1995-2009 (from 100 in 1995 to more that 700 recently), with the increasing growth rate, fully justifies the need for dissemination of spatial econometrics models and methods among polish economists, as well as the integration of them.

In this edition of *Folia Oeconomica* (252) you can find a collection of 13 papers, which were specially prepared and presented in English at the Conference. We have identified here three thematic parts: (1) Spatial and Regional Economic Analysis, (2) Spatial Analysis in Health Economics, (3) Methods of Spatial and Panel Data Analysis. Other papers qualified for publication (in Polish) are presented in the next edition of *Folia Oeconomica* (253). Presentations of doctoral and graduate students, however, are published in a separate, third set of post-conference papers.

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