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#### ABSTRACT

Since the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, the term "smart city" has been used more and more frequently in the international arena. This phrase is commonly used both in relation to the activities of enterprises, as a subject of research work or as a trend that the paramount international organizations such as the United Nations or the European Union refer to. This concept is also more and more often used by representatives of local and regional authorities themselves who, while making local policies and defining the direction of city development directly refer to the smart city idea when trying to define their actions.

The doctoral dissertation defines the role and significance of a new trend in urban development policy. The most important research on the idea of smart city was analyzed and characterized which, in the opinion of researchers and representatives of local and regional authorities themselves should be considered as activities consistent with that trend. The dissertation defines in detail all the activities that are most often identified as characteristic elements of the idea of building a smart city.

The structure of the doctoral dissertation was built in accordance with a model that allows for the development of threads related to the smart city trend in urban development policies.

In Chapter 1, attention is focused on the role and importance of cities as entities of global importance in determining the quality of life as well as the development policies they implement. Chapter 1 allows you to define the role and importance of cities, both in historical and geopolitical terms as well as the differences between them. It is also a competence analysis of the representatives of local and regional authorities who on one hand, by implementing certain horizontal policies have an impact on the achievement of globally defined goals, whilst on the other really determine the quality of life of individual members of the community which is also critical for the proper development of cities.

Chapter 2 in its entirety is devoted to the development trends of the concept of smart city. Attention was drawn to the changes in the perception of the new trend which, depending

on the person defining it resulted in diverse activities. When analyzing the most important studies on the intelligence aspect of cities, attention was given to both subjectivity in terms of gradation of certain units and listing those that can be objectively considered as leaders who, in their development policies, include the concept of smart city as an important part of their activities. These made it possible to build a theoretical foundation which forms the basis for the analysis and development of the results presented in Chapter 3.

The last chapter defines the key research areas and practical spheres of smart cities activity. The results of analytical research are presented in the form of graphs and compared with the practical activities of cities that can be considered as world leaders in the implementation of the smart city idea.