

INTRODUCTION

Over-a-century-old tradition of development and dissemination of social policy as an academic discipline and a field of practical activity involves continuous expansion of the range of interests and areas of exploration. In Poland it was particularly important in the last 25 years, that is the time of regime change, accession to the EU, implementation of the principles of knowledge-based civil society, promotion of innovative economy and social cohesion. Thanks to its dual dimension it plays an important role in the development of the social sciences and preparation of professional staff for public administration bodies, local authorities, broadly defined services, social services and labour market. It takes up in initiated exploratory research all subjects and problems, which determine the quality of life, and which will determine in the future the quality of life of successive generations. Applying it is not an easy task due to interdisciplinarity of societal issues, as well as apoliticism of proposed solutions, which is expected in science, and rarely used in practice. Therefore it carries the risk of criticism and polemic, but also creates the need for social discourse, necessary in order for any innovative actions to take place. This collection of analyses, considerations and reviews is devoted to such interdisciplinary discussion. Its cross-thematic nature is justified by importance of the addressed issues, as well as their conceptual range. The target model of effective social policy solutions is based on interdependence of many spheres, including economic, technological, political, social, societal and cultural spheres.

Thanks to the kindness of the Editor-in-Chief and authorities of the Faculty of Law, Administration and Management of the Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, the presented 18th volume of „Humanities and Social Studies” is devoted entirely to the issues within the scope of interest of the social policy. It does not deal with all aspects, but it indicates current issues and the problems important from the social, as well as economic point of view, such as social services, productivity in late adulthood, migration, or dilemmas connected with the European protective approach. It also offers an insight into views expressed by contemporary social politicians from various cities, as well as science and research centres (Częstochowa, Gdańsk, Katowice, Kielce, Kraków, Łódź, Olsztyn, Radom, Warsaw, Wrocław).

Review articles, analyses, announcements and reviews contained in it – 22 works in total – were classified according to the key of the prevailing content and divided into 5 groups of topics dealing with the same issues: *Trends in Social Policy; Labour Market – Migrations; Educational Policy and Lifelong Learning; Health Security and Senior Policy* and *Environmental Stimulators of Social Safety*. The *Articles* part has been preceded by the introduction containing the text *Considerations on Genesis and Development of Social Policy* by prof. Janusz Sztumski – the author of social science methodology and the master of Polish social policy. In *Reviews* part there were presented opinions and recommendations for the three new publications devoted to

currently popular issues: Polish religious identity, risks associated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and the phenomenon of *design* in the urban environment.

The idea of the editors of the periodical and the authors of the texts was to signal in the publication a broad range of issues falling within the scope of social policy and attract interest of broadly defined opinion leaders, including representatives of the world of politics, media, local authorities and bodies responsible for broadly defined safety, health care, education, lifelong learning, labour market, activation and environmental integration at the regional level, in the problems diagnosed nowadays. The volume is also addressed to students of faculties such as: national security, political science, international relations, economy, administration and social work, in the case of which the courses such as „Social Policy” and „Social and Economic Policy” have been included in the academic programme.

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