

The present book has been published on the occasion of the 28th International Geographical Congress in the Hague. Its aim is to present contemporary issues in geographical research in Poland.

Geography is an independent scientific discipline in Poland. It is also an academic subject offered for university studies. There is a marked division in the structure of Polish geography into two sub-disciplines: socio-economic and physical, or natural, geography. This division, as well as the increasing tendency towards specialisation, define the research scope and methodology of Polish geography today. Still, Polish geographers treat geography as an organisational and institutional whole, and strive to reinforce internal links, especially through the common concern with the man-environment relationship.

Despite its considerable scientific potential and activity of researchers, the achievements of Polish geography are not always noticed on the world forum. In some measure, this may be attributed to the publication of most works in Polish and the orientation of the research towards home needs. A new stimulus to development of geography, especially its socio-economic branch, has been provided by the deep political, economic and social changes that started to take place in Poland and Europe after 1989. They have offered scholars new problems and new fields of interest. I hope that the review of issues and studies presented in this volume will give the reader an opportunity to get acquainted with the current research trends in Polish geography.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Zbyszko Chojnicki</i>	
Foreword	7
<i>Zbyszko Chojnicki</i>	
Socio-Economic Geography in the Face of the Systemic Transformation in Poland	9
<i>Tadeusz Strykiewicz</i>	
Issues in Economic Geography	23
<i>Piotr Korcelli</i>	
Issues in Urban Geography	37
<i>Wiesław Maik</i>	
Issues in Population Geography	47
<i>Teresa Czyż</i>	
Issues in Social Geography	57
<i>Roman Matykowski</i>	
Issues in Political Geography	69
<i>Adam Kotarba, Stefan Kozarski, Leszek Starkel, Bolesław Nowaczyk</i>	
Issues in Geomorphology	79
<i>Janusz Paszyński</i>	
Issues in Climatology	103
<i>Małgorzata Gutry-Korycka</i>	
Issues in Contemporary Geographical Hydrology	113
<i>Andrzej Kostrzewski</i>	
Integrated Monitoring of the Natural Environment	123
<i>Leszek Starkel</i>	
Polish Studies Connected with the IGBP Global Change Programme	135
<i>Zdzisław Kamiński</i>	
Organisation of Geographical Sciences in Poland	145