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THE DEVELOPMENT OF FINTECH IN POLAND AS A FACTOR OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

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Abstract. *The article examines the development of the fintech sector in Poland, identifies the main stages of its evolution, analyzes its current state, and compares it with other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The study substantiates the impact of financial technologies on enhancing Poland's international competitiveness, fostering the development of the digital economy, and strengthening the national innovation ecosystem.*

Keywords: *fintech, Poland, international competitiveness, digitalization, financial technologies, Open Banking, BLIK.*

The article examines the development of the fintech sector in Poland as a significant factor in strengthening the country's international competitiveness in the context of the ongoing digital transformation of the global economy. The relevance of the study is determined by the increasing role of financial technologies in modernizing financial systems, improving the efficiency and accessibility of financial services, attracting investment, and fostering innovation-driven economic growth. The purpose of the research is to identify the main stages of fintech development in Poland, analyze the current state of the Polish fintech ecosystem, compare its performance with other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and assess its contribution to the formation of the country's competitive advantages in the international economic environment. The study is based on the application of historical, comparative, analytical, and system-structural research methods. The empirical basis includes reports and statistical data from international organizations, European Union institutions, the National Bank of Poland, the Polish Financial Supervision Authority, and industry publications related to the Polish fintech market. The results of the research show that the development of fintech in Poland has evolved through four major stages: the formation of the institutional foundations of the financial system, the digitalization of the banking sector, the emergence of a fintech ecosystem, and the current innovation-driven stage characterized by the implementation of Open Banking, artificial intelligence, advanced payment technologies, and digital financial ecosystems. The study reveals that Poland has established the largest fintech market in Central and Eastern Europe due to the combination of a large domestic market, a highly digitalized banking sector, strong

cooperation between banks and fintech companies, and a regulatory framework aligned with European Union standards. Particular attention is paid to the BLIK payment system, which has become one of the most successful digital payment solutions in Europe and serves as an example of nationally developed financial innovation. A comparative analysis demonstrates that Poland occupies a leading position in the region in terms of the number of fintech companies, the scale of digital payments, and the adoption of innovative financial services. The scientific novelty of the research lies in the systematization of the stages of fintech development in Poland and in substantiating the relationship between fintech growth and the enhancement of national international competitiveness. The practical significance of the study is associated with the possibility of applying the Polish experience in the development of fintech ecosystems, digital transformation policies, and financial sector modernization strategies, particularly in countries seeking closer integration with the European digital economy. The findings confirm that fintech should be viewed not only as a component of financial sector digitalization but also as a strategic factor in ensuring long-term economic growth, innovation capacity, and international competitiveness.

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