

## **ABSTRACT**

The thesis is focused on the comparison of the population and economic development in California and Illinois between 1980 and 2010. The main purpose is to discover the major trends, differences or agreements in the development of both of these states and State Economic Areas they belong to, i.e. Pacific and East North Central. The official statistics were used for the analysis. Population development is examined by the number of residents, race and ethnicity and migration. Economic development is studied by the gross domestic product and selected characteristics related to the population and its standard of living. Results demonstrate that the population of California is growing and its racial and ethnic composition is changing whereas the population of Illinois is stagnating or growing moderately. Both states undergo the economic growth, which was however interrupted by the financial and economic crisis in recent years. Results of the comparison of the development of Pacific and East North Central indicate that the differences between divisions correspond to the differences between states.

**Key words:** comparison, population and economic development, major trends and differences, California, Illinois, Pacific, East North Central, 1980–2010