



Integrating Entrepreneurship and Work-Based Learning in Higher Education

National Literature review Poland

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PROJECT PARTNERS



This WEXHE publication is applicable to the following disciplinary sectors:

Hard pure (e.g. physics etc.)

Soft pure (e.g. literature etc.)

Hard applied (e.g. engineering etc.)

Soft applied (e.g. management studies etc.)

WEXHE research has showed that there are no substantial differences between these four sectors regarding the implementation of Work Based Learning in Higher Education. Therefore this document represents the four sectors mentioned.

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INTRODUCTION

Main purpose of the project Integrating Entrepreneurship and Work Experience in Higher Education (WEXHE) is to identify and analyse current provision of work experience and entrepreneurship in higher education in 7 different European countries. As the effect of the research replicable models for work experience and entrepreneurship, together with guidance on management, quality assurance, learning outcomes, funding and accreditation will be created.

Purpose of national literature review is to discover how each country – partner of the WEXHE Project define Work Base Learning and how it is support by the educational system and authorities. Moreover literature analysis should cover the background of WBL, so its evolution and influence on the labor market and educational system.

Five important questions were ask. They cover following topics: How WBL is understood in Poland, what types of WBL can be found, what is the current status of WBL and level of development, what are the main drivers and barriers in development of WBL and what long-term results can be expected from WBL implementation.

The biggest challenge of the analysis was to find the right literature, as the subject of WBL in higher education is not a popular research topic. The WBL is mentioned in the context of university management and market positioning of private universities, as well as WBL in the context of CSR. There is very little monograph on the practical education of students.

The institution of student practice has been functioning in Poland for a long time. The lack of literature on the effects of this form of education may indicate that it is underestimated by the scientific community. The remaining forms of practical training, such as simulation companies and internships for graduates, are rather new and have not yet reached an in-depth analysis, although the first reflections on this topic are beginning to emerge.

The challenge for WBL in Poland is to continue to provide the right level of work placement. Still in many forms, trainees are treated as office support, which does not allow them to either develop entrepreneurial attitudes or acquire skills useful on the labor market.

We hope, that this literature review will help to understand WBL issue both – as it is seen on universities and by the entrepreneurs – potential employers. We found also few postulates formulated by students.

QUESTION 1: WBL UNDERSTANDING

In Poland discussion on WBL is focused on vocational and technical schools (secondary school). Dual education system (based on the German model) is well described both, by national papers and by the scientists. However WBL at Universities (also technical and medical) exist in various models but it's description is not specific and literature discussion is rather incidental. Most voices about WBL are made at occasion of publications about reform of higher educational system, where many issues (also not connected with WBL) are raised.

National Qualification Frameworks (NQF) [PL: Krajowe Ramy Kwalifikacji dla Szkolnictwa Wyższego] for Higher Education is a document that provides understandable in the national and international context description of qualification gained in the system of higher education in a specific country. Formal introduction of the qualifications framework into the higher education system in Poland came along with the adoption on March 18, 2011, the Act amending the Law on Higher education.

NQF is linked to the ongoing with the Polish Qualifications Framework (for lifelong learning), in addition to qualification gained in the higher education system, qualification obtained in the system of general education (system of education) and qualifications obtained in vocational education system.

The benefits associated with the introduction of the NQF result from the adoption of the concept of description qualification through assumed learning outcomes, including a set of general skills (useful regardless of career path) and related to direction of study. This involves a change in the approach to the learning process, which the overriding goal is to ensure that the student achieves the intended result – to after graduated with the appropriate knowledge, skills and competences social.¹

In governmental paper – guidelines for preparation curriculums by the Universities there is short thesis that universities should also consider whether to certify their social competences learners could use the skills acquired outside the university – for example well-documented volunteering. Treatment of this type activity as a certain form of achieving the effects of social competence, it fits well into the university's planned opening for recognition of learning outcomes acquired outside the formal education system. However, this requires creating new patterns of behaviour and good practice in this area.

A valuable addition to the methods used by the university to verify the effects of education in the range of social competencies may be an assessment of the student's actions and attitudes during the course held professional practice. Such an assessment, formulated by the tutor of the practice, should appear in the documentation of its course; It could then be one

¹ Andrzej Kraśniewski, Jak przygotowujemy programy kształcenia zgodnie z wymaganiami wynikającymi z Krajowych Ram Kwalifikacji dla Szkolnictwa Wyższego?, p 6.
http://www.ka.edu.pl/gfx/ksw/userfiles/amerklinger/literatura/przygotowanie_krk_podrecznik_104s.pdf.

of the ways demonstrates by the university that it shapes the social competence of the graduate.²

Summarizing, in public documents WBL is treated rather marginally and it's indicated as one of the methods that help to evaluate universities effort of education. It's not the primary tool that should be used to transfer the knowledge.

The provisions of the Regulation on the conditions of conducting studies³ also require the definition of dimension, rules and forms of practice, where the training program foresees practices – par. 4 sec. 1 point 11.

Based on act mentioned above the thesis was formulated that practice could be treated like other learning modules.

In the Regulation some specific requirements related to the implementation of practical activities have been formulated:

- enrolled in the program of study for a practical course related to practical vocational training should take place in conditions appropriate for the scope of practice and allow direct execution appropriate practical activities by students,
- the organizational unit of the university should provide students with a proper mode of attendance practices envisaged in the education program.

Summarizing, legal basis for WBL in Polish educational system are rather poor. WBL is understood as addition to practical studies (where specific abilities are required from absolvent – mostly at technical and medical universities).

WBL is in some publications mentioned as one of the element that help in SCR strategy.^{4 5 6} Authors does not refer directly to any form of WBL, but underling that good cooperation with private sector is one of the most important factor for non-public universities. Strong connection with business helps universities to provide better opportunities for the students. Also helps to design better – long lasting curriculum. Authors states that the entrepreneurial behaviours of higher education institutions are needed to cope with the increasing pressure

² Andrzej Kraśniewski, Jak przygotowywać programy kształcenia zgodnie z wymaganiami wynikającymi z Krajowych Ram Kwalifikacji dla Szkolnictwa Wyższego?, p 55

http://www.ka.edu.pl/gfx/ksw/userfiles/amerklinger/literatura/przygotowanie_krk_podrecznik_104s.pdf

³ <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20140001370>

⁴ Research Papers of the Wrocław University of Economics. Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu. 2014, Issue 338, p 40-51.

⁵ K. Leja: Doskonalenie relacji z interesariuszami jako wyraz społecznej odpowiedzialności uczelni. Misje i służebność uczelni w XXI w. ed. Jerzy Woźnicki Warszawa: Instytut Społeczeństwa Wiedzy, Fundacja Rektorów Polskich, 2013, p 303 – 311.

⁶ Popławski W., Markowski M., Forkiewicz M.: Świadomość strategii i zarządzania strategicznego w zarządzaniu uczelniami wyższymi na przykładzie szkół wyższych w Polsce. Zeszyty Naukowe. Organizacja i Zarządzanie. Politechnika Śląska, nr. 93 (2016), p 415 - 424.

of the competitive environment, the growing expectation of the society for modern education, a useful environment, the need to build prestige.

Recommendations developed by workshop participants Round Table of High Quality Student Internships⁷ was a discussion organized by Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Recommendations were prepared. Students, entrepreneurs and scientists were unanimous. In area of work placement was stated that most important is:

- to provide specific information for employers on learning outcomes on concrete study directions,
- to clarify the requirements and effects of the practice - both on the university side as well employer,
- the flexibility of the duration of the practice
- "ordering" practices by employees
- the substance use of students-trainees on specific projects
- study the effectiveness of practices
- assessment of apprentice tutors

Recommendation however did not specify how participants understand WBL. The thesis concentrate on work placement and does not mention other types of WBL.

Jolanta Urbanikowa in presentation Role of the university in the process of lifelong learning⁸ as a challenge points promotion of learning outcomes from outside the university in the scientific community.

Summarizing, Polish literature does not give clear definition of WBL. Both, governmental documents and academics discussion does not provide specific types of WBL and after the lecture it is impossible to draw the line between work placement, traineeship and entrepreneurship. As mentioned above, that is conclusion to HE sector. For vocational and technical schools WBL is described as cooperation between school and entrepreneur that allow school-goers to take part in process of manufacturing connected with gaining theoretical knowledge helpful to understand that process.

⁷ http://www.nauka.gov.pl/g2/oryginal/2014_11/138d87485ba09aba55bec368108d59.pdf.

⁸ <http://www.ka.edu.pl/dla-pracownikow/jakosc-kształcenia/literatura-i-materialy/> .

QUESTION 2: WBL TYPES/TYOLOGY

Work Placement

The National Centre for Research and Development is an operator of program Studying? – Go practice. Program is design to raise the competences of people participating in higher education, meeting the needs of the economy, the labour market and society.

The aim of the program is to increase the competence of students by creating and implementing high quality work placement programs in cooperation with entrepreneurs. These will include placements lasting no less than 1 month in one unit, as well as 3-month placements directly related to study programs. The program budget is about PLN 550 million. In the years 2015 – 2018 four competitions (once a year) will be announced, which will be addressed to universities.

Each of the co-funded projects will last 12 to 24 months and cover the last semester of study. The thematic scope of the internships will be directly linked to the fields of study – so as to ensure the practical use of the learning outcomes in the course of the internship. The minimum placement will be 120 hours and will cover at least 20 hours of traineeship per week.

Students and academics make efforts to improve work placement, mostly make it more efficient and valuable considering WBL. Good example of analysis is document “Good Student Practice. Code, opinions, examples”⁹. The publication was commissioned by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. The publisher is foundation Student Aid Fund [PL: Fundusz Pomocy Studentom]. Most of the postulates contained in the document can be reduced to a common denominator – students' practices do not look as they should. Exceptions to this rule are rare, and the most common problems are:

- lack of idea of time spent on apprentices,
- bad will of employers who do not even try to assign young people to interesting tasks and treat them as necessary evil or people for so called McJob,
- lack of communication between universities and employers,
- illusory institutions of tutors.

The effect:

- the bitterness of participants,
- the feeling of wasted time, and often also
- the attempts to avoid practicing by only organizing their attestation of graduation.

⁹ <http://www.konfrontacje.edu.pl/pub/praktyki-www.pdf>.

The second reflection is the surprise that so far there has been no informal set of rules to be followed by university representatives, employers, and students who are going to practice.

OTHER FORMS of WBL

Academical Business Incubators

Academical Business Incubators ABI are facilities advertised as a opportunity to establish own business without establishing company or register as a self-employer. ABI is legal entity, it's taxable and need to fulfil social security obligations. Students, absolvent or scientist may (under the agreement) become a part of ABI and provide services independently as like they were entrepreneurs. In general when the business plan is approved ABI provide management help. Effect if ABI is ability to perform business activity without a risk of conflict with revenue office or Social Security (all formalities are on ABI and participant formally is not entrepreneur). In case when business is not effective and need to be closed, participant can start another business without the burden.

The Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP) published in 2014 raport Innovation centres in Poland (including business incubators).¹⁰

Educational activities in Poland are run by 132 public HEIs and 321 non-public HEIs. Out of all Academical Business Incubators (ABI) total of 21 units is connected with public universities, while only 3 with non-public universities. In most of the studied ABI are university units, but there are also ABI acting in the form of associations, limited liability companies and joint stock companies.

The study confirmed that the most frequent clients of the incubators tested were students. Their average share of ABI clients increased from 35.6% in 2011 to 44.4% in 2013. The increase in student participation in the ABI was evaluated positively.

Another sizeable number of ABI customers in 2013 were graduates who graduated two ore less years earlier. Their average share in the respondents group decreased in the years 2011 – 2013 from 41.5% to 20.6%. For this group declining interest is disadvantageous because graduates are characterized by the greatest enthusiasm and entrepreneurship, and therefore they are most likely to set up their own businesses that will last a lifetime on the market.

In third place, in terms of numbers, there is a group of researchers.

In 2013, the respondents showed a total of 97 companies established in AIP, which meant that on average 10 new businesses for one AIP, 4 of which were founded by women. In addition, respondents showed that 3% of all businesses contributed to incubators (since the

¹⁰

http://www.pi.gov.pl/PARPFiles/file/OIB/publikacje/20141204_PARP_osrodki_innowacyjnosci_w_polsce.pdf

very beginning of the AIP) have received awards at national or international competitions or exhibitions.

Graduation internships

Graduation internships^{11 12} are an agreement between the trainee and the starosta (self-government authority) – this is not an employment relationship (for the purposes of the Labour Code, this is not employment, and the person who is formally employed for the duration of the placement remains an unemployed person).

Graduation internships are organized by all Labour Offices throughout the country.

Employers are quite willing to take on a graduate traineeship because they do not incur any cost of hiring an employee who, although without experience, can bring value to the company - especially if the internship lasts more than three months.

The internship lasts from 3 months to a year. The rule is that the more competitive the labour market (lower unemployment), the shorter the traineeship. At the end of the traineeship period, a letter may be issued to the Labour Office in which the trainee proposes to extend the traineeship - if there is still money, usually the trainee will be assigned, especially if the company guarantees employment of trainee.

Ordered fields of study

Another program which element is WBL is so called ordered studies.¹³ This are fields of study recognised by the authorities as important for national economy.

Support for the ordered study is provided by government. Leading universities could apply for co-financing incentives for candidates for study and to improve the quality of education.

Ordered studies, including the implementation of competition projects aimed at increasing the attractiveness of education in technical, mathematical and natural sciences, and increasing the number of graduates of these fields.

The forms of support used included:

¹¹ <http://zielonalinia.gov.pl/Praktyki-absolwenckie-32138>

¹²

<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https://www.ur.edu.pl/file/41822/Raport+ze+sta%C5%BCy+studenckich+i+absolwenckich+przeprowadzony+na+podstawie+Kwestionariusza+ankiety+ewaluacyjnej+dla+sta%C5%BCyst%C3%B3w+w+ramach+projektu+%E2%80%9ERozw%C3%B3j+Uniwersytetu+Rzeszowskiego+szans%C4%85+dla+regionu%E2%80%9D.docx>

¹³

http://www.ncbr.gov.pl/gfx/ncbir/userfiles/_public/fundusze_europejskie/kapital_ludzki/ewaluacja/raport_ps_db_final.pdf

- scholarships for students,
- compensatory classes for students of the first year of study in a given specialty,
- other forms of didactic activity which, according to the university authorities, raise attractiveness of education on the aforementioned directions, including collaborating with employers on internships and student internships.

What sets the course of study is the emphasis on practical work skills (especially in first degree studies). Additional activities were often included in the program, often relatively expensive, for example, to obtain specialized professional qualifications. Additional language classes were organized, activities in direct collaboration with employers (university or employer), study visits, conferences, etc. It was also important to fund more active forms learning, in smaller groups, in close contact between the teacher and the student. The study programs included paid internships (internships) in domestic and foreign employers, as well as in domestic and foreign research centres.

The main form of cooperation between universities and employers is work placements. Most students/ graduates declare that during their internship they have performed tasks directly related to their studies, particularly for longer internships (lasting more than 4 weeks). The main benefits of participating in the internship were the increase in practical skills, the increase in professional knowledge and the development of soft skills. The benefits of getting the most out of a job offer and making it easier for you to get a job were the smallest benefits.

Summarizing, we could not find in the literature description of the basic models of WBL such as traineeship and entrepreneurship, but it not mean that they are not exist in Polish educational system. Entrepreneurship is delivered by the Academic Business Incubators but this in not the only model. The same is with traineeship - graduation internships enable that, and are well described but are not the only tool available.

QUESTION 3: WBL CONTEXT

Interesting report was provided by Deloitte¹⁴ - "First steps in the labour market. Leaders of the future". Students highly value their professional competences, although they consider that the merit of the university is rather small. When looking for work experience, students first focus on finding internships and work related to the direction of study. In addition, they are eager to participate in educational programs offered by employers, or specialized workshops (both substantive and soft skills development). Also on the list of experiences held by respondents are also seasonal work and volunteering. Although such professional experiences are much less appreciated by the respondents from the perspective of their usefulness in work.

In the WBL context another phenomena was identified.^{15 16} Employers are increasingly seeking to recruit and select candidates, apart from evaluating their experience and education, to identify specific competencies sought from the perspective of the organization as well as their accompanying development potential. Students and graduates applying for a job are aware of this. This does not change the fact that there is often a difference between the level of competence presented by students (according to their own assessment) and their assessment by employers.

Summarising, practice improves self-confidence. This often results in considerable overestimation of competences, particularly soft skills. This indicates a small verification of these competencies during the practice.

In 2014 final report Analysis of qualifications and competences crucial for increasing the chances of graduates in the labour market¹⁷ was published. One of the analysed aspect were competences of students/absolvent in context of labour market requirements. Report shows that all candidates overestimate various competences (professional, personal, technical, communication).


Based on employers preference, the five most desirable competences that should be provided to university graduates were indicated. These include cognitive, interpersonal, mother tongue, computer skills and self-organization. This was also confirmed by conducted in-depth interviews. Particular attention deserves place of knowledge. In common sense it seems often that it is the knowledge and ability to use it that is key to finding a job by graduates. However, it turns out that perspective of employers is different. Key competences

¹⁴ https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/pl/Documents/Reports/pl_Raport-PierwszeKroki-2015.pdf.

¹⁵ https://bkl.parp.gov.pl/pobierz.html/Bilans_Kapitalu_Ludzkiego_-_Raport_podsumowujacy.pdf.

¹⁶ https://bkl.parp.gov.pl/pobierz.html/PARP-BKL_broszura_V_edycja_2014_PL.pdf.

¹⁷ <http://www.uj.edu.pl/documents/102715934/001bcfee-7b59-4983-9eaf-2ca7adbc7ad2>.



are the adaptation and processing of information and the appropriate communication between individuals and groups.

Competence gaps (difference between employers expectation and reality) are greatest in the case of the most desirable competences, i.e. interpersonal, self-organizing and cognitive. These three competencies are among the most desired by employers. One of the conclusions of the report was that universities should rather create the potential and give solid foundations, adapt their knowledge and skills (using their social competence) to the conditions of the particular employer.

How important is professional experience show another chapter of mentioned report. The proportion of unemployed (unemployed and job-seeking) is lower among the graduates who have ever earned a part-time job (13% versus 23% of the unemployed among the unemployed in the unemployed). Recommendation is, that professional experience greatly increases the chances of graduates in the labour market, so investment in internships and practices with employers is obligatory. Employment also depends on future graduates. From their activity outside of study (taking up work, additional internships/placements, additional training, study abroad, i.e. Erasmus, social activities, participation in student life, volunteering). It is therefore important to promote and develop student activity outside of science, for example by awarding additional points for social activity to scholarships or other fellowships, i.e. Erasmus. It is also recommended to promote and subsidize science clubs. It is also advisable to give students at the university greater flexibility to combine study and professional work (e.g. by enabling students to construct an individualized learning grid).

The main recommendations for students formulated by employers are: attendance at internships/internships (52%). Subsequently, 44% recommended participating in additional "hard" competency training courses (directly related to the profession). 35% of employers recommended to take a job outside of their studies. A similar percentage (36%) recommended personal development (personality development, general education, motivation, etc.), and soft skills training (19%). On the other hand, taking up the next field of study as well as acting in volunteering was recommended by only about one in ten employers. It is clear that the recommendations of employers are primarily aimed at increasing students' contact with employers and gaining skills/experience useful in the labour market.

Only 56% of universities monitor labour markets (supply of graduates and demand for educated professions) in industries and sectors relevant to their education: 39% are limited to regional scale, and only 17% carry out broader monitoring. However, every 7th school does not monitor and does not intend to conduct it. It is clear that even if universities declare that their labour market needs are taken into account in their education strategies, they may often lack the relevant data to adequately profile their offer due to the lack of monitoring.

In this context question need to be asked, if universities are the most appropriate facilities to organize work placements for students.

According to the employers of universities, in order to better align the competencies of graduates with the needs of the labour market should above all increase the number of practical activities – the indication of 40% of employers. Qualitative research suggests that employers talk about practical classes often referring to: "hands-on" classes, student-centred classes and/or classes that teach specific, practical skills required on the labour market. 14% of employers also recommended increasing the number of mandatory internships/traineeships and increasing the scope of cooperation with entrepreneurs in this area.

Higher Education Development Program for 2015 – 2030¹⁸ is document prepared by Ministry of Science and Higher Education. It contains a list of recommendations for WBL area:

- the majority of students should gain high-quality education with a practical profile. It is supposed to give general knowledge, create the basis for further development, but put a great deal of emphasis on developing professional skills that enable to work effectively in specialist or engineering positions,
- it is extremely important that studies in the field of applied sciences be treated as equivalents to other types of higher education. They should be recognized in the eyes of employers and make it easier for young graduates to enter the labour market as respected professionals,
- it is important to promote practical profile studies. These high quality studies should provide solid foundations for general education but also be strongly oriented towards gaining the specialist knowledge and practical skills required at the engineer or specialist level. Their program should play a well-planned professional apprenticeship or their workshop counterparts,
- this process will be conducive to cooperation with employers in the design of education programs and high quality student internships,
- it is worth promoting the practice of crediting the results of the study to the documented learning outcomes achieved through activities not related to activities included in the study program, but resulting from scientific activity (scientific research activities, participation in research projects, participation in project competitions, etc.),
- it is recommended to evaluate student practice (in the case of practical majors) and the effects of students' research, development or implementation projects (academic fields).

¹⁸ http://www.nauka.gov.pl/g2/oryginal/2015_09/cccd12e22cdc548b16002ab2c199ba7.pdf.

In a broader context interesting is also program “Mentoring as a way for intergenerational transfer of knowledge and development of employees 50+”¹⁹ ²⁰ This can be valuable information for entrepreneurs how to organize work placements for students. The generational differences mean that employees are getting worse and worse with each other. They have different priorities, different values, different approaches to life and entrusted responsibilities. Being able to adapt to a specific age group and setting up a collaborative platform gives you the opportunity to create a team that not only cooperates with each other, but is also complementary to your knowledge and skills.

Mentoring is a bridge between generations, showing how to work together for business and labour market development and not compete. It is also an intergenerational transfer of attitudes and values such as loyalty, commitment, attachment to high quality, good communication, respect and so on.

The most effective mentoring is parallel work, i.e. the creation of teams composed of employees of all ages (sharing knowledge about modern technologies, sharing work experience, approach to the client, etc.). This is the optimal use of employee competence.

On September 2016 State Higher Vocational School in Tarnów published monograph “Concepts of innovative education in reforming higher education”. Simulation company as a didactic method for studies with a practical profile.²¹ In the publication actual case of Symtur was described. Authors share the results of the research. The main conclusion after the analysis of the functioning simulation company is that the idea of using a simulation company for the education of economics or administration students was highly appreciated by independent experts, who emphasized above all its innovativeness, efficiency and interdisciplinary use. The research confirmed the high efficiency and effectiveness of the method described, especially in acquiring knowledge, skills and "soft skills".

The author for the researched and scientifically developed concept and its implementation was honoured in 2015 with the award of the Minister of Science and Higher Education.


Publication about improvement of entrepreneurship among students and absolvent „The Role of the Polish Higher Education System in the Development of Entrepreneurship”²² present the conclusion that formal education does not seem to play a major role in the

¹⁹ <http://www.igrp.com.pl/downloads/aktywizacja3.pdf>.

²⁰ Tubielewicz K.: Międzypokoleniowa sieć współpracy zawodowej jako baza do transferu wiedzy. Innowacje w zarządzaniu i inżynierii produkcji/ ed. pod red. R. Knosali Opole: PTZP Opole, 2013, p. 398 – 406.

²¹ red. A. Gądek, Tarnów 2016. Koncepcje innowacyjnego kształcenia w reformującym się szkolnictwie wyższym. Firma symulacyjna jako metoda dydaktyczna na studiach i profilu praktycznym.

²² Nowak, H. (2016). The Role of the Polish Higher Education System in the Development of Entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurial Business and Economics Review*, 4(4), 43-59, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15678/EBER.2016.040104>.



development of entrepreneurship among young people in Poland; however, it begins to improve when the tertiary level of education is taken into consideration.

Author also states that many new initiatives have appeared in recent years, such as courses and master's degrees related to entrepreneurship and company creation; departments of entrepreneurship and innovation at universities; incubators; programmes for coaching young entrepreneurs; awards for the best business ideas of students; etc. On the other hand, the community of researchers who are interested in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education has started to consolidate and its members share their experiences and achievements. It can be concluded that the situation in Poland regarding the promotion of entrepreneurship among students and graduates is getting better, but there is still a lot of work to do.

Another problem is the percentage of students who have ever participated in any kind of entrepreneurial programme or course, and the collection of data reflecting the number of firms created by them in the future.

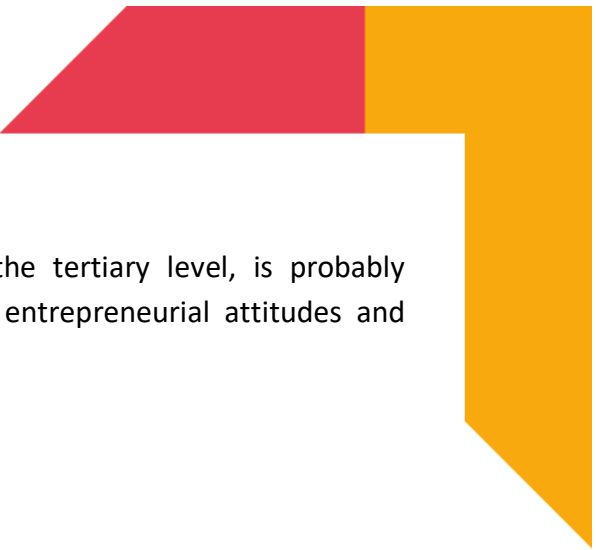
For the purpose of publication series of interviews with students has been made. Many students see the necessity for changes in the system of education in terms of entrepreneurial competences.

The most frequent postulates are the following:

- more practical activities and using the cases of real companies,
- inviting real entrepreneurs to participate in classes at the university,
- practical activities in companies (work experience),
- formal aspects of running a business (registration, bookkeeping, taxes, European funds, etc.).

The general conclusion is that personal development depends on the cultural norms of society, the influence of family and friends, as well as on the general rules of the formal educational system at the primary, secondary and tertiary school levels (Table 6). The various educational experiences of individuals during their lives shape their capacity to undertake different activities in the future, especially those relating to future employment. From this perspective, the educational environment plays an important role in the decision to create new companies by people from different educational backgrounds.

Poland belongs to a group of countries with a high number of students, in absolute and relative terms, so the transmission of entrepreneurial values through the formal educational system could have a significant effect on the development of entrepreneurship and building a knowledge-based economy.



The role of the formal education system, especially at the tertiary level, is probably underestimated, and has great potential to influence the entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviour of students and graduates.

QUESTION 4: WBL IMPLEMENTATION

Work based learning in Poland is mostly associated with VET education. According to Polish education regulations, student at the secondary VET school should complete practical training, in most cases during 4 week work placement, which should be supportive to learning process at school. This is not sufficient to assure the quality of education and proper adjustment to the needs of the labour market. Employers in Poland, especially SME's , report, that one of the main weaknesses of the VET graduates is the lack of professional experience and skills necessary to function at the work place. Theses weakness of the Polish education system is strongly addressed in EU financial perspective 2014-2020. Improving the quality of VET education is one of the priorities of the European Social Fund.²³ However, in case of HEI WBL do not receive such a strong support from EU funds.

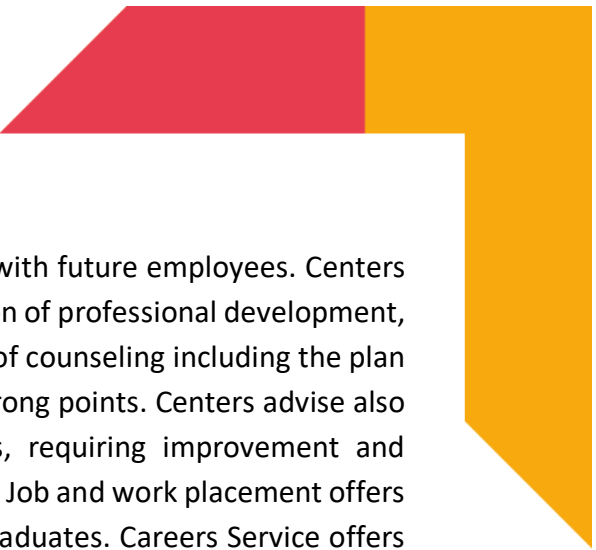
Selected projects in WBL in HEI were supported in previous perspective, within Life Long learning program (*Erasmus Curriculum Development*) . One of the very few was the project WBLQUAL – An Approach to Qualifications through Negotiated Work Based Learning, executed in 2011-2013, focused on the transfer of WBL experience of Staffordshire University in UK to University of Łódź. Despite the involvement of Łódź University, project was rather adjusted to the need of Life Long learning (adult education) than to education of University students. Presently HEI implement WBL projects mostly with their own resources and their own initiatives.

WBL project at the HEI are the part of education quality assurance. Quality of Education at the HEI is monitored by Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA) composed of 80 – 90 members appointed by Minister , responsible for higher education from among candidates nominated by HEIs senates, Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland and other academic bodies. PKA conducts obligatory program evaluations of quality of education and elaborate the opinions on degree programs, submitted by higher education institutions. PKA monitor also dialogue with all stakeholders of the education process, including academic circles, candidates for students, employers, and state and public administration bodies. This include also monitoring of WBL initiatives, which in case of Polish HEI are mostly focused on work placement.²⁴

Institutions, which facilitate students works placement are Academic Carrier's Centres, located in majority of Polish HE, based on the idea of Careers Services, established a hundred years ago in United Kingdom. Centres create a platform between the HEI students and the companies through enabling the students to gain professional experience, supporting

²³ Problem of WBL in VET education are presented in OECD Reviews on Local Job Creation Employment and Skills Strategies in Poland. 2016. 2. <http://proedu.uni.lodz.pl/archives/102>.

²⁴ 25 <http://www.pka.edu.pl/en/mission-statement/>.



graduates on starting their career and providing companies with future employees. Centers advise also students and alumni on selecting the right direction of professional development, further education and training. They carry out various forms of counseling including the plan for career paths and support in learning on Job candidate' strong points. Centers advise also on student's personal skills as well as indicate the areas, requiring improvement and development. One of the main roles of the Center is to gather Job and work placement offers from companies and distribute it among the students and graduates. Careers Service offers students and graduates relevant information about the job market as well as practical knowledge on how to prepare job application documents and how to be more effective at job interviews. Center advice students and graduates how to effectively spend the time during the work placement. It provide them with the relevant knowledge and skills, and help them develop right attitudes. It offer information, training and career counseling. For many young people, Academic Carriers Center are the first and most important source of information about the job market.

Work placement are obligatory part of the education process in majority of HEI. In theory, companies, interest in student's work placement , sign the agreement with HEI, which include obligations of both parts. Company accepts the program of work placement, which is monitored by the representative of HEI. Program precise student's tasks during employment and methods of evaluation. Students may assist other employers of the company. They may conduct analyses, surveys and reports, which enrich regular activity of the company. Students may also execute new tasks, within their competences, adding new values to company's competences, like e.g. search engine optimization. Employers profit from the students labor and also may observe the students, to identify the best candidate for future employment.

Simultaneously, students may identify his/her preferences, concerning future job. Analyses conducted at the Cracow School of Mining showed, that student's work placement in engineering is focused mostly on : 1/learning about future job and position; 2/ get experience in future tasks; 3/ learning about labour market expectations 4/ gathering resources for future thesis.²⁵ In practice too often students execute simple jobs, which do not develop significantly their professional expertise.

Work placement is prevailing form of WBL in Poland. However Polish HEI implement also two other form, including entrepreneurship and traineeships. In case of entrepreneurship HEI promote start up programs, benefiting from the Start UP Poland program, which focus on policy makers and on promotion of the favourable legal infrastructure for start-up initiatives. Start UP Poland create the conditions for start-up operation, removing the barriers and advise policy-makers on taking best actions that stimulate innovative entrepreneurship. By working

²⁵ K. Klimkiewicz, Rola praktyk studenckich w doskonaleniu praktycznego aspektu kształcenia studentów uczelni wyższych, *Studia Ekonomiczne. Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach* nr. 225 2015.

closely with Polish public administration, Program accelerate start up initiatives also among the students. Involvement of Polish HEI in start-up initiatives depends mostly on individual approach of HEI, however creation of start up in HEI is supported by Ministry of Higher Education. In 2016 there was over 750 start-up companies, created at the Polish HEI. Significant part of them were created in three leading Warsaw HEI (Warsaw University – 92 start-ups, Warsaw Technical University – 74 start-ups and Warsaw School of Economic – 71 start-ups). Second Start up Academic Centre is in Cracow (Cracow Mining Academy – 63 start-ups and Jagiellonian University – 46 start-ups).²⁶ Leading HEI run start up supports programs, which assist students and graduates in elaboration of the business concept and train in solving specific business problems. Such a programs function on numerous HEI in Poland, including e.g., Toruń University²⁷, Warmińsko Mazurski²⁸, Poznań University²⁹ and in many others.

Besides *Start Up Poland*, which support all start up initiatives, there is also the network of Academic Incubators of Entrepreneurship, started in 2004. This network group over 2000 companies with HEI origin, offering the opportunity to test business concept for students and graduates.³⁰

Academic entrepreneurship is supported also with the program of virtual companies, functioning in relatively few HEI. Program of Virtual companies at HEI was started in 2014 at the Wroclaw University with the company *V student*. It was followed by the other HEI, including Łódź University and Czestochowa Technical University. Within this program students are employed in virtual company, which run regular business, providing services and issuing invoices mostly to other virtual companies associated in Polish Association of Virtual companies. Employment in such a company allows to gain professional qualification in reality very close to those in real company.

Traineeships function in Poland mostly in the form of vouchers for unemployed graduates, distributed by the labour Office, among unemployed graduates, up to 30 year old. Vouchers allows the graduates to select the company individually and acquire work experience. Traineeship can last up to 6 months. (12 months for the persons below 25 years). Salary of the graduate is covered by county (labour office).³¹

HEI institutions are interest in WBL initiatives, as they want to educate the student in the conditions close to those on the labour market. HEI try to respond to the employers need,

²⁶ <http://piech.blog.pl/2016/02/01/uczelnie-w-polsce-o-najwiekszej-liczbie-startupow-ranking/>.

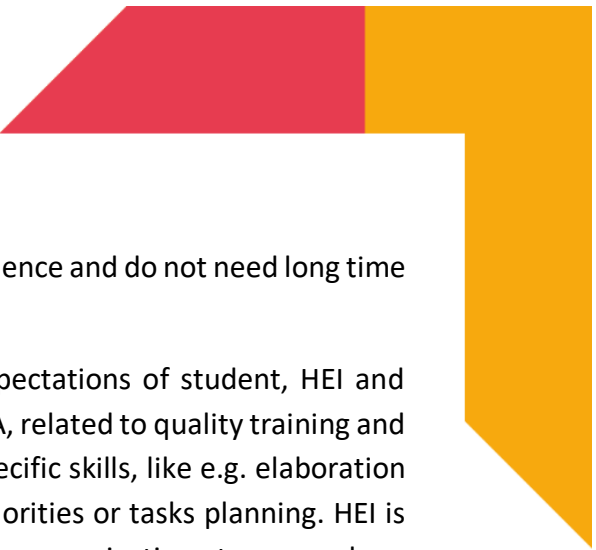
²⁷ <http://smartspace.io/campusumk/>.

²⁸ <https://evenea.pl/imprezy/szkolenia/olsztyn/seminarium-startup-od-pomyslu-do-biznesu-141502/>.

²⁹ <http://ue.poznan.pl/pl/zycie-studenckie,c24/kola-naukowe,c195/aktualnosci,c2663/wyklad-otwarty-startup-od-koncepcji-do-realizacji,a35413.html>.

³⁰ <https://inkubatory.pl/firma-bez-zus/>

³¹ About 27 of the budget of active labor Policy in Poland is spend on this instruments <https://www.mpips.gov.pl/praca/instrumenty/>



who are interested in graduates, who have professional experience and do not need long time on job training after their. Diploma.

The main problem in WBL implementation are different expectations of student, HEI and employers. HEI is interested in meeting the expectation of PKA, related to quality training and relation with labour market. Therefore it focus on gaining specific skills, like e.g. elaboration of the report, information gathering and analyses, setting priorities or tasks planning. HEI is interested also in social and civic competences, like e.g. communication, team work or business ethics. Employers in many instances are interested in low cost or cost free employers during holiday time, to replace regular employees. Only small part of them are aware of the incentives of employing the students with new qualification and in possible future employees.³² Students are interested mostly in gaining professional experience, which is a key to labour market. Therefore they accept the work without payment to be able to show in CV completed work placements.

³² <http://natemat.pl/12623,podaj-przynies-pozamiataj-jak-naprawde-wygladaja-praktyki-studenckie>

QUESTION 5: WBL IMPACT

Problems with combining different expectations of students HEI and employers influence small impact of WBL on Higher education. Despite obligatory work placement for majority of students, its impact on professional qualification is limited, as students are assigned to simple jobs, which do not enrich their professional qualifications. Limited impact of WBL was recognized by European Commission, which in 2015 published 20 guiding principles³³ on effective implementation of WBL. These principles, grouped in four areas, related to social partners engagement, support for companies participating in WBL, carrier guidance and quality assurance in WBL focus mostly on VET, but majority of them is very useful in planning WBL development in Poland, also in HEI. The meaning of dialogue with main stakeholder in education process was also stressed by the group of Polish experts, working on the reform of HEI in Poland.³⁴ According to them, HEI should cooperate with business in elaboration of the curriculum, including the program of work placement for students. Such a dialogue could bring together expectations of main stakeholders in WBL.

WBL can increase the quality of Higher education, bringing the education process closer to real situation on the labour market. However current practice require significant changes. Ministry of Higher Education is aware of the problems with WBL and is planning the changes in regulations concerning student's work placements. It is planned to elaborate unified standards of work placement. Also the duration of the work placement would be prolonged up to 6 months. Employers report the problem with organization of students work placement during summer holiday, therefore HEI would be more flexible in planning working time. From the point of view of students it would be also crucial to involve more SME's to students work placement program. SME's located also in small villages, would scale down the cost of work placements for students living in small villages.³⁵ Unified standards for work placement should precisely describe topics of training, expected results, and method of evaluation of the training program.

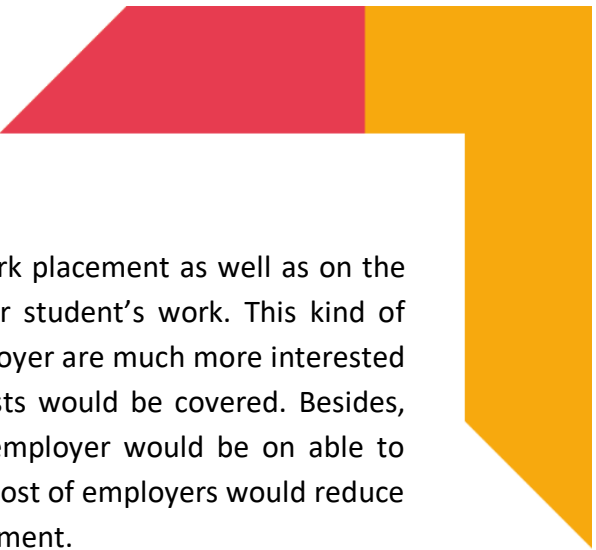
HEI reports the problem with identification of sufficient number of companies, interested in organization of work placement. This problem can be solved with better communication with companies, improved organization of the training and more dialogue with employers to adjust the training to the need of employers. Adjustment to employers needs is visible in the Program of the Ministry of Higher Education "You study?, you apprentice!" (Studiujesz? Praktykuj!) , started in 2015³⁶ and continued to 2018. Within this program HEI may apply for

³³ European Commission, DG Employment. 2015. High-Performing Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning - 20 Guiding Principles

³⁴ Reforma nauki i akademii w ustawie 2.0. Praca Zbiorowa pod red. A. Radwana. Kraków 2017.

³⁵ <http://pl.blastingnews.com/spoleczenstwo/2016/04/praktyki-studenckie-do-zmian-prawo-i-sprawiedliwosc-ma-juz-na-nie-pomysl-00884019.html>

³⁶ Ministry plan to spend 550 Mln PLN on the program (about 130 mln Euro).



EU funds, which can be spend on students salary during work placement as well as on the salaries of employees at the company, who would monitor student's work. This kind of program address the problem of costs at the company. Employer are much more interested in organization of work placement for students, if their costs would be covered. Besides, accepting the payment for the work of their employees, employer would be on able to contract the students to simple jobs. Programs covering the cost of employers would reduce the problems with identification of companies for work placement.

CONCLUSION

General conclusion is that Polish literature does not cover work based learning topic fully and deeply. Lack of major research on WBL in aspect of labour market needs and students preparation for being desirable employee. It is difficult to define WBL types, especially those mentioned in the WEXHE Project. We could not find literature on traineeship because it is one of the less popular type of WBL in Poland.


Also not enough sources caused, that we could not analyse different approach to WBL in defined in the WEXHE areas (hard, soft, etc.). Literature does not give an answer to the question about types of WBL and its general understanding. Of course some of the aspects of WBL are well described, but they not necessary correspondent to the WBL types in WEXHE Project. In Poland exist also other types of practical training for students and absolvent that are both supported by the government and the universities. They can be provide by Labour Office or special carrier centres at universities. Their efficiency depends mostly on people who locally manage the facility, so good practice need to be publicized.

There is still a big difference in perception of WBL by business and academics. On academics side dominates view that most of the practical training need to be provide by the school not by the business. Of course there is a level of cooperation in design of curriculum and practitioners conduct classes but surveys among the students show that this is below the expectation.

Also business points, that absolvent do not have the most important skills in modern economy – communication skills, ability to work in a group and acquire new knowledge. They pointed that soft skills need to be improved. What was very interesting, entrepreneurs involved in high quality WBL pointed low language skills of student and absolvent. That shows need of improvement on academic side.

We could identify weak correlation between work placement and acquiring professional skills. In most cases work placement are not validated, and both sides (students and entrepreneurs) are not interested in real training, but see WBL as necessary formality. That shows, universities need to put more effort on validation and supervision of WBL, especially considering work placement.

All participants of the process formulate comments, how to improve it. There are no differences on the skills that need to be improved, but approach is very different. Still the cooperation between business and HE is not strong enough. Entrepreneurs point that students despite the practice in the companies have unrealistic requirements for the first job. They overestimate their skills and escalate financial claims. It shows that while they help to partially acquire new skills, they stimulate expectations instead of improving them. On the other hand, a significant part of the students did not have high quality practice. They were



not allowed to participate in production or business management. Hence, there may appear inadequate expectations.

On this field we can see passive attitude of universities that often do not care about proper quality of practice. On this field, the best private universities are distinguished, for them high quality practices mean graduate success on the labour market, and consequently, more interest in offered courses of study by the next generation of candidates for study.

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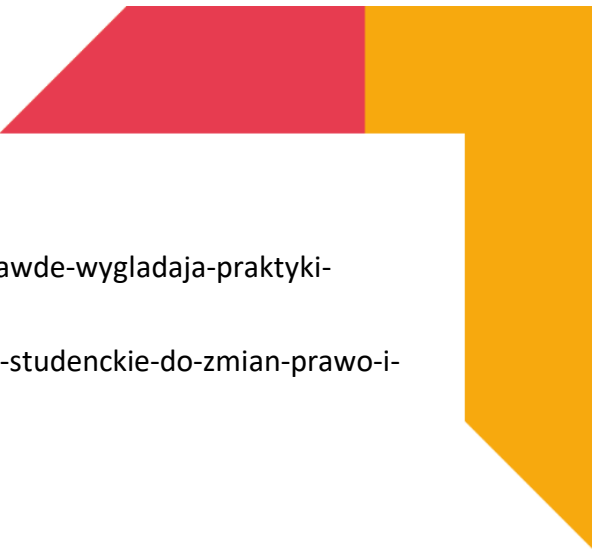
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