

## Summary

Competition and competitiveness are among the most critical areas of reflection in many academic disciplines, including economics, management, and quality sciences. It is a fundamental challenge to the global economy, its constituent entities, and the theories that describe them. Today, companies seeking to increase their effectiveness and efficiency are turning to increasingly sophisticated management concepts and methods. One such concept finding application in business practice is business process management. The literature studies business competitiveness and its various exogenous and endogenous determinants. However, there is a lack of research results that focus on diagnosing process determinants of competitiveness. This research gap raises the need to explore this issue, so this study attempts to identify a model under which proper management of an enterprise's processes induces an increase in competitiveness. This is reflected in the main objective of the work, which was to assess the impact of the degree of sophistication of the process approach in small and medium-sized enterprises on the level of their competitiveness, resulting from its aggregated and systemically interrelated components, i.e., competitive potential, competitive advantage and competitive position. To achieve the main objective, the Author conducted a quantitative empirical survey using a survey questionnaire by CAPI method. Following the survey, 1286 correctly completed questionnaires were obtained from enterprises in the SME sector of the kujawsko-pomorski region. The data obtained allowed the Author to assess the impact of the degree of sophistication of the process approach in small and medium-sized enterprises on their competitiveness, resulting from its aggregated and systemically interrelated components.

The results made it possible to verify the hypotheses set in the paper and formulate the following general conclusions:

1. Increasing the degree of sophistication in enterprises of the process approach does not increase the level of development of their competitive potential because the increase in the intensity of process identification weakens the competitive potential;
2. The increase in the level of development of the competitive potential of enterprises affects the acquisition of competitive advantages in the market;
3. The competitive advantages gained in the market affect the competitive position achieved by enterprises higher relative to their competitors;

4. The increase in the level of development of the competitive potential of enterprises does not affect the higher competitive position they achieve relative to their competitors. The dissertation consists of five chapters and the introduction and conclusion sections. The first two chapters are theoretical, the third is methodological, and the fourth and fifth are empirical. Chapter One is devoted to corporate competitiveness and its formation. Chapter two contains the essence and importance of the process approach in enterprise management. The third chapter presents the methodology of the research procedure adopted in work on the process determinants of competitiveness of SME enterprises and the characteristics of the research sample. Chapter four presents the level of competitiveness and the state of the process approach in small and medium-sized enterprises of the kujawsko-pomorski region. The fifth chapter presents the interrelationships occurring in enterprises between the implementation of the process approach and the formation of competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises of the kujawsko-pomorski region. The conclusion of the dissertation summarizes the results obtained, points out the limitations of the research procedure and presents recommendations for further research in the field of shaping the competitiveness of enterprises based on the process approach.