

## **The Situation in Poland**

In Poland, as in other European countries, the present demographic conditions are unfavourable. Fertility decline and the process of population ageing have led to significant changes in the relation between particular age groups and as a result to increasing of burden on working population. In the years 1988-2013 the share of population aged 65+ increased from 10.2 to 14.7 per cent while the proportion of young population at the age of under 15 recorded a drop from 24.4 to 15.0 per cent (Demographic Yearbook, 2014). Old-age dependency ratio recorded an increase from 22 to 29 persons in post-working age per 100 persons per working age. Potential support ratio decreased from 4,5 to 3,4 persons of working age per one retired person. It is predicted to drop to around 2,0 in 2050 as a result of entering baby-boom generation born in 1950s into retirement age. The general demographic situation of Poland has a considerable impact on young people entering the labour market. Projected shrinking labour force and its ageing by increasing the percentage of immobile working population (aged 45-59 for females and 45-64 for males) and declining mobile working population (aged 18-44) influence the difficulties for the younger population in getting a job and higher competition between the younger and the older part of working population (the share of immobile working population increased from 18,1 to 23,6% in the years 1990-2013). According to population projection made by Central Statistical Office in Warsaw, the percentage of population aged under 15 will record the further drop to 12.1 in 2050 while the share of the elderly aged 65+ will reach 32.7 per cent. On the other hand the proportion of young people aged 15-34 will decrease from 28.6 to 18.5 per cent of total population.

Young population in Poland is characterized by low level of economic activity resulting from the postponing of entering the labor market due to continue their education. Among those aged 15-24, the employment rate was 24.3 per cent, which was less than half than in the age group above 15 years. Youth unemployment rate was 27.3 per cent and more than 2.5 times higher than the value characterizing the population of working age (9.9 per cent). However, high rate of youth unemployment, often double the rates for people of working age are recorded in almost all EU countries. On the other hand, duration of unemployment increases with age of the unemployed and decreases with rising levels of education. Unemployment is especially high among young people with only a basic vocational education. University graduates show the lowest unemployment rates, but the unemployment rate for this group has been on the rise since the beginning of economic crisis (Polakowski, 2012).

Most often the argument in the context of youth unemployment is the lack of professional experience. At the end of 2013, the largest population among people with the registered unemployed under 25 years of age, was that with no work experience - 209.9 thousand people (accounted for 52.3 per cent of the young unemployed), then the

unemployed with work experience under one year - 96.5 thousand persons (24.1 per cent) and 91.9 thousand with experience from one to five years (22.9 per cent). For this reason, the young are entitled to receive unemployment benefits twice less than the older (Sytuacja na rynku pracy ....., 2014). It should be underlined, that the share of unemployed among population aged 15-24 was the highest in małopolskie voivodship, where the research on lost generation will be conducted. High level of youth unemployment in this region (with its capital in Krakow) results from demographic condition, namely the highest level of fertility in Poland.

Among the unemployed total, as well as among the unemployed under 25 years of age, women prevail. In 2013 in Poland women constituted 51.9 per cent of the total registered unemployed under 25. Young women hold a higher level of education than men, yet they are more susceptible to long-term unemployment. In 2013 among the registered unemployed young women, 12 per cent had higher education while 37.0 per cent had basic vocational education or lower. Among young unemployed men these proportions were 4.6 per cent and 52 per cent, respectively (Sytuacja na rynku pracy..., 2014).

According to survey research conducted by A. Świątek (2012), pupils from upper secondary schools have large expectations about labour market (for example the most respondents - 25 per cent of total, expects high salaries on the first place and the second most frequent answer were good conditions of work. The least chosen option to the question about what pupils expect from future work, was compliance with their qualifications which may be worrisome. Furthermore, only half of the surveyed students considered to be entrepreneurial persons. Making efforts to improve the process of entrepreneurship education in school is in the author's opinion one of the best ways to counteract the difficulties of young people in the labour market.

### **SWOT Analysis of situation of the young on the labour market in Poland**

#### **Strengths**

- Increasing level of education of young people
- The lowest unemployment rates among university graduates
- good command of foreign languages
- ability to use modern technologies
- Możliwość poświęcenia uwagi pracy, ze względu na brak zobowiązań rodzinnych

#### **Weaknesses**

- Low level of economic activity of young people
- Extending the period of young people remain dependent on their parents
- High rate of youth unemployment in general
- Low level of entrepreneurial attitude
- Unconscious plan their career paths, the choice of education without the knowledge of the labor market
- Lack of experience of people entering the labor market

#### **Opportunities**

- Polish economy has been performing relatively well during economic crisis
- Supporting entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills in schools

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- Legal arrangements to facilitate a smooth start their own business by new entrepreneurs
- Professional support through university Career Offices and school career counselors

### **Threats**

- Unfavourable demographic changes
- High level of emigration of young people
- The devaluation of the importance of higher education in the eyes of employers
- Low cooperation schools and employers
- Lack of appropriate offer of higher education meeting the requirements of labour market

### **Information about previous projects on entrepreneurship and business competencies carried out at Pedagogical University, Institute of Geography**

The Department of Entrepreneurship and Spatial Management (Institute of Geography, Pedagogical University of Cracow) engages in implementation of many international and national research and educational projects related to entrepreneurial education and education in economic geography. From 2009 - 2011, as the head of the Polish team, Tomasz Rachwał, together with the employees of the Department of Socio-Economic Geography (Sławomir Kurek) and the Tourism and Regional Research Department (Mariusz Szubert), he participated in "FIFOB - Fit for business Developing business competencies in school" research project run within an international consortium of members from several EU states (Austria, Latvia, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Hungary, the UK). The project works involved an analysis of core curricula and curricula in all partner countries to determine development of business competencies in school education systems. Results of the curricula analyses were confronted with views of teachers and social partners (employers, trade unions). Specific, interim and final project deliverables and presentation of "good practices" together with recommended changes in the system of education were presented in many publications, including a monograph summarizing research results.

From 2011 to 2013, T.Rachwał, S.Kurek (heads of the Polish team) and Wioletta Kilar together with German, Italian and UK partners took part in "ReSeCo - Retail Sector Competencies: Developing self and social competencies in vocational training for the retail sector" project. The project delivered educational materials for developing personal and vocational competencies. The project involved a transfer of innovation with its pilot testing and implementation in Polish vocational schools.

From 2010 to 2014, an innovative national project "Step into Entrepreneurship" was also implemented, with T.Rachwał as its technical coordinator, delivered by the staff of the Department: Monika Borowiec, Sławomir Dorocki, Małgorzata Zdon-Korzeniowska with involvement of S. Kurek from the Socio-Economic Geography Department and Agnieszka Świętek from the Didactics of Geography Department. The project deliverables

included preparation and a pilot implementation of an innovative strategy for developing entrepreneurial attitudes, developing competences in mathematics and computer skills in upper secondary schools. The educational strategy developed in the project is based on the concept of a virtual enterprise set up by students (and located on an educational e-platform) and competing on a virtual market. Under the project, a series of supporting educational materials for teachers (including class scenarios, guidelines) and students (including "Business Step by Step" publication) were prepared.

In addition, from 2010 to 2012, T.Rachwał took part, as an expert in the project "I am entrepreneurial - Developing Entrepreneurial Attitudes among Students with Application of Innovative Methods and Tools". The final deliverable of the project is a set of integrated didactic tools developing social competence and entrepreneurial attitudes among young people and supporting the didactic process of teaching courses in basic entrepreneurship and economy in practice. From 2012 to 2014, employees of the Department (M. Borowiec, S. Dorocki, W.Kilar, M. Płaziak, A. Szymańska) together with an employee of the Department of Didactic Geography (A. Świętek) and the Department of Socio-Economic Geography (Piotr L. Wilczyński) were engaged in another project from the series of "I am entrepreneurial - an innovative curriculum for teaching basic entrepreneurship and economics in practice", which has led to development of a curriculum, class and course scenarios and an e-textbook for students of both courses. It is the first interdisciplinary (covering two subjects) textbook on the market to teach both basic entrepreneurship and economy in practice.

Further to the reform of curricula in schools above the lower secondary level, a new base curriculum was introduced for entrepreneurship and this is why T.Rachwał and Z.Makieła, as co-authors, prepared in 2011 and 2012, a new textbook accompanied by a multimedia CD-ROM and an exercise-book "Krok w Przedsiębiorczość" ["Step into Entrepreneurship"] (published by Nowa Era publishing house), addressed to students in schools above the lower secondary level studying the basics of entrepreneurship. The project was aimed at preparing an all-inclusive package to teach the subject in accordance with the new base curriculum and, for this reason, it includes many additional publications, e.g. teachers' manual with a variety of additional materials on a CD and a set of educational films. Regular educational bulletins are published to support entrepreneurship teachers and, in October each year, the Department organises annual conventions of entrepreneurship teachers in Krakow. What is more, T.Rachwał is also the author of an economic geography highschool and vocational school textbook (extended curriculum) entitled "Oblicza geografii 2" (the "Faces of Geography 2"). The textbook is accompanied by a rich set of additional publications, including a multi-media CR-ROM and a text generator. All the above-mentioned textbooks received positive, very good reviews from experts and were thus admitted by the Ministry of the National Education to use in schools.

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Furthermore, 2013 saw the completion of the project initiated by T.Rachwał, aimed at drafting a university economic geography textbook for practice. The practice guidebook written by T.Rachwał and Radosław Uliszak (the Department of Socio-Economic Geography of the Pedagogical University of Cracow) and Paweł Czapliński (the University of Szczecin) and Anna Tobolska (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) is not only to present some selected research methods applied in economic geography but also illustrate them with practice (cases). Such form of a guidebook seems more student-friendly and reader-friendly as they can follow the process step by step and see how their expected outcomes are achieved and results interpreted.

From 2012 to 2014 international project “Common Goals - Common Way” has been implemented, The Hungarian project financed by the EU under Leonardo da Vinci programme aimed at adapting schools to work with young people having different social and cultural background (in particular, Roma students) and actions in support for vocational education (increasing students' interest in vocational schools, stimulating their motivation to study and supporting vocational school students, awareness in planning professional careers by students, bringing vocational schools closer to the reality of the labour market). In the project, the Pedagogical University of Cracow is represented by: Wiktor Osuch - the head of the Polish project team, Sławomir Kurek, Tomasz Rachwał, Agnieszka Świątek. The Krakow team prepared a special study to help Hungarian teachers working with Roma children to understand their cultural difference, solve integration difficulties and learning difficulties and indicating the right methods to be used when working with Roma children and their parents. In addition, the study includes a diagnostic tool to analyze relations in Hungarian - Roma classes and many other valuable recommendations and information addressed to teachers working in the Roma environment.

In addition, in 2014, T.Rachwał together with Danuta Piróg from the Didactics of Geography Department with Nowa Era publishing house and other partners, started implementing a project "Recognise your professional predispositions" to develop contemporary tools supporting identification of vocational competencies of young people to plan their educational path and future professional career.

### **Entrepreneurship and P&S competences in Polish education system**

Entrepreneurship education starts in Polish schools from junior high school, among students aged 13-16 years. For the first time, students learn there about the issues of entrepreneurship on the subject *Knowledge about society*. On this subject, students learn: the basic entrepreneurial skills, how to apply the basic principles of the organization of work, the basic principles of functioning of the economy and businesses, how to create

his household budget, and they are trained to choose the right direction of further education and occupation. The most important school subject on which the Polish students gain knowledge and entrepreneurial skills is the *Basics of Entrepreneurship* taught in: secondary schools (aged 16 to 19 years), technical schools (aged 16 to 20 years) and vocational schools (at the age of 16 to 19 years). *Basics of Entrepreneurship* in these schools is a compulsory subject, run within 60 hours of lessons in the first grade. In the new core curriculum recently appeared also a new subject: *Economics in practice*, which is an addition to the content carried on *Basics of Entrepreneurship*. Its purpose is to develop students' skills in full implementation of economic project: from an idea, by preparing a plan and implementing it, to analyze the effects. *Economics in practice* is the supplementary and optional subject. Interested students can learn it in 30 hours.

Curriculum of *Basics of Entrepreneurship* includes a very wide range of knowledge and entrepreneurial skills. Students acquire the basic macroeconomic knowledge, learn about the principles of market economy, the activities of market institutions and the impact of the government regulations. They also learn about microeconomic issues, prepare a draft of their own business based on the business plan and get to know the procedure of register own business. In the context of students' future careers the labor market is an important part of entrepreneurship training program content. Students learn about the context of the local labor market, analyze their own ability to find a job, prepare application documents and practice holding of interview. In addition to developing the knowledge and skills, *Basics of Entrepreneurship* develop students' entrepreneurial competencies. These competencies include: certain personality traits (eg. openness, activity, prudence, optimism), the types of behaviors (eg. the management, control, decision making), as well as personal (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation) and social competencies (empathy, interpersonal skills). To get these competencies during entrepreneurial education in the classes of *Basics of Entrepreneurship* students:

- recognize the entrepreneurial qualities;
- recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their own personality;
- characterize their social roles;
- learn how to plan their own activities, to achieve the set objective;
- make decisions based on the analysis of the situation and assess the effects of their actions;
- learn self-presentation and the presentation of its position through various forms of communication (verbal and nonverbal);
- learn teamwork, learn the roles and qualities of a good team leader and the contractor;
- identify, analyze and make proposals to solve the conflict in a team;
- learn to assert their rights as a members of the team.

For teachers, training of competencies is much more difficult than knowledge and skills training. Competency shortages make it difficult for young people to find their way

into adulthood and enter the labor market. According to the PARP report "Employers of labor market" (Kocór, Strzebońska, Dawid-Sawicka, 2012), more than half of Polish employers in 2012 from the young candidates applying for a job expected: having a right profession (100%), experience (69%), adequate competencies (68%) and right level of education (57%). Compared to 2010, employers have come down requirements of having by the candidates experience (from 96% to 69%) and the relevant qualification (from 60% to 35%), and significantly increased the requirements for the need to have the appropriate competencies (of 52 % to about 68%). According to the another PARP report *Expectations of employers of tomorrow* from 2012, most employers expect from their future employees competencies, which are possible to develop at school. About 20% of employers believed to be important: the ability to make contact with people, customers, responsibility, discipline, work, honesty and credibility. Many employers (14.4%) expects also an ability to communicate ideas from its future employees. In opinion of 10% of the employers, future employees should have features like: manners, politeness, self-presentation skills, taking care of the image, flexibility, willingness to work, hard work, diligence, thoroughness, accuracy and attention to detail. More than 6% of employers require problem-solving skills and entrepreneurship. Other competencies indicated by more than 5% of employers are: resistance to stress, punctuality, ability to learn and self-reliance. All these competencies are entrepreneurial competencies. Unfortunately, according to the third report of PARP *Youth or experience? Human capital in Poland* (Górniak, 2013), the employers are not satisfied with the level of competencies of their future employees. Over 45% of employers surveyed in the report indicate that the candidates applying for a job do not have professional competencies. The second competence most frequently mentioned by employers (nearly a quarter of the respondents) is the lack of ability to self-organization (self-organization of work, initiative, punctuality). According to the employers, candidates also miss: interpersonal skills - understood as developing and maintaining contacts with other people (approximately 13%), and cognitive skills - searching and analysis of the information and drawing conclusions (about 6%).

These deficiencies were also confirmed by people working with young people every day, encouraging them to find their first job. According to Mrs. Dorota Owczarek, an employee of the District Centre of Vocational Training in Wieliczka (near Kraków), who works with teenage students, interpersonal skills training in the vocational education system, is missing the most. Another expert- Mrs. Alina Jurczak, an employee of the Pedagogical University of Cracow who works with students and graduates in the Office of Promotion and Career, argues that the most important powers, which should young people entering the labor market have, are: openness to information, flexibility of thought and action, the ability to search for information, the ability to work in a team, ability to organize own work, courage and actively seeking work. Unfortunately young people often lack these skills and attributes. It is therefore necessary to supplement *Basics of*

*Entrepreneurship* education by the methods and tools for effective education of entrepreneurial competence among students at different stages of education.

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