

Project title: The role of sports activity in building social capital in Poland

The goal of the project is to carry out a thorough analysis of relations between the Social Capital (SC) - covering, in accordance with OECD's definition (2007) "networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate cooperation within or among groups" - and sports activity (SA) of Poles. Empirical studies show positive impact of SC on SA, however there is an absence explicit evidence on to what extent SA can add to the shaping of SC. Basing on the literature, it can be assumed that SA, acting through development of soft competence (e.g. teamwork), through positive impact on health, image, and establishing social relations, should add to building of the SC. Such direction of assumptions is confirmed by the data from the report of the National Bank of Poland '*Innovation potential of Polish economy: conditions, factors, prospects*' of 2016; (NBP, 2016). It says that the most innovative countries (e.g. Switzerland, Scandinavian countries) are characterized by a far larger participation in sports organizations, compared to Poland. This is especially important since Poland aims for further social and economic development (for example through increasing the level of innovativeness). Participation in sports organizations (after propensity to trust other people) - according to NBP - a dimension of SC that best (from all considered) describes the differences in the level of innovativeness on international level. Considering the issue from this perspective, it can be assumed that SA (occurring in connection with participation in organisations) is something exceptional. This induces a question of mutual relations between SA and SC. Prior literature provides evidence that these are correlated. However, although the impact (positive) of SC on SA is - in principle - backed with empirical research, the arguments behind the impact of SA on SC are still scarce and uncertain. It must also be mentioned that as of this moment, such analysis has been carried out neither for Poland, nor for any other country of similar social or economic structure (i.e. for other Central European countries).

Therefore, within the project, it is planned to carry out research that, while considering differences between particular persons (such as e.g. leisure, material status, revealed personality features or the features of the community in which these persons function), will allow establishing the impact of SA on the SC. And hence, basing on panel data from Social Diagnosis (www.diagnoza.com) an analysis of shaping the dimensions of SC (e.g. trust towards other people, participation in various organizations, number of friends or civil engagement). Which – with the application of a method based on matching-type estimation (in version proposed by Lechner et al. 2011) – will allow to assess not only the correlations, but also casual relationships. The second group of econometric analyses will allow the assessment of the relation between participation in sports organizations and undertaking SA, and the SC, at the regional level (e.g. engagement of the third sector, participation in elections, or crime rate).