



## Stowarzyszenie Pozytywnych Zmian – Poland

Project „Edu +”

ERASMUS + KEY ACTION 2 PROJECT WITH PROJECT NUMBER 2019-1-PL01-KA204-065178

### Definitions In Poland

According to the PIAAC study (International Adult Competence Survey), periodically carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), basic activities are recognized as **skills** that are important for the social functioning of the individual:

- reading and understanding the text (*literacy*),
- mathematical reasoning (*numeracy*),
- use of information and communication technologies (*problem solving in technology-rich environments*),
- social skills such as interpersonal communication, adaptation to changes, teamwork, setting realistic life goals, managing conflicts and resolving conflicts, making decisions, showing initiative.

Skills themselves are defined as the **ability to apply and process knowledge in different life situations**. Increasingly, in other studies, projects and reports, so-called **soft skills** related to interpersonal communication, teamwork, setting life goals, conflict resolution, decision making. You can talk about low basic skills when a person has problems with simple activities in a given area (e.g. he/she does not understand the instructions on how to complete the form, it is difficult for him/her to send an email). It is worth noting that low basic skills do not have to manifest themselves in each of these areas at the same time. There will be people who are highly qualified in many areas, and only one can see serious gaps in them.

There are, therefore, many definitions of the concept of skill depending on the theoretical concept adopted. One of them is cited by the Educational Research Institute in connection with the introduction of the Polish Qualifications Framework: **Skills are the ability to perform tasks and solve problems specific to learning or professional activity**.

Skills are slightly differently defined within the European Qualifications Framework: **Skills are the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems**.

On the subject of life skills on the EPALE platform it was written: **They are an element of the opportunity to live and work in a specific social, cultural and environmental context.** *Types of life skills appear as a response to the needs of the individual in real life situations.*

A common feature of many definitions is that skills are considered modifiable and that they can relate to very different spheres of human activity. Skills together with knowledge (understood more broadly than just academic knowledge) and attitudes create **competences**. The term **competence** is understood as the ability to take specific actions and perform tasks using learning outcomes and own experiences.

## **Numbers**

According to the latest data (European Center for the Development of Vocational Training - CEDEFOP) it is estimated that in Poland there are from **six to even more than eight million people** who could potentially benefit from the basic skills development program.

The problem is that they *don't always see this necessity*. It is worth noting that low basic skills often affect not only the individual, but also the rest of society, which is clearly seen in various spheres, including economic (lack of budget planning skills, problems with understanding banking records, etc.) or political (e.g. difficulties with understanding a party's program).

The results of the International Adult Competence Survey (PIAAC5) indicate that adults in Poland have a fairly low level of basic skills: **approx. 20% Adults up to the age of 65** had serious problems using texts and calculations to cope with life.

Even lower results were achieved in the area of digital skills (computer and internet) - **56% adults up to 74 years** of age had no competence or were very low.

The specificity of Poland is one of the lowest in the EU and in the world the percentage of adults with low education (at most basic or junior high school) - **8.7 percent**. population in 2016, with the percentage steadily decreasing every year.

## **EU activities**

In December 2016, the Council of the European Union adopted recommendations on paths for improving skills -

Upskilling pathways: new opportunities for adults - which recommend Member States to conduct coordinated and systematic activities for adults with low basic skills or low qualifications. The Council's recommendation sets the main objective to achieve at least a minimum level of basic skills, understood as the foundation of the entire education process, including professional development and lifelong learning.

## **Criteria for selecting participants**

Based on qualitative research, the following target groups qualified for project activities were identified:

- people with low level of education,
- people living in disadvantaged areas,
- participants of great changes in the economy and labor market,
- people leaving prison,
- people after long-term hospitalization,
- people after long-term exclusion from work (e.g. parents caring for young children who return to the labor market),
- guardians of people with disabilities,
- seniors,
- excluded and marginalized people,
- people with disabilities.