

# The Observatory for the Labour Market and Education of the Malopolska Region

## About the Project

The Observatory for the Labour Market and Education of the Malopolska Region is an innovative research project, one of the first in Poland and in the region, aiming at more accurate diagnosis of regional, social and economic problems. The diagnosis should influence programming of activities undertaken on the labour market and help adapting education system to the needs of the contemporary economy.

The first stage of the project was launched in April 2006 and lasted until December 2007. The project is conducted by the Regional Labour Office in Krakow and co-financed by the European Social Fund.

During the project the Observatory established cooperation with institutions engaged in monitoring the regional labour market and shaping local employment policy:

- four departments in the Marshal's Office of the Malopolska Region: Department of Regional Policy, Department of Transport, Economics and Infrastructure, Department of Education and Sport and Department of Information Society;

- Regional Centre for Social Policy
- Malopolska Agency for Regional Development
- Education Office in Krakow.

Moreover, the Observatory established cooperation with some other domestic and foreign institutions willing to exchange good practice.

The Observatory mission is to provide reliable information on the labour market which should facilitate reaching decisions on development of the Malopolska Region.

To make our information reliable, up-to-date and tailor-made to regional institutions' needs we identified, collected and organised all the information stored by the project partners. Each document was assessed according to its informational value and usefulness from the labour market and employment policy point of view.

Having all relevant documents collected we made an in-depth information needs analysis. Our respondents pointed out number of under-recognised issues, including occupational mobility, employees' competences and qualifications, use of EU funds, foreign investments, as well as the innovative character of regional enterprises' activity.

Finally, we set about filling information gaps – through research on the labour market. Research reports together with conclusions and recommendations are available from our web-based Information Resource Library.



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# The Information Resource Library

The development of IT tools and techniques makes publications more and more available through the Internet. For that reason the Observatory decided to create a publicly accessible collection of interested documents concerning the labour market and its environment.

The rules of the Library functioning were formulated by the Observatory team. Thanks to the original method of characterising information resources the Library gives more options than a traditional library catalogue on-line. The main Library advantages are searchability and accessibility – it offers a complex searching mechanism and a direct access to publications – a user does not have to install any special program or browser.

The Library holds more than three hundred of various types of publications: planning documents, analyses, databases, bulletins,

public documents, research reports, experts' policy reports.

Items were taken either directly from organisations (key public administration institutions, the government agencies, Polish research institutes and think tanks) or from organisations' websites. The main selection criterion is a subject: the labour market, economy and education. We made a considerable effort to built up a collection that would be useful for civil servants, education institutions' employees, research specialists, economic experts, students and other interested persons.

According to statistics the Library has been the most frequently visited part of the Observatory website.



## Researches and Analyses

From April 2006 to December 2007 the Observatory for the Labour Market and Education of the Malopolska Region accomplished six researches: 'The job offers monitoring', 'The fates of the upper secondary vocational schools graduates', 'A comparative analysis of poviats in the Malopolska Region' (powiat - Polish administration unit on the local level), 'Migration – the results of the latest researches and analyses', 'The analysis of the employment potential of the Malopolska economy' and 'The research on the Malopolska strategic branches'.

### JOB OFFERS MONITORING

The research project 'Job offers monitoring' consisted of two parts.

During the first one we collected information on job offers that can be found in widely available media like the Internet or press, as well as in local labour offices. Obtained data was organised by professions and specialisations. The survey allowed us to indicate the specific character of each employment agency (local labour offices, academic career centres, personnel consultancy agencies).

The second part of the research dealt with employers and allowed us:

- to verify employees' search methods,
- to verify the most often used recruitment criteria,

- to define a profile of the ideal employee,
- to identify which positions are the most difficult to fill.

Our research report may be useful for both employment advisors and those who look for a job. Moreover, the report allows to identify branches which look for employees and media where job offers are placed most often.

### Conclusions and recommendations

In the third quarter of 2006 21,774 job offers applying to Malopolska were placed in the monitored media. In the same time employers informed Malopolska local labour offices about their demand for 16,252

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## JOB OFFERS MONITORING - continuation

employees, which amounts to 43% of all analysed offers. Comparison between job offers published in the local labour offices and media revealed that there was a significant difference in the demand for specific occupational groups. The local labour offices specialises in job offers addressed to: industrial workers and craftsmen, unqualified blue-collar workers, service workers and salesmen, office workers. Media were used as a recruitment tool in case of specialists, managers, engineers and administration personnel. Therefore, those persons who apply for higher, more demanded positions (technicians, medium personnel, specialists and managers), have better chance to find a job through websites, academic career centres and newspapers than through the labour offices. In turn industrial workers, craftsmen or unqualified blue-collar workers can find many offers in the labour offices.

In the monitored media more than half of jobs were offered in the city of Krakow. The number of job offers published in the city of Krakow, Nowy Sącz, Tarnow and Tarnow powiat was approximately twice bigger in media than in the local labour offices. In remaining poviats in Malopolska more offers were available from the local labour offices. So

Krakow, Nowy Sącz, Tarnow and Tarnow powiat inhabitants have better chance to find a job offer in the Internet or press, and remaining poviats inhabitants receive more offers in their local labour offices.

Overwhelming majority of job offers were submitted by the entrepreneurs (76%). Only 24% of announcements were published in the monitored media by specialised employment agencies (job placement).

Overwhelming majority of job offers (91,5%) were published only in one medium. It means that entrepreneurs rarely use various channels of job placements, therefore it is of great importance for job seekers not to limit themselves to one source of offers.

The most sought-after occupational group were construction workers: over 10% of analysed offers available in the same time in three media applied to building specialists. Besides, entrepreneurs in Malopolska search for sales representatives (9%) and IT specialists (8%).

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## THE FATES OF THE UPPER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS GRADUATES

The aim of the research was to discover the fates of vocational schools graduates from the labour market and the system of education point of view. Simultaneously, researchers made an attempt to identify objective and subjective factors involved in increasing one's chances on the labour market and factors which encourage the young to continue their education. The knowledge on vocational and educational fates of the vocational schools graduates may be valuable information for pupils who are taking decisions on their future school.

### Conclusions and recommendations

The results and conclusions were presented during the concluding conference of the research. After considerable discussion on the presentations the Observatory formulated concrete recommendations.

**Conclusions and recommendations on the vocational education system** – further learning is determined mostly by parents' higher education, accompanied by pupils' active participation in additional (optional) classes, mainly language courses. To help the vocational schools graduates enter the labour market or achieve success during their education it is necessary to organise additional school and extra-mural classes and encourage pupils to take part in them. It is of great importance to hold school and national knowledge contests, as well.

Certainly, for those who want to work after school, workshops on job searching would be useful. Organisation of such classes is the evidence of school and teachers' commitment, which may influence pupils and encourage them to begin an active job

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## THE FATES OF THE UPPER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS GRADUATES - continuation

search. It is interesting, that pupils from schools where such additional classes were organised, were less threatened with unemployment even if they did not participated in the meetings.

The lower parents' education the lower probability that a vocational school graduate will continue his/her education and higher probability that after school he/she will find a job or will become unemployed. So it is necessary to provide parents with lifelong learning opportunities – especially those parents, who have lower formal education and usually are not interested in raising their qualifications. Activity in the area of lifelong learning may stimulate pro-educational behaviours among the young.

The unemployed graduates are usually passive, they have low qualifications, do not care about their educational future and have a low motivation to improve their situation on the labour market. To help such graduates avoid unemployment it is necessary to encourage them to draw up their own occupational or educational plans taking into account personal predispositions and school exam results. It is also of great importance to provide each secondary and upper secondary



vocational school pupil with counselling. Moreover, they should accumulate occupational experience: through compulsory trainings and internships, voluntary service, part-time, holiday and temporary work. Extra-mural diplomas and certificates are extremely

important for young people's future.

Basic vocational schools graduates' poor skills and qualifications stems partly from the state policy - in the past couple of years the government has promoted comprehensive education at the cost of vocational one. As a result pupils and their parents prefer the comprehensive education and consider it as a best one. Basic vocational schools (zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa - ZSZ) are chosen by the young with low aspirations and limited abilities. Moreover, many of them do not broaden occupational experience and do not take vocational exams. Pupils from upper secondary technical schools (technikum) do not value vocational training, since they plan to continue their education at universities. Therefore, entrepreneurs cannot have good opinion on their value.

Taking into consideration that the costs of vocational education are high, it is necessary to engage entrepreneurs in adapting school curricula to the labour market needs. Young people must have access to all information needed for taking rational and conscious decisions on education. It is crucial to improve quality of practical training, as well.

Usually, persons with vocational education, especially basic one, have specialised qualifications, which limits their flexibility during a job search and in consequence deteriorate the situation on the labour market. To solve this problem the government should introduce in vocational schools a module learning and popularise lifelong learning idea.

**Recommendations on research organisation and a regular monitoring the fates of vocational schools graduates -** Insufficient information about graduates on the labour market makes hinders planning educational policy on a vocational training. Thus, a systematic, regular and careful

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## THE FATES OF THE UPPER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL SCHOOL GRADUATES - continuation

monitoring the fates of vocational schools graduates is necessary. Upper secondary courses and curricula should be drafted taking into consideration periodical analyses on the labour market. It is also of great importance to monitor the entrepreneurs needs for employees.

**Conclusions and recommendations on dissemination of research results** - taking into account which motives inspires the young to choose a school (fashion, peers' or parents' suggestions) it is necessary to provide pupils and their parents with information needed for taking rational decisions on the educational future. Results of researches carried out by the Observatory should be mentioned during application for funds. Research results comparability would enable comparison of educational offers, which in turn would help pupils choose the future school. A ranking list would have to contain some indicators from the research on the graduates fates: 1. how many graduates find a job taking into consideration the situation on the labour market and the fact that some of them continue their education; 2. graduates satisfaction from a job/education.

**Conclusions and recommendations on vocational counselling** - Secondary schools' (gimnazjum) pupils should have access to employment advisors, final exam results and competence tests which will help them consciously shape their educational and occupational future. Predisposition tests will show quality of human resources entering the labour market. Present number of employment advisors is insufficient. There is an urgent need for organising regular meetings of advisors, pupils and parents to discuss the labour market situation.



## A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POWIATS IN THE MALOPOLSKA REGION

The comparative analysis of poviats in the Malopolska Region was based on statistics and documents focused on: the labour market (employment and unemployment), the social integration and education.

These are the basic dimensions in the new Human Capital Operational Programme (2007-2013).

The analysis presents a specific character of poviats – their socio-economical situation, their assets and weaknesses. The segmentation may be helpful in drafting the path of development for each poviat.

### Conclusions and recommendations

The analysis aimed at grouping poviats into subregions of similar development parameters and formulating conclusions needed for planning activities in the area of employment, education and the social exclusion.

**Agricultural segment** – in the long term it is necessary to invest in education rather than in social service. Special support should be given to people under 25 who account for a significant group of the subregion's unemployed. Social security

## A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POWIATS IN THE MALOPOLSKA REGION - continuation

provisions make people dependent upon social protection and condemn to marginalization. Moreover, it is possible that more local communications links are needed to improve the labour mobility.

**Central-western segment** – like in agricultural segment a special support should be given to people under 25. Moreover, the emphasis should be put on:

- the development of small and medium enterprises,
- the solution of the farm fragmentation problem,
- the differences between rural and urban areas, particularly in education.

**Industrial segment** – first and foremost the segment needs structural changes – external investments and diversification of branch development. It is necessary to draw local authorities' attention to unemployment among women, for whom the best solution may be a retraining. Institutions responsible for fighting unemployment should take care of the young as well – to prevent the region from depopulation (the industrial segment is the most demographically threatened region in Malopolska: there has been a negative population growth, a negative migration balance and numerous foreign migrations).

**South-eastern segment** – it is necessary to invest in education and take care of the young entering the labour market, the unemployed women and the long-term unemployed. The inhabitants should be made independent of social protection.

**Neighbour segment** – it is necessary to invest in education and take care of the unqualified unemployed and the unemployed over 55.

**Krakow** – the special care should be provided to the unqualified unemployed, however the city has so receptive labour market that the only problem is the retraining and a motivation to work. Moreover, Krakow is a potential labour market for other areas in the

Malopolska Region.

**Urban segment** – the special attention should be drawn to the migration of qualified staff and young people from the region. The segment needs a new impetus for development which would increase employment chances for skilled young persons. Otherwise, the subregion could encounter significant problems with maintaining present strong competitive position.

The research authors were asked for pointing out these segments/poviats which should be supported immediately. In the light of available data a special attention should be paid to agricultural and industrial segments. However, each segment struggles with its own problems, so it would be advisable to define specific social problems and their solutions directly on the local level. For instance, in rich Krakow on the one hand there is a high demand for employees, on the other hand there are problems with the social exclusion and with the transmission of the social exclusion to children.

The discussion on the segmentation resulted in preparing a list of important problems and information needs, which should be taken into consideration by the regional institutions responsible for the labour market and the social reintegration. The list has a dynamic character: the labour market policy must not be based merely on historical problems shown in widely available, old statistic data.

One unquestionable fact: investing in education and lifelong learning is the best decision regional institutions can make, especially as following social groups are concerned: mothers who want to come back on the labour market, the disabled, who want to learn and work, persons who need help in overcoming difficulties and who has taken pains to struggle for new life opportunities.

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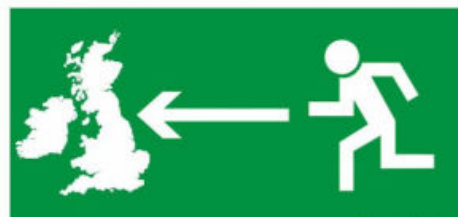
## MIGRATION - THE RESULTS OF THE LATEST RESEARCH AND ANALYSES

The publication presents the results of the latest Polish and foreign researches, expert opinions and analyses on Polish emigration and immigration. The content was based on an extensive survey on:

- press articles published since the Polish accession to the European Union,
- information available on the Internet portals devoted to the labour market issues,
- information from Polish and foreign think tanks, institutions and projects conducting

researches on migration.

The publication combines information on migration motives, scale and directions with information on migration research methodology. Moreover, it presents the portrait of Polish emigrants and their expectations about earnings abroad.



## THE ANALYSIS OF THE EMPLOYMENT POTENTIAL OF THE MALOPOLSKA ECONOMY

The analysis aimed at identifying the fastest-developing branches of economy in Malopolska Region - the branches that will generate jobs in the future. So far an introductory phase has been completed. In the next stage indicated branches will be comprehensively researched using qualitative and quantitative methods. Classification of enterprises was based on the

Polish Classification of Activities (Polska Klasyfikacja Działalności).

In the analysis we used variables relating to employment policy and the financial condition of enterprises, as well as the labour market, enterprise development policy and economic situation variables.

## THE SURVEY ON THE MALOPOLSKA STRATEGIC BRANCHES

The survey aimed at gathering information on the situation of enterprises and on a demand for personnel in enterprises recognised as strategic for the Malopolska labour market.

During the study we were analysing: a structure of employment, employment movements, deficits in employees' qualifications and training needs. Moreover, we assessed present

conditions for running business and existed forecasts of the strategic enterprise's future. During the second phase of the survey we conducted focus group interviews to discuss with entrepreneurs all achieved results. Thus we obtained valuable source of information for those who plan trainings destined for employees.



# Study visits

## THE STUDY VISIT TO FINLAND

The study visit to the Northern Ostrobothnia Region, the town of Oulu, took place from 20th to 25th November 2006. The participants were the Observatory team members and the representatives of the partner institutions: Malopolska Agency for Regional Development, Department of Education and Sport and Department of Regional Policy in the Marshal's Office of the Malopolska Region.

The main objective of the visit was to learn about good practice in the Finnish regional foresight activities and methods.

**A foresight system in Finland** - the foresight system is a systematic process of gathering information and preparation of medium and long-term forecasts which help taking decisions and undertaking common activities by institutions responsible for shaping regional development policy. Predicting requires cooperation and links network between key actors. That is why methods promoting interactions and participation are so important. As a result, the foresight activities supports regional development and a regional innovation system. It promotes competitiveness and the economic growth in the region, as well.

The foresight projects helped in the Northern Ostrobothnia Region:

- to elaborate a model for activities of the regional institutions operating in the labour market,
- to predict demand and supply on the regional labour market, including qualification needs,
- to promote cooperation in the foresight active-ties, statistics and research on local, regional and country levels,
- to use new technologies in the regional foresight activities.

**TKTT model** provides the short-term forecasts about a need for employees among regional entrepreneurs. At first, it was introduced by

the TE Centre (the Economic and Development Centre) in Oulu, now it is being implemented by most of the Finnish regional TE Centres cooperating with local labour offices. Recommendations and conclusions has been included in regional strategies on the labour and education markets.

The results of the foresight projects are used by TE Centres to plan vocational education and selecting projects to be financed by the European Social Fund. Other regional organisations, such as the Regional Council, find the foresight helpful in drafting regional labour market plans, including the regional labour market plan till 2020 and the regional education and training plan for 2008. The labour offices use foresight information to adapt the labour market instruments to anticipated changes on the market. Thanks to the foresight activity it is possible to define vocational training needs and identify training target groups.



The Observatory used the TKTT model to elaborate the methodology of the Malopolska strategic branches survey. The survey aimed at obtaining information on the situation of the Malopolska enterprises and their staff needs.

**Local and regional cooperation** - The important aspect of planning the regional development in Finland is cooperation between various regional and extra-regional institutions in shaping the labour market policy and appropriate researches. The cooperation helps predict changes on the labour market and changes in demand for occupations, qualifications and skills. Moreover, it is possible to create a tailor-made regional training offer.

## THE STUDY VISIT TO ITALY

The study visit to the Piemonte Region, the town of Turin, took place from 16th to 21th July 2007. The participants were the Observatory team members and the representatives of the partner institutions: Department of Regional Policy and Department of Information Society in the Marshal's Office of the Malopolska Region.

The main objective of the visit was to learn about experience in conducting research on the local labour market – about methods, techniques and tools used in monitoring and predicting the situation on the labour market in Piemonte.

### **The Regional Observatory on the Labour Market in Piemonte:** its main tasks include:

- integrating information on the labour market with information about education;
- adapting activities co-financed by the European Social Fund to entrepreneurs' needs;
- disseminating information on the labour market and education (through the website, publications, meetings);
- supporting the Employment Agency in Piemonte (analyses, prognostic tools).

**Entrepreneurs needs survey** - The Regional Observatory in Piemonte conducts survey on the regional and local entrepreneurs' needs. The analysis identifies occupations dominating in each sector in the region, training needs and

a demand for qualifications. All these in a consequence influence training system.

The survey measures a level of demand for occupations and the present frequency of their occurrence in the sector. Each occupation has been assigned to one of four categories: occupations of a high demand and a low occurrence, occupations of a high demand and a high occurrence, occupations of a low demand and a low occurrence and occupations of a low demand and a high occurrence. Training destined for occupations of a high demand and a low occurrence receives additional points which may be a decisive factor in obtaining funds for the project. All information of a current occupational ranking is published on the Observatory website.



**SISL system** - it is a meta-system gathering comprehensive information on employment, unemployment and the labour market needs. SISL is being implemented by the CSI Piemonte which is a public Regional Agency founded in 1977 by the authorities of the Piemonte Region and universities in Turin. The agency operates in telecommunication and IT sector.

SISL provides the regional authorities, entrepreneurs and employees with access to the Internet database of job and employees offers. Information gathered in the database helps prepare analyses useful in making decision on the labour market policy. Moreover, it is a useful tool to control projects and use of grant funds. Finally, it is a mechanism for evaluating activities undertaken by the labour offices to help individuals find jobs.



## THE STUDY VISIT TO SCOTLAND

The study visit to Scotland, the town of Edinburgh, took place from 22th to 27th July 2007. The participants were the Observatory team members, the representatives of the project 'Malopolska Partnership for Lifelong Learning' and the representative of the partner institutions: the Regional Centre for Social Policy and two departments in the Marshal's Office of the Malopolska Region: Department of Transport, Economics and Infrastructure and Department of Education and Sport.

The main objective of the visit was to learn about experience in conducting researches on the local labour market and cooperation between research institutes and public administration. Furthermore, the participants became acquainted with the Scottish government activities for entrepreneurs (Scottish Enterprise), employees (Career Scotland) and vulnerable groups like immigrants and the socially excluded.

The part of a host institution was played by Napier University in Edinburgh. By the university courtesy the Polish guests learnt about its activities, including achievements in cooperation with graduates and public institutions and research carried out by the Employment Research Institute.

**Napier University in Edinburgh** is a dynamic, innovative and forward-looking institution dedicated to supplying educational services which are relevant to the needs of

today's students and employers. By offering creatively designed courses, flexible study methods and accessible routes to higher education the university equips their graduates for success in a competitive job market. Moreover, Napier has been known for engagement with business and for the applicability of its research to key societal and economic sectors. The University intends:



- to remain accessible to the widest body of students who can benefit from a higher education;
- to develop learners' skills and attributes, so that they will be able to fulfil their potential in the workplace and in society;
- to position itself at the leading edge of learner-centred approaches to learning, teaching and assessment and learner support;
- to transfer knowledge applicable to key areas of the economy within Scotland and the wider UK;
- to develop and sustain excellent areas of research and knowledge transfer;
- to develop its international focus.

The University attaches enormous value to develop good contacts with its graduates. In this way it has up-to-date information on their employability and is able to adapt curricula to the labour market demands. Data on the fates of the graduates are widely known which help promote the university. It is the way to obtain funds as well: every year the university receives from the graduates significant funding for projects run by students and developing the educational offer.



# The Project Team



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# The project partners

⇒ **The Malopolska Agency for Regional Development** - the institution carries out activities contributing to the comprehensive development of the Malopolska Region: supports local initiatives, provides financial support to enterprises and programmes aimed at the regional development, initiates and promotes entrepreneurship, is involved in investment promotions and operates for the benefit of environmental protection.

⇒ **The Marshal's Office** - it is a part of self-governmental authority in the Malopolskie Region. The Marshal's Office helps the Marshal of the Region and the Management Board fulfil its duties. There are seventeen departments within the Office, including the partners of the Malopolska Observatory for the Labour Market and Education:

**Department of Transport, Economics and Infrastructure** - the department is responsible mainly for cooperation with economic self-government and business institutions in promoting regional entrepreneurship, monitoring the economic situation of the region, attracting investment capital, implementation of 'Regional Strategy of Innovation for the Region of Malopolska', cooperation in implementing the labour market programmes and development of the integrated transport.

**Department of Regional Policy** – the department is responsible for drafting the regional development policy and implementing 'The Malopolska Region Development Strategy'. Moreover, it performs tasks connected with using of the European Union funds.

**Department of Education and Sport** - the department is responsible for teachers' professional development, organization of lifelong learning, running educational projects, implementing 'The Malopolska Region Development Strategy'.

**Department of Information Society** - the department's develops programmes for information society development, it promotes modern digital solutions in public administration.

⇒ **Regional Center for Social Policy** – it is a unit of the Marshal's Office responsible for shaping and implementing social policy in the Malopolska Region.

⇒ **The Education Office in Krakow** - exercises a didactic and pedagogical control over schools and other educational institutions in Malopolska.

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