

Book Review: Łukasz Puślecki, *Cooperation in the Biopharmaceutical Sector in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe – Diagnosis, Challenges and Perspectives* CeDeWu, Warsaw 2023

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Quote as: Rymarczyk, J. (2024). Book Review: Łukasz Puślecki, *Cooperation in the Biopharmaceutical Sector in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe – Diagnosis, Challenges and Perspectives* CeDeWu, Warsaw 2023. *Ekonomia XXI Wieku*, (27), 39-40.

DOI: [10.15611/e21.2024.05](https://doi.org/10.15611/e21.2024.05)

JEL Classification: O32, Y6, C1

The reviewed monograph is an original and pioneering work that addresses a very serious problem related to innovativeness in the biopharmaceutical sector in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, namely alliance cooperation in this field between various entities in the region.

Proof of the relevance of this issue can be found in the fact that both alliances and innovation are among the most important artefacts in the world economy, and are a common subject of research and scientific publications. Capitalism in its contemporary form is even sometimes described as the capitalism of strategic alliances, while the economy is referred to as a knowledge-based economy. The individual stages in its development, known as the 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0 industrial revolutions, are none other than subsequent more innovative forms of production leading to innovative changes in practically all spheres of the functioning of societies. In this context, it would be very interesting to conduct research, to a large degree futurological, into how the development of artificial intelligence and any inventions of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 would impact the shaping of alliance forms of cooperation between enterprises and other institutions in the field of R&D (a three-sided helix: companies, universities, governments).

This work is the result of many years of research by the author, both in the form of desk research, but also predominantly detailed, fundamental empirical research. The principal aim, as the author writes in the introduction, is to identify research and development alliances, as well as open innovations alliances in the above-mentioned sector of the economy and geographical area. At the same time, the author understands the concept of identification very broadly, as it basically covers their comprehensive business model, as can be seen in the work's extensive list of detailed aims and research tasks, which include motives, sizes, forms, directions, frequency, tools, opportunities and threats, barriers and stimulators, and challenges and perspectives of R&D cooperation.

His in-depth knowledge of the research issue allowed the author to pose ten research hypotheses, whose verification accurately indicates the status and specifics of the development of cooperation in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in comparison to those of Western Europe and the USA, as well as its relative weakness.

The work is theoretical, empirical and interdisciplinary in nature. The theoretical part is based on exceptionally rich, well-chosen subject literature, possibly with a somewhat exaggerated emphasis on the author's scientific achievements (he refers to himself twenty or thirty times). The empirical part consists in primary research of a quantitative and qualitative nature. The former appears in the form of an online questionnaire in English containing as many as 45 different types of question and distributed to around 2000 entities in the biopharmaceutical sector, while contact was also made with around 400 managers in the CEE region. The achieved return rate was 187 questionnaires, that is around 10%, which is standard in this type of research, whilst the qualitative research consisted of 30 individual in-depth interviews with 20 entities (companies and 12 institutions), as well as questionnaires in Polish and English.

It should be underlined that this was the first research of its type, and the carefully selected methods (triangulation research methods, quantitative and qualitative methods) allowed for the successful verification of the research hypotheses and for the full realisation of the paper's aims. It was an exceptionally ambitious, difficult and time-consuming task, above all due to the difficult access to companies and their concerns with regard to sharing information that could be used by their competitors.

The structure of the study is compelling – it is logical and subordinate to its aims. In accordance with general methodological principles, the author moved from the general and theoretical issues addressed in the first two chapters to detailed issues based on empirical research in the third and fourth chapters. The final theoretical and empirical chapter has, in addition to its scientific value, great utilitarian significance as it includes recommendations for companies in CEE countries cooperating in the field of biopharmaceutical innovations. In particular, it contains a diagnosis of companies' innovation cooperation in the period 2015-2021, a proposal of an original conceptual scheme for the evolution of portfolio alliances, R&D alliances in the direction of open innovation alliances, and the adaptability of strategic alliances to open innovations, as well as a conceptual scheme for translational innovations and the co-evolution of R&D alliances and open innovation alliances. These issues in particular constitute the value added that the reviewed work contributes.

This monograph by Łukasz Puślecki is pioneering in its nature and is the first to comprehensively analyse alliance forms of innovation cooperation in CEE countries. It fills an evident research gap and brings a significant contribution to the development of knowledge in economic and strategic management theory, including the area of alliances and innovation. It constitutes the basis for constructing innovative models of cooperation between firms in the field of R&D through the use of various forms of strategic alliances. It is also very important in the context of Poland's position on the world innovation market. As is well-known, Poland occupies a very remote position in this ranking and is one of the last in Europe.

Possibly the financial aspects of innovation cooperation could have been taken into consideration to a larger degree, including the use of EU funds. However, even without this, the work is very extensive (362 pages), and such issues can serve as the subject of the author's future research, as he is undoubtedly an outstanding expert in the issues researched, with extensive knowledge and research skills.

In summary, in my opinion the monograph by Łukasz Puślecki is an outstanding and original work of significant scientific, cognitive and utilitarian value. It contributes a great deal to understanding the complex processes of innovation cooperation, and may be of significant importance to making them more efficient.

The work also deserves considerable recognition from a formal perspective. It is well written, being to a large degree understandable even for lay readers, and in this regard fully meets the criteria for scientific works. It testifies to the author's exceptional cognitive abilities and his passion for research, and may serve as a model of reliability and diligence in scientific study.