



**LEONARDO ECON-IT**  
**Market Assessment Report**  
**Szczecin-Poland**



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

This document is produced within the framework of the LEONARDO ECON-IT project, as a country-specific report for Work Package 1, Market Assessment, with the purpose of providing a general overview of the Business Advisors' sector in Poland, especially addressed to the analysis of their training needs.

The report is structured in the following way:

- Section 2, *Background Information*, describes in a very general way the structure of the sector
- Section 3, *Methodology*, explains the steps followed for the preparation of the report
- Section 4, *Quantitative Analysis*, presents the numeric results from the application of the questionnaires
- Section 5, *Conclusions*, merges the output of the questionnaires with the focus group and desk-based research outcomes to provide the picture of the Business Advisors training environment
- Section 6, *Recommendations*, summarizes in a structured way the results of the two previous sections
- Annex 1, *List of Participants*, contains the list of organizations involved in the study.

## 2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### **Business Advisors**

First of all we should mentioned the specific situation in Business Advisors sector in Poland.

Before 1989, under the communism era, the business Advisors Sector wasn't developed. During the communism, there weren't many goods on the market. There wasn't any necessity to advise the public sectors because, no matter what kind of product there was in the magazines, there were all sold out, because of the general lack of the goods. In this case, there wasn't any need to advise.

The advisers were only at the political level, so the people couldn't really profit of it. But with the collapse of the communism many things has changed. With the fall of the communism in 1989, the free market was introduced, so the SME started to be created.

With a change of the system, many international enterprises started to make an investments in Poland, and these were from the different sectors of the market.

With the foundation of the polish departments of this consortiums, they have introduced the new, still unknown in Poland, methods of management in the enterprises. The new styles of the communications, service, advertisement, marketing were introduced.

The western-european standards, started to be the polish, common standards in the enterprises.

The "know-how" has come to Poland from the western Europe but also from the United States, so the new polish advisers has learned of their work in the International enterprises.

They have well received this modern methods of management.

So we can say that the business advisers sector in Poland was established from the two groups:

1) first employees from the international companies; they've studied this methods during their work. The international enterprises has brought their own advisers to show the polish employees different aspects of the functioning of the enterprises.

2) foreign business advisers firms, which have found the polish market as a new chance of the development for their activities.

These days there are about 3000 enterprises in Poland, whose name contains the words "advising", "consulting" etc.

It is said that only about a 1000 of them are the good qualificated enterprises which can provide really great number of services with the good quality.

These 3000 seems to be sufficient with the needs of the enterprises.

Generally polish business advisers have a really good reputation, they are still working on their continuing professional development.

We should underline that the sector of business advisers in Poland is quite hermetic. The enterprises who profits from the Business Advisers, gives the names of the advisers to the other enterprises, so that the others can also profits from the same advisers. This recommendation assure the best business advisers a constant place in the Business Advisers sector.

### ***Business Support Organizations in Poland***

We can mentioned following Business Support Organizations:

- Regional Development Agencies- information, training, promotion and advising role; support of innovations, connecting polish and foreign SME, European funds- Regional Financing Institution for the SME sector
- Crafts Chambers- they represent the Crafts and they promote them; they provides the technical education and gives proposals of the law changing,
- Associations of the Employers- they represent polish private employers in front of the national institutions, active enterprises and present their own economic programme,
- Chambers of Commerce- support for the enterprises, trainings, services-foreign languages, law advices, tax advices, searching for the cooperants-nationals and internationals. Integration of the employers
- Sectorial Chambers, support for the enterprises from the one sector of economy.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

Following the structure described in the ECON-IT application submitted to the LEONARDO Programme, the steps followed to build the study have been:

- Adaptation and translation into Polish of the questionnaire for Business Advisors. This questionnaire has been subsequently answered by 10 organizations. It was made via telephone, via face to face meetings but also via email
- Adaptation and translation into Polish of the questionnaire for Business Support organizations. The questionnaire has then been provided to 10 organizations, with the same arrangement and logistics like the already explained for the Business Advisors.
- Identification of key issues from the answered questionnaires
- Focus Group meeting with representatives from both categories (Business Advisors and Business Support organizations) to discuss the key issues previously identified
- Desk-based research has been made.
- All the collected information has been analyzed to produce the Conclusions and Recommendations Section of this report.

## 4 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The small amount of the organisations involved does not allow for significant statistical results. Nevertheless an aspect of the participations of the Business Support Organisations from the cities of the different polish regions can give the general view on the subject of Business Advising. Comments are added when applicable.

### 4.1 Questionnaire for Business Advisors

<b>Do you practice as a Business Advisor under the auspices of a professional body?</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	90%	Four of these professional bodies are national professional organisations like consulting enterprises (three) and international consulting enterprise. Three are local organisations and one has mentioned that he doesn't belong to any group.
Any group	10%	
No	0%	

<b>How do you undertake continuing professional development (CPD)</b>	
<b>Answer</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Completely variable	Meetings, seminars, conferences, training courses, researches, internet, literature, postgraduate studies like MBA, experience from the others advisers

<b>Are there any training courses or further education provided for B.As. in your area?</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	30%	Only three advisers know the training courses, but they have mentioned that it isn't only for the BAs, they are rather general.
Any knowledge	10 %	
No	70%	

<b>Are you aware of other surveys or research taking place into the training needs of B.As</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	10%	One only has said yes, and this adviser has mentioned, that there is a lack of knowledge of management in investment projects, psychology of management and negotiations
No	90%	

<b>What kind of business advisory training materials do you use</b>	
<b>Answer</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Completely variable	periodical professional publications, line magazines, case studies, power point, literature, dvd, cd, internet, researches,

<b>Do you have any knowledge about globally EU approved training programmes for B. A.</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	0%	
No	100%	

<b>What are your thoughts on the development of e-learning materials for B.As</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Very useful	40%	We've asked the business advisers from different age. So the Advisers who are hardly older, like 40 years and more, finds e-learning moderately useful or not useful. The advisers that thinks that the e-learning is useful have like 25-35 years old. The older advisers are rather conservatives, and they prefer the standard methods
Moderately useful	50%	
Not useful	10%	

<b>Do you find it necessary to introduce any kind of Quality Insurance Policy for B.As</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	70%	Three have mentioned that there isn't any necessity of the QIP for BA's. The one who has said this are rather well known in the BA sector in Poland, so nevertheless they don't find it difficult to receive new clients
No	30%	

<b>Are you interested in how other EU countries provide training/further education to B.As.</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	100%	
No	0%	

<b>Getting to know other countries provision of B.A. training and CPD would help your work</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	100%	
No	0%	

<b>Which training models do you give preference to</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Participation	80%	Some participants provide more than one answer to this question, this is why the total percentage is over 100%
Internet	60%	
Mixed	40%	

<b>Like to take part in operating an international interactive web based training portal for B.As</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	70%	
No opinion	10%	
No	20%	

<b>Necessary to publish your own and other countries training programmes for B.As/SMEs</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	60%	
No	40%	

<b>How many entrepreneurs ready to develop does a B.A. keep regular personal contacts with</b>	
<b>Answer</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Variable from 20 to 600	Depend of the organisation, of the size of the enterprise in which the adviser works.

<b>Are you able to reimburse the expenses of your trainings without any support and by SMEs</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	60%	These four hope to get some aid from the government, business association or any other association
No	40%	

## 4.2 Questionnaire for Business Support Organizations

<b>Are there concrete research results for the governmental support of Business Advisors</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	0%	
No	100%	

<b>What kind of media provides public sector support organisations with information on the training/development needs of B.A.</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Media	40%	
Advisory networks	70%	
Labour organizations	30%	
Conferences	70%	
Training courses	10%	

<b>Do you feel public sector support organisations should encourage and support the formation of B.A. networks</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	90%	
No	10%	

<b>Is there a role for public sector support organisations to oversee the CPD of B.A.s</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	90%	
No	10%	

### 4.3 Desk based research with practicing business advisers

<b>Are you aware of any form of general training programmes for business advisers in EU?</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	0%	
No	100%	

<b>Are you aware of any form of general training programmes for business advisers in your country?</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	10%	Only one adviser has answered that there is such programme, but he has mentioned that it isn't a programme strictly for business advisers. Nevertheless there are many trainings about the innovations, management, marketing and structural funds.
No	90%	

<b>Does your own organization or company provide in-house/bespoke training courses for business advisers ?</b>		
<b>Answer</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Yes	10%	This Adviser has mentioned the Northern Chamber of Commerce, organization which is a partner in Leonardo Econ-IT project.
No	90%	

<b>In your own opinion what type of training do you think is required for Business Advisers?</b>		
Three Advisers have answered, that their preferable types are the typical trainings in groups. Other types chosen are: case studies, lectures, exchange of opinions and experiences, face-to-face meetings, but first of all- trainings based on practice and not on the theory.		

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

During our researches we've asked the Business Advisers and Business Support Organisations from the region of West Pomerania as well as from the other parts of Poland.

So we can say that the results of our researches are the general profile of the Business Advising in Poland, even though there were only ten participants from each group.

The answers were more or less the same, so we can say that the results are adequate to the situation in Poland.

As it was mentioned at the beginning, the sector of Business Advisers and Business Support Organisations is quite new in Poland.

The Advisers are aware of the lack of knowledge so they are working to extend their knowledge.

The methods of undertaking CPD are rather based on experience, which shows that the practical part is always the best way to extend the qualifications.

The problem is that there aren't typical training courses for BA's. All the trainings are for more general audience, which means that if the BA's wants to extend their knowledge, they are rather obliged to make it in the groups with the entrepreneurs, employees etc., which is more difficult, because it is obvious that in the coherent, sectorial groups it is easier to exchange the opinions and experiences.

As it was mentioned, Business Advisers would like to continue their professional development, but in fact they don't really know from which programmes they can profit. There isn't any knowledge on the neither European nor polish training courses for BA's. Apparently they use the general methods of intensify the knowledge with the other beneficiaries.

To obtain the best profile of the BA's sector in Poland we've asked the advisers from different age, which was also important, because as we can remark in the Section of Quantity Analysis, the opinions on different questions is slightly different between the older and the younger Advisers.

We should underline, that although BA's sector is relatively new in Poland, there are Advisers who prefers the typical methods of courses. They don't find it really useful to use the methods of trainings based on internet. They don't believe in it's efficacy. They think that face to face meetings makes the participants to think, to be active. They think, that by internet, there isn't the real pressure, which can make them lazy.

Nevertheless, the interaction with the other participants is one of the most important aspects of the Business Advising.

As we've already underlined, the BA's sector in Poland is quite new, so there is a need among the BA's to know how does it work in the other countries.

The support for the Business Advisers is really important because there are the more and more entrepreneurs who needs a service of the BA's so we can anticipate that there would be created.

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

On a base of the researches in the frames of Work Package 1 by the Leonardo Econ-IT there are the following recommendations:

- 1) there is a need of the training course designed exclusively for the BA's. Such a course would be more efficient than the present courses, which are designed for the wider genre of entrepreneurs
- 2) the new training course should be a mix of the e-learning methods and presence participation, which should be the best way to convince the BA's who are rather pessimistic with the e-learning.
- 3) there is also a will to take part in operating an international interactive web based training portal for BA's, which should be use in future elaborate of this kind of system, we should profit from their experiences
- 4) There is a need of the Quality Insurance Policy. Perhaps the course in Econ-it project should be finished with some kind of exam, which should be the best guarantee of the quality of the BA's which have taken part in the Econ-IT project. It would enlarge the meaning of this course and the Econ-IT would be perceived as exclusive and would be a synonym of quality.

## ANNEX 1 – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

- *Practising Business Advisors*

- 1) SZCZECIN EXPO Towarzystwo Wspierania Rozwoju Pomorza Zachodniego
- 2) Europrojekty
- 3) Global Ericsson Consulting
- 4) Motivation Training Consulting
- 5) Spektrum Consulting
- 6) Fundacja Talent Promocja Postępow
- 7) Biuro Programów Międzynarodowych Politechniki Szczecińskiej
- 8) Północna Izba Gospodarcza
- 9) Katedra Efektywności Innowacji Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego
- 10) Działalność indywidualna doradcy biznesowego

- *Business Support Organizations*

- 1) Regional Chamber of Commerce from Lublin (Regionalna Izba Gospodarcza w Lublinie)
- 2) Chamber of Commerce and Industrie from Wielkopolska region (Wielkopolska Izba Przemysłowo- Handlowa)
- 3) Westpomeranian Association of the Regional Development Zachodniopomorskie Stowarzyszenie Rozwoju Regionalnego
- 4) Kraków Chamber of Commerce and Industrie (Izba Przemysłowo-Handlowa z Krakowa)
- 5) Westpomeranian Agency of the Regional Development (Zachodniopomorska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego)
- 6) Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industrie from Gliwice (Regionalna Izba Przemysłowo-Handlowa w Gliwicach)
- 7) The International Programmes Office, Technical University in Szczecin (Biuro Programów Międzynarodowych Politechniki Szczecińskiej)
- 8) The Office of Innovation and Efficacy of the University of Szczecin
- 9) Fundacja Talent Promocja Postępow
- 10) Lubelska Izba Rzemieślnicza

- *Focus Group Meeting* (IEP office in Valencia, June 20 2007)

- Paweł Łebrowski- Business Support Organisation
- Daniel Owczarek- Business Advisor

- Tomasz Zaj c- Business Advisor
- Roman Siedlikowski- Business Advisor
- Joanna Markiewicz- Business Support Organisation
- Pawe  Mieczan – Business Support Organisation