

## Summary

Barriers encountered by non-governmental organizations (charitable foundations and associations), in connection with obtaining funds from the European Social Fund under the Regional Operational Program for the Śląskie Voivodeship for 2014-2020, are the subject of this thesis. It also raises the issue of the impact the non-governmental organizations have on shaping local social policy. Four cities in Śląskie Voivodeship with contracts for the largest number of projects co-financed by the European Union, were selected for the research. These are the following: Katowice, Gliwice, Częstochowa and Bielsko-Biała.

Despite the fact that there are many studies on the obstacles that NGOs may face when undertaking various activities, fulfilling their functions and achieving specific goals, no comprehensive study on this subject has yet emerged; especially those that would include the situation in Śląskie Voivodeship. No study has shown that non-governmental organizations – charitable foundations and associations – in the indicated voivodeship have an actual direct impact on shaping the local social policy.

NGOs are specific entities because their existence is independent of the state bodies and autonomous from a political perspective. This independence often causes financial and employment related problems, e.g. recruitment of qualified staff (i.e. familiar with the rules of operation of non-governmental organizations), as well as volunteers. This results from the fact that the entire organization usually relies on their unpaid work. Numerous problems may arise both in the financing of current projects and planning of the new ones. It is also important that non-governmental organizations can both use their own resources, e.g. membership fees, and obtain funding from the European Union for the implementation of specific projects.

Poland's accession into the structures of the European Union resulted in the third sector gaining access to a completely new source of financing. It became obligatory to develop a concept of an innovative, creative and original project, and to obtain a positive assessment. However the process of securing such funds, as well as the subsequent implementation of the project, is associated with numerous barriers.

The aim of this doctoral dissertation is to present the issues related to problems that charities and associations face while trying to secure the EU funds, in the context of the possibility to shape their social policy in a given area (both in the entire Śląskie Voivodeship and in selected cities of this voivodeship); as well as showing through empirical research that

despite the many obstacles Silesian NGOs encounter, they are able to operate effectively and raise funds for themselves.

The dissertation is theoretical and empirical. Chapters I to V are devoted to the presentation and explanation of the current theoretical knowledge concerning the issues discussed in the dissertation. Chapter number VI (the last chapter) includes a statistical analysis of obstacles faced by non-governmental organizations - charities and associations - in selected cities of Silesian Voivodeship. The analysis focuses on two phases of the process: the phase of developing EU projects and submitting applications, and then the phase of project implementation (after their approval). The impact of non-governmental organizations on shaping local social policy has also been analyzed. A detailed structure of the dissertation is presented below.

Chapter I presents the key assumptions for the ROP WSL for 2014-2020. The chapter starts with a general description of ROP WSL, and then moves on to a detailed description of individual priority axes of the ROP WSL regarding the ESF, i.e. the regional labor market, regional knowledge-based economy personnel, social inclusion, revitalization, social and health infrastructure, as well as strengthening the educational potential. Chapter I also discusses the issue of the regional dimension of performed activities. Within this scope, the subjects of the analysis were the following: community-led local development, support for revitalization, and last but not least support for projects in the field of sustainable urban and rural development.

Chapter II is devoted to the matter of influence of third sector organizations on the shaping the local social policy. Non-governmental organizations are part of the above mentioned sector, and are an extremely important element of the social policy of those countries where democracy has been well-established. The following issues were analyzed: objectives for establishing non-governmental organizations, social and legal conditions related to starting their operations, ways of meeting specific needs of the citizens, areas of the organisations' activity, key problems related to their role in shaping the local social policy.

Chapter III is one of the central parts of this dissertation since it presents sources of financing the non-governmental organizations, i.e. non-grant funded (e.g. initial capital, membership fees or donations), subsidies (e.g. operational program), private funds of organizations, national public funds and European funds.

Chapters IV and V deal with other issues of key importance from the perspective of this dissertation. These are the barriers that NGOs face in the design and application phase, and in the project's implementation phase. In the first case, the following types of barriers were

analyzed: information related, from the human perspective, from the formalities perspective, and bureaucratization barriers. In the second one, the following barriers were analyzed: b. Personal, b. Financial, b. Organizational, b. Social, b. Team management, b. Information, b. Time, b. Resources, b. Legal, v. Qualitative, b. technological and infrastructural, b. billing.

Chapter VI contains the results of empirical, quantitative and qualitative research. The first was devoted to the activity of non-governmental organizations, foundations and associations in the Śląskie Voivodeship, and the second - to the most important barriers encountered by selected charitable foundations and associations, and their influence on shaping local social policy. The quantitative research was based on the data contained in the Project Map of the Regional Operational Program 2014-2020 of the Śląskie Voivodeship. This part of the dissertation also contains the most important fragments of in-depth interviews conducted with selected employees of Silesian foundations and associations, as well as an analysis of the impact of non-governmental organizations on shaping the local social policy. The above are based on two documents, i.e. the Social Policy Strategy of the Śląskie Voivodeship for the years 2006-2020 and the Social Policy Strategy Of the Silesian Voivodeship for the years 2006-2020. Update 2015.

The summary contains the most important findings resulting from empirical research and literature studies. It contains the following information: achieving the main goal as well as specific goals, addressing the main research problem and research questions, and the scope of verifying the main hypothesis and specific hypothesis. At the end of the dissertation, there is a bibliography, list of tables and list of drawings.

### **Keywords**

Keywords: barriers, non-governmental organizations, charitable foundations, associations, European Social Fund, local social policy, EU projects, co-financing from the European Union.