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Introduction

Globalization is such an omnipresent term these days that any mention of its effects is typically dismissed as a cliché. Without a good reason, one may add, arguing that the implications of this phenomenon, to a very large extent, shape the processes and laws of social, political, and economic life.

One particular trend inextricably linked with globalization is the increase of competition, resulting from simple expansion of trade exchange as new actors, previously excluded from the economic mainstream, join the global markets. The wide accessibility of technologically advanced products and services has revolutionized the markets to the point that countries on the lower ladders of economic power can utilize them more effectively and cheaper than those which authored them in the first place.

Development of regionalism in the contemporary global economy has urged researchers to enter political and economic discussion on the concept of regional competitiveness and perceive competitiveness in terms of regional advantage with the purpose of better understanding of economic effects, similar to those observed at the level of countries and individual sectors of economy. These and other questions formed in the context of competition, its sources and its various manifestations in the global economy (with particular attention to the Asia and Pacific region), have stimulated our authors to express their views in the papers submitted to the fourth international scientific conference entitled “Faces of Competitiveness in Asia Pacific. Region – Country – Enterprises”, organized by the Department of International Economic Relations at Wrocław University of Economics. The conference was held under the patronage of Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Polish Ministry of Economy and the Embassy of Japan in Poland.

This publication, as a well-polished mirror, reflects all the different takes on the competitive analysis of the Asia and Pacific region. The papers presented in the first part of the book, “Determinants of the competitiveness of regional groupings in the Asia and Pacific region”, concentrate on various aspects of international competition of the ASEAN grouping. The extensive part two, “International competitive potential of the economic actors of the Asia and Pacific region”, addresses sources and methods of shaping international competitive advantage in Asian transnational corporations and SME companies operating in the region under study.

Presenting this subsequent volume of our ongoing series on the Asia and Pacific region, we would like to express our deep belief that the publication will satisfy the scientific needs and interests of our audience. In particular, this book may prove invaluable to all the readers wanting to extend their understanding of social, economic, and political processes that shape the international competitiveness of the Asia and Pacific region as a whole.

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