

In this issue

This issue of the “Warsaw Forum of Economic Sociology” (WFES) contains the second part of the publication series initiated in the previous issue (25/2022) of the journal. As with the first part, this issue is devoted entirely to an exchange of views around Juliusz Gardawski and Ryszard Rapacki’s new conceptualization of the idea of patchwork capitalism, i.e. an ideal type describing the essence and key features of the socio-economic order that emerged in Poland and other Central and Eastern European countries from 1989 onwards, published in WFES in 2021 (12[24]).

In the first part of the debate on the new conceptualization, we presented the views of economic sociologists – critical reflections and constructive proposals for certain extensions, amendments and clarification of some aspects of this conceptualization, made by Krzysztof Jasiecki, Wiesław Gumuła and Jacek Sroka. These comments and proposals (as well as the inspiration drawn from the texts of other participants in the debate, as discussed below) were addressed by Juliusz Gardawski, who – in collaboration with Ryszard Rapacki – came up in his response with the proposal for an expanded conceptualization of patchwork capitalism and a more advanced operationalization of the ideal type of this socio-economic order.

The current issue of WFES, in turn, provides four contributions to the discussion of the new conceptualization of the patchwork order, made by economists. These contributions have been arranged in a certain logical sequence, which starts with the articles offering constructive proposals aimed to fine tune and deepen the idea of patchwork capitalism, which inspired the original authors to put forward an expanded conceptualization of its ideal type.

The first of these articles, written by Adam Czerniak, contains an elaborate proposal for a broader consideration of the co-existing coordination mechanisms of decisions and actions of economic and social actors in patchwork capitalism. As the author points out in his contribution, in the earlier conceptualization of its ideal type this dimension was only hinted at. On the basis of an in-depth theoretical and

empirical analysis carried out in the article (based on the example of the institutional area of housing), Adam Czerniak draws the conclusion that taking into account in the extended conceptualization of patchwork capitalism the coexistence of diverse (sometimes divergent in terms of their inner logic) coordination mechanisms would greatly enrich the picture of patchwork capitalism and add analytical depth to its conceptualization.

In the second article included in this issue, Piotr Maszczyk shares his insights on – more generally – the idea of categorizing models of capitalism and – in direct reference to Gardawski and Rapacki's 2021 article – the usefulness in the scholarly research of their new conceptualization of patchwork capitalism.

The next contribution, authored by Marek Garbicz, is an explicit review of Gardawski and Rapacki's proposed new explanation of the nature and key peculiarities of the socio-economic order that has emerged in Poland and other Central and Eastern European countries since 1989. In the review, the author wonders whether the concept of patchwork capitalism fits the Polish case. His answer to this question is negative – while recognizing in the new conceptualization some virtues of novelty and originality, Garbicz nevertheless rejects the very idea of patchwork capitalism. The main premise of his critical assessment of the new conceptualization is his belief that the complete picture of Post-Communist capitalism that has emerged in Poland and selected CEE countries already exists, as embodied in the category of a 'dependent market economy' introduced into scientific circulation by Andreas Nölke and Arian Vliegenthart in 2009, and that nothing new can be added to this picture.

In their response to the foregoing review, closing this issue of WFES, Ryszard Rapacki, in collaboration with Juliusz Gardawski, argue with this belief while simultaneously discarding the resulting criticisms of the new conceptualization spelled out by Marek Garbicz. They point out that the arguments raised by the reviewer are largely unfounded, and may be due to a misperception of the very idea of patchwork capitalism and misguided interpretation of the relevant arguments underlying this idea, coupled with some gaps and weaknesses in his own reasoning. They therefore reiterate their position that the new conceptualization of patchwork capitalism is a new, stand-alone research category which adds value to the multi-causal explanation of the complex, multidimensional and multi-layer nature and unique institutional features of the new socio-economic order existing in Poland and selected CEE countries. Hence, according to the authors, it fits the Polish case, as well as the case of those countries, provided though that it is interpreted in terms of Max Weber's ideal type rather than empirical generalization.