

## Introduction

The rapid growth of the information-communication technology gave the modern man the tools for revolutionize the two basic social processes – communication and access to information. Internet forms of communication and unlimited information resources became the direct stimulant for changes increasingly visible in the globalizing society. The development of the individual scientific branches and changes in the job and private human activities are visible the strongest in the labour market, but conditioned the most by the process of education, which decides on the range and speed of growth of each society.

The hyper-textual and episodic information transfer and the specification of virtual space invariably change the modern reality in a constant way, and the transformations affect nearly all aspects of human life: the information became a commodity, driving civilisation growth<sup>1</sup>; the autonomy of institutions and individuals, characteristic for globalisation processes, translates into the progressing individualisation and the obligation of constant progress in the Baumann understanding<sup>2</sup>, which directly implicates the change in the lifestyle; in the informative society the priority role is played by the conditional knowledge and defined through the key and job competences acquired and developed through the constant education, among which information competences have become necessary for functioning in the new conditions; the economic conditions deciding on the local and global labour market change in an unexpected pace – new occupations appear and old ones gain a new meaning and relate to new conditions; in the globalizing reality saturated with new media the only constant is change, so the labour stability and social activity are conditioned by gaining new and developing the already present competences constantly through the whole life, and the most desired key competence turns out to be elastic adaptation to the dynamically changing conditions. Going ahead of these challenges, the European concept of constant education gives equal rights to competences acquired by formal, extra-formal

---

<sup>1</sup> M. Golka, Czym jest społeczeństwo informacyjne?, *Ruch Prawniczy, Ekonomiczny i Socjologiczny*, rok LXVII, vol. 4, 2005, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> According to Z. Baumann, progress is nowadays understood individually, not – as before – collectively In Z. Bauman: *Płynna nowoczesność*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 2006, p. 209.

---

and non-formal education, which is why the extra-school forms of vocational training become increasingly important, and the national centres for certifying competences acquired in an extra-formal form have the right to certify competences acquired in the self-learning non-formal process. The dynamic information-communication technology development definitely favours the increase in meaning and interest of non-formal training, which, thanks to the more and more advanced technologies, can in an increasingly broadening sense take the form of **hybrid and remote learning**. Users of these forms may widely decide on the place, time and range of their learning, thus taking the burden of responsibility for its effects. The awareness of own educational predispositions and needs definitely favours the aware constant human development, which is a necessity today, highly priced by the employers on the ever shifting labour market.

The texts included in this bilingual publication include the international perspective on the issues which are constantly a subject of scientific studies and discussions, the aim of the education authorities' actions and care of institutions responsible for the efficiency of current education on a global, regional and local level. The diversity of issues discussed by the authors; studies, conditioning discussions, interpretation of achieved results or didactic-upbringing reflexion, confirms the global character of the phenomenon, however complexly conditioned by tendencies of the local labour market and different priorities of man's personal development throughout their lives.

Many authors agree that in the face of the changes taking place constantly – in the offer of the more and more advanced information-communication devices changes, within individual scientific branches and specialisations, and within the multi-aspect vocational and social activity, it has become an indispensable condition of human development to constantly update their key and vocational competences, which are also the most effective form of protection from digital, vocational or social exclusion. After finishing the formal education, everyone is individually responsible for their own development, its direction and forms of realization. Self-education, or other activities within non-formal education, require determination, consistency and self-discipline in realising the consciously prepared path of individual development. It is definitely easier to use the ever increasing offer of courses, trainings, workshops or seminars within the extra-formal education, or as some prefer – extra-school education. The wide range of the issue and forms of learning makes the choice easier; especially that modern information-communication tools, which enable learning in any place at any time, are increasingly more helpful and available in this field.

The authors discussing these issues in their texts have tried to point out that there are diverse conditionings of a successful extra-school education through *inter alia* referring to specific solutions in neighbouring or extra-European countries (Ukraine, Poland, United States) in the field of:

- 
- A comparative analysis of system solutions, or
  - Extra-formal vocational education and training in specific occupations (e.g. train traffic specialist, philologist, literature specialist, agricultural technician).

The presented examples are a necessary reference point for the discussed theories, proposed solutions or diverse local conditions, deciding on the specialist educational offer, enabling, according to the assumption of the European concept of constant learning, development for every man – regardless of age, sex, location, occupation, interests, predispositions or needs.

On behalf of myself and the entire Editorial Board, I would like to thank the Reviewers for the time spent on analysing the texts – prof. Nadieżda Łucan for in-depth and very detailed references to each text and Assistant Professor Józef Bednarek for politely pointing out the most important message included in the published texts.

*Barbara Kędzierska*