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UNIFICATION OF ECONOMIC PROMOTION IN MAŁOPOLSKA REGION AS AN EXAMPLE OF INSTITUTIONAL COOPETITION

In recent years, regions have been increasingly promoted at the international level. It is reflected in actions taken by individual voivodships (Polish provinces), intensifying measures for attracting investment and promoting exports of local enterprises, combined with the use of additional funds, including EU appropriations, or with the formalisation of cooperation between various institutions and businesses. The aim of the article is to verify whether the voivodeship promotion model adopted in Małopolska, based on coopetition, fulfills the intended role and whether it can be a model for other regions. The article presents the most important results of the analysis, which may be the starting point for the development of the first in Poland model of coopetition in the field of economic promotion of the region and verification of its effectiveness.

Keywords: coopetition, economic promotion, regional promotion.

JEL Classification Codes: H79, R58.

Introduction

Coopetition is an example of process and organisational innovation. The term is derived from the words ‘cooperation’ and ‘competition’. It means cooperation between competing enterprises or institutions which, instead of seeking ways of gaining advantage over competitors in the market, decide to focus their efforts on obtaining shared benefits by maintaining mutual cooperative relationships. Such benefits include opportu-

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nities to learn from the partner, access to complementary resources, widening the range of products or services offered, cutting operating costs, access to new technology and production methods, upgrading skills. In competitive cooperation, it is essential to build a good relationship between the competitors engaged in such a cooperative arrangement. The cognitive dimension connected with communication is of importance as well. The better the communication, the more fruitful the cooperation. Other major determinants include a good relationship between partners – trust, sharing certain standards and values, mutual commitment, cultural similarity and the ability to resolve conflict (<http://www.uwm.edu.pl/egazeta/koopetycja-wspolczesna-forma-wspolpracy>). Considering the above, it is possible for regional institutions, not infrequently competing with one another, to enter into cooperation? If so, what would such an area of cooperation be?

On the basis of publications and available source materials, the hypothesis was put forward that it was possible for regional institutions to establish cooperation regarding the unification of economic promotion. For the purpose of confirming the assumptions, the examination of documents combined with direct interviews with selected persons engaged in economic promotion in Małopolska (the region of Little Poland) was adopted as the most suitable research method. The analysis covered national and local legislation. Documents related to implemented projects were examined as well. The investigation included promotional publications and websites.

Coopetition in the context of a region and its promotion

Coopetition is observed in a number of sectors, e.g. the high technology, automotive or telecommunications industries. Sony and Samsung can serve as an example. The former supplies new technological and qualitative solutions for manufacturing LCD panels which, from the point of view of the latter, constitute complementary resources to be used quickly through cooperation. As a result, it is translated into gaining competitive advantage over other companies (such as LG) in the flat-screen television market. Coopetition is also seen in the telecommunications industry. Cooperation between Netia and Orange consists in the provision of wholesale services and telecommunications infrastructure. At the same time, both companies compete with each other in retailing satellite telephony and Internet access. In the business world, there are many firms cooperating in the manufacture of common products. Excellent examples are those of automotive concerns such as BMW and Daimler Chrysler, supplying engines to their cars, or GM and Renault, jointly producing light vehicles.

Understood as a special form of integration, coopetition refers to unique resources in the form of capabilities and skills where an enterprise uses its unique resources in competing with other enterprises (Grabowska 2011). Cooperation with competitors (coopetition) is a special importance when firms face a common challenge, such as

environmental issues, and can use their common knowledge base to solve these challenges. (Steinmo, Jakobsen 2013). An important precondition of benefiting from cooptation is that the cooperative activities should be distanced from the customer (Bengtsson & Kock, 2000). Research shows that more than 50% of cooperative relationships (strategic alliances) occur between firms within the same industry or between competitors (Gnyawali & Park, 2009). Most of these alliances are vertical relationships between buyers and sellers and between competitors with indirect links through relationships with the same buyer. Less attention has been paid to horizontal relationships between direct competitors (Bengtsson & Kock, 2000). w (Steinmo, Jakbsen 2013) Identically, cooptation involves cooperation between competing local government and public institutions, as exemplified by the common goal of the unification of economic promotion of the region concerned. In the globalised economy of the 21st century, economic phenomena have a spatial dimension and influence the development of particular areas in the world, in particular of countries and their regions. It intensifies competition between the latter, characterised by attracting foreign and domestic investors as well as by strengthening local producers. Expected effects include job creation and growth in capital resources, increased living standards of the population, scientific and technological development.

Voivodships (Polish provinces) differ in factor endowment, availability of human and natural resources and vary in historical background and economic conditions. The above elements combined account for uneven development of areas in economic terms. Concentration processes in economic activity, buoyant growth of selected urban centres and migration all contribute to the non-symmetrical level and dynamics of regional development. Attracting investment, a vital component of regional economic growth, influences the perception of specific areas as friendly locations for setting up businesses and pursuing economic activities, indirectly or directly affecting the level of costs and potential income (Nazarczuk 2013).

In connection with Poland's membership of the European Union, the terms 'voivodship' and 'region' were assumed to be tantamount. Since Poland joined the European Union in 2004, there has been increasing competition and rivalry between voivodships, forcing them to adopt measures for creating and enhancing economic competitive advantages. In simplified terms, it can be assumed that regional competitiveness means the ability to compete, and hence the region's operations and sustenance in a competitive environment. This skill can be considered both in the process sense (the process of striving to increase competitiveness over time) and in the attribute sense (set of features describing a given object in comparison to other objects) (Łązniewska, Gorynia 2012). It is recognized that competition between regions is about striving to provide the right technological, social and infrastructural conditions for the development of entrepreneurship. It is on a regional scale that many factors are shaped that may affect the functioning of companies, such as social capital, business environment institutions, and public services (Grodzka 2017). Regions have been ever-more serious about promoting their

economic qualities which must be clearly and, first of all, effectively communicated to undertakings, financial institutions, domestic and foreign investors or to ministries and government agencies responsible for the economic promotion of Poland. The main tool for differentiating a region is to build its economic brand, based on a set of ideas, values, characteristics, culture, words, images, etc. designed to call up certain expected and specific associations for the recipient. A correct identification of values and characteristics of a region contributes to effective economic branding of the region, shaping its image along with all other actions, whether intentional or unintentional (Florek 2006). A strong brand not only arouses interest, attracts tourists or investors but it also contributes to increasing the competitiveness of local enterprises (Zdon-Korzeniowska 2012).

Territorial marketing aims to influence opinions, attitudes and behaviour patterns of external and internal groups of recipients by designing a suitable set of means and instruments for stimulating exchange relationships. The key objectives of territorial marketing comprise developing and strengthening services provided by public institutions, shaping a positive regional image, increasing the attractiveness and improving the positions of competing regions. The most essential external operating goal in territorial marketing is the orientation of all measures and actions towards an external recipient. It encompasses learning their motivations and preferences in assessing the attractiveness of a region at the time of choosing a particular destination and expressing satisfaction with regional conditions (Szromnik 2008).

The external territorial marketing of a region may be oriented towards persons, domestic or foreign institutions. The key is to learn the motives behind migration decisions made by enterprises and groups of undertakings, business owners and managers, followed by creating a professional offer targeted at them and based on the attractiveness of values of the region concerned and persuasive rationale leading to success. For external territorial marketing to be effective, relationships often take the form of affiliate marketing. They may lead to building mutual trust with simultaneous stimulation and creation of social support for public authorities' actions. Effective affiliation shapes loyalty, important to each of the parties (Szromnik 2008).

Coopetition in Małopolska

The Małopolskie voivodship was created in 1999. The development of a single economic brand of the Małopolskie voivodship allowed to build a coherent image as perceived by its residents, undertakings or investors but also prepared the region in institutional and organisational terms to the expected inclusion of Poland in the European Union structures. Another impulse was joining the Schengen area by the Republic of Poland on 21 December 2007.

The delegation by the central government to regional authorities of various powers and rights with regard to the bottom-up creation of regional development contributed to the need for defining a uniform concept of external regional marketing (Florek 2006). After 1999, Polish regional (voivodship) governments carried out promotional activities through departments of the Marshal Offices, voivodship institutions or subsidiaries. Poland's first initiative breaking the previous patterns was a contractual partnership named the Business in Małopolska Centre (*Centrum Business in Małopolska – CeBiM*), created under the 'Agreement on the functioning of the Business in Małopolska Centre 'CeBiM' and cooperation in the economic promotion of the Małopolskie Voivodship between the Małopolskie Voivodship, Małopolska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego S.A. and Krakowski Park Technologiczny Sp. z o.o.' (*Porozumienie w sprawie funkcjonowania Centrum Business in Małopolska „CeBiM” i współpracy w zakresie promocji gospodarczej Województwa Małopolskiego pomiędzy Województwem Małopolskim, Małopolską Agencją Rozwoju Regionalnego S.A. oraz Krakowskim Parkiem Technologicznym Sp. z o.o.*) of 3 December 2009. In a single place, it combined various institutions, e.g. investor services, exporter support, participation in trade fairs, etc., which strengthened the coordination and unification of institutional activities for the development of the Małopolskie voivodship. Cooperation was formalised and, first and foremost, intended to be a long-term relationship. It was a model example of the cooperation of institutions and businesses which had competed before and, thanks to the common goal of the unification of economic promotion of the voivodship, entered into cooperation. Affiliation relationships between various regional entities with their external partners could be initiated, maintained and strengthened not only by the parties involved but also by associations, chambers of commerce and industry, authorities, non-governmental organisations, universities, etc.

The most important objective of the project Business in Małopolska Centre was to streamline and standardise the process of investor and exporter service in the Małopolskie voivodship, which resulted from attractiveness analyses of the voivodship. The establishment of CeBiM was then a unique solution on a national – scale. The new philosophy of cooperation was a response to problems identified during the investment and export attractiveness analysis of the region. The most serious issue was the lack of coordination between activities of major regional institutions pursuing economic development of the voivodship in the context of its investment and export attractiveness. During inter-institutional meetings, there were suggestions of lacking coordination of promotional measures, resulting in obstacles to information flow and overlapping work of individual institutions. Other confirmed problems included the lack of a leader shaping a coherent promotional and investment policy for Małopolska and weakening dynamics of attracting foreign investment. The absence of a single office combining various activities of a number of institutions, i.e. a one-stop shop, and the lack of a common portal serving as a central and comprehensive source of business information addition-

ally hindered the economic development of the voivodship. CeBiM was supposed to be a response to the identified problems as well as a single and dedicated place for building the regional economic brand of Małopolska, allowing a potential investor to obtain assistance in investing in the voivodship and an exporter to be exhaustively informed of expansion opportunities in foreign outlets (Resolution no. 1261/09 of the Management Board of the Małopolskie voivodship of 10 November 2009 – *Uchwała nr 1261/09 Zarządu Województwa Małopolskiego z dnia 10 listopada 2009 r.*).

The Business in Małopolska Centre was founded by institutions whose activities were systemically oriented towards the economic development of the region. Each of them had their specific characteristics, a profiled purpose and legal framework. One of the founding institutions of CeBiM was the Małopolskie Voivodship (*Województwo Małopolskie – WM*), whose responsibilities included defining the development strategy for the region, its economic and business development, establishing and arranging cooperation with regional authorities in other countries, tourism and cultural promotion of the region. The regional government of the voivodship executed its tasks through the Marshal Office of the Małopolskie Voivodship (*Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Małopolskiego*), with specialised and dedicated structural units in charge of promotion and economic development, e.g. the Team of the Business in Małopolska Centre (*Zespół Centrum Business in Małopolska*), the Team for Economic Cooperation (*Zespół ds. Współpracy Gospodarczej*) (Regulation no. 39/2016 of the Marshal of the Małopolskie Voivodship – *Zarządzenie nr 39/2016 Marszałka Województwa Małopolskiego z dnia 28 kwietnia 2016 r.*).

Another founder of CeBiM was Małopolska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego S.A. (MARR), a leading regional institution for regional development and, at the same time, a major partner for central government institutions and the voivodship government in shaping the policy for innovation-oriented development of Małopolska. The structure of the company had a separate Investor Service Department (*Departament Obsługi Inwestora*), dedicated to activities of the Business in Małopolska Centre (List of Departments at MARR S.A. and their responsibilities 2018).

The third founding institution was Krakowski Park Technologiczny sp. z o.o. (KPT) owned by the State Treasury, from 1997 in charge of managing the special economic zone in Cracow and, as a business environment institution, aimed to carry out activities related to speeding up regional development, e.g. by attracting investment, export expansion and job creation (About Krakowski Park Technologiczny 2018 – *O Krakowskim Parku Technologicznym 2018*). In 2012, CeBiM was joined by Małopolskie Parki Przemysłowe S.A. (MPP), established in 2005 by the Małopolskie Voivodship and Krakowski Park Technologiczny sp. o.o. for the purpose of providing initiative, support and promotion of Małopolska (Resolution no. 1009/12 of the Management Board of the Małopolskie Voivodship – *Uchwała Nr 1009/12 Zarządu Województwa Małopolskiego z dnia 14 sierpnia 2012 r.*).

Delivery on the objectives of CeBiM

The project to have inspired the creation of the Business in Małopolska Centre was 'Invest in Małopolska', implemented by MARR, WM and KPT from September 2008 to October 2010. It was targeted at foreign managers and investment market institutions as they had indicated difficulties related to a large number of institutions and obscure procedures. Chronologically, it was the first close cooperation of institutions aimed to build and promote a coherent image of Małopolska. Observations concerning issues raised by investors, plenty of meetings and information sharing contributed to understanding the importance of the problem and the need to set up a centre coordinating activities and measures for regional economic branding. The implementation of 'Invest in Małopolska' was the origin of establishing permanent institutional cooperation (Completed projects 2017 – *Projekty zrealizowane 2017*).

The institutions contributing to the Business in Małopolska Centre, acting in symbiosis, build an image of the region as an attractive location for business, investment, with a strong focus on exports, aiming to create a solid and recognised regional economic brand. Cooperation, frequent meetings, interconnected events but also one common office space for all the institutions ensure efficient organisation of work and activities. Employees seconded by their respective units to CeBiM shape the recognition of the image of Małopolska by participating in foreign trade fairs, conferences and by providing services to investors or exporters. They also carry out study visits, promote the region in social media, receive official state delegations and cooperate with central government agencies and ministries. All the above-mentioned activities combine to convey a precise and coherent message, regardless of the specific institution, place, time or event.

The experience gathered resulted in the project 'International Promotion of the Export Supply of Małopolska' (*Promocja Małopolskiej Oferty Eksportowej na arenie międzynarodowej*), implemented by MARR and WM in 2009–2010. It was intended to supplement the activities offered by CeBiM through support for Małopolska's exporters as well as for undertakings considering entering foreign outlets. The project implementation comprised the creation of a database of reliable business partners, updated on a regular basis, whereas economic operators from Małopolska could present themselves free of charge in the catalogue of the Export Supply of Małopolska (*Małopolska Oferta Eksportowa*), made available to potential business partners at the CeBiM website. At the same time, the CeBiM partners developed a comprehensive investor service system based on information sharing and joint promotional activities. In addition, exporters could participate in economic missions and business meetings, they were also assisted in establishing relationships with foreign customers and Polish diplomatic missions (*Projekty zrealizowane 2017*).

CeBiM implemented a number of EU-funded projects which allowed to build the regional economic brand of Małopolska. Implemented by MARR and WM from June

2010 to March 2011, the project 'Business in Małopolska' offered, *inter alia*, the preparation of specialist studies of the regional economy, assistance in contacts with the local administration and higher education establishments, information on state aid available to investors, investment zones and areas, EU funds and grants. A coherent project implemented by MARR, KPT and WM from January 2011 to December 2012 was 'Business in Małopolska – Investing in the Future' (*Business in Małopolska – Inwestycja w Przyszłość*). Based on previous experience, it indicated the directions and places of the economic branding of Małopolska in foreign markets. Measures were precisely targeted at investment decision-makers in major economic sectors (*Projekty zrealizowane 2017*). During the implementation of the projects, there was increased interest from foreign investors, in particular in IT, shared services and development centres. In the above-mentioned industries, Cracow has become an unquestionable leader in Europe and a major investment destination in the world (Awards and honourable mentions of the City of Cracow 2018 – *Nagrody i wyróżnienia Miasta Kraków 2018*).

'Business in Małopolska – Grow with us' continued to promote the economic brand of the region but the primary focus was on the promotion of Małopolska in specific industries of biotechnology, shared services, IT and modern technology. The project was implemented from June 2012 to May 2014. Participation in international trade fairs and conferences was intended to maintain the upward trend of investment by global corporations and to build the image of Małopolska as a high-technology and innovation region. It also presented the voivodship's products and services offered by other industries, e.g. manufacturing, tourism, education and healthcare, with media campaigns carried out on television, in the Internet and in-flight magazines. The outcome was an increased number of foreign investors in Małopolska and strengthened association of Małopolska with modern investment and outsourcing (*Projekty zrealizowane 2017*).

In the project 'Business in Małopolska – Partnership Network', implemented by MARR and Województwo Małopolskie in cooperation with partners from Latvia, Russia (the Kaliningrad Oblast) and Ukraine from December 2012 to December 2015, the focus was on supporting and encouraging businesses in Małopolska to engage in export operations. It was the first CeBiM project to involve a Latvian partner and non-EU partners. As an innovation on a national scale, permanent representations of Małopolska were established in Riga, Lviv and Kaliningrad in order to help match business partners, exchange information on potential importers and exporters as well as on investment opportunities. Economic operators in Małopolska showed significant interest in inbound missions from the partner countries within the project. The outlook changed dramatically upon the outbreak of armed conflict between Ukraine and Russia, in particular as a consequence of Russia's imposing an embargo on products from the European Union (*Projekty zrealizowane 2017*).

One of the supporting activities of CeBiM was a network of Investor and Exporter Service Centres (*Centrum Obsługi Inwestorów i Eksporterów – COIE*), operated by the

Marshal Office of the Małopolskie Voivodship and prepared as a system solution by the Ministry of Economy in order to improve the position of Polish businesses in international markets. Launched in July 2010, it is scheduled to function until 2020. The goal was to facilitate access for undertakings and associations of undertakings to comprehensive, high quality and gratuitous information services necessary to plan, organise and carry out exports and foreign investment. In addition, it was intended to stimulate foreign investment in Poland by increasing the accessibility for potential foreign investors of information on conditions of taking up business activities and on support instruments for entrepreneurship development. COIE provided customised information prepared by CeBiM, a unique solution in Poland. Due to the inclusion of employees of the Marshal Office assigned to the execution of COIE tasks in the structure of the Centre, such studies comprehensively presented opportunities offered by the voivodship (Investor and Exporter Service Centre 2018 – *Centrum Obsługi Inwestorów i Eksporterów 2018*).

The activities of CeBiM were promoted through its website, www.businessinmalopolska.pl. It included articles and information prepared for investors and businesses in Małopolska with regard to the services supplied, support opportunities as well as the initiative of the Business in Małopolska Centre itself. The focus was on economic, business and policy aspects. CeBiM was engaged in the voivodship part of the national competition 'First-class Land' (*Grunt na medal*), aimed at selecting the most attractive investment sites in every region. It was organised until 2016 on a two-year basis by the Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency (*Polska Agencja Informacji i Inwestycji Zagranicznych – PAIiIZ*) in cooperation with the Marshals of the respective voivodships and Investor Service Centres. Information on attractive investment sites was obtained by employees of the institutions forming CeBiM. They sought land, prepared descriptions of parcels, coordinated meetings with the organisers and land owners (An investment site in Bochnia awarded the 'First-class Land' prize 2016 – *Bocheński teren inwestycyjny otrzymał nagrodę Grunt na medal 2016*).

The Business in Małopolska Centre provided information on the Małopolska Business Award (*Małopolska Nagroda Gospodarcza*). Introduced in 2009, it promotes the best economic operators from the Małopolskie voivodship, investment-oriented attitudes and increasing competitiveness between undertakings. During the award presentation ceremony, the successful businesses and entrepreneurs are presented by the Marshal of the Voivodship with statuettes of the Innovation Tree, the symbol of CeBiM (Małopolska Business Award 2017 – *Małopolska Nagroda Gospodarcza 2017*). The Centre actively pursues foreign awards, prizes and titles conducive to the building of a positive image of Małopolska. In contrast to other voivodships where activities are frequently non-coordinated and carried out by various entities, CeBiM is the only unit in Małopolska to prepare materials for and replies to the institution developing an international ranking of regional attractiveness, fDi Strategy. As a result, Małopolska was ranked fourth for fDi Strategy in the European Cities and Regions of the Future 2016/2017 ranking

(Małopolska ranks fourth in FDI ranking 2016 – *Czwarte miejsce Małopolski w rankingu FDI 2016*).

Summary

The article presents a model of the economic promotion of a region as exemplified by the Małopolskie Voivodship. The measures implemented led the way in Poland and allow an assessment and conclusions which should be useful for other regions. The Business in Małopolska Centre can serve as an example of cooperation, in the form of effective cooperation of a number of institutions intended to foster the economic development of the voivodship. Coordinated activities and consistent initiatives facilitate effective economic branding of Małopolska. Cooperation and relations with economic operators, including foreign investors, allow on-going monitoring of business trends and needs. Since 2016, the partners in the Centre have been engaged in the implementation of further projects aimed at national and international economic promotion of the Małopolskie Voivodship.

The „Power up your Business in Małopolska” project is an example of the possibility of undertaking wide-ranging cooperation of institutions for which the common goal is the economic promotion of the region. The partner of the project is Kraków Nowa Huta Przyszłości, a non-CeBiM business partner. Promoting activities of the voivodship are planned in locations such as Kazakhstan, Iran, Dubai and Vietnam. Experience gained in investor and exporter service offers a chance of establishing an entirely new institution to promote the region in Poland and in the world and successful performance confirms the validity of the decisions to set up the Centre, taken years back. The adopted model may serve as a good practice example for other voivodships. As experiences of other countries suggest, the next level of cooperation between regional entities is permanent institutionalisation of cooperation. It may result in the creation of a new institution with legal personality, delegated powers in relevant matters and regular funding. Such a newly established entity could provide commercial services, thus gaining financial independence. The creation of such institutions will allow to reinforce activities connected with regional promotion.

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