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SELECTED ASPECTS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN POLAND AND AUSTRIA

Abstract. The basic aim of this paper is the comparative analysis, both theoretical and empirical, of selected aspects of entrepreneurship in Poland and Austria. The significance of the selected topic, most of all, results from the role and impact entrepreneurial activities have on the welfare of societies, both economically and socially. Keeping in mind the diversity and complexity of the phenomenon of entrepreneurship, one must in particular consider its integral relationship with economic activity and development, both of the individual and of the society at large. In economic terms, entrepreneurship is usually interpreted as the ability to creatively and innovatively solve business problems, combined with the ability to use opportunities arising from economic activity. Our empirical studies on the analysis and assessment of entrepreneurial attitudes were conducted on the basis of data published by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development within the framework of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) study. Selected aspects of entrepreneurship in international terms were subjected to analysis. Particular emphasis was placed on assessing Poland's situation compared to that of other countries. Special attention was drawn to institutions supporting entrepreneurship in both countries and an attempt was made to specify the directions of their future actions.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial attitudes, perception of entrepreneurship, the grounds for entrepreneurial activities

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship has a long research tradition in several different scientific disciplines [2]. In the economic sciences, Hebert and Link attribute the origins of entrepreneurial thought to the concepts of Richard Cantillon (1680-1734). The three main approaches to entrepreneurship identified by them are the German, American and Austrian approaches [11,

10]. The subject matter has been subjected to numerous approaches and studies, as well as definitions. The impact of entrepreneurial activity on the functioning of enterprises, both economically and socially, and, more precisely, the relationship between entrepreneurship and economic growth [1, 4, 8, 9], has been emphasized on many occasions. The corresponding literature also expresses the view that entrepreneurship contributes to the emergence of new technologies and products and services, and at the same time is one of the key determinants in the development of civilization [16, 18].

Entrepreneurship and being entrepreneurial are thought to go hand in hand with activity, creativity, showing initiative, resourcefulness, rapidity of producing proper reactions and decision-making, the ability to adapt to changing conditions or complex situations, and the ability to take risk. The lexical interpretation of the words ‘entrepreneurship’ and ‘entrepreneurial’ recognizes them as possessing the spirit of initiative, as well as skills, creativity and resourcefulness to approach various issues, particularly in the field of industry and trade [24]. Entrepreneurship is often combined with innovativeness [5] and, at the same time, is very much in line with the thought of one major pioneer of the concept – Joseph Schumpeter [22]. In regard to the sources of entrepreneurship, most researchers answer that its primary source lies in the ability to see opportunity where others cannot see it [14].

The basic aim of this paper is the comparative analysis, both theoretical and empirical, of selected aspects of entrepreneurship in Poland and Austria. The significance of the selected topic, most of all, results from the role and impact entrepreneurial activities have on the welfare of societies, both economically and socially. Our empirical studies were conducted on the basis of data published by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development within the framework of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) study. Selected aspects of entrepreneurship in international terms were subjected to analysis. Particular emphasis was placed on assessing Poland’s situation compared to that of other countries. Special attention was drawn to institutions supporting entrepreneurship in both countries and an attempt was made to specify the directions of their future actions.

2. The essence of entrepreneurship from an economic perspective

Regarding the issue of entrepreneurship from an economic point of view allows us to notice a wide range of definitional approaches that depict its different perspectives. Sudol describes entrepreneurship as a characteristic that needs to be understood as the readiness or ability to undertake and solve new problems, while simultaneously being aware of the associated risks. Entrepreneurship is also characterized by the ability to use emerging opportunities and rapidly and flexibly adapt to the changing conditions of the environment [9].

On the other hand, according to Griffin, entrepreneurship may be regarded as the process of running a business activity and also taking on the risk that is associated with it [10]. The emergence and development of this process is the result of various conditions, depending both on the internal capabilities of individual people and external conditions, which determine the pace of development of newly established economic entities [19]. Duraj and Papiernik-Wojdera indicate that this approach to entrepreneurship is oriented towards a rather narrow target, combined with the prospect for setting up and running one's own business [7]. Therefore, in this respect, entrepreneurship is identified with the activities that relate to the establishment and management of a specific economic entity.

In broader terms, going beyond the sphere of the enterprise, the essence of entrepreneurship may be regarded in the context of the economic life of a specific country. In these terms, entrepreneurship can be considered to be the creative recognition and analysis of the opportunities that arise from a competitive strategy, and should be treated as one of the most valuable resources of modern societies [13, 15].

The above considerations show the multidimensionality of the issue of entrepreneurship. On one hand, the significance of entrepreneurship is expressed in a micro-economic dimension, associated with the willingness to take the risk of setting up and conducting one's own business activity; thus taking responsibility for self-employment and employment of other people in the established company and assuming responsibility for all organizational aspects connected with the functioning of this company. On the other hand, entrepreneurship is interpreted as a phenomenon that has a wide range of impact on the market sphere. It can be seen as a method of creating new jobs and a way of reducing unemployment. It thereby contributes to further economic development of a specific country. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that the economic dimension is connected with the social dimension.

3. The institutional support for entrepreneurship

From the point of view of a state's economic policy, the identification of the sources of entrepreneurship and its determining factors is as important as defining entrepreneurship and its role in the state economy because it is the first step towards the build-up of efficient systems to support its development and promotion, as well as the creation of a positive image of entrepreneurship.

When thinking about entrepreneurship, it is crucial to note that entrepreneurship is not so much about inborn characteristics as acquired ones. At the same time, entrepreneurship is a way of behaviour and not a personality trait. Therefore, it is an attribute of people's conduct and their attitude towards the performed work [6]. There are many studies concerning the

teaching of entrepreneurship and a vast current of the research is devoted to the issues associated with education in the field of entrepreneurship in educational programs.

Another important observation is the fact that entrepreneurial behaviour is also conditioned by external factors from an entrepreneur's environment. These mainly include the market situation, labour force, competition, and the level of the available equity, as well as formal, legal, political and socio-cultural conditions [20]. This point is very important because it suggests that entrepreneurship can be supported and a key role can be played by the state and its institutions [21]. Obviously, external conditions are not the most significant factor, however they are certainly important. One could therefore attempt to determine what their exact role is and what the tasks of the institutions supporting entrepreneurship should be directed to with a goal of specifying the framework of their operation and points of gravity. It also seems that the roles and activities of the institutions supporting entrepreneurship are quite important because these institutions may have great impact on the creation of entrepreneurial attitudes, a favourable legal and administrative framework and a positive public perception of entrepreneurs.

The development of entrepreneurship is also determined by the type of economy. In the 'Global Competitiveness Report' issued by the World Economic Forum, individual countries are assigned to one of three groups according to their stage of economic development [23]. In this context, one can identify economies that are oriented towards factors of production, those that are oriented toward efficiency and those that are geared towards innovation [3]. In countries oriented to factors of production, competition takes place at the level of factors of production such as labour or natural resources. In this case, the price is the main element of enterprises' competition on the market; productivity and labour costs are low. For countries oriented to efficiency, they must create more effective methods of production, increasing the quality of products and services while allowing for rising labour costs. Finally, countries oriented to innovation may maintain high salaries and an appropriate standard of life provided that their enterprises are able to compete on the basis of new and specialized products and other innovative solutions. In 2014, as in previous years, Poland and Austria were categorized in two different types of economies. Austria was among the countries oriented to innovation and Poland was among those oriented towards efficiency. Nevertheless, Poland is at a transitional stage and aspires to join the group of economies directed towards innovation.

In the three stages of economic development listed above, the role of the state in supporting entrepreneurship and economic growth is different. In economies oriented to factors of production, the tasks of the state concern, among others, support for institutions, infrastructure and microeconomic stability. In economies oriented towards efficiency, the task of the state is mainly to improve the functioning of the capital and labour markets, attract foreign investments and create learning systems that enable technology education. In economies oriented towards innovation, the state's key role lies most of all in the creation and commercialization of knowledge.

In both types of economies, the so-called entrepreneurial ecosystem is of critical importance for the development of entrepreneurship. This term is understood as business environment institutions, universities, and the environment of investors, as well as a climate favourable to creativity. Isenberg expresses the view that state governments play a key role in creating entrepreneurial ecosystems by creating the legal and administrative framework appropriate for the development of entrepreneurship. However, ecosystems develop best naturally, which means that governments should somehow follow in the same direction as entrepreneurs do, instead of favouring selected branches of the economy [12]. Mason and Brown suggest a model of the entrepreneurial ecosystem that is dynamic in nature and in which an essential role is played by the state, its support, and its policies [17]. According to these authors, the support from the state most frequently takes place in four different ways. First of all, there are systems of consultancy and information, which are created for newly established companies. Another type of support is providing new companies with financial resources (favourable lending systems, business angels) and services. The third mode consists of creating networks between different elements of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. This category may include different types of organizations that associate enterprises and fulfil certain criteria. The fourth element is the creation of a positive image of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship [17].

4. Institutions supporting entrepreneurship in Poland and Austria

Poland and Austria support entrepreneurship using all of the four methods discussed above. However, some differences exist that deserve special attention. In Austria, the following three institutions supporting entrepreneurs play a central role: Wirtschaftskammer Österreich, Advantage Austria and the Austrian Business Agency.

Wirtschaftskammern Österreich (WKÖ) – The Austrian Federal Economic Chamber – coordinates and represents the interests of the Austrian business community at the national and international level. Within the Austrian Economic Chambers' system, it functions as the national umbrella organization for the nine State Chambers (one in each of Austria's federal states or *Bundesland*) and 110 trade associations for different industries. One main task of this organization is to contribute to favourable framework conditions in Austria's legal system and implement a variety of mechanisms and initiatives to support business and entrepreneurship. Today, this institution assembles approximately 410,000 entrepreneurs in Austria. As affiliation with chambers is mandatory for certain groups of society in Austria, every company is by law a member of the Federal Economic Chamber and one or more of its regional branches. The Austrian Economic Chamber is financed not by public funds, but by contributions from its members, i.e., the Austrian companies. In return, the organization's

leadership and decision-making is conducted by representatives of companies (and not state officials). This gives the Austrian Economic Chamber a high degree of independence from the state government and ensures its ability to work independently and in the best interest of Austrian entrepreneurs. The services of the organization are meant to primarily benefit its members, i.e., already existing companies. Nevertheless, the Austrian Economic Chamber also operates a *Gründerservice* – service for business founders, which provides certain support for start-ups and future entrepreneurs free of charge.

Advantage Austria is Austria's Trade Promotion Organization. It is a network of approximately 110 offices in more than 70 countries worldwide. Organizationally a department of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, it provides Austrian companies and their trade partners with a wide range of services. Employees and consultants of the organization support entrepreneurs in the countries, where they operate in selecting appropriate suppliers and business partners from Austria and organize events enabling the establishment of business contacts. Further tasks of the offices of Advantage Austria include assisting Austrian companies in their search for importer, distributor and sales representative contacts and providing comprehensive information on business locations and how to enter the Austrian market.

The Austrian Business Agency (ABA) is the national investment promotion organization. It is responsible for acquiring and providing professional consulting services to foreign companies that want to establish a subsidiary or business operation in Austria. ABA provides information about Austria as a business location, and advises companies on all relevant issues free of charge.

Several Polish institutions supporting entrepreneurship are the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, Polish Business Incubators and the National System of Services for Small and Medium Enterprises.

The Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP) is a government agency and the central administrative body subordinate to the Minister for Economic Affairs. It manages funds coming from the state budget and the European Union to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and develop human resources. It conducts research and development and undertakes publishing, consulting, and training activities. Moreover, it addresses the implementation of economic development programs. Its goal is to create an environment that is favourable and supportive to entrepreneurs. All the activities of the agency are performed with a special emphasis on the needs of the SME sector.

Academic Business Incubators, whose concept refers to traditional 'business incubators', and which are also known in other countries, operate in Poland in a particularly active way. In Poland, these institutions work very intensively while creating a wide network of institutions throughout the whole country. Depending on the target group, there can be several particular types of business incubators:

- nascent entrepreneurs from the SME sector, who are beginning or only about to begin their business activity,
- youth and students (academic business incubators),
- social economy entities (social entrepreneurship incubators).

The National System of Services for Small and Medium Enterprises is a network of voluntarily cooperating organizations that provide services for the benefit of micro-entrepreneurs, SMEs, and people undertaking a business activity. Within its framework, so-called consulting points (PK KSU) operate. Through these consulting points, SMEs may obtain information on the basic issues associated with running and managing a business and the available support instruments (including EU funds).

Overall, this analysis suggests that a considerable part of the institutional support for entrepreneurship in Austria is oriented more towards helping already existing enterprises and established companies whereas, in Poland, emphasis is placed, most of all, on enterprises at the incubation stage, future entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that the main Austrian organizations supporting entrepreneurship – the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber and its associated Trade Promotion Organization, Advantage Austria, as well as (to some extent) the Austrian Business Agency, are primarily oriented towards associating entrepreneurs and strengthening their position in the international arena, which amounts to the third type of the previously discussed types of activities (creating a network of ties between different elements of the entrepreneurial ecosystem). The main Polish organizations on the other hand, while also having a wide range of tasks concerning the support of entrepreneurship in general, mainly concentrate on the first and the second type of activities (consulting and transfer of resources, mostly financial ones).

5. The verification of aspects of entrepreneurship in Poland and Austria

The below studies aimed at verifying selected aspects of entrepreneurship in Poland and Austria were conducted on the basis of data published by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, carried out within the framework of research of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM).¹ In the GEM report there is important information on different aspects of

¹ GEM is the largest global research project in the field of entrepreneurship. In 2014 research was conducted in 73 countries, which amounts to 72.4% of the world population and 90% of the gross world product. The research sample was 206 thousand respondents. The studies in the GEM project were carried out in two stages. The first one is the *adult population survey* – APS, conducted on a sample amounting to at least 2,000 people aged over 18. The other stage of the research consists of collecting the opinions of national experts (*national experts survey* – NES). In this case, the research sample has at least 36 specialists (four experts for each of the nine components of the Entrepreneurial Conditions Framework: Entrepreneurial Finance, Government Policy, Government Entrepreneurship Programs, Entrepreneurship Education, Research & Development Transfer, Commercial & Legal Infrastructure, Market Openness, Physical Infrastructure, Cultural & Social Norms) – source: *The report from the research of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2014*. Global Report.

entrepreneurship concerning, among others, entrepreneurial attitudes, levels of entrepreneurial activity, and reasons for starting a business activity.

Entrepreneurial attitudes can be measured using four indicators: entrepreneurial intentions, recognizing a business opportunity, entrepreneurial skills and fear of failure. It can be assumed that the listed indicators primarily have an individual dimension, but it should also be noted that these attitudes are dependent on social, cultural, economic and historical conditions. Therefore, it is reasonable to compare entrepreneurial attitudes in different countries. This comparison is even more justified given that the economies of Poland and Austria (despite their joint European Union membership), are currently still at two different stages of economic development. Therefore, our analysis attempts to identify some regularity and in so doing seeks to be helpful in predicting changes.

The category connected with initiatives of starting a business activity was described in the research as “entrepreneurial intentions”. It is defined as the percentage of people aged 18-64 who, over the next three years, intend to start a business activity and, at the same time, are not involved in conducting one at present. Recognizing a business opportunity refers to the perception of favourable conditions for starting a business activity by the entities subjected to the research. The category associated with the auto-verification of both possessed abilities and knowledge concerning the skills essential for using opportunities, which emerge during running a business activity, was defined in the research as entrepreneurial skills. Fear of failure was recognized as the factor limiting the level of entrepreneurial activities. In Table 1 below, we list the percentages of the respondents declaring the entrepreneurial attitudes listed above in Poland and Austria against the background of individual stages of the economic development.

Table 1

Entrepreneurial attitudes in Poland and Austria against the background of individual stages of the economic development (% of the surveyed entities)

Country	Entrepreneurial intentions		Recognizing an opportunity		Entrepreneurial skills		Fear of failure	
	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014
Austria	11,6	8,1	49,2	44,4	49,6	48,7	43,5	34,9
Poland	24,2	15,6	20,4	31,3	53,9	54,3	58,7	51,1
the average in the economies oriented towards innovations	12,7	12,3	32,0	38,8	38,3	42,0	44,5	37,8
the average in the economies oriented towards efficiency	29,0	22,8	41,5	42,4	52,4	55,0	36,6	31,6

Source: Authors' own study based on: The report from the research of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor – Poland 2012. Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, Warszawa 2013, p. 13-14; Raport z badania Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2014. Global Report, p. 32-34, 79-80; Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. Bericht zur Lage des Unternehmertums in Österreich, S. 9.

Entrepreneurial intentions associated with the initiative of starting a business activity are significantly different in the two analyzed countries. In Poland, the proportion of people

willing to run their own business activity was almost twice as high as in Austria. This was observed in both 2012 and in 2014. In this regard it should be noted that in economies oriented towards innovation the level of entrepreneurial intentions is generally lower than in economies oriented to efficiency. However, the values for this feature of entrepreneurship, both in Poland and Austria, are lower than the average value for the specific economy. Moreover, there is a downward trend with this value.

Another category related to entrepreneurial attitudes is recognizing a business opportunity. This is measured by the percentage of people who assume that, in their environment, there are favourable conditions for starting a business activity. Austrians are more optimistic in this respect. Nearly 50% of the respondents, both in 2012 and 2014, recognized a business opportunity. However, in the case of Austria a downward trend can be observed, contrary to the respondents from Poland, who increasingly noted good conditions for running a business activity. The corresponding numbers were 20.4% of the respondents in 2012 and 31.3% in 2014. However, contrasting this entrepreneurial attitude to the average in the specific economies, it can be seen that in Poland, significantly fewer people recognize a business opportunity compared to the average in economies oriented towards efficiency. On the other hand, this percentage is clearly higher than the average in economies oriented towards innovation, such as in Austria.

It is important to note that the analyzed respondents rate their own capabilities regarding skills and knowledge essential for running a business activity relatively high. In 2014, such an opinion was expressed in Poland by more than 54% of the respondents and in Austria by 48.7% of respondents. Nevertheless, despite this difference, Austrians assess their own entrepreneurial skills significantly higher than the average in states whose economies are oriented towards innovation. In the case of Polish respondents, their assessment is close to the average value. Moreover, in economies oriented towards innovation, a smaller percentage of people appreciate their own entrepreneurial skills than in economies oriented towards efficiency.

The last of the identified factors referring to entrepreneurial attitudes is fear of failure, which may be regarded as a restriction on entrepreneurial activities. In the analyzed period, a relatively high percentage of all of the respondents declared such a fear in Poland. The corresponding figures are 58.7% in 2012 and 51.1% in 2014, respectively. Despite the downward trend, these are values that are 20 percentage points higher than the average of economies oriented towards efficiency. In Austria, the corresponding values were 43.5% in 2012 and 34.9% in 2014. This also indicates a significant downward trend. At the same time, it is close to the average value.

Another research area associated with individual levels of entrepreneurship concerns the main stages of the life of enterprises. The first stage refers to activities associated with the intention to start a business activity and the beginnings of its functioning (nascent entrepreneurs). The other stages are those of new entrepreneurs (the activity runs for 3 to 42

months), established entrepreneurs operating on the market for more than 3.5 years, and finally the stage of discontinuance (closure of the enterprise or withdrawal from running a business activity). Table 2 presents the corresponding data depicting the levels of entrepreneurial activity in Poland and Austria.

Table 2

The levels of entrepreneurial activity in Poland and Austria

Country	Nascent entrepreneurs		New companies		Established companies		Discontinuance of the activity	
	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014
Austria	6,6	7,7	3,4	5,7	7,6	9,8	3,6	3,9
Poland	4,8	5,8	4,6	3,6	5,8	7,3	3,9	4,2
the average in the economies oriented towards innovations	4,2	5,3	3,0	3,4	6,7	6,7	2,7	2,6
the average in the economies oriented towards efficiency	7,8	8,1	5,6	6,2	7,8	8,5	4,5	4,5

Source: Authors' own study based on: The report from the research of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor – Poland 2012. Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, Warszawa 2013, p. 15; Report from the research of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2014. Global Report, p. 81-82.

On the basis of the data included in Table 2, it can be concluded that during the first three stages of the entrepreneurial activity, there can generally be observed a greater percentage of people running a business activity in those specific stages of development in Austria than in Poland. This property refers both to nascent entrepreneurs, new companies, and established enterprises. Only at the level associated with the declaration of discontinuance of an enterprise was there was a smaller percentage of people showing readiness for withdrawal from business activities in Austria.

When comparing the analyzed percentages to the average of countries from that same specific stage of economic development, Austria shows higher levels than the average of economies oriented towards innovation in all analyzed areas. On the other hand, in Poland, the percentage of respondents in each case is lower than the average of economies oriented towards efficiency. At the same time, it can be observed that the level of entrepreneurial activity in Austria has an above-average value. In Poland, however, it amounts to a value below the average.

The last of the analyzed dimensions of entrepreneurship is concerned with identifying the causes that motivated entrepreneurs to establish a business activity. The conducted survey identified two different types of motivation. The first one concerns the goal of using an opportunity combined with the improvement in the standard of living through the prospect of increasing income or professional independence. The other reason is the necessity of making a living while facing the impossibility of finding livelihood from other sources. The table below shows the percentage of entrepreneurs indicating these reasons for starting a business activity.

Table 3

The reasons for undertaking a business activity² in Poland and Austria (% of entrepreneurs)³

Country	An opportunity associated with the improvement in the standard of life		Necessity	
	2012	2014	2012	2014
Austria	38,2	37,4	10,8	11,0
Poland	30,1	47,1	40,7	36,8

Source: Authors' own study based on: The report from the research of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor – Poland 2012. Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, Warszawa 2013, p. 21-22; The report from the research of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2014. Global Report, p. 41.

Table 3 depicts the data with regard to the level of entrepreneurship based on opportunity connected with an improvement in the living standard as well as that undertaken out of necessity. On the basis of the above, there are significant discrepancies in the area of entrepreneurial stimuli, which are characteristic of the analyzed countries. Nearly 40% of respondents from Austria saw an opportunity associated with an improvement in the standard of life in undertaking a business activity. On the other hand, a relatively low percentage of respondents, namely 11%, indicated necessity as the main motivation for starting a business activity. In other cases, it must be assumed that the surveyed units were driven by different factors not included in the study, which motivated them to undertake a business activity.

The results of the research for Poland show a clear division into two extremely different groups of reasons for undertaking a business activity. In 2012 more than 30% and in 2014 over 47% of Polish entrepreneurs declared that they established their companies with the intention to use an opportunity connected with an improvement in the standard of life. A similarly large percentage, amounting to 40.7% in 2012 and 36.8% in 2014 indicated necessity as the main motivation to set up a business. At the same time, there was a significant increase in positive stimuli and a decrease in negative stimuli in the conducted studies. A growing number of Poles recognize opportunities in starting a business activity and, simultaneously, fewer and fewer people feel forced to undertake these activities due to a lack of other opportunities.

6. Conclusions

Against the backdrop of a highly developed economy, the empirical assessment of entrepreneurial attitudes in Austrian society indicates comparatively low entrepreneurial intentions. Only a few of the surveyed respondents wanted to set up their own business activity. At the same time, they recognized business opportunities and rated their own

² The Table does not include mixed motivations.

³ In the research, we present the percentage of people who are involved in setting up a business activity or running a new enterprise (up to 42 months before conducting the study).

entrepreneurial skills relatively highly. Therefore, it can be concluded that the fundamental issue that needs to be addressed by institutions charged with the promotion of business is thoroughly analyzing the factors contributing to the comparatively low eagerness to set up a business activity despite the indicated good prospects for conducting it, and taking according measures to improve the entrepreneurial spirit in their country.

On the other hand, in the case of Poland, a greater willingness to run a business activity can be noted. This greater preparedness for self-employment in Poland exists despite conditions that, according to the survey, are considered less favourable to starting a business activity. Poles appreciate their own entrepreneurial skills rather highly, but at the same time, a relatively high number of them fear failure in business. In this case, the issue that needs further analysis and improvement is the opportunities available for conducting a business. The institutions in the two respective countries are thus faced with the following situation: Poles, who are fairly well supported in the early stages of running a business activity, receive insufficient support in its later stages. Austrians, in turn, require more motivation in the early stages of running a business activity.

Overall, a clear advantage of the Austrian economy can be discerned when analyzing the two countries' involvement in entrepreneurial initiatives. With regard to entrepreneurial attitudes, it can be concluded that, despite the little willingness to run one's own business activity declared by the respondents in Austria, there are more external opportunities that can be used and, consequently, there are overall high levels of the entrepreneurial activity.

In Poland, on the other hand, respondents generally have greater intentions to set up a business activity, but they do not always turn this into actual entrepreneurial activity. At the same time, it can be concluded that despite the respondents' declared intentions to establish their own business activity and their confidence that they possess entrepreneurial skills, they still face certain difficulties regarding their entrepreneurial activity in Poland. It seems that two of the most important barriers to entrepreneurial initiatives in this case are the fear of failure and an unfavourable environment for running a business activity. These findings suggest that there are ample opportunities for activity for the institutions supporting entrepreneurship, which have the task of creating the legal and administrative conditions favourable for entrepreneurship.

It can be concluded that in Austria, entrepreneurial activity, which consists of establishing one's own business activity, is mainly conducted by people due to positive expectations, combined with anticipated opportunities for an increase in income or the achievement of professional independence. In Poland, however, entrepreneurial activity is often associated with a lack of other alternatives and a lack of opportunity for finding suitable employment. Nevertheless, other factors, which have not been discussed in this study, such as those that concern the different motivations of specific entities for starting their business activity, require additional research. Likewise, the assessment of the precise role of institutions supporting the development of entrepreneurship requires further similar studies.

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