

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY OF DISABILITY PEOPLE IN THE CENTRAL POMERANIAN AREA

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Abstract

Professional activation is an important part of the economy, in particular local and regional authorities. Properly initiated entrepreneurship significantly affects, among other things, the direct development of the region, including local businesses and the investment opportunities of local government units. Improving competitiveness and the socio-economic image of the region can be seen by taking direct economic initiatives (also in cooperation with economic entities and/or scientific research units) and by implementation of innovation, the use of various forms of external financing, but primarily through new jobs and business activity. The aim of the study is an attempt to present the issue of professional activation of disabled people in the former Central Pomeranian province, in the county Słupsk. The study public opinion poll (own questionnaire study) was conducted at the turn of 2013–2014y. Survey was also conducted in Polish and English literature. In the years 2007–2015 local government organizations implemented 7 projects in the region of Słupsk and also activities are constantly supported by District Labour Office (PUP) activation, which provides services to 97 % of respondents.

KEYWORDS: *management, professional activation, disability, unemployment.*

JEL CODES: J6, J7, L1, M12

Introduction

Effective social integration as well as professional activation of disabled people should be the major determinant of the social policy in Poland. According to the author, consistent and complete support system for the social inclusion of people with disability, is not established and does not function in an effective manner. Reference is made to the most important determinants of socio-economic position of people with disability (Gąciarz, Ostrowska, Pańków, 2008)

- economic transformation – the emergence and development of a free market economy, in particular deregulated labour market;
- changing social functions and welfare state;
- systemic transformation of public administration.

Among the major causes of increasing difficulties in the process of social adaptation of people with disability are also, changing under the influence of informational (Mikołajewska, Mikołajewski, 2011) and technological (Childress, 2002) revolution as well as systematically changing educational standards (Olkie-

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wicz, 2013), prerequisites for partisanship of individuals and social groups in professional activation, economic and public activities.

New economic and social order creates particularly high expectations concerning social policy, both in terms of accurate and precise determination of its objectives, as well as in the selection of instruments of its implementation. The establishment of the same rules for people with and without disabilities integration into employment is not only humane, but for many disabled people can be an important part of rehabilitation (Mikołajewska, Mikołajewski, 2010; Apostolos, Czerwińska, Kuczyńska-Kwapisz, 2007). It is an important factor in preventing (or reducing) the social exclusion.

It concludes that promotion of employers as well as increasing subsidizing, is a meaningful action. On the other hand, a small number of professionally active people leads to decrease in labour supply. Employers, due to a limited number of employees, cannot count on finding, in this group, competent people, adequate to their needs. Therefore, they decide to hire non-disabled people, whose labour supply is higher. The consequence is of this is a misfit and inflexibility of labour market, which further results in fewer opportunities to find employment by disabled people and greater worries about losing their current job. This effect enhances the mismatch on the basis of a specific reflective clutch (Czapliński, 2010).

1. Materials and methods

The analysis of the literature on the subject (Szreder, 2010; Kuciński, 2007; Babbie, 2007) was the beginning of the authorial research process, including the identification of determiners of labour activity among the disabled. Within the framework of research, thematic blocks were created in the range of:

- competence of people with disability;
- correlation of professional activity to efficiency limitation;
- determinants of employers attitudes (in the context of professional activity in economic entities).

Carrying out identification and analysis of received responses supplemented with analytical resources (statistical i.e. GUS -Central Statistical Office using BAEL method – Labour Force Survey, PUP – District Job Centre etc.) allowed to demonstrate various aspects of as well as the multi-dimensionality of the issue of professional activation among people with disability. It was also possible to gain knowledge (Report, 2005; Global..., 2010), which might provide the basis for establishing a system that would improve the disabled for the purpose of professional activation or economic consideration for entrepreneurs promoting employment of people with disability.

Secondary data was used in the interdisciplinary studies, obtained as a result of: literature analysis and document examination. Primary data was obtained through a questionnaire survey carried out among randomly selected group of respondents with disability. The survey covered 120 people, 60 % of which were female with varying degrees of disability, in the former Centre-Pomeranian province, in the county Słupsk. The opinion poll was carried out at the turn of the year 2013–2014.

2. Results and discussion

In the currently undergoing transformation of the economy resulting, inter alia, from socio-economic changes, civilization development, computerisation, aging society, higher living standards, unemployment etc., human work becomes more important.

Table 1. Macroeconomic data on employment in Poland as of 31.12.

	Units of measure	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total population	thous.	38167.3	38529.9	38538.4	38533.3	38495.7
Working in the national economy	thous.	13782.30	14106.90	14232.60	14172.00	14244.30
Pre-working (0–17 years)	%	19.0	18.8	18.5	18.3	18.2
Working (18–59/64 years)	%	64.5	64.4	64.2	63.9	63.4
Mobile age (18–44 years)	%	40.1	40.0	40.0	40.0	39.8
Immobile age (45–59/64 years)	%	24.4	24.4	24.2	23.9	23.6
Post-working age (60/65 years and more)	%	16.5	16.8	17.3	17.8	18.4
total registered as unemployed	thous.	1892.68	1954.71	1982.68	2136.82	2157.88
men	thous.	926.26	939.91	922.47	1037.63	1058.43
women	thous.	966.42	1014.79	1060.20	1099.19	1099.46
Registered rate of total unemployment	%	12.10	12.40	12.50	13.40	13.40
The average age of professional deactivation	age	61.00	62.50	62.40	61.90	61.30

Source: <http://stat.gov.pl/macro-economic-indicators/>

Social status is determined by work, on the one hand achieved by employers and employees, on the other by local self-governments, voivodeships, country, which establishes proper foundations for entrepreneurship. Socio-economic development of the region is created by a job market, which is shaped by supply and demand, financial capabilities of the society, communes, counties etc. Tab. 1 presents macroeconomic indicators, which show that unemployment is one of the strategic issues of a growing economy and rising unemployment rate only confirms us in this.

Table 2. The number of unemployed people with disability

Type of disability	Unemployed with disability						Disabled job-seekers and not remaining in employment					
	2011		2012		2013		2011		2012		2013	
	County	Slupsk	County	Slupsk	County	Slupsk	County	Slupsk	County	Slupsk	County	Slupsk
Mental disorder	57	110	65	112	76	109	28	11	28	38	21	37
Mental retardation	8	7	10	7	10	6	1	0	3	0	3	0
Nervous system diseases	126	181	152	190	158	232	4	5	3	7	6	7
Impaired locomotor	58	89	61	81	68	89	8	6	12	11	12	10
Voice, speech and hearing disorders	34	33	42	4	37	48	2	3	2	5	2	6
Eye diseases	42	51	43	65	46	64	8	13	8	15	8	15
Epilepsy	6	9	14	14	12	14	0	3	0	2	3	3
Digestive diseases	8	6	3	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0

Type of disability	Unemployed with disability						Disabled job-seekers and not remaining in employment					
	2011		2012		2013		2011		2012		2013	
	County	Ślupsk	County	Ślupsk	County	Ślupsk	County	Ślupsk	County	Ślupsk	County	Ślupsk
Genitourinary diseases	9	9	8	9	9	14	1	0	0	1	0	1
Respiratory and cardiovascular diseases	33	46	41	38	42	47	5	1	4	2	4	3
Other	54	79	64	108	81	136	3	1	3	6	3	7
Non-established	6	6	1	1	5	1	4	7	3	5	3	5
Total	441	626	504	633	546	763	64	50	66	92	65	94
Total	1067		1137		1309		114		158		159	

Source: own elaboration based on District Labour Office in Ślupsk (PUP)

The analysis of table 2 shows that the number of unemployed people registering in the District Labour Office (PUP), both with disabilities as well as those who seek employment, increases annually. Figures indicate that even though in the Central Pomeranian area annual trends are growing, they are different when divided between local bodies (administrative). Regardless of the duration of study, the indicator is still too high (tab. 3), as it oscillates in the range of 40–60 %.

Table 3. Number of people with disability in Central Pomeranian area

	County	Ślupsk
Unemployed people with disability		
2011	41 %	59 %
2012	44 %	56 %
2013	42 %	58 %
Disabled job-seekers and not remaining in employment		
2011	56 %	44 %
2012	42 %	58 %
2013	41 %	59 %

Source: own elaboration

Changing trends in the number of people with disabilities who are unemployed, job seekers and not remaining in employment, may result from many factors. The size, quantity and intensity of their impact significantly affects (Szczypta, 2012) the level of professionally active people with disability and also self-government organizations. This results in growing competition as well as the deficiency of jobs, the diversity of work and increasing employment instability, which causes a necessity for integration of social and professional activation (Paszkwicz, 2009), specifically of people with disability, supplemented by a system of government actions (Gąciarz, Pańków, Ostrowska) local government units and non-profit organizations.

Table 4. Tab. Professional activation of people with disability in Poland (%)

Specification	Professionally active		Economically inactive
	<i>employed</i>	<i>unemployed</i>	
Total in Poland	15,34	3,94	80,72
Urban areas	13,15	5,19	81,66
Rural areas	18,48	2,15	79,37

Source: own elaboration based on: *The results...*, 2003.

Local government organizations are operating locally, due to a limited financial resources they limit system activities to several programs or actions to activate the unemployed. In the years 2007–2015 local government organizations implemented 7 projects in the region of Słupsk: “Preventing social exclusion of people with disabilities”, “EuroCareer”, “A new perspective”, “STER”, “Autumn time of professional activity”, “We focus on the entrepreneurial” and “Starting a business”. Local government activities are constantly supported by District Labour Office (PUP) activation, which provides services to 97 % of respondents. However, up to 58 % of the respondents is discouraged to look for work due to lack of prospects (job offers) as well as development opportunities.

Activation measures implemented by organizations not always bring significant results. The reason for this state is an internal conflict of the disabled person, which arises from the conviction of their weaker position, lack of self-esteem, belief in own abilities, skills and knowledge. The most common psychological problems among people with disability who seek employment include (Wolski, 2010):

- conflict connected with evaluation of own disability – lack of acceptance of own disability consisting of coexisting both extremely negative and positive feelings towards own disability; perception of the disability as a feature stigmatizing the individual and not as a limitation in specific area of social life and career;
- the use of compensatory defence mechanisms by the disabled as an answer to a traumatic experience;
- uncertainty, lack of faith in own abilities, subjectively perceived low probability of effectiveness of undertaken actions;
- lack of motivation to act which results in inaction with active measures on the job market even in learned profession;
- lack of time management skills, which makes planning and taking deliberate actions more difficult – disability is regarded as an obstacle in the realisation of life opportunities;
- feeling of lack of control over own lives and desirability of actions – the most important cause of long-time unemployment; lack of goals, lack of planning skills and no influence on events also reflect negatively on the process of job seeking;
- low self-esteem;
- justification of failures with a disease / disability; demanding attitude, and according to research concerning mechanisms of human demanding, mostly people who are inactive have most demanding attitudes.

In addition, the main problem from the point of view of the unit potential is the low education and qualifications level of people with disability (Woźniak, 2007). Among subjective factors affecting the level of employment, should also be mentioned: patience, determination, sense of humour, level of education, age and physical condition. Self-activity and initiative, self-reliance, cooperation, communicativeness as well as flexibility and ability to adapt to certain conditions – this is a set of professional competence, which employers currently look for in the employee (also disabled).

Among the population study, the most common reason limiting professional activity include lack of motivation, current physical condition, insufficient qualifications etc. (Fig. 1).

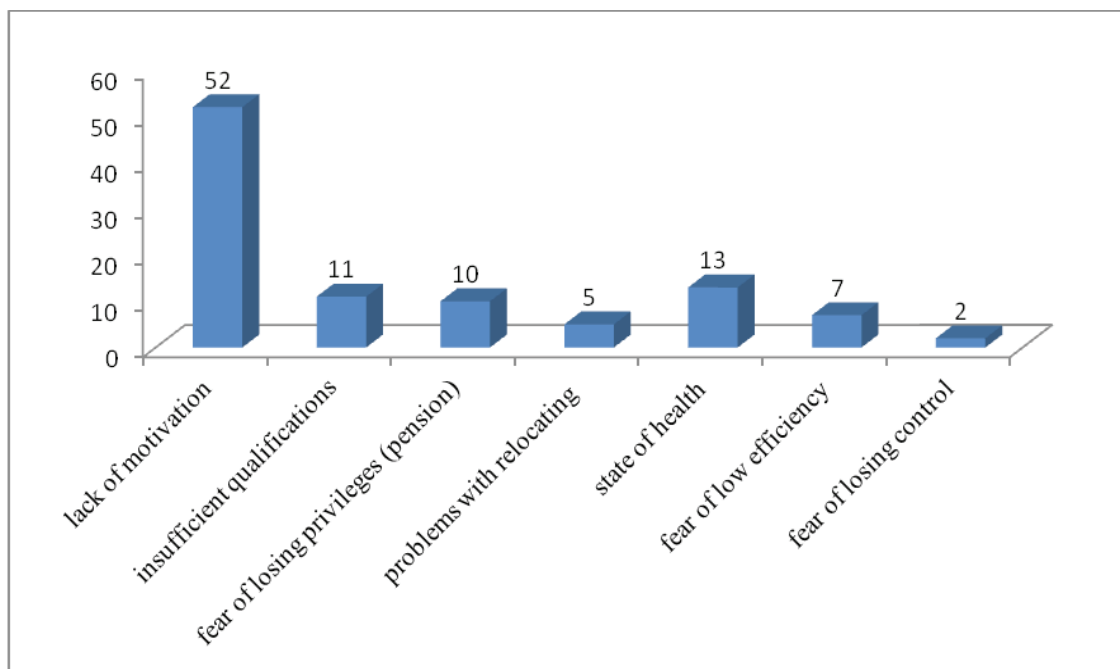


Figure 1. Factors determining professional activation in percentage (%)

Source: own elaboration

However, among the study population, as many as 87 % said that they are determined to take up a job (although 13 % believe that there are no proper offers), 13 % are undecided, including 10 % due to state of health and 3 % because of a possibility of losing privileges. Entrepreneurs perceive problems with employment of the disabled people in a slightly different way. By analysing the attitudes of the employers, identification of factors which determine employment barriers of the disabled was carried out (Trzyna, 2009). The basic elements are higher operating costs, necessity of creating appropriate infrastructure for the disabled as well as fear of low quality and effectiveness of work (Fig. 2). Also, the majority of employers are concerned with the possibility of significant absenteeism among workers, which may result from the degree of disability (moderate, severe or profound) and the current health status.

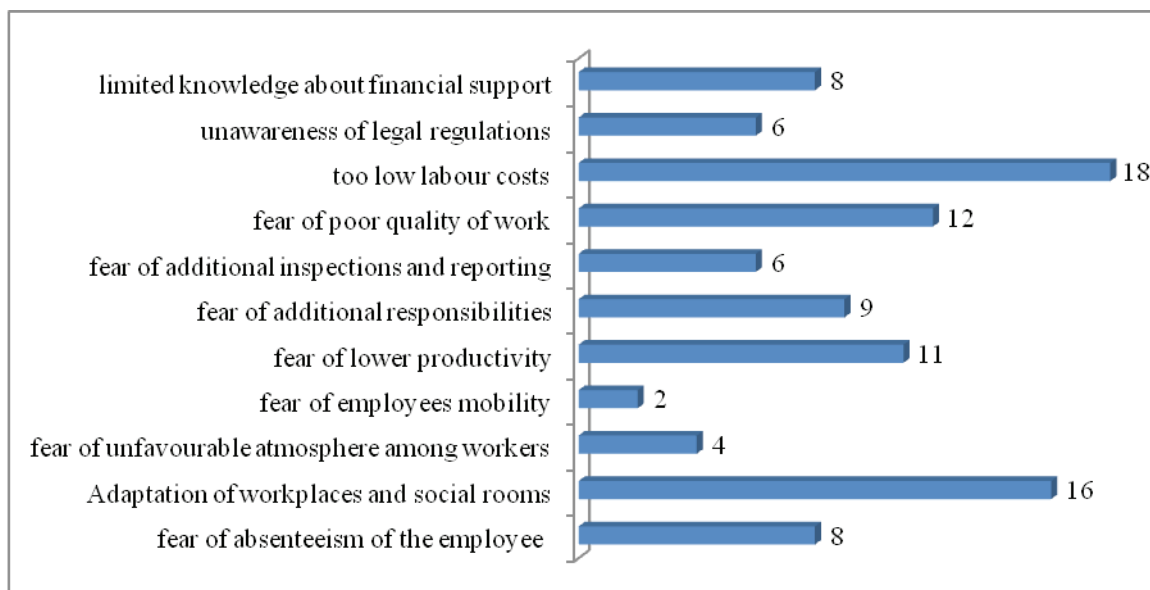


Figure 2. Factors determining professional activation in % among employees

Source: own elaboration

In practise, people with physical disability (60 %) are most frequently employed, sensory (22 %), and the least frequently, people with psychological disability (11 %) and they represent 6 % of total population of the disabled in the region. Out of 6 % of the population only 9 % was employed in micro-enterprises, 24 % in small organizations and 44 % in medium and large (PUP, 2011).

Conclusions

Professional activation is an important element of social life, the unemployed and in particular unemployed people with disability. There are many incentives that determine (Chruściak, Michalczyk, Sijko et al., 2008) the degree of professional activation among the disabled, which can be evidenced by numerous factors: internal and external, (Poliwczak, 2013; Kirenko, Sarzyńska-Mazurek, 2012); can, want and be able to (Maj, Woźniak, Brzezińska, 2007; Dyszel, 2006); socio-demographic and disability, competence, life satisfaction as well as occupational prestige, (Brzezińska, Kaczan, Rycielski, Piotrowski, 2008); determining:

- attitudes of people with disability (additional needs, psychological factors, limitations resulting from the disability (Smoleń, Sękowski, 2008), contraindications, psychological profile, low productivity);
- attitudes of the employers (additional responsibilities, incurring increased costs, prejudices and stereotypes);
- working conditions and environment (alteration and adaptation of the technical infrastructure of the company, implementing changes of technically-organizational nature, attitudes of colleagues and superiors, functional barriers);
- elements of external environment (barriers which make taking up employment difficult (functional, psychosocial, affecting the level of development of people with disability, financial), functioning system of vocational rehabilitation support, situation on the labour market and legal environment) (Baczyński, Radecki, 2008).

The numbers and strengths of the incentive can be counteracted through active actions undertaken by the local self-governing and non-profit organizations. What has to be bearded in mind is that professional activity of the disabled does not only depend on organizations, but mostly on entrepreneurs and interested people i.e. unemployed with disability. It is a fact that people with disability have limited access to employment and not having a job can lead to social exclusion and in consequence, low self-esteem as well as discouragement to live (Otrębski, 2007) or taking any initiatives or actions. What it means is that for a person with a disability, work gives a feeling of having control over own life, the feeling of independence, satisfaction, autonomy and is also an important element in the process of creating self-image as well as being critical for finding the meaning of life (Maj, 2007).

It is therefore necessary to create actions of professional activation of the disabled people, initiate psychological and medical support (rehabilitation). Professional activation of a disabled person often results from life activity or a need for an active way to spend time, need of development (education), without indirect contact with other people, or active actions for common good etc. Reducing unemployment among people with disability might be possible through:

1. From the point of view of the unemployed:
 - increase of self-confidence, skills, knowledge etc.;
 - greater creativity of action;
 - broader integration with entrepreneurship;
 - increase in the number of activation training courses;
 - increase in the number of informational meetings with employers.
2. From the point of view of the entrepreneur:
 - simplification of procedures related to receiving grants for employing people with disability;
 - increase in aid from the local organizations;
 - creating properly adapter workplaces.

3. From the point of view of organizations (self-governing and non-profit):
 - increase of financial support for companies (e.g. increase of tax reliefs), simplify the legislation regarding employment of people with disability;
 - create a database of people with disability seeking employment;
 - modernise the way in which PUP operates;
 - increase in the number of informational meetings with employers.

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PROFESINIS NEĮGALIŲJŲ AKTYVINIMAS CENTRINĖJE POMERANIJOJE

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Santrauka

Profesinis aktyvinimas yra svarbi ekonomikos dalis, ypač vertinant vietiniu ar regioniniu lygmeniu. Pelninai dirbančios verslo organizacijos regionui daro ir tiesioginę įtaką, įskaitant ir vietinį verslą, turint mintyje tai, kad padėti neįgaliesiems gali ir vietos valdžia. Regiono konkurencingumą ir socioekonominį įvaizdį galima gerinti taikant ekonominius svertus ar diegiant naujoves, naudojant išorinį finansavimą, kuris dėka galima kurti naujas darbo vietas ir skatinti verslą. Šio tyrimo tikslas – neįgalių žmonių, gyvenančių centrinėje Pomeranijoje, Slupsko apskrityje, profesinis aktyvumas. Tyrimas atliktas 2013–2014 metais, naudojant autoriaus sudarytą klausimyną. Be to, atlikta mokslinės literatūros lenkų ir anglų kalbomis analizė. Analizuoti 7 projektai Slupsko apskrityje, inicijuoti vietos valdžios atstovų 2007–2015 metais. Tiek valstybės, tiek vietos lygmeniu būtina skatinti šį procesą, t. y. žmonėms, turintiems negalią, padėti įgyti profesiją, o vėliau – padėti jiems įsidarbinti, padedant tiek psichologiškai, tiek mediciniškai. Dažnai žmonių su negalia profesinis aktyvumas priklauso nuo galimo gyvenimo aktyvumo, sudarytų galimybių mokytis, galimų kontaktų su kitais žmonėmis. Taip neįgalius žmones lengviau integruoti į darbo rinką.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: *valdymas, profesinis aktyvumas, neįgalumas, nedarbas.*

JEL KLASIFIKACIJA: J6, J7, L1, M12