

dr hab. Justyna Danielewicz

dr hab. Maciej Turata

dr Małgorzata Żak-Skwierczyńska

‘The role of universities in shaping entrepreneurial competence as a factor in regional development’

Modern economies base their development on entrepreneurship, which is a key factor in regional growth. Universities play an important role in this process, not only by educating future entrepreneurs, but also by creating an environment conducive to the development of business initiatives. Cooperation between universities and the business sector, the availability of programmes supporting entrepreneurship and a strategic approach to education can have a significant impact on the dynamics of local and regional markets.

The aim of this article is to analyse the relationship between academia and graduate entrepreneurship, as well as to assess the impact of entrepreneurial activity on regional development in Poland. In addition, a critical analysis of regional development strategies will be carried out in terms of their effectiveness in creating conditions conducive to entrepreneurship.

The article covers three main areas: (1) the influence of universities on the entrepreneurial attitudes of graduates, (2) the relationship between entrepreneurial attitudes and the dynamics of socio-economic development of regions, and (3) the evaluation of regional policies in terms of supporting the creation of entrepreneurial attitudes. The results of the analysis can provide valuable insights for universities, policy makers and institutions responsible for regional economic development.

1/ Universities and the development of entrepreneurial attitudes among students

In the context of the growing role of higher education in shaping entrepreneurial ecosystems, the aim of this part of the article is to analyse the role of universities in creating entrepreneurial attitudes among graduates. Particular attention will be paid to: a) the analysis of the structure of faculties at universities in the regions; b) the analysis of the influence of universities on the labour market in the context of creating entrepreneurial attitudes; c) the analysis of the readiness of graduates of economics/business faculties to start a business after graduation.

The survey will be based on an analysis of statistical data on the number of students in particular fields of study and on the level of entrepreneurial activity of graduates.

Conclusions from the survey can serve as guidance for policy makers and universities themselves in optimising educational programmes and strategies to support entrepreneurship.

2/ Entrepreneurial attitudes and regional development

The second part of this article will focus on the analysis of the impact of entrepreneurial attitudes on the socio-economic development of regions in Poland. The main aim of this part will be to assess to what extent entrepreneurial competence and activity contribute to socio-economic development and the improvement of key regional development indicators.

The analysis of socio-economic development will be carried out on the basis of a set of indicators including the level of unemployment, number of start-ups, number of patents, investments in the region, value of output per employee and number of newly registered companies. This will make it possible to identify which regions have the highest levels of entrepreneurship and which factors favour or limit the development of companies and innovation.

Particular attention will be paid to the role of universities as catalysts of entrepreneurial attitudes (competences) and their impact on regional economic development. It will be analysed whether and to what extent the presence of strong academic centres translates into an increase in the number of new businesses and labour market dynamics.

The ultimate aim of this analysis is to indicate whether the offer of economic-business education can be seen as one of the factors in the socio-economic development of the regions. It also aims to identify potential areas of interest for regional policy in supporting the development of entrepreneurial attitudes/competencies.

3/ Regional policy and the promotion of entrepreneurial competences/attitudes

The third part of the article serves to review the way in which existing regional policies currently emphasise the promotion of entrepreneurial attitudes. For this purpose, an analysis of regional development strategies will be carried out. The analysis will use the method of content analysis, allowing for a systematic assessment of how strategic documents define and address the issue of entrepreneurial competences and attitudes.

Conclusions from the analysis will allow an assessment of the extent to which regional strategic documents not only declare support for the creation of entrepreneurial competences and attitudes, but also provide specific tools enabling their development. The results can serve as a basis for formulating recommendations aimed at improving policies supporting entrepreneurial attitudes at regional level.