

The occupational structure is one of the key measures of the economic activity of the population. Although it does not take into account important factors such as technical progress and labour productivity growth, its study allows for a better understanding of the dynamics and scale of transformations that took place in the economy. Reconstruction of the occupational structure in the 19th century will make it possible to include the Polish lands in the area of research on the process of industrialisation and its specificity in the core and peripheries of the European economy. In addition, the proper understanding of key determinants of 19th century industrialization, its success and failure factors, is good starting point for a proper comprehension of the phenomena resulting from the industrial and post-industrial economy, Digital Revolution or the economy of Industry 4.0. As a result, it creates the possibility to find a better perspective for the understanding of the challenges that the global economy has been facing during the 20th and 21st century.

The literature lacks an unambiguous assessment of whether the territory of the Congress Kingdom should be regarded as an area located entirely on the periphery of the industrial revolution or as a border region. In addition, the dual economic structures in the Kingdom of Poland, as a result of which areas with modern industry coexisted alongside lands dominated by traditional agriculture, make it difficult to make an unambiguous assessment of the effects of the industrialization on the Polish lands based on the available data. The issue of reconstructing the occupational structure in the lands of the Congress Kingdom was taken up by Polish economic historians in the second half of the 20th century, but as a rule it did not constitute the main subject of their research. As a result, most studies focus exclusively on a narrow geographical, social or economic area. Differences in calculations and methodologies, as well as missing data for regions in different periods, mean that results for different sectors and areas of the Kingdom may not be comparable.

The proposed research project aims to fill this knowledge gap: to reconstruct and study the evolution of the occupational structure in the lands of the Congress Kingdom between 1826 and 1897, including spatially in as detailed a resolution as possible. The period covered by the analysis extends since the establishment of regulations for the registration of births in church metrics until the first Russian census. The database on the occupational structure provided as a result of the research will allow a more detailed examination than ever before of the phenomenon of industrialisation of the Polish lands in the 19th century. This will allow verification of hypotheses formulated in the literature on the dynamics, causes and timing of industrialisation. Based on the results obtained, hypotheses concerning differences in the occupational structure between individual regions and religious associations, as well as the degree of differentiation in terms of the number of occupations performed in relation to Western European countries, and whether industrialisation of the lands of the Congress Kingdom took place simultaneously in different regions will be verified. In addition, the role of new and old urban centres in the process of industrialisation, the impact of the proximity of industrial centres on the occupational structure of neighbouring areas, and the impact of the proximity of railways, rivers and the national border on the occupational structure of individual regions will be examined.

The database created will also be able to be used for other research in the economic history of the Polish lands. A proper understanding of changes in the occupational structure of the Polish lands in the 19th century may prove very helpful in, for example, improving estimates of the GDP of the Polish lands in the analysed period as well as for research on labor market history and social inequalities. This will enable a better understanding of the origins, process and consequences of the 19th-century economic transformation, both in macroeconomic and social terms.

In the process of reconstructing the occupational structure, data from metric birth books and baptismal registers will be used - accurate individual data containing information on occupations. Scans of 19th-century manuscripts will be converted into text files, from which, using a linguistic model, information will be extracted allowing for the identification of occupations carried out by persons included in the documents (parents of the child, godparents, witnesses), as well as characteristics allowing for the classification of a given person into a specific demographic and geographical group. The mapping of the occupational structure across the lands of the Congress Kingdom will be carried out using stratified random sampling. Geographical and social differences in occupational structure will be verified using statistical methods, while methods from spatial econometrics will be used to study the determinants of industrialization of Polish lands.