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**THE POSSIBILITIES OF REALIZING BY POLISH GMINAS THE MEASURES
FOR EMPLOYMENT INCREASE WITHIN THE PROGRAMMES
FINANCED BY EU FUNDS IN THE FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE
FOR THE YEARS 2007–2013**

Introduction

Gmina, as one of the most important institutions of local government which influences social and economic situation in a region and which is obliged to fulfill local social needs, ought to participate in initiatives for employment increase, making use of their rights and resources.

The essential source of financial support in the field of labour market is European Union funds. The author of this article has done the research in which he has analyzed and determined the possibilities of realizing by gminas the measures for employment increase, available in the perspective for the years 2004–2006. The results of this scrutiny have shown that the programmes offer a number of measures for employment increase designed for gminas, which can use them as an independent beneficiary or a partner in a project.

As currently Poland starts to benefit from Union's financing within the confines of new programming period for the years 2007–2013, the author has made an attempt to answer the question if and in what field the programmes from the new perspective allow gmina to realize initiatives for employment increase in a region. Hence, in the article the scale of continuation of the measures available within the previous perspective is identified and scrutinized, and new measures and priorities which allow to influence the situation on labour market are analyzed. In this context the author also shows anticipated influence of implementing key programmes which offer initiatives for employment growth on the level of unemployment and the number of the employed. For gminas this knowledge may appear extremely important, since

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thanks to it local governments will be able to plan and realize initiatives which influence the level of employment in a region.

1. Initiatives for employment increase within main operational programmes

The crucial programme which contains objectives aimed at employment increase seems to be *Operational Programme Human Capital* (OP HC). It covers whole financing from European Social Fund in Poland. Implementation of the programme constitutes the confirmation of main directions of development and pro-employment policy of the Polish government.

In the years 2004–2006, the EU structural funds' support for the development of human resources was implemented mainly within the confines of *Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development* (SOP HRD), *Integrated Regional Development Operational Programme* (IRDOP) and *EQUAL Community Initiative*. As SOP HRD evaluation system has shown, its deployment at a regional level has proved successful. Projects implemented in regions corresponded very well to the local labour market needs. This situation resulted from the fact that regional administration was able to adapt measures to social and economic situation of regions, labour market conditions and the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME).

Conclusions from the evaluation of SOP HRD indicate that implementation of projects aimed, among other things, at supporting labour market, adaptativeness of personnel in the economy, social integration and education system at a regional level allow spending granted means effectively. Therefore, *OP Human Capital* continues measures initiated within *SOP Human Resources Development* in the fields of:

- support for systems and structures related to the labour market, social integration and education,
- support for persons and social groups through advancement of competencies of employees working in the labour market institutions, social assistance teachers,
- assistance to unemployed persons, individuals looking for jobs and persons threatened by social exclusion,

- adaptation of qualifications of personnel and staff in enterprises,
- measures in support of improving the level and quality of education in the society conforming to the needs of the regional labour market.

Moreover, the range of support within *OP Human Capital* has been considerably extended to allow enhancing the potential of public administration, institutions of the third sector and health protection¹.

Also implementation of *Integrated Regional Development Operational Programme* at a regional level has contributed to effectiveness of undertaken measures. Evaluation studies show that projects related to assuring equal opportunities and professional reorientation have conformed to needs of the local labour market and influenced development of the region in a positive way. To a large extent such an evaluation was a result of better adaptation at a regional level to actual needs of the labour market. OP HC continues measures initiated within IRDOP in the field of:

- support for restructuring processes,
- implementation of scholarship programmes,
- propagation of knowledge transfer,
- life-long learning system for adults,
- development of entrepreneurship².

Continuation within *OP Human Capital* of previous measures for employment increase and implementing new initiatives in this field correspond with achieving the main objective of OP HC, which is *increased level of employment and social cohesion*. It will be achieved by implementing six strategic objectives:

- improving the level of professional activity and ability to employing persons who are unemployed or professionally passive,
- reducing areas of social exclusion,
- enhancing the adaptability of employees and enterprises to changes that take place in the economy,

¹ *Human Capital Operational Programme, National Strategic Reference Framework 2007–2013*, Ministry of Regional Development, 7 September 2007, p. 100.

² *Human Capital Operational Programme...*, op. cit., p. 101.

- propagation of education in the society on each education level with concurrent improvement of the quality of educational services and their stronger correlation with needs of knowledge based economy,
- enhancing the potential of public administration as regards development of law and policies and providing high quality services, and strengthening partnership mechanisms,
- enhancing territorial cohesion³.

Thus, the programme concentrates on the following areas: employment, education, social integration, development of adaptation potential of enterprises, and issues connected with creating efficient public administration at all levels and implementing the principle of good governance. Hence, OP HC contains 10 priorities which are implemented both at central and regional level.

When it comes to the initiatives for employment increase which apply to gminas, among the priorities implemented at central level the crucial ones are: Priority I *Employment and social integration* and Priority V *Good Governance*. In case of the first priority there is a possibility of implementing initiatives for broadening the impact of the Active Labour Market Policies, mostly by: development and implementation of nationwide programmes addressed at specific target groups, development of instruments oriented at early identification of individual needs of the unemployed and seeking jobs persons, propagation of job placement and vocational counseling (for example by applying modern information and communication technologies), improvement of the information exchange system concerning the available job offers and possibilities of advancing professional qualifications between specific institutions of the labour market, and also by establishment, implementation and promotion of complex solutions aimed at propagation of the notion of equal opportunities, reconciliation of family life with work, and geographical and professional mobility⁴. Within Priority V it is possible to improve regulatory potential of public administration, for example by: rationalisation of the process of constituting local laws and

³ More: *Human Capital Operational Programme...*, op. cit., p. 106-120.

⁴ *Szczegółowy Opis Priorytetów Programu Operacyjnego Kapitał Ludzki 2007–2013*, approved by ESF Management Department in Ministry of Regional Development, 18 September 2007, p. 22-38.

administrative acts by territorial self-government units. Gminas can also contribute to the improvement of the situation on labour market by strengthening of the potential of social partners and non-government organizations (for example by consulting and creating regulations together with these organizations), improving management and services in public administration, and by supporting private enterprises by implementation of the 'one-stop-shop' system for start-ups and simplification of administrative procedures related to enterprise creation⁵.

Similar chances to influence labour market situation are offered within priorities implemented at regional level. Thus, Priority VI *The labour market open for all* concentrates on improving and increasing the impact of the Labour Market Active Policies, increasing the employment level among young persons, older persons, women, persons with lasting unemployment, persons with disabilities, the unemployed living on rural areas. The other priorities give opportunities to realize projects in the fields of: social and work activation (also by assistance and promotion of volunteerism and supporting innovative measures as a form of prevention from social exclusion), support of private enterprises (by trainings, counseling, supporting cooperation of employees and researchers aimed at knowledge transfer between science sector and enterprises, creating and developing Regional Innovation Strategies), and in the field of improving quality of vocational education eliminating inequalities in disseminating education and quality of educational services, especially between rural and urban areas⁶.

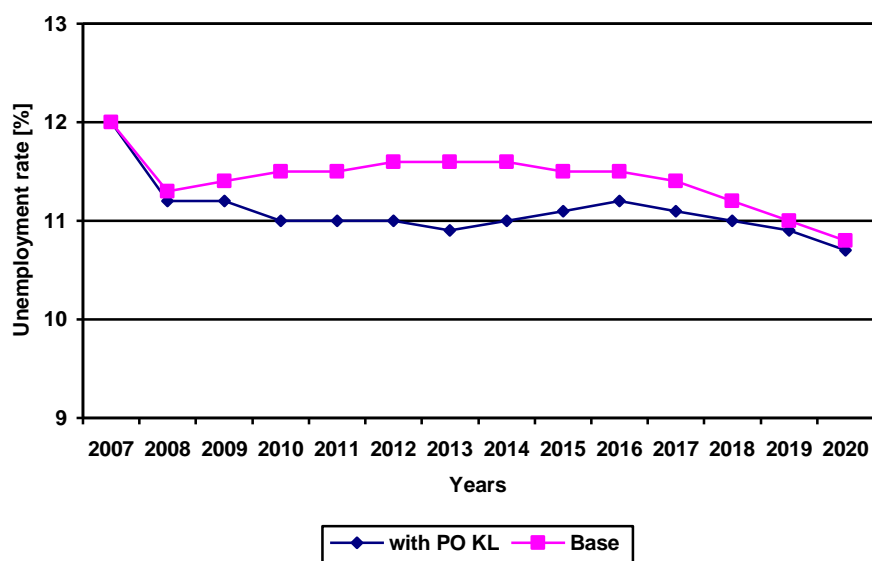
At this point it is worth to show to what degree the implementation of *Operational Programme Human Capital* will contribute to the decrease of unemployment rate and what its impact on the number of the employed persons will be. The chart 1 presents the level of unemployment rate in the years 2007–2020 for both scenarios – with and without implementing OP HC. It is estimated that thanks to implementation of OP HC, the level of unemployment rate in the years 2007–2013 will decrease by almost 1 percentage point. After completing the implementation of OP *Human Capital* for the years 2007–2013, its influence on the unemployment rate will decrease gradually (in 2020,

⁵ *Human Capital Operational Programme...*, op. cit., p. 163-168.

⁶ More: *Szczegółowy Opis Priorytetów...*, op. cit., p. 169-276.

thanks to the implementation of OP HC, the level of this rate will be lower by 0,15 percentage point)⁷.

Chart 1. The level of unemployment rate in the base scenario (without OP HC) and in the scenario with OP HC



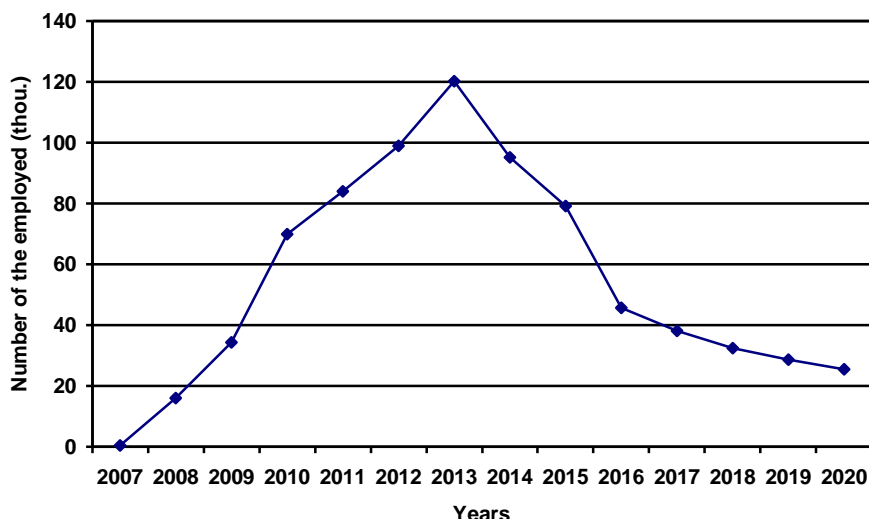
Source: Own study on the basis of Wrocławska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego data.

On the basis of the scrutiny it can be stated that the influence of *Operational Programme Human Capital* on the number of the employed persons will be positive – implementation of the programme will contribute to the increase of employment level (chart 2). In 2013 there will be over 120 thousand additional workplaces in comparison with the base scenario. Later the OP HC's impact on the labour market will decrease gradually. However, after termination of the financing within OPHC, in 2020 the number of the employed will be still bigger by 25,4

⁷ *Ocena wpływu Narodowych Strategicznych Ram Odniesienia i Programów Operacyjnych na lata 2007 – 2013 na polską gospodarkę przy pomocy modelu makroekonomicznego HERMIN*, Wrocławska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego, Wrocław 2007, p. 20-21.

thou. comparing with the scenario without implementation of *OP Human Capital*⁸.

Chart 2. Influence of OP HC on the number of the employed



Source: Own study on the basis of Wrocławska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego data.

Part of the initiatives which were available within *Sectoral Operational Programme Improvement of the Competitiveness of Enterprises, years 2004–2006* (SOP ICE) are continued within *Operational Programme Innovative Economy, years 2007–2013* (OP IE). However, *OP Innovative Economy* is not a simple continuation of *SOP Improvement of the Competitiveness of Enterprises*. Part of measures implemented within SOP ICE is now available within *Regional Operational Programmes*. SOP ICE constituted comprehensive support system for enterprises. It aimed at creating strong institutional background which was supposed to support functioning of enterprises and converting the economy into the one based on innovative companies. It was addressed both to business support institutions and directly to entrepreneurs, especially small and medium-sized enterprises.

⁸ *Ocena wpływu...*, op. cit., p. 21-22; Compare: T. Kaczor, *Prognoza oddziaływania makroekonomicznego realizacji Programu Operacyjnego Kapitał Ludzki na lata 2007–2013*, Instytut Badań nad Gospodarką Rynkową, Warszawa 2006, p. 17-18.

Basing on the experiences from implementing structural funds, it has been stated that the measures for enterprises have been very popular. Within *SOP Improvement of the Competitiveness of Enterprises* most applications have been submitted from Measure 2.3, within which small and medium-sized enterprises could gain financing for new investments. Also, considerable interest has been aroused by measures aimed at business support institutions, including gminas. Out of 1113 applications correct in terms of formal assessment, 527 have been approved.

Within *Operational Programme Innovative Economy* over 90% of the financial allocation covers following areas: R+D, innovations, information and communication technologies. Putting emphasis on these issues is the result of the fact that the main strategic document, the guidelines of which serve as a point of reference for OP IE, is the Lisbon Strategy, renewed in 2005⁹.

In the European Commission Report for 2006 on the implementation of the renewed Lisbon Strategy, the conclusions also showed the need of stimulating R+D activity and innovativeness. As a result, *Operational Programme Innovative Economy* is complementary to the following Community documents, created for the financial perspective 2007–2013: *Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities for the years 2007–2013*¹⁰ and *Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme for the years 2007–2013* (CIP)¹¹. The national document to which OP IE is directly related is *National Strategic Reference Framework 2007–2013*. Strategic objective formulated in this document calls for concentrated efforts aimed at increasing the competitiveness of the Polish economy through enhancing its innovativeness.

⁹ At national level OP IE is related to: *National Development Strategy for the years 2007–2015*, *National Strategic Reference Framework for the years 2007–2013*, *National Reform Programme for the Implementation of the Lisbon Strategy for the years 2005–2008*.

¹⁰ The document was adopted by the Decision No 1982/2006/WE of the European Parliament and of the Council dated 18 December 2006 establishing *The Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (2007–2013)*.

¹¹ The document was adopted by the Decision No 1639/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council dated 24 October 2006 establishing *The Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (2007 to 2013)*, OJ L 310/15, 9 November 2006.

In OP IE it is stated that innovations are the crucial factor contributing to creation of new, better workplaces, in particular of workplaces based on knowledge. Innovations, especially those related to application of new information and communication technologies in the area of organization and management, are an indispensable element of the transformation of the Polish economy into a digital economy based on knowledge and of the transformation of the Polish society into an information society characterized by a better standard of living. Taking above-stated guidelines into consideration, as well as the analysis of strategic objectives of the above-mentioned documents, the main objective of the programme has been identified, namely: development of the Polish economy on the basis of innovative enterprises. It will be achieved by implementation of the following detailed objectives:

- improvement of innovativeness of enterprises,
- improvement of competitiveness of Polish science,
- strengthening of the role of science in economic development,
- increasing the share of innovative products of the Polish economy in the international market,
- creation of permanent and better workplaces,
- growth of the use of information and communication technologies in the economy¹².

It is important to note that within OP IE innovativeness at local and regional level is not supported. Innovativeness of this kind is promoted and supported within Regional Operational Programmes and *Operational Programme Development of Eastern Poland* (EPD OP). It results from the fact that in OP IE the minimum support level for a project is 2 million euro. It is worth to mention that this requirement is often criticized as the most considerable flaw of the programme, because this level is perceived as too high for small and medium-sized enterprises, and it will be difficult to find the company which will be able to realize an innovative project on such a big scale. The problem is vital especially because of the fact that SMEs are the entities which contribute to the decrease in the level of unemployment substantially¹³.

¹² *Innovative Economy Operational Programme 2007–2013. National Strategic Reference Framework 2007–2013*, Ministry of Regional Development, 27 July 2007, p. 59–65.

¹³ R. Mbewe, *Fundusze a polska rzeczywistość*, „Fundusze Europejskie” 2007, no 3(22), MJ Media, Poznań, p. 66.

Initiatives of OP IE are realized within nine priority axes. Although most instruments are designed especially for SME¹⁴, still there are initiatives within confines of which the employment increase objective is achieved and which at the same time can be realized by gminas. These are mostly initiatives aiming at:

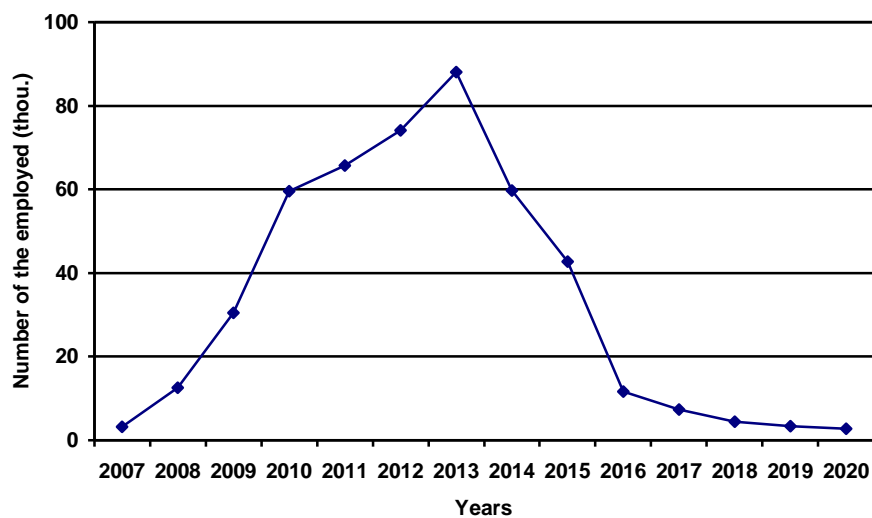
- stimulating the development of digital economy through supporting the creation of new, innovative eServices, innovative electronic solutions for business and the reduction of technologic, economic and mental barriers for using the services in the society - entities of local self-governments (together with nongovernmental organizations) can conduct projects aiming at providing the access to the broadband Internet (particularly for citizens who are threatened by a digital exclusion),
- providing integrated teleinformation infrastructure of the public administration at local level (ensuring synergy of measures regarding eAdministration at the central and regional level),
- increasing the number of enterprises operating on grounds of innovative solutions – by initiating cooperation between enterprises and, among other things, incubators, scientific and technological parks,
- comprehensive support for SME entrepreneurs interested in trade contacts with foreign partners, covering in particular: counseling and trainings in sales promotion and export promotion, foreign market studies, participation in exhibitions and fairs,
- development of business assistance centers' network,
- development of investment areas,
- establishment and development of an Internet system for servicing entrepreneurs seeking trade partners and potential investments in Poland,

¹⁴ At least 65% of resources allocated to a direct support for enterprises is assigned for beneficiaries of SME sector. The rest of the resources supports business support institutions, scientific entities providing enterprises with high quality services and the system which allows development of innovative enterprises' institutional surrounding.

- promotion of Poland’s tourist assets, including creation of new innovative types of products and tourist services, establishment of tourist information system¹⁵.

It is important to analyze to what extent implementation of OP IE will have an impact on the number of the employed persons. It is estimated that the number of new workplaces will increase gradually until 2013 with relation to the scenario without implementation of OP IE, to achieve the level higher by 88 thousand people (chart 3). In the next years, the difference in the number of additional workplaces between both scenarios (with and without implementing OP IE) will still get smaller. In the years after termination of the financing within OP IE, the number of the employed persons will be still slightly higher than if the programme was not implemented at all¹⁶.

Chart 3. Influence of OP IE on the number of the employed



Source: Own study on the basis of Wrocławska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego data.

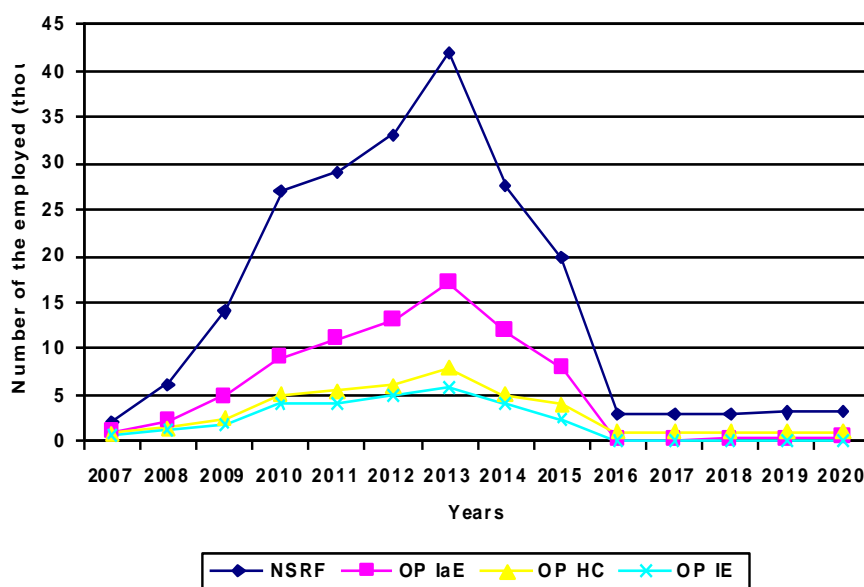
The biggest programme within 2007–2013 perspective, to which 42% of all financing from EU cohesion policy has been allocated, is *Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment (OP IaE)*.

¹⁵ *Innovative Economy Operational Programme...*, op. cit., p. 96-100, 113-126.

¹⁶ *Ocena wpływu...*, op. cit., p. 26-27.

However, it does not offer gminas possibilities of realizing initiatives for employment increase in a region. OP IaE is designed to conduct large projects in the fields of transport infrastructure improvement, environment protection, energy sector, health sector, culture and higher education¹⁷ (by using financing from Cohesion Fund and European Regional Development Fund).

Chart 4. Influence of OP HC, OP IE, OP IaE on the number of the employed in Wielkopolska voivodship (with relation to NSRF)



Source: Own study on the basis of Wroclawska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego data.

At this point it is worth to analyze the estimated impact of implementation of OP HC, OP IE and OP IaE on regions. On the example of Wielkopolska voivodship, there will be scrutinized the influence of the abovementioned programmes on the number of the employed persons in this region. Financing within the whole *National Strategic Reference Framework* (NSRF) has a positive influence on the

¹⁷ *Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment. National Strategic Reference Framework 2007–2013*, Ministry of Regional Development, 5 December 2007, p. 96-107.

employment level throughout the whole analyzed period of time (chart 4). It allows dynamic increase in the number of the employed in the years 2007–2013 with relation to the base scenario. The most considerable impact will be noticed in 2013 – the number of the employed, with relation to the base scenario, will grow by almost 42,88 thou. people; in the next years the influence will weaken. Taking into consideration the impact of particular operational programmes on the employment level in the region, it is noticeable that in the next years it is analogous to the influence of NSRF. However, there can be seen different strength of this impact. Definitely, it is most considerable in case of OP IaE. The biggest influence of transfers within this programme, with relation to the base scenario, is noticed in the year 2013 (employment of over 17,3 thou. additional people). The other two programmes also allow the increase in the number of the employed, however, their influence on the labour market is not as vital as in case of OP IaE¹⁸.

2. Influencing the situation on labour market in Wielkopolska (ROP) and Eastern Poland

Vast range of possibilities of realizing measures for improvement of the situation on labour market is available within sixteen Regional Operational Programmes and *Operational Programme Development of Eastern Poland* (OP EPD). Creating and putting these documents into practice is perceived as one of the main factors which contribute to the change in the system of programming regional policy in Poland. The role of local governments and their regional policies have been strengthened¹⁹. In case of ROPs, the author will analyze one of them, focusing on *Wielkopolska Regional Operational Programme 2007–2013*²⁰. It constitutes one of the key documents which set priorities

¹⁸ *Ocena wpływu Narodowych Strategicznych Ram Odniesienia i wybranych Programów Operacyjnych na lata 2007 – 2013 na gospodarki polskich województw przy pomocy modeli regionalnych HERMIN*, Wrocławska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego, Wrocław 2007, p. 207–208.

¹⁹ T. G. Grosse, *Narodowa Strategia Rozwoju Regionalnego i kontrakty wojewódzkie: czy są jeszcze potrzebne?*, „Samorząd Terytorialny” 2007, no 12, p. 17-18.

²⁰ *Wielkopolski Regionalny Program Operacyjny na lata 2007–2013 – version 7.0* dated August 2007, adopted in accordance with the Decision no 1083/2006 of the Council, dated July 2006.

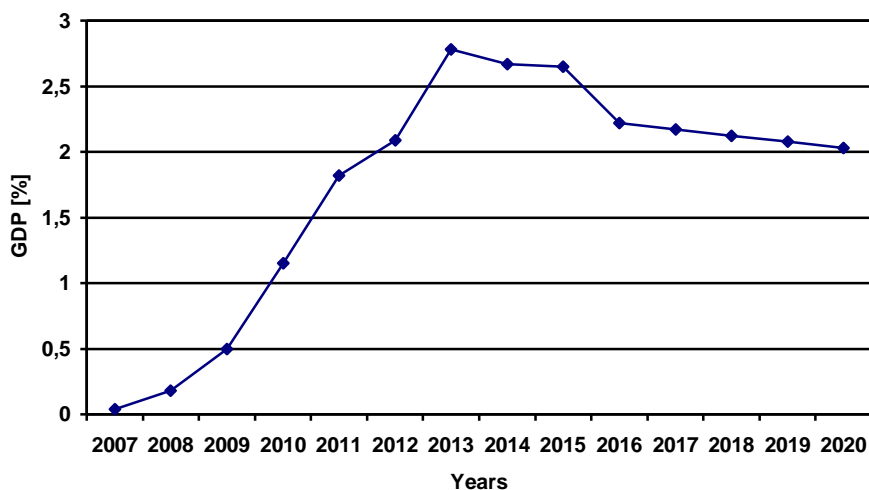
regarding the development of Wielkopolska voivodship within the next years, and thanks to that it shows gminas the possibilities of realizing initiatives for employment increase. The main objective stems from the strategic objective of *Strategia Rozwoju Województwa Wielkopolskiego do 2020 roku*²¹ (Development Strategy for Wielkopolska Voivodship to the Year 2020), in which it has been stated that the increase in level of life will take place through, among other things, the improvement of the situation on labour market and the system of education. At the same time it has been pinpointed that the crucial issue is strengthening Wielkopolska's development potential for the growth of competitiveness and employment. This increase is to be achieved through realizing measures aimed at improvement of investment conditions, increase in inhabitants' activity on labour market and increase in the role of knowledge and innovations in the region's economy. Also, the analysis of the document's main priorities indicates the vital role of taking up ventures which lead to employment increase. These priorities show the need for support of self-employment and starting new businesses, development of human capital through adopting education system to labour market requirements, increase in enterprises' economic potential, reduction of within-the-region development differences through the employment increase in the stagnant areas.

It is estimated that the implementation of ROP for Wielkopolska will have a considerable impact on the level of regional GDP and the number of the employed in the years 2007–2020. It is assessed that at the climax of the ROP's implementation, which is the year 2013, the influence of the programme will result in the growth of regional GDP by 2,78% (chart 5). It means that in the year 2013, thanks to absorption of EU funds, the level of regional GDP will be higher by 3,344 billion zł. than if ROP was not implemented. In the next years the ROP's influence on the level of regional GDP will decrease gradually. However, even after the end of the implementation, which means in the years 2016–2020, GDP will be still higher by over 2% that if the programme was not realized²².

²¹ *Strategia Rozwoju Województwa Wielkopolskiego do 2020 roku* – adopted by Sejmik Województwa Wielkopolskiego on 19.12.2005, in accordance with the Resolution no XXVI/412/04.

²² *Wskaźniki realizacji Regionalnych Programów Operacyjnych na lata 2007–2013 – ocena makroekonomicznego wpływu 16 RPO na gospodarki regionalne przy użyciu modeli HERMIN*, Wrocławska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego, Wrocław 2007, p. 60.

Chart 5. Influence of ROP for Wielkopolska on the level of GDP



Source: Own study on the basis of Wrocławska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego data.

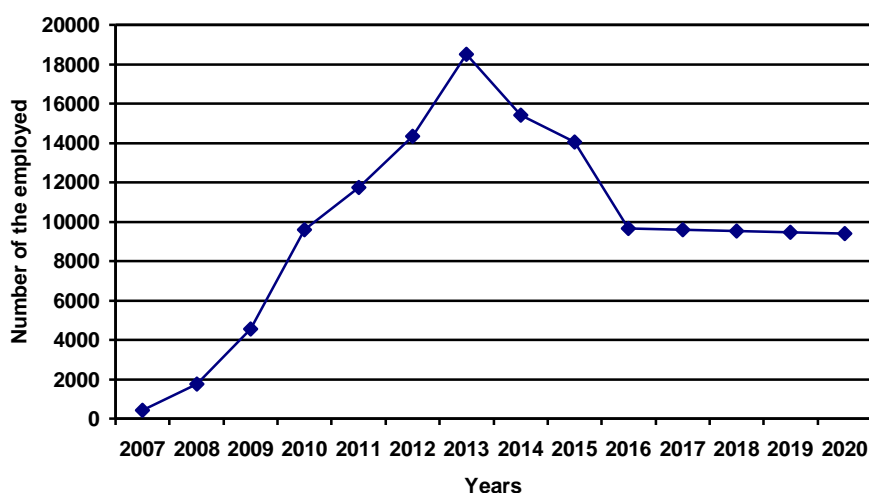
In the years of ROP's implementation, the number of new workplaces in Wielkopolska voivodship is estimated to grow gradually, with relation to the scenario without realizing ROP (chart 6). This trend will continue until the year 2013 – then the number of the employed will be higher by over 18,5 thou. people. In the next years, the impact of ROP on this number will still get smaller. However, even after termination of ROP's implementation its influence on labour market in Wielkopolska will be visible. In the years 2016–2020, 9300 to 9700 more people will work than if ROP was not implemented²³.

Operational Programme Development of Eastern Poland 2007–2013 constitutes additional support within structural funds and it serves strengthening the impact of the other programmes across five voivodships: warmińsko-mazurskie, podlaskie, lubelskie, podkarpackie and świętokrzyskie. Its main objective stresses the importance of hastening the pace of social and economic development in Eastern Poland in conformity to the sustainable development principle. In order to achieve it, all measures are realized according to six priority axes.

²³ *Wskaźniki realizacji...*, op. cit., p. 61.

Regarding the possibilities of taking up initiatives for employment increase by gminas, the crucial ones seem to be the initiatives aimed at:

Chart 6. Influence of ROP for Wielkopolska on the number of the employed



Source: Own study on the basis of Wroclawska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego data.

- improving the competitiveness of the broadband Internet market by ensuring competition on the market of wholesale data transmission and open access to passive infrastructure,
- increasing the level of knowledge and competencies and awareness related to the scope of usage of the Internet and the ensuing advantages among inhabitants of Eastern Poland endangered by 'digital exclusion',
- improving the university education standard, especially as regards the establishment and usage of modern technologies and information tools and techniques,
- improving accessibility of enterprises to external financing sources on an early stage of operation of a company and improving investment readiness of SMEs,
- improving conditions for running economic activity - developing and diffusion of innovative enterprises,

- establishing a constant cooperation platform between regions of Eastern Poland,
- undertaking common promotion actions in the sphere of the economy and development of interregional cooperation,
- improving the mobility of the inhabitants,
- improving access to the national and international transport system,
- development of a joint tourist offer for Eastern Poland, which comprises promotion of sustainable forms of tourism²⁴.

3. Cross-border cooperation and development of rural areas

Analyzing the programmes for the years 2007–2013, thanks to which local governments have gained the possibility of influencing the situation on labour market, it is also important to mention *Programmes of the European Territorial Cooperation* and *European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)*, which have replaced the measures realized within *Community Initiative INTERREG III 2004–2006*. While *ENPI* enables to take up cross-border cooperation with the countries which are not members of European Union, *Programmes of the European Territorial Cooperation* aim at transborder²⁵, transnational and transregional cooperation between EU partners²⁶. The main objective of transborder cooperation is, among other things, promoting cooperation and direct contacts which support economic and social development, through:

- administrative cooperation and integration of local communities through: implementing projects concerning labour market, promoting equal status of men and women, developing human resources and supporting R+D sector,
- supporting entrepreneurship and developing SMEs,

²⁴ *Operational Programme Development of Eastern Poland 2007–2013. National Strategic Reference Framework 2007–2013*, Ministry of Regional Development, 2 October 2007, p. 80-98.

²⁵ More: M. Woźniak, *Współpraca międzynarodowa jednostek samorządu terytorialnego w świetle prawa polskiego i standardów międzynarodowych*, „Samorząd Terytorialny” 2005, no 4, p. 12-14.

²⁶ E. Nowińska-Łażniewska, P. Nowak, *Współpraca międzynarodowa w ramach projektów INTERREG III*, „Studia Regionalne i Lokalne” 2007, no 2(28), p. 37-38.

- enhancing access to transport, information and communication nets.

Transnational cooperation in which Poland participates is realized within *Programme for the Baltic Sea Region and Central Europe Programme*²⁷. The programmes' main priorities which affect the situation on labour market are:

- supporting innovativeness, among other things through: international transfer of knowledge, preparing and implementing transnational innovativeness strategies, facilitating cooperation between research institutions, production sector and universities, initiating cooperation between training institutions and employment agencies,
- enhancing attractiveness and competitiveness of cities and regions, among other things through: preparing integrated strategies of urban development and regional development, reducing negative results of demographic and social changes regarding urban development and regional development.

Regarding transregional cooperation, *European Territorial Cooperation* includes *Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IV C*, which is implemented across the whole territory of European Union²⁸. Thanks to the programme, local and regional governments have gained possibilities of realizing measures aimed at, among other things: enhancing effectiveness of regional policy through promoting innovativeness and economy based on knowledge, concentrating mainly on the issues connected with research and development of technology, supporting entrepreneurship, information society, employment and increasing the level of qualifications.

In the perspective for the years 2007–2013, vast range of measures available within *Sectoral Operational Programme Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food Sector and Rural Development* is continued within *Programme for Development of Rural Areas for 2007–2013*. It includes a few initiatives which influence labour market, also in an indirect way. These are for example: trainings to gain new profession, advisory services for persons employed in agriculture and forestry,

²⁷ These programmes have replaced programmes of transnational cooperation: INTERREG III B BSR and INTERREG III B CADSES.

²⁸ In case of Poland, this programme have replaced two programmes of transregional cooperation: INTERREG III C North and INTERREG III C East.

creating and developing micro-enterprises. However, in case of these initiatives, the role of gmina is limited to being a partner in a project. The biggest possibilities of taking up measures for employment increase by local governments are offered within programme *Leader*, which is implemented within the fourth axis of *Programme for Development of Rural Areas*. *Leader* is supposed to contribute to activating rural communities through the cooperation with social and business partners (which form so-called Local Activity Groups, which constitute a three-sectors partnership – it consists of partners from public, business and social sectors) in order to plan and implement local development strategies²⁹. In this way the programme influences creating new workplaces on rural areas and enhancing local resources management.

Conclusion

The programmes from the new financial perspective for the years 2007–2013 offer a number of initiatives for employment increase, which can be realized by gminas. Employment issues are stressed in a lot of priorities and objectives, both main and strategic. Moreover, the research on the influence of implementing the programmes on unemployment level and the number of the employed in the years 2007–2020 show that in case of most programmes the impact will be considerable. It is visible especially in the programmes such as *Operational Programme Human Capital* and *Operational Programme Innovative Economy*, but also in Regional Operational Programmes.

It is a vital matter that the initiatives from 2007–2013 perspective largely correspond with the character of measures for employment increase which were available within the programmes for the years 2004–2006. Thus, gminas have gained possibilities to continue realizing measures which were financed by EU also in the previous years. It applies to initiatives for example in the field of: assistance to unemployed persons, individuals looking for jobs and persons threatened by social exclusion; improvement of the level and quality of education in the society; life-long learning system for adults; development of entrepreneurship, mostly through improvement of innovativeness of enterprises.

²⁹ *Programme for Development of Rural Areas 2007–2013*, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, September 2007, p. 294-310.

Moreover, within some priorities the range of support has been widened by a lot of new initiatives. Thus, it is possible to realize projects in the field of, among other things, enhancing the potential of public administration and institutions from the third sector. Also, great stress has been laid on the initiatives in the field of R+D, innovativeness, information and communication technologies. As a result, gminas may improve the situation on local and regional labour market more effectively and in a more comprehensive way, which contributes to faster social and economic development of a region.

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