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1. Introduction

1.1. Aims and objectives of the research

Entrepreneurship refers to the process of creating a new enterprise and bearing any of its risks, with the view of making the profit. It is an act of seeking investment and production opportunity, developing and managing a business venture, so as to undertake production function, arranging inputs like land, labour, material and capital, introducing new techniques and products, identifying new sources for the enterprise.

Entrepreneurship operates under an ecosystem called as entrepreneurship ecosystem. The ecosystem comprises of government programs and schemes which encourage entrepreneurship, non-governmental organisations that provide advisory services to entrepreneurs, and other organisations which promote and support entrepreneurship directly or indirectly.

The aim of the desk research is to provide a state of the art/current situation on existing policies, practices and aspects of fostering entrepreneurship among disadvantaged groups with emphasis on adult learning. The objective is not only to collect best practices but to get a detailed idea on the current situation and to improve what we already have by bringing new ideas.

The Research is dedicated to the analysis of the particular needs of the learners, educators and employers in the participating countries. Based on the analysis further steps will be taken to improve educators' capacities, enhance their skills and provide them with a training programme to carry out the effective learning of adults from disadvantage background in gaining entrepreneurship skills and knowledge. The contents of the program will be mainly divided in: learning outcomes framework; modules on different themes and UPthEM facilitators' guidelines.

The aim of the learning outcomes framework is to provide description of the knowledge, skills and competences (attitudes) to be reached by potential learners engaged in the training programme. This section will be divided in two parts – general (containing learning outcomes valid for the four types of disadvantaged adults we focus on (sociocultural, economic, geographical and physical disadvantages) and specific (containing small sets of learning outcomes, relating to each group specifics).

2. Setting the scene

2.1. Adult educational system

Poland is divided into formal, non-formal and informal education. Among the educational opportunities for adults, there are:

- **Primary schools for adults**

This type of school is a place of education for people who are over 18 years old and without primary education or with incomplete primary education. Recently, a lot of these schools have been established in Poland due to the educational reform which is abolishing lower-secondary schools.

- **Lower secondary school for adults**

The year 2020 is the last year of functioning of lower secondary school (including those for adults), it is caused by the educational reform, which increased the number of years of primary and secondary school education and removed lower secondary school.

- **Adult secondary schools**
 - **High schools for adults**

This level of education is intended for adults wishing to obtain secondary education.

- **Post-secondary schools for adults**

Post-secondary schools for adults are a place where people with secondary education can obtain a vocational diploma.

- **Public institutions providing continuing education for adults**

All the institutions operating within these organisations are different centres of vocational education and training aimed at providing vocational courses, professional qualifications and training.

- **Training institutions**
 - **Training institutions offering courses for the unemployed and jobseekers**

In Poland there is a register, which is called RIS - *Rejestr Instytucji Szkoleniowych* (Register of Training Institutions), in which all training institutions operating in the field of offering training to the unemployed are registered. It is an excellent source of knowledge for people who currently do not have a job and want to obtain employment by increasing their competences.

- **Other training institutions**

All other training institutes which are not registered in RIS.

- **Higher education**
 - **Students of post-graduate studies and specialist training**

To participate in postgraduate studies you must have a Bachelor, Master or Engineer degree. These studies are regulated by slightly different laws than standard first and second degree studies. Participants are not legally treated as students and are not entitled to such rights.

- **Open and Third Age Universities**

These facilities were created to educate, integrate and activation older people.¹

2.2. Statistics (official data analysis) about education of adults as a whole and adults from disadvantage groups – level of education, opportunities for upskilling, educational institutions providing educational opportunities for adults, willingness to learn, preferences what to study

Based on the results of the CSO (Central Statistical Office) study (*Adult Education 2016*) in Poland, 45.1% of citizens at age 18-69 participate in some form of education (formal / informal / non-formal education).²

The most recent statistics (2017) on adult education in Poland show that there are currently 103 primary schools for adults with 1189 learners (325 of whom are women³).

In terms of overall formal education, there are more women than men and more urban than rural inhabitants.⁴

In Poland, in non-formal education (based on the Central Statistical Office's study of 2016), the largest proportion of students are those with higher education (41.4%) and post-secondary education (24.2%). As for people with vocational and lower secondary education, it was less than 10%.

In the conducted study, graduates of pedagogical faculties were among the most frequent users of non-formal education, which, according to the authors of the study, may confirm that teachers are a professional group which, due to its profession, has to constantly improve.

Among the obstacles and difficulties on the way of formal and non-formal education, the respondents mainly included their lack of need for further education. Other obstacles

¹ https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/main-providers-53_pl

² Statistical Office in Gdańsk, *Adult education 2016*, Statistical analyses, Gdańsk, 2018

³ https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/main-providers-53_pl

⁴ Statistical Office in Gdańsk, *Adult education 2016*, Statistical analyses, Gdańsk, 2018





included lack of time resulting from, for example, family responsibilities or time of courses/training conflicting with other commitments (e.g. professional)⁵.

2.3. Specific learning needs of adult learners

The adult approach to learning is very different from the standard approach of young people in compulsory education. The first difference is their motivation. Adults who undertake additional learning often have clear goals and high self-motivation to achieve them. In addition, they see concrete benefits in acquiring knowledge and know how to use it. Often the learning undertaken is intended to help them develop from their professional area or, for example, fill a gap in knowledge in their professional area.⁶

2.4. Specific training needs of adult trainers

In order to be able to teach adults effectively, adult trainers need to know how this age group approaches learning. The trainer must be aware that in andragogics (the adult education process), the schemes that are appropriate for teaching children and young people will not work. It is important to be aware that an adult who enters this process of learning has already a lot of life experience.

An important thing in the education of adults by trainers is to establish individual teaching plans that will meet the requirements set by those who want to acquire knowledge, for example, on the gaining of specific skills useful in their professional area. This means that during learning it is necessary to take into account the expectations of adults and try to meet them⁷.

2.5. Specific needs of the employers (Requirements of the labour market)

Employers are mainly focus on the employees who is well prepared and experience in the offered position. The key here is to find a competent person who is ready to start working without taking first a long training.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ J. Woźniak, SPECYFIKA UCZENIA SIĘ DOROSŁYCH dostęp na stronie: https://bozenabelcar.weebly.com/uploads/4/4/7/1/44710589/specyfika_uczenia_si%C4%98_doros%C5%81ych.pdf

⁷ K. Mikołajczyk, *Jak uczyć się dorośli, czyli co powinien wiedzieć trener o specyfice kształcenia uczestników szkolenia*, e-mentor nr 2 (39), kwiecień 2011, dostęp na stronie: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333339713_Jak_ucza_sie_dorosli_czyli_co_powinien_wiedziec_trener_o_specyfice_kształcenia_uczestnikow_szkolenia



The “Postawy Pracownicze” (Employee Attitudes) project carried out a research which showed which characteristics of the employee are most desired by employers.

Among them the most popular were:

- responsibility,
- meeting professional obligation,
- involvement in the performance of their duties,
- communication skills,
- willingness to cooperate⁸.

This shows that among the desired characteristics, those related to self-organisation of work and communication skills dominate.

Of course, there is no one set of qualities that will be considered most important in every job. The specificity of each work is different and requires different specialist and soft skills.

3. Existing policies, practices and aspects of entrepreneurship education and fostering entrepreneurship skills in adult learners with emphasis on disadvantaged groups

In Poland, the first classes on entrepreneurship take place in a secondary school (high school / technical school) on the subject "Basics of entrepreneurship".

Within the framework of these classes, pupils follow a programme which is contractually divided into three aspects of teaching. The first one aims at introducing them to basic theoretical knowledge of entrepreneurship and economics. Here, they acquire knowledge, among other things, on basic concepts of entrepreneurship and economics (e.g. the role of money, the functions of the economy, taxes), they learn about the role of entrepreneurship in human life, but also learn about the role of good management or marketing and CSR. An important element in the education of secondary school students is also preparing them to look for a job (writing a CV, interviews, etc.) Another aspect of learning is the acquisition of skills and applying them in practice and also shaping attitudes⁹.

⁸ <https://poradnikprzedsiębiorcy.pl/-idealny-pracownik-jakich-cech-wypatruja-pracodawcy-u-kandydata-do-pracy>

⁹ <https://podstawaprogramowa.pl/Liceum-technikum/Podstawy-przedsiębiorczości>

The next stage of entrepreneurial education in Poland is the period of higher education. Here, there are great opportunities to study subjects related to entrepreneurship (majors such as: entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship in business, entrepreneurship and finance, etc. and majors related to them such as economics, management, finance and accounting). During the technical studies there are also courses in entrepreneurship/economics (this depends on the programme of the university).

In addition, there are plenty of opportunities in Poland to take part in entrepreneurship courses, both online and in traditional form, in which everyone can take part. This allows adults with emphasis on disadvantaged groups to gain knowledge of entrepreneurship and increase their chances on the labour market.

4. SWOT analysis of the existing good practices in the sphere of entrepreneurship training

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many universities with majors related to entrepreneurship • Free courses • Teaching entrepreneurship in secondary schools • Online courses 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few courses adapted to the requirements of a disadvantaged group • Not taking into account special educational needs in courses
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU projects • Increase in the number of start-ups cooperating with educational centres 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of practical skills training at universities • A dynamically changing environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outdated programme of studies ○ Outdated course programme

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The biggest weakness that needs support and improvement is the small number of courses that are adapted to the disadvantaged group. Courses are generally addressed to all and do not take into account the special educational needs faced by these groups. The main



recommendation for improving entrepreneurial skills will therefore be to adapt courses to disadvantaged people.

The strengths are the large number of courses open to the general public, also in on-line form, and the opportunities offered by universities in Poland.

Among the opportunities we can see the possibility offered by EU projects to prepare free educational materials or an interesting indicator is the number of start-ups that cooperate with educational institutions. Therefore, it can be assumed that new interesting technological solutions will soon appear, which will speed up and simplify the learning process.

6. References/Literature

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