

Country: Poland

Name of the case study: ***Assistance from „A” to „Z” – Professional activation of homeless people from Wroclaw Circle St. Brother Albert Aid Society***

Period: 30.09.2012-30.10.2015

Target population: homeless people

Life stage: 18-65

Investment theme: homelessness, social and vocational activation of homeless people

Short description of the program:

*Assistance from A to Z* was a project of socio-professional activation of people at risk of social exclusion. It applied to a specific group of people – the homeless. The project was implemented in the period of time: 30.09.2012-30.10.2015 in Wroclaw by Wroclaw Circle St. Brother Albert Aid Society. The project included the socio-professional activation of 136 homeless people, out of work, at risk of social exclusion, in three annual editions. 120 people accomplished the participation in the project.

Project intervention assumed the professional and social activation of the homeless through the acquisition of socio-professional skills and competences, which would allow to reduce the negative consequences of homelessness. Beneficiaries of the project benefited, among other, from classes forming social competencies and activation (e.g. sports, arts), IT trainings, work trainings, vocational trainings, meetings with entrepreneurs and vocational internships. The project provided psychological support, as well as, support in solving legal problems and accompanist support.

St. Brother Albert Aid Society, the organization which Wroclaw Circle implemented this project, has been operating since 1981 and is the first non-governmental organization in Poland, that provides help to the homeless.

*Assistance from A to Z* project was implemented under the Operational Programme Human Capital and was financed by the European Social Fund. It received funding in the amount of PLN 3,230,097.45.

Policy Area:

Active inclusion policy; the social and vocational integration of homeless people at the municipal level in Poland.

The legislative and regulatory frame work:

The legislative and regulatory frame work included key acts of law:

- Act of 12 March 2004 on social assistance;
- Act of 13 July 2003 on social employment;
- Act of 27 April 2006 on social cooperatives;
- Act of 20 April 2004 on promotion of employment and on labour market institutions;
- Act of 27 August 1997 on vocational and social rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities;
- Act of 24 April 2003 on public benefit and volunteer work.

Implementation of the project was also subject to regulations of the Operational Programme Human Capital, under which the project *Assistance from A to Z* has been implemented.

Main actors:

- Wroclaw Circle St. Brother Albert Aid Society – non-governmental organization, association,

department of St. Brother Albert Aid Society. Wroclaw Circle was founded in 1983. On 31.12.2015 Wroclaw Circle had got 131 members, including 119 ordinary members and 12 supporting members. The organization employed 57 people, and 27 people working on the basis of civil contracts. Circle operates the following facilities for helping the homeless: two shelters for homeless men, shelter for homeless women and mothers with children, night shelter for homeless women, night shelter for homeless men, warming centre for homeless people. Wroclaw Circle helps every year almost 3 thousand people, also implements many projects of support and activation of the homeless.

- Homeless people – beneficiaries of the project, especially people who were under the care of Wroclaw Circle St. Brother Albert Aid Society. Among the 136 homeless people involved in the project were: 110 men and 26 women; 90 economically inactive persons and 46 unemployed; 54 disabled persons, including 8 women and 46 men; 7 young participants – at age of 15-24 and 51 elderly participants (aged 55-64); 8 persons with higher education, 103 with secondary education (general secondary, vocational secondary and basic vocational) and 25 with lower secondary or primary education.
- Others: the Municipal Social Assistance Centre in Wroclaw, the District Labour Office in Wroclaw, employers.

#### Innovative elements:

An important innovative element is the use of innovative methods of accompaniment. This solution comes from France and it is an innovative component, developed under the projects implemented by the St. Brother Albert Aid Society. The essence of this method is subjective and partner-like approach of a person who without the support would not be able to take legal employment and rebuild social bonds. Accompanist is the person directly carrying out the method of accompaniment, which is responsible for personal advising, coordinates the support of various institutions, provides support, as well as, instruments for professional and social activation.

In Polish conditions, innovation is also the combined use of a wide range of social and professional support. Public institutions usually limit the support, which prevents the active inclusion of homeless people who require a comprehensive approach.

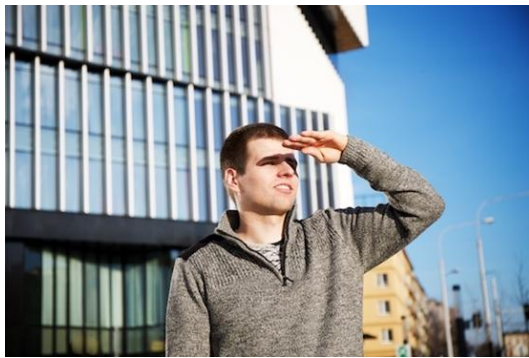
Links to to key policy documents, previous research, news reports, etc.

Policies in the fields of social inclusion and active inclusion are important areas of Polish social policy, conducted as part of national actions as well as regional and local once, including the support of the European Union. Key policy documents, previous research, news reports on homelessness are a part of social inclusion materials and mostly they are available only in Polish.

Photos:



Participants of IT trainings and art classes conducted in the framework of the *Assistance from A to Z* project



Kamil Peksa, project beneficiary



Krzysztof Pawłuszko, project manager assistant



Alicja Grzesiak, project beneficiary, the winner of first place in the competition "As the European Social Fund changed my life" in 2013

Source: Wrocław Circle St. Brother Albert Aid Society

Country: Poland

Name of the case study: Government Program for the Elderly Social Activity based on the selected example

Period: 2012-2020

Target population: seniors

Life stage: independent elder

Investment theme: active ageing, senior policy

Short description of the program:

Rządowy Program na rzecz Aktywności Społecznej Osób Starszych (Government Program for the Elderly Social Activity- ASOS) is one of the tools of the senior policy in Poland. The senior policy is one of the newest public policies implemented in Poland after 1989. It was established as a result of two processes. The first was the accession of Poland to the European Union (EU), where the support for the elderly people inclusion and activation is treated as a social investment. The second one is strongly connected with the growing process of aging society in Poland. The main impulse for the development of the ASOS Programme was establishment on the basis of a Decision No 940/2011/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 September 2011. The year 2012 became the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations.

The ASOS Programme has had two editions: 2012-2013 and 2014-2020. The main objective of the Programme under both editions is to improve the quality and standard of living of the elderly, dignified aging through social activity. The objectives of the ASOS Programme are based on four priorities: education of older adults; intergenerational social activities such as recreation activities for grandparents and grandchildren, participation of older adults in social activities such as gardening, interaction through learning, physical exercises with a group; and recruiting older adults as volunteers to do for example grocery shopping or cooking.

Policy Area:

Senior policy, active ageing policy

The legislative and regulatory framework:

The ASOS 2012-2013 Programme was a response to the challenges of demographic and social processes in Poland. Its main objective was to create conditions for the development of the social activity of seniors, who, owing to the population boom of the 50s, are, or soon will be, entering the 60+ age group. These people may be ending their professional activity, but they remain in good psycho-physical condition, have a potential, qualifications, life experience and free time that can and needs to be utilized with an appropriate social activities offer. Activity is one of the indispensable elements of healthy ageing. A pivotal role in this process is also played by cooperation and integration, in as well as between generations.

The Programme assumes simultaneous actions in four areas of senior social activity. It is based on the following priorities: **priority I:** education of seniors – this includes actions for the development of educational offers aimed at seniors, the use of the potential of mutual learning, the development of innovative forms of education, informal and non-formal, promoting the so-called competence volunteering; **priority II:** social activity promoting integration in and between generations – this assumes the development of different forms of senior activity, with the use of the existing social infrastructure (e.g. public libraries, cultural centres), and includes the younger generation to create a mutual understanding and development of social skills; **priority III:** social participation of seniors – measures for a greater involvement of seniors in public, social, economic, cultural and political life, which will

contribute to the growth of civil society. A particularly important role in this field is played by organisations that represent the interests and needs of the elderly, and that encourage their commitment in the life of local communities, e.g. senior boards attached to local governments; **priority IV: social services for seniors** – actions for the development of different forms of support through an increase in availability and quality of social services for seniors.

The programme included the contest and system components. The contest component assumed financial support to projects implemented by organizations working in the field of public benefit in four priority areas for the elderly. The implementation of allocated funds amounted to 20 million zlotys in 2012 and 40 million zlotys in 2013. The first edition of the open offer contest was resolved in October 2012.

The experiences from the implementation of the ASOS 2012–2013 Programme were the foundation for the design of the next edition of the Programme for the period 2014-2020. It was created as a result of cooperation with organisations that implemented projects within the contest component of the Programme and a close dialogue with representatives of the non-government sector, scientific and expert communities, self-governments, central administration, trade unions and employers associations, held, among others, within the activities of the Board for Senior Policy.

The Programme is designed as a complex endeavour that addresses areas and directions of support that enable the achievement of the main objective, i.e. the improvement of the quality and level of senior life for decent ageing through social activity. It assumes practical integration of the non-government sector to the actions for senior engagement. The Programme budget for 2014-2020 will amount to 280 million PLN. As the ASOS Programme for 2012–2013, it lays the strategic foundations for the implementation of the social policy for the elderly has profound significance for its future. The rational concept of the long-term policy in this scope can be formulated in the near future only in a participation formula, with the involvement of all stakeholders. The Programme is also envisaged for seven consecutive years, as only comprehensive and accurately long-term actions have a chance of providing a permanent effect for the social situation of seniors, realised against the demographic challenges of Poland.

**Main actors:**

Department of Senior Policy in the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy  
The Council of Senior Policy  
Local non-governmental organisations  
Local communities  
Universities of Third Age  
Public institutions responsible for social services delivering

**Innovative elements:**

The ASOS Programme is the first public intervention made by central government in Poland, in order to improve the seniors' quality of life by their social activation and better integration with the society. It generates several direct advantages, not only for the elderly people as the target group of the Programme, but also for the local communities and local economy, where the intervention is implemented. It is a supportive solution for development of the 'silver economy'. New educational and other social services, which are offered for seniors by the ASOS Programme, create new market of products and services, which is the response for elderly people needs and expectations. This process has

changed the traditional understanding of population ageing as the social and economic problem towards the new interpretation of this phenomenon, as the opportunity for economic growth and new work places creation. The ASOS Programme is a driving force for taking up the inter-sector cooperation. The partnership between social, public and private sectors in delivering services is not new solution but in this context it is based on using the unique resources, which are delivered, by different type of actors. In this case, the added value of intervention is not only the phenomenon of the partnership, which traditionally is perceived as the part of democratic society, but the cooperation in order to rich the goal. This is a kind of economisation of the cooperation, where the partners are not equal and their significance is measured by the different types resources that they have.

Links to to key policy documents, previous research, news reports:

Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej (2013), *Założenia Długofalowej Polityki Senioralnej w Polsce na lata 2014-2020*, Warszawa,

<http://www.mpips.gov.pl/download/gfx/mpips/pl/defaultopisy/8489/1/1/ZDPS%2014-02-04%20%20Monitor%20Polski.pdf>

Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej (2012), *Rządowy Program na rzecz Aktywności Społecznej Osób Starszych na lata 2012–2013*, Warszawa,

[http://www.mpips.gov.pl/gfx/mpips/userfiles/\\_public/1\\_NOWA%20STRONA/Aktualnosci/seniorzy/Rzadowy%20Program%20ASOS\\_2012-2013.pdf](http://www.mpips.gov.pl/gfx/mpips/userfiles/_public/1_NOWA%20STRONA/Aktualnosci/seniorzy/Rzadowy%20Program%20ASOS_2012-2013.pdf)

Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej (2016), <https://www.mpips.gov.pl/seniorzyaktywne-starzenie/rzadowy-program-asos/>

Adamczyk M. (2015), *Looking Forward to a Dynamic Third Age. Polish Mapping Report*, Lubelski Uniwersytet Trzeciego Wieku, [http://u3a.is/Polish%20Mapping%20Report%20\(1\).pdf](http://u3a.is/Polish%20Mapping%20Report%20(1).pdf)

Buczyńska A., Buczyński P. (2013) *Aktywność społeczna gdańskich seniorów*, Gdańsk 2013,

[http://bibliotekawolontariatu.pl/wp-content/uploads/AKTYWNOSC\\_SPOLECZNA\\_GDANSKICH\\_SENIOROW.pdf](http://bibliotekawolontariatu.pl/wp-content/uploads/AKTYWNOSC_SPOLECZNA_GDANSKICH_SENIOROW.pdf)

Towarzystwo Edukacyjne Wiedza Powszechna, <http://tewp.org.pl/>

Photos:

