

Preface

The forerunners of economists considered the problem of efficiency long before our era. One of the first was Hesiod (gr. Hesiodos), who lived in the eighth century BC and was interested in efficiency due to the fact that he was a farmer. He was one of the initiators of economic thought. As a farmer, he was interested in efficiency at the level of producers and households. Subsequent Greek thinkers dealing with economic problems also considered efficiency at this level, not at the scale of society as a whole. Not surprisingly, therefore, the word “economics” derives from the Greek language. It was first used as the title of a book by Xenophon, *Oikonomikos*, and concerned efficiency at the level of manufacturers. Over time, they began to examine efficiency more broadly at the scale of whole societies and countries. Over the centuries, states and societies which achieved high efficiency, both at the level of individual organizations and the macroscale, have left us testimony of their high material and spiritual culture. Their complexity, scale, and sometimes even speed of realization are difficult to achieve, even given our present level of technology. With the development of civilization, methods of management underwent continuous transformation, characterized by progressive changes, which have allowed us to reach today’s unprecedented dynamics of technological transformation, both economic and social. The source of these changes is the maelstrom of breakthroughs that ultimately lead to the modification of existing paradigms. Increasingly, there are opinions about the decline, or even the bankruptcy, of traditional economics, which, as a science, is based on the study of accuracy and repeatability. The modern era is characterized by rapid changes, which is not conducive to such study. In these conditions, models (including mathematical ones) based on accepted a priori assumptions lose their applicability, which is required to meet one of the most important challenges for economists, determining a path for rational development. In our currently dynamic and ambiguous reality, the pursuance of being rational, effective, and efficient still seems to be valid. There is a constant need to deepen our understanding of the concept of efficiency, further identify its dimensions and essence, recognize new conditions for efficiency, improve ways of measuring it, etc. The VI International Conference

titled “Efficiency as a Source of the Wealth of Nations” was devoted to this objective (ESWN 2015). The conference served as a platform for researchers, business practitioners, and academics to discover different aspects underlying new approaches to efficiency and deliberated upon the causes of inefficiency. Each paper submitted to ESWN 2015 has gone through a stringent peer review process by members of the International Programme Committee. The conference resulted in a very fruitful discussion and exchange of thoughts. Finally, we would like to thank all the contributing authors, members of the Programme Committee, and the rest of the Organizing Committee for their highly valuable work in enabling the success of this sixth edition of ESWN.

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Tadeusz Dudycz
Grażyna Osbert-Pociecha
Bogumiła Brycz

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Dudycz, T.; Osbert-Pociecha, G.; Brycz, B. (Eds.)

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