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More information about the author is provided as an introduction to the *Motivations, expectations, and demands of seniors participating in computer skills training* article.

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Natalia Romanowska is a chemist and a graduate of the Wrocław University of Technology. She is a project consultant, with her experience gained at Wrocław Centre for Technology Transfer at the Wrocław University of Technology and at Innova consulting company; currently running the Outspider company. She became an active member of AVEC and a participant of @ktywny Senior and she has won the hearts of seniors and others right away, which led to her being appointed a vice-chairman of Stowarzyszenie AVEC (AVEC association) and a coordinator of the computer skills training courses for seniors. She is ambitious and energetic and full of inspiring ideas. She is interested in mountain trekking, climbing, and sailing. A collector of stones.

European Union opportunities for funding projects for seniors. Review and structure of sources

Summary: The present article is an attempt at organising the available information on the subject of the opportunities of funding projects aimed at people of 50 years of age or more from the sources of various European Union funds at the central, national, and regional levels. Operational programmes related to the opportunities of implementing projects for seniors along with detailed information regarding the

beneficiaries and the potential proponents are presented, as well. Furthermore, a number of regulations and related documents constituting a course of information about the procedures connected with applying for the funds necessary to carry out the planned projects are listed. The aim of the authors of the article was to make it easier to find particular pieces of information related to the opportunities of applying for funds for projects for seniors among the hundreds of publications on the subject.

Key words: projects, operational programme, EU funds, 50+.

Introduction

A developed state should consist of three clearly defined, separate sectors: the public sector – including the government, the local government and other government institutions, the market sector – with the for profit subjects, aimed at generating profit, and the third sector – the voluntary one, including the organisations relying on the principles of self-help, promotion of active living, and aimed at creating and realising grassroots initiatives. Currently, a number of organisations promoting active living among people of over 50 years of age exist - they are usually NGOs. It must be emphasised that being active is to be considered in the context of sport, health, and education. A growing number of initiatives promoting healthy lifestyle and new opportunities of development for people over 50 are being developed in Poland – which does not mean that the level necessary for fulfilling social needs has already been reached. The number of programmes that provide support for seniors who decide to set up businesses, and those that offer employment services and various types of training courses for seniors is growing, as well.

We encounter a number of difficulties on the way to introducing these initiatives, with the question of receiving the necessary funds the most important of them. Therefore, the aim of the present article is to provide a review of the sources of funding and of the information on the projects funded by the European Union as well as the opportunities of receiving financial support for the projects aimed at seniors in Poland. Due to the amplexness of the problem the detailed information related to submitting grant applications has been excluded from the presented data. Because of the fact that the European Union project funding system employs a specific nomenclature it was necessary to provide an ongoing explanation of the used terms – these are listed in brackets.

One of the most important of the current sources of financial contributions to the promotion of active living among the people over 50 years of age are grants from the budget of the European Union. The ways of obtaining funds and their subsequent use depend on the particular persons and organisations applying for the grant. Furthermore, the grants received from the budget of the European Union are the most common source of funding for the aforementioned projects, since initiatives of this sort do not have major support on the level of the national government.

The importance of grant-aid for the initiatives related to the general prevention of social exclusion of seniors is exemplified by the "Report on Intellectual Capital

of Poland” conducted in 2008 that draws the attention of politicians, the public and the media to the role and significance of the quality and the level of the intellectual capital of seniors, with Poland taking the last place of all the 16 European countries included in the comparison.

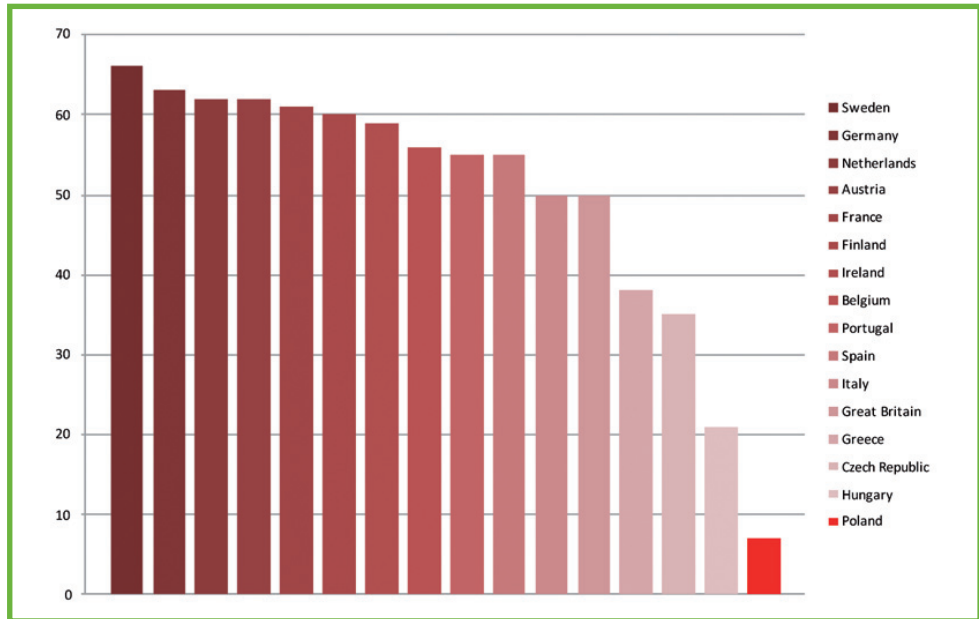


Chart 1. Intellectual Capital Index of seniors

Source: http://pliki.innowacyjnosc.gpw.pl/Kapital_Intelektualny_Polski.pdf, retrieved: 10.06.2010 r.

The reasons for Poland taking such an unfavourable place in the comparison of the researched countries were diagnosed as follows:

- Low level of professional activity of Polish seniors,
- High level of perceived alienation among people of advanced age,
- Low level of the availability of medical services calculated as the number of doctors per 1000 citizens.

This is increasingly becoming a burning issue due to the fact that Polish society is ageing. That is why the government policy related to seniors needs to be changed. Unfortunately, our government that should take sufficient care of seniors and guarantee their rights in accordance with the European Social Charter does not fulfil its duty, and as a consequence the responsibility of providing care and organising the time of people of advanced age lies with the families. It has only been for the last few years that we have been observing a slight change in relation to the aforementioned responsibilities with non-governmental organisations relieving the families of some of them. According to the "Report on Intellectual Capital

of Poland” that we have referred to before the deepening of the unfavourable demographic processes may, in the long run, result in the collapse of the public finances and in the inability of the government to provide social security for the older generations. The crisis of demographic regression can be avoided through the promotion of professional activity among the senior generation and the prolonging of the period of professional activity¹⁾. Operational programmes funded by the European Union are to constitute one of the number of solutions to the problem. That is why in the present article we have decided to emphasise this particular source of funding along with providing an outline of the origins of the discussed grants.

The hitherto received funds can be divided into three stages. Poland benefitted from European Union funds even before 2004 as part of the pre-accession support for the countries working towards European Union membership. Subsequently – after the accession of Poland to the European Union in 2004 – in 2004–2006 we were granted the opportunity to benefit from European Union funding on the same basis as the other members. The years 2007–2013, in turn, constitute a new period for European Union programmes, with Poland receiving further grants for operational programmes of numerous types.

There is a number of rules governing the European Union grant-aid, and one of the most important of them is the obligatory partial funding from the national government; that is, the grant-aid for a project consists of funds from the European Union as well as those from the national budget. The distribution of the financing of programmes in 2004–2006, as well as the current one, according to the plan for 2007–2013 are presented in the diagram below. Such co-financing is also in accordance with one of the rules of the cohesion policy, the one termed

Chart 2. European Union funds

Funds	2004–2006	2007–2013
(100%)	European Union funds (75%)	European Union funds (85%)
	national funds (25%)	national funds (15%)

Source: <http://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/WstepDoFunduszyEuropejskich/Strony/Czysafundusze.aspx>, retrieved: 09.11.2010 r.

¹⁾ http://pliki.innowacyjnosc.gpw.pl/Kapital_Intelektualny_Polski.pdf, dostęp: 10.06.2010 r.

supplementation of the rule of co-financing. It is to provide support and supplementation of the national funds, rather than substituting them completely.

Persons as well as organisations and institutions of various types (entrepreneurs, local government, schools, non-governmental organisations, etc.) may receive the funding depending on the goals that they want to achieve. However, individuals can also benefit from the funding by taking part in the numerous types of training courses, conferences, research projects, and counselling on the subject of starting a business, for instance. A number of conditions should be met before participating, e.g. one may qualify because of one's age, or belonging to a particular social group (especially ones at risk of social exclusion). The recipients – despite the literal meaning of the term – have to accept a number of responsibilities related to, for instance, obligatory participation in classes and successfully finishing the training course on pain of having to return the funding, receiving a certificate. Enumerations of the obligations of the beneficiaries constitute an essential part of the statutes of the particular EU-financed projects, and the final and mutually binding condition in the signing of a contract defining all the requirements that have to be met in order to participate in a EU project, the responsibilities of the organiser as well as the participant of the project, and the consequences of breaching the contract.

In order to receive funding the other organisations and institutions need to submit grant applications. To become the recipients of such funding it is obligatory to meet a number of strict requirements. It is of crucial importance that the statutory aims of an organisation comply with the conditions of application. Beneficiaries can apply for all types of funding, although the project that is to be implemented must comply with the aims a particular operational programme and it must be submitted in response to a call of proposals to the appropriate intermediary body. An application submitted correctly to the appropriate agency is subsequently subject to assessment. During the verification a meeting of experts of an Evaluation Committee is called; then the application is either accepted and the project receives the grant, or it is rejected which results in declining the fund application. The beneficiaries whose projects are rejected can file complaints. In such cases the application is re-assessed by a new team of experts at another Evaluation Committee meeting and then it is finally opinionated.

The assessment of the applications consists of two parts – evaluation of the formal and the quality aspects. The first part is related to the procedural criteria and in the second one the budget of the project – eligible expenditures, reasonability of the planned expenses, as well as the general idea behind the project – is subject to assessment; coherence with the aims of the operational project that the action is to constitute a part of is of crucial importance at this stage. Frequently missing a single rubric in the form causes the rejection of the application due to a formal error, and the quality aspect of the application is not even taken into consideration.

Programmes implemented on the national level

Operational programmes organised as part of the actions undertaken by the European Union in order to support economic growth and employment development are closely connected to the documents, strategies, policies, and guidelines described below.

One of the above is the National Cohesion Strategy (NCS) also referred to as National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF). In the document the priorities, the areas of use, and the implementation system of the following EU funds are defined:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF),
- European Social Fund (ESF),
- Cohesion Fund.

The NCS is defined through the strategic and the horizontal objectives. The strategic objective of the NCS is "to create conditions for the improvement of competitiveness of the economy based on knowledge and entrepreneurship, ensuring the increase of employment and the higher level of social, economic cohesion"²⁾. The objective is achieved through the implementation of horizontal objectives, such as:

- "Improving the functioning standard of public institutions and development of partnership mechanisms,
- Improving the human capital quality and enhancing social cohesion,
- Establishment and modernisation of technical and social infrastructure crucial for better competitiveness of Poland,
- Improving the competitiveness and innovativeness of enterprises, including in particular the manufacturing sector with high added value and development of the services sector,
- Increase of the competitiveness of Polish regions and preventing their social, economic and territorial marginalisation,
- Balancing growth opportunities and supporting structural changes on rural areas"³⁾.

The NCS objectives listed above are implemented in a variety of ways – through actions of legal and fiscal character as well as through the operational programmes organised by the European Union and coordinated by the Ministry of Regional Development and the Regional Operational Programmes managed by the executive branches (the managing boards) of the particular voivodships and with the use of projects co-financed by structural elements, such as:

- Infrastructure and Environment Programme – ERDF and CF,
- Innovative Economy Programme – ERDF,
- Human Capital Programme – ESF,

²⁾ <http://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/WstepDoFunduszyEuropejskich/Strony/NSS.aspx>, dostęp: 10.09.2010 r.

³⁾ <http://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/WstepDoFunduszyEuropejskich/Strony/NSS.aspx>, dostęp: 10.09.2010 r.

- 16 regional programmes – ERDF,
- Development of Eastern Poland Programme – ERDF,
- Technical Assistance Programme – ERDF,
- European Territorial Co-operation Programmes – ERDF.

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) - structural funds and the Cohesion Fund constitute the financial tools of the cohesion policy implemented by the European Union. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is the largest of the three and its aim is to increase the level of social and economic cohesion within the European Union and reduction of inequalities between regions.

The ERDF finances:

- Direct support of investments in business in order to foster stable employment,
- Infrastructure connected with research and innovation, telecommunication, preservation of environment, energy, and transport,
- Financial instruments (risk capital funds, regional development funds) in order to support local and regional development and improving the cooperation between cities and regions,
- Technical support tools⁴⁾.

As previously mentioned, the ERDF also finances all the operational programmes.

The second largest element is the European Social Fund (ESF) whose aim is improving the quality and availability of jobs as well as creating opportunities of employment within the European Union. Training courses, workshops, and various forms of employment support constitute the largest part of the projects implemented with the support of the ESF.

The idea of an ongoing adaptation of employees and businesses through participation in lifelong learning systems as well as development and dissemination of innovation in organisation of work constitute the areas of activity of the ESF. Further, the ESF deals with providing access to employment for those looking for work, professionally inactive people, women, and immigrants as well as those with various problems and those discriminated on the labour market. The last element constituting an area of the activity of the ESF is providing support for the human capital through the introduction of education system reforms and establishing education centres.

The last element of the cohesion policy of the European Union is the aforementioned Cohesion Fund that needs to be discussed despite the fact that it is not directly connected with the promotion of active living among the people of over 50 years of age. However, it was as part of that fund supporting ecology and transport that Poland, after its accession into the European Union, received the highest grant-aid that any member state had ever previously obtained. The regional

⁴⁾ <http://www.bps.uw.edu.pl/europejski-fundusz-rozwoju-regionalnego.html>, dostęp: 10.09.2010 r.

government units of the states whose gross national product (GNP) per capita is lower than 90% of the European Union members' average are the main beneficiaries of the discussed funds.

The most important documents regulating the distribution of European Union funds are Community Strategic Guidelines (CSG) and the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF). The former of these constitute an important document defining the areas that need to be the recipients of funds, which also becomes the basis of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF), also referred to, as formerly mentioned, as the National Cohesion Strategy (NCS), that constitute the most important Polish document related to European Union grant-aid. It is in these documents that the aims that the money received by Poland as part of the aforementioned funds is to be spent on are defined. „The objective of NCS is to create conditions for the improvement of competitiveness of the economy based on knowledge and entrepreneurship, ensuring the increase of employment and the higher level of social, economic cohesion”⁵⁾.

The documents discussed above constitute the basis for the development of Operational Programmes that allow for the receiving of funds for particular actions. Therefore, operational programmes become the instruments created for the implementation of the aims of the ERDF, the ESF, and the CF.

Detailed descriptions of priorities are prepared for each of the programmes, with application documents prepared before submitting all project proposals as well as the acts regulating e.g. the legal aspects of receiving public funds supplementing the descriptions.

Apart from the six main Operational Programmes there are the six regional ones constituting the supplement of the strategic documents of the European Union and involving the particular voivodships.

The forms of financing of all the actions conducted by the European Union described above are implemented at the national as well as the regional levels. However, there is a number of funds distributed at the European Union level that are organised as part of the programmes implemented by the European Commission. All organisations based in the member states as well as those from outside the EU may apply for grant-aid from these funds. The funds at the European Union level are implemented and governed by the European Commission and those institutions in the member states which have been established to manage these forms of financing.

⁵⁾ <http://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/wstepdofunduszyeuropejskich/strony/celepolitykispojnosci.aspx>, dostęp: 10.09.2010 r.

The programmes implemented at the European Union level

The following programmes are implemented at the European Union level:

- Lifelong learning,
- Erasmus Mundus,
- Culture,
- Europe for citizens,
- Media,
- Second programme of Community action in the field of health,
- Safer Internet,
- Youth in action,
- Community programme for employment and solidarity - Progress,
- Life+,
- Freedom, security, and justice programmes,
- External policy instruments,
- Cohesion policy, Common Agricultural Policy, and Common Fisheries Policy instruments.

Description of the programmes for seniors

The precursors of the Lifelong Learning Programme were the SOCRATES, Leonardo da Vinci, Jean Monnet, e-Learning, and European Language Label programmes, with their most important actions included in the Lifelong Learning Programme for 2007–2013. Its aim is „to foster interchange, co-operation and mobility between education and training institutions and systems within the EU” and the expected results are „modernisation and adaptation of education and training systems In the participating countries [...] and [bringing] European added value directly to individual citizens participating in its mobility and other co-operation actions”⁶⁾.

Chart 3. The structure of the Lifelong Learning Programme

Programy sektorowe			
Comenius Edukacja szkolna	Erasmus Szkolnictwo wyższe	Leonardo da Vinci Kształcenie i szkolenie zawodowe	Grundtvig Edukacja dorosłych*
Program Międzysektorowy (Transversal Programme) 4 kluczowe działania – rozwój polityki edukacyjnej; uczenie się języków; ICT upowszechnienie przykładów najlepszej praktyki			
Program Jean Monnet 3 kluczowe działania – Akcja Jean Monnet; instytucje europejskie; stowarzyszenia europejskie			

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm retrieved: 03.02.2012.

⁶⁾ <http://www.frse.org.pl/programy-frse/uczenie-sie-przez-cale-zycie>, dostęp: 15.08.2010 r.

Students, teachers, organisers of training courses, businesses, social partners, associations, research centres, and other organisations concerned with education in the broad sense of the term can become beneficiaries of the Lifelong Learning Programme. It ought to be noted that the lifelong Learning programme is financed in 75% from the European Union funds, with the remaining 25% contributed by the grant recipients.

The programme that is aimed at adult education in the broad sense of the term and that provides support for European cooperation in this area is Grundtvig, whose actions are intended for organisations involved in the education of the final beneficiaries of the programme. It is engaged in promotion of the education of those needing special support; i.e. the handicapped, seniors, national and ethnic minorities, people of low qualifications as well as inhabitants of areas of low adult education accessibility⁷⁾.

Chart 4. The Grundtvig programme

Objectives	<p>„To respond to the educational challenge of an ageing population in Europe, To help provide adults with pathways to improving their knowledge and competences, To improve the quality and accessibility of mobility throughout Europe of people involved in adult education and to increase its volume, To improve the quality and to increase the volume of co-operation between organisations involved in adult education throughout Europe, To assist people from vulnerable social groups and in marginal social contexts, in particular older people and those who have left education without basic qualifications, in order to give them alternative opportunities to access adult education, To facilitate the development of innovative practices in adult education and their transfer, including from a participating country to others, To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning, To improve pedagogical approaches and the management of adult education organisations⁸⁾.”</p>
Actions	<p>Decentralised: Managed at the national level by National Agencies, Opportunities to implement projects or workshops by organisations (Grundtvig partnership programmes, senior volunteering projects, Grundtvig workshops). Individual trips of adult education staff (training and professional development of adult education staff, visits and exchanges of adult education staff, Grundtvig assistantships, Grundtvig preparatory visits). Centralised: Managed directly by the Executive Agency of the European Commission in Brussels, Multilateral projects, Grundtvig networks, Accompanying measures.</p>

⁷⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/doc/call09/prior_pl.pdf, retrieved: 15.08.2010 r.

⁸⁾ <http://grundtvig.org.pl/index.php/ida/2/>, retrieved: 11.06.2010 r.

Target public	Learners in adult education, Institutions and organisations providing learning opportunities in adult education, Teachers and other staff of those institutions or organisations, Centres involved in the initial or further training of adult education staff, Associations and representatives of those involved in adult education, including learners' and teachers' associations, Centres providing guidance, counselling and information services relating to any aspect of adult education, Persons and bodies responsible for systems and policies concerning any aspect of adult education at local, regional and national level, Research centres and bodies concerned with adult education issues, Enterprises, Not-for-profit organisations, voluntary bodies, non-governmental organisations, Higher education institutions.
All 27 of the EU member states as well as Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, and Croatia can reply to the calls for proposals of the programme.	

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/structure/grundtvig_en.html#4, retrieved: 03.02.2012.

The national and regional level programmes

Human Capital Operational Programme

The policy of promoting activity of people of over 50 years of age as part of the Human Capital Operational Programme is implemented in regional operational programmes. The actions undertaken to support people of over 50 years of age (sometimes over 45 years of age) are included in the priorities, parts/sub-measures, as it were, of the operational programme. These are the priorities VII.3 and IX.5. Furthermore, the actions related to the promotion of activity of people under 64 years of age, i.e. those of the working age are connected with the priorities VI.1.1, VI.2, VII.1.1, VII.2.1. The limited number of the mentioned programmes makes one realise how minute the European Union funds aimed at promotion of active living among seniors are. An outline of the priorities follows.

The aforementioned priorities present the aims that are to be achieved as well as the actions that are to be undertaken to fulfil them. Furthermore, the priorities determine the types of projects that can be financed. Systemic projects are to be found here – the ones related to the financing of public actions implemented in the way defined in separate legal regulations and by the persons specified therein – and call for proposals projects – with the applications submitted in reply to calls for proposals of the Intermediary Bodies on the basis of the Priority Framework of the HCOP. To complement the presentation of the system of financing the HCOP actions it is necessary to introduce the notion of the Managing Authority. It is the institution providing the grant-aid for the implementation of HCOP projects. It is to announce the calls for proposals, conduct the assessments of the applications, establish the Monitoring Committee, sign contracts with the project managers, monitor the implementation of the projects, as well as granting of refunding the expenditures of the project managers. In the Lower Silesian voivodship the institution implementing the VI and VII priorities is Dolnośląski Wojewódzki Urząd Pracy (Lower Silesian voivodship employment agency) and the IX priority is managed by Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Dolnośląskiego (Lower Silesian voivodship marshal office).

Chart 5. Characteristics of priorities

	Priority VI Employment market open to everyone	Priority VII Promotion of social integration			Priority IX Development of education and competences in the regions
Actions	6.1 Improvement of the accessibility of employment and supporting professional activity in the region	7.1 Development and dissemination of active integration	7.2 Prevention of social exclusion and strengthening the social economy	7.3 Local initiatives for active integration	9.3 Dissemination of continued school education
Aims of the actions	Increasing the level of professional activity and providing opportunities for employment for the unemployed and creating conditions for the development of professional activity in the region	Development of active forms of integration and securing access to them for the people at risk of social exclusion and the improvement of the effectiveness of the functioning of social assistance institutions.	Improvement of the accessibility of employment for people at risk of social exclusion and development of the social economy sector.	Supporting the development of initiatives for the prevention of social exclusion of the members of local communities in the rural areas that encourage their professional and social activation.	Increasing the participation of adults in continued school education through the improvement of its quality and availability and increasing the importance of continued education as a factor influencing the employment market.
Sub-measures	6.1.1 Supporting the unemployed on the regional employment market – calls for proposals applications.	7.1.1 Development and promotion of active integration through social assistance centres – systemic projects.	7.1.2 Development and promotion of active integration through regional family support centres – systemic projects.	–	–
		7.1.1 Development and promotion of active integration through social assistance centres – systemic projects.	7.2.1 Social and professional activation of the people at risk of social exclusion – call for proposals projects.	–	9.5 Grassroots educational initiatives in rural areas
					Dissemination of activity of the inhabitants of rural areas aimed at self-organisation and creating local initiatives for the development of education and increasing of the level of education of the inhabitants of rural areas.

Types of beneficiaries	All single entities – except regional employment agencies and individuals	Social assistance centres	Family support centres	All single entities – except individuals	All single entities – except individuals	All single entities – except individuals	All single entities – except individuals
<p>Target groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The unemployed, particularly: – persons unemployed for at least 12 consecutive months during the last 2 years, – women (including especially those entering the employment market for the first time and those returning from maternity leaves) – people under 25 years of age – the disabled – people over 45 years of age – The unemployed inhabitants of rural and rural-city areas and inhabitants of cities of population of under 25,000 intending to find non-agricultural jobs/mieszkańców zamierzające podjąć zatrudnienie w zawodach pozarolniczych. 	<p>People meeting all three of the requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – benefitting from social assistance. – working age (15–64 years of age) – unemployed or the employed at risk of social exclusion. 	<p>People meeting three of the requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – benefitting from social assistance. – working age (15–64 years of age) – unemployed or the employed at risk of social exclusion – the environment of the socially excluded – social assistance and integration agencies, their staff and voluntary workers – social and business partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the unemployed at risk of social exclusion – the environment of the socially excluded – social assistance and integration agencies, their staff and voluntary workers – social and business partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the unemployed of working age (15–64 years of age), at risk of social exclusion, inhabiting rural and rural-city areas and cities of population of under 25,000 – inhabitants of rural and rural-city areas and inhabitants of cities of population of under 25,000 – single entities working in rural areas for the prevention of social exclusion of the inhabitants of these areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – people of 24-64 years of age (and those of 18-24 years of age who are out of school) who declare the willingness to participate in continued school education – adult education schools, continued education, training, and vocational education centres (except schools for secondary schools graduates) – social and business partners – employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – inhabitants of rural and rural-city areas and inhabitants of cities of population of under 25,000 – local communities working in the rural areas for the development of education in the rural areas and increasing the level of education of the inhabitants of rural areas – single entities working in the rural areas for the prevention of their marginalisation and their sufficient development. 	

Source: Developed on the basis of the information on the Ministry of Regional Development website (<http://www.mrr.gov.pl/>) and the Dolnośląski Wojewódzki Urząd Pracy (Lower Silesian voivodship employment agency) website (<http://www.dwup.pl/>).

Chart 6. The documents necessary for writing a Human Capital Operational Programme project

Documents	
1	<p>European Union regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corrigendum to Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 - Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Regional Development Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1783/1999 - Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Social Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1784/1999 - Council Regulation (EC) No 1084/2006 of 11 July 2006 establishing a Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1164/94 - Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) - Corrigendum to Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 of 8 December 2006 setting out rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Regional Development Fund
2	<p>Polish regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ustawa z dnia 7 listopada 2008 r. o zmianie niektórych ustaw w związku z wdrażaniem funduszy strukturalnych i Funduszu Spójności (Dz.U. 2008 nr 216 poz. 1370), - Obwieszczenie Marszałka Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 20 listopada 2007 r. w sprawie ogłoszenia jednolitego tekstu ustawy – Prawo zamówień publicznych (Dz.U.07. nr 223, poz. 1655), - Ustawa z dnia 6 grudnia 2006 r. o zasadach prowadzenia polityki rozwoju (Dz.U.06. nr 227, poz. 1658 z późn. zm.), - Ustawa z dnia 8 grudnia 2006 r. o zmianie ustawy o finansach publicznych oraz niektórych innych ustaw (Dz. U. z 2006 r., nr 249 poz. 1832), - Ustawa z dnia 30 czerwca 2005 r. o finansach publicznych (Dz. U. z 2005 r., nr 249, poz. 2104 z późn. zm.), - Zarządzenie Nr 6 Ministra Rozwoju Regionalnego z dnia 11 kwietnia 2007 r. w sprawie Komitetu Koordynacyjnego Narodowe Strategiczne Ramy Odniesienia na lata 2007–2013
3	<p>Directives for 2007–2013</p> <p>EU documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Community Strategic Guidelines (CSG) constitute an essential EU document that defines the areas to be financed by the EU. On the basis of the Guidelines the National Strategic Reference Framework are constructed. <p>Polish documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The National Strategic Reference Framework, also known as the National Cohesion Strategy, is the most important Polish document related to EU funds. It defines the aims for which Poland is to spend the funds of the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund. The National Cohesion Strategy for 2007-2013 is aimed at creating conditions for an increase of competitiveness of Polish industry based on knowledge and entrepreneurship and ensuring an increase in employment and an increase in social, economic, and spatial cohesion. - The purpose of directives, as opposed to regulations that define the aim and the scope of the particular funds, is to identify the areas in which the cohesion policy can be most effective in supporting the implementation of the Community priorities aimed at achieving the goals of the new Lisbon Strategy. <p>The Community Strategic Guidelines constitute the basis for the preparation of national documents of the member states, i.e. National Strategic Reference Frameworks and the operational documents.</p>

4	Directives of the Ministry of Regional Development	Documents regulating the general aspects of inculating the EU funds in the 2007–2013 financial perspective
5	National Development Strategy	
6	Strategia Rozwoju Województwa Dolnośląskiego (Lower Silesian voivodship development strategy)	– Documents defining the aims and the priorities of the social and economic development on the national, regional, and local levels
7	Local Development Strategies	
8	Horizontal directives	
9	Directives for the Human Capital Operational Programme	– Documents of the Ministry of Regional Development that define the rules and aims related to the implementation of the Human Capital Operational Programme, e.g. rules of financing, eligibility of expenditures, financial reporting, control system, etc.
10	The system of implementation of the Human Capital Operational Programme	
11	The Human Capital Operational Programme	– Document including the socio-economic report identifying the particular areas to be supported (i.e. employment, education, adaptability, social integration, administration, and health care), the SWOT analysis, information on the subject of the hitherto received foreign funding for the human capital, the strategy of implementation of the Programme divided into the particular areas to be supported, description of the priorities, the expected effects of the support and implementation indicators, description of the system of implementation, information about and the scope of complementarity with other funds and operational programmes and the financial plan. Due to the general character of the Human Capital Operational Programme the Managing Authority has prepared. – Document providing further details on the directives of the Human Capital Operational Programme. It is a compendium for the potential beneficiaries of the Programme containing information about the opportunities and the ways of implementing the projects co-financed by the European Social Fund. The information contained therein is related to the particular types, the list of the potential beneficiaries, the target groups, and the system of implementation, making it easier to prepare the project and to fill the application forms correctly.
12	Detailed description of priorities	
13	Action plans for the particular priorities for each year of the 2007-2013 period.	– Document developed by the Intermediary Body – the yearly implementation plan of the Human Capital Operational Programme – the plans prepared separately for each of the regional priorities include: the report on the dominant problems, the planned aims to be achieved as a result of the support provided and information on the preferred forms of support in a particular year, financial plans for each of the years and the detailed rules and the deadlines for the choice of the projects in the span of one budget year (except for the action plan for 2007–2008). The document is recommended by the Monitoring Committee of the Human Capital Operational Programme and assented by the Managing Authority of the Programme. – Document including information on the call for proposals: its subject, application submission deadlines, the funds for the financing of the project, the application requirements, selection criteria.
14	Calls for proposals	– Document submitted by the potential beneficiary/project organiser to the implementing agency in order to receive funds.
15	The application	

Source: Developed on the basis of the information on the Ministry of Regional Development website (<http://www.mrr.gov.pl>) and the Dolnośląski Wojewódzki Urząd Pracy (Lower Silesian voivodship employment agency) website (<http://www.dwup.pl>).

To conclude it needs to be stated that although the European Commission proposes certain actions supporting the initiatives aimed at seniors they might not be sufficient in the face of the growing problem presented by the ageing of the society. The results of the analysis of the opportunities of support for people over 50 years of age provided by the European Union suggest that there are only a few such programmes. The inability to use the EU funds as well as the ineffective management of them constitute yet another problem. Although one hears more and more about computer training courses for seniors or sport and cultural actions there is no effective promotion and education campaign related to the subject of activity and promotion of active living among people of over 50 years of age. Because of this situation a large part of the society remains ignorant of the existence of such programmes, which is why the co-financed projects frequently have problems reaching the indicators to be met according to the application.

Without social interest in the problem and with the lack of knowledge of the opportunities of receiving support the problem of the ageing society is marginalised. Social dialogue is of crucial importance here, because it makes it necessary for the Polish legislators and the European Union officials to negotiate and seek solutions. That is why we should hope that the year 2012 that is to be the Year of Seniors will mark the beginning of essential, necessary changes in this difficult area.

Furthermore, the highly formalised application submission system and the restrictions imposed by the European Union on the potential project organisers are so severe that small centres and agencies cannot „compete” for the project funds due to their lack of sufficient financial security. Because of this situation the funds for a particular priority often are not spent which leads to Poland refunding the European Union financing and the indicators assumed in the operational programmes and plans not being met.

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