

Employer – Market – Employee

In mid-2014, as part of the Study of Human Capital, the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PAED) did its fifth survey of employers in Poland. As every year, the Regional Labour Office in Kraków conducted its survey to complement the results of the nationwide exercise. During this year's edition, a detailed analysis was performed of the demand for competences in three areas which are of importance for the Małopolska labour market: wholesale and retail trade, chemical industry and the manufacture of rubber and plastic products as well as the production of foodstuffs.

Impact of the condition of businesses on employment

The results of the employers' survey done by the PAED in mid-2014 indicate an improvement in the condition of Małopolska businesses compared with 2013. 40% of the respondents declared an increase in the profit generated by their business, as compared with the previous year, the profit dropped for one third of the respondents and one quarter of their number earned the same money. In 2013, as many as 40%

of the employers said that their year-to-year revenues had dropped. It was only every fourth respondent that declared an increase in their revenue during the same time period. A general improvement in the condition of businesses in 2014 may also be demonstrated by the fact that more employers had introduced innovative solutions into their operations (43% compared with 37% in 2013).

Changes in the employment levels in 2013 and 2014



A better financial standing of businesses translated into their personnel policy and plans in that regard. In 2014, the number of employees increased in nearly every third Małopolska firm. In 2013, this was true of as few as every fourth business. There was also a clear drop in the percentage of employers who had reduced

their overall employment level (14% compared with 24% in 2013). An increase in the number of employees was more frequently characteristic of businesses in the section of "Information and communication", "Finance and insurance", "Accommodation and catering services", "Health care and social welfare", "Professional, scienti-

fic and technical activities” as well as “Industrial processing” and “Education”. Less optimistic data on the dynamics of employment in 2014 come from the building and transport industries. Still, in these cases too, the number of employers declaring a drop in overall employment in their businesses was smaller than those who declared an increase.

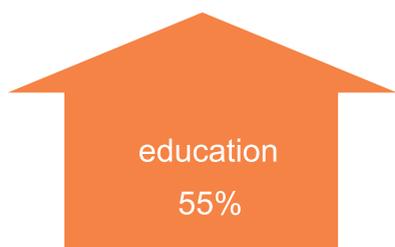
Employers’ expectations of candidates for work

One third of Małopolska employers expected that candidates for work would be fully prepared to do their work. The remaining two thirds were inclined to provide their employees with additional training, to various extent, and every fifth of these employers were willing to prepare their candidates in full to perform their responsibilities. The level of preparation to work expected by firm owners depended primarily on the type of business they pursued. Full preparation

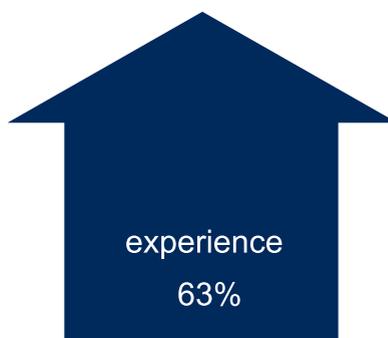
The employers’ plans for employment for the next year were more optimistic too. In mid-2014, as many as 30% of them presumed that employment would be growing in their firms in the following year. Only 8% expected a drop in the number of employees.

employers from the “Professional, scientific and technical activities” section.

At the same time, there was an increase in the percentage of employers declaring that the field and level of education and work experience of the candidates mattered in the recruitment process. 43% of the employers who did recruitment at the time of the survey said that the positions they offered required certificates. Reference was most frequently made to the



important for 55%
of the employers



important for 73%
of the employers

was required predominantly by employers in the transport and health care industries, as well as a considerable number of representatives of the building industry, industrial processing and information and communication. Most willing to offer additional training to their employees were

driving license or certificates required by the law. 40% of employers seeking employees also expected a command of a foreign language. This was largely English.

Recruitment difficulties

The percentage of employers who declared difficulties finding the right employees decreased – from 82% in 2013 to 67% in 2014. Nonetheless, again, more than two thirds of the employers said that the choice of the right candidate for work involved a lot of difficulties. The failures in the recruitment process were most

frequently due to the fact that the candidates did not meet the expectations.

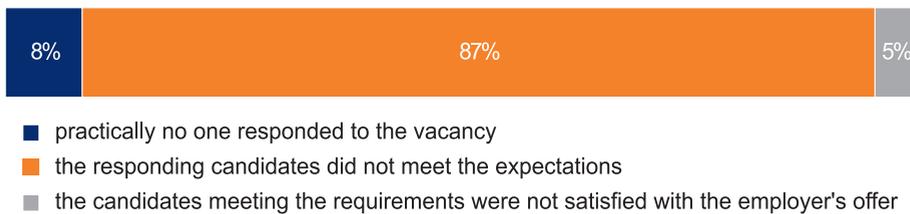
Employers complained primarily that the candidates did not have suitable work experience. Compared with the previous surveys, the percentage of the employers mentioning that barrier increased. Another obstacle was also

the lack of required skills and competences.

It is noteworthy, however, that the recruitment difficulties did not relate, to the same degree, to all categories of employees. For instance, attracting professionals from the market – which was the most desirable occupational group in 2014 – was not as difficult for the employers as hiring duly qualified industrial workers. The group that was particularly chal-

lenging in the recruitment process were building workers.

Causes of recruitment difficulties



Demand for competencies by industry

In order to deepen its knowledge acquired through the Study on Human Capital project, in another of its surveys of the demand for employees amongst Małopolska employers, the Labour Market and Education Observatory of Małopolska analysed in detail the three areas of importance in the regional labour market. These were: wholesale and retail trade, the chemical industry, manufacture of rubber and plastic products and the production of foodstuffs. The analysis enabled identification of the competences required in this branch of the economy. The table presents the ones which the employers considered most important. Additionally, the ones which were difficult to attract from the market were distinguished.

The key competences in trading, in terms of their importance, were individual (personality) ones. In the opinion of most of the respondents, elements indispensable in trade include: honesty, independence, personal manners, customer orientation and commitment. Such opinions are not surprising – this industry requires frequent contacts with customers and doing financial settlements (hence particular emphasis on honesty). The skills of evaluating product or service quality and care for such quality is also very important. Organisational competences such as: effective work organisa-

tion and systematic work also matter. Trading firm owners complained less frequently about deficits of knowledge and skills in candidates for work than representatives of other industries. Like traders, also representatives of the chemical industry and manufacturers of rubber and plastic products valued highly soft (individual) competences. They were less frequent to mention specialist competences as the key ones. What mattered the most, were care for quality, loyalty, honesty and commitment. Committed and loyal employees were usually willing to learn and try to do their work as best as they could. Also care of the entrusted equipment and independence, meaning work without the need for continued supervision and control of results was also very important. In the employers' opinions, it was relatively difficult to attract innovative staff and ones with initiative. In the food sector, the competences relating to quality in the production process were amongst the first on the list. These include cleanness and hygiene, care for quality, knowledge of the rules for storing food, knowledge of the HACCP. These were followed by knowledge of production technologies, observance of the rules for the operation of work position, knowledge of the recipes in the production process, ability to control the process and evaluate product quali-

ty, as well as the knowledge of the procedures. ces in the first place. Individual competences or attitudes were given lower weights. In other words, representatives of the food industry value specialist competen-

Key competences of employees, by industry

trade	chemical industry	food industry
1 honesty	care for quality	cleanness and hygiene
2 independence	loyalty	care for quality
3 personal manners	honesty	honesty
4. customer orientation	commitment	storage
5. commitment	care for the equipment	HACCP
6. quality of the goods	independence	commitment
7. organisation of own work	work safety	punctuality
8. systematic approach to work	learning	production technology
9. care for quality	evaluation of product quality	operation of work position
10. dispute resolution	problem solving	knowledge of recipes
11. order check	organisation of own work	process control
12. learning skills	pace of work	evaluation of product quality
13. patience	knowledge of products	knowledge of raw materials
14. oral communication	machinery user manuals	independence
15. sales planning	knowledge of internal procedures	frugality
16. knowledge of products	cooperation	preparation of recipes
17. record keeping	innovativeness	product price calculation
18. dealing with stress	orientation at development	organisation of own work
19. knowledge of internal procedures	initiative	learning
20. operation of specialised computer programmes	complaint handling procedures	pace of work

More information on the demand for competences by industry and most popular occupation can be found in the report “Employer – Market – Employee” available from the website of the Labour Market and Education Observatory of Małopolska at www.obserwatorium.malopolska.pl.

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