[The results of the study from Podlaskie voivodship]

The aim of the study

The study was conducted on a sample of 134 companies from Podlaskie, Poland. The aim of the study was to assess the familiarity and application of foresight research as well as to evaluate foresight maturity level of Podlaskie service and manufacturing enterprises.

The structure of the examined companies in respect of employment figures was the following: 44 microenterprises, 39 small businesses, 36 medium-sized businesses and 14 large companies. 63% of the analyzed companies were service companies, 23% were manufacturing companies, and 14% were manufacturing and service companies. 60% of the businesses had never heard of a possibility of undertaking foresight research. Familiarity with the term "foresight" was declared by 40% of the entrepreneurs. Application of foresight elements in their business practice was claimed by 20% of the companies, mainly the large ones and the ones which compete globally.

Maturity levels

The maturity level was calculated according to the following components of foresight maturity, namely: leadership, planning, environmental scanning, forecasting and vision building. These disciplines are based on the framework outlined in Thinking about the Future co-edited by futurists Andy Hines and Dr. Peter Bishop (Hines, 2006). The book is a contribution of 36 leading futurists describing the best practices (Grimm 2009). The example of the organizational scorecard is presented in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. An example of organizational scorecard in Foresight Maturity Model by Grimm (2009)](image)

The basic maturity model contains five maturity levels (Grimm, 2009): Ad hoc (level 1). The organization is not or only marginally aware of processes and most work is done without plans or expertise. This is the initial state for any practice. Aware (level 2). The organization is aware that there are best practices in the field and is learning from external input and past experiences. Capable (level 3). The organization has reached a level where it has a consistent approach for a practice, used across the organization, which delivers an acceptable level of performance and return on investment. Mature (level 4). The organization has invested additional resources to develop expertise and advanced processes for a practice.

World-class (level 5). The organization is considered a leader in this area, often creating and disseminating new methods. "These levels are developmental and cumulative i.e. organizations can only achieve higher levels after they mastered and passed through the lower levels (Grimm 2009).

Results and recommendations

In Figure 2 there are presented the overall percentages of the enterprises reaching the five foresight maturity levels.

![Figure 2. The overall percentages of the enterprises reaching the five foresight maturity levels](image)

The final foresight maturity level was calculated on the basis of the lowest component value. The overall values of the subsequent maturity areas are presented in Table 1. The score has been calculated on the basis of the dominant value of foresight maturity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maturity levels</th>
<th>Maturity areas</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>scanning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>forecasting</td>
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<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>vision building</td>
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As the lowest component value equals 1 for forecasting, general foresight maturity of companies in Podlaskie equals 1. Due to the low foresight foresight maturity index of companies in Podlaskie, application of business coaching techniques leading to increase in company efficiency in the aspect of a chosen component or all components of foresight maturity seems well-grounded.

Business coaching techniques allow the enterprises to reach the desired level of foresight maturity. The promising business coaching techniques are GROW model (Alexander, Renshaw 2005), solution-focused coaching (Green et al 2006) or wheel of business to name but a few. An interesting further research is also the widening the scope of the five examined foresight maturity components so as they correspond to the current trends related to foresight research which manifest in the appreciation of the enterprises internal resources.

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