

The objective of the project is to determine the real significance of digital technologies in creating spatial justice. This issue will be considered in the context of the functioning of rural areas from the perspective of the concept of smart rural development. Embedding research under the concept of smart rural development allows us to refer to the role of digital technologies in modern society, the rural economy, taking into account current realities and development challenges.

The basis for achieving these goals will be the analysis of selected areas of rural areas functioning in Poland in the use of digital technologies. Both the concept of spatial justice and smart rural development should be divided into different planes. Therefore, to precisely describe the analysed issues, the decision was made to focus on research on various planes related to the impact of digital technologies on the functioning of rural areas.

In current research on smart rural development, a deficiency of empirical research, especially in local systems, is noticeable. This is largely due to the difficulties in quantifying the phenomenon. It should also be noted that the second important problem (as a consequence of a small amount of empirical research) is the weakness of the concept in the theoretical scope.

Research carried out within the project will be mainly theoretical and cognitive. The theoretical contribution of the project results will be associated primarily with the enrichment of the subject literature in the field of smart rural development and the importance of digital technologies in rural areas, and their importance for achieving spatial justice. The cognitive nature of the project will be included at the stage of implementation of each of the study objectives because they are exploratory - determining interdependencies or relations between various phenomena. It is worth to add that the concept of spatial justice is oriented towards practical activities. Hence, the research results will be able to form a basis for raising the scientific level of recommendation of important territorial and industry development strategies of the country. The project also will provide knowledge which should give a significant impulse to further development of the concept of smart rural development and the special importance of digital technologies in it. Due to the prevalence of digitization and the increase in the share of digital technologies in processes of a social and economic nature (including in the spatial dimension), the results obtained should constitute an important contribution to the development of socio-economic geography and spatial management) along with related disciplines (including economics).