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# **RAISING THE LEVEL OF COMPETENCES OF THE CSO EMPLOYEES THROUGH THE MODERNIZATION OF STATISTICAL EDUCATION SYSTEM**

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## 1. *The purpose and means of competence model implementation in the CSO*

The Statistical Education System in the constantly developing statistical world is a very important issue. Changing reality poses new challenges for statistics and statisticians. Therefore raising the level of competences of the CSO employees through the modernization of Statistical Education System is a key component of the human resources strategy of Central Statistical Office.

Human resources management strategy of Central Statistical Office covers the wide range of organization's problems concerning structure and organizational culture, organization effectiveness, competences, recruitment and selection of resources and staff development.

In order to upgrade the process of managing human resources in 2012 the CSO introduced a project titled *"The management of competences as a model of human resources management in the Central Statistical Office"*. It was realised in cooperation with the Civil Service Department at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister within the project named *"The modernisation of management systems and improving the skills of the personnel by implementing enhancements focussed on the improvement of management processes in government administration."*

In 2012 a competence model was created and developed, including a description of 20 competence profiles. Before that, the CSO cooperated with consultants to analyse the organizational structure and describe the model. During the project tasks were performed.

### **TASK ONE – IDENTIFYING AND SELECTING COMPETENCES**

The task one involved an analysis of the CSO's organisational structure, its internal documentation and documentation pertaining to legislative acts: job descriptions, internal rules and regulations, document: *"Directions of the development of the Polish official statistics up to the year 2017"*. The analysis of documentation was performed with a view to aligning the currently developed competence management model with the strategic goals and development directions of the CSO.

To prepare first documents, the CSO has undertaken different actions including:

- Survey - 360 filled-in surveys were returned to HR units
- 30 Individual interviews
- Additional meeting with the CSO management
- Group interviews and Expert panel

The actions carried out under task resulted in the listing of CSO competences and the forming of, within the organisation, job groups for which competence profiles will be developed.

## TASK TWO – DEVISING A CONCEPT OF COMPETENCE-BASED MANAGEMENT

Under that task, a competence management model was developed (definition of competences<sup>1</sup>, behavioural indicators, scale), a competence matrix, a division into competence profiles, including descriptions of 20 profiles with competences matched to them.

## TASK THREE – A MEETING AND APPROVING

Under task three, a meeting with the management of the CSO was held behind closed doors and without consultants, at the CSO's request. After the meeting, the CSO provided the consultants with comments to the report and draft of model. After this process, model was developed. As a part of the next stage the CSO was presented with a modified competence model, including a competence glossary, a competence matrix, and modified competence profiles for CSO job groups. The model was then approved by the CSO.

As a result the CSO has established a competence model with 21 profiles. The implementation of the project commenced in 2013, and its effects have a long-term impact on enhancing the quality of personnel management in the official statistics departments. Firstly, the model was implemented in the Central Statistical Office. Next step was to involve particular statistical offices in Poland. In 2013 "The Book of Competence Profiles" was approved by Director General of the CSO.

Competence profiles align with particular groups of positions.

The competence management system facilitates the goals of the CSO while supporting employees in their career development, so that they could perform their duties more effectively.

The competence management started with identifying and communicating the necessary key competences which are needed to pursue the organisation's strategy and its strategic goals.

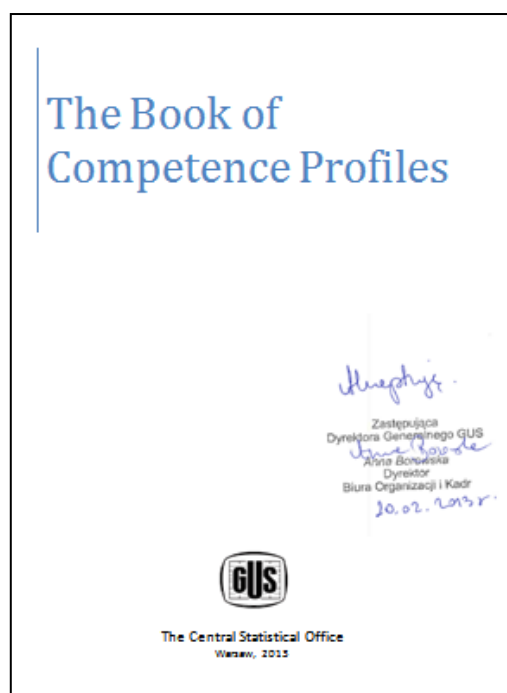
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*Competence can be defined as all interconnected traits of character, knowledge, skills and values, on which the person depends to do his/her work well. By taking into account the aforementioned elements that form competence, we can conclude that: **knowledge** makes it possible to understand reality, **skills** determine the effectiveness of actions, **traits of character, values and attitudes** are supportive to the quality of actions and make them individual in nature.*

Consequently, competence management became directly linked to the organisation's strategy and assumed to be strategically important.

In 2013 there was the first pilot competences evaluation carried out in the CSO. Evaluation covered competences included in the 19 competency profiles assigned to jobs descriptions in the office.

It was carried out for 733 employees and 28 competences were assessed in total. The aim of this evaluation was to define the competency gaps as well as the surpluses.



The final report from the competences evaluation showed that only a small group of employees of the Central Statistical Office requires development activities aimed at eliminating competency gaps. The vast majority of employees should take part in activities aiming at professional development of their competences. In order to make the evaluation more adequate and accurate, in 2014 HR department improved the tool adding new functionalities to it.

According to the Act dated on 21st November 2008 on the Civil Service each Civil Service Corps member has got its own individual professional development programme which shall be the basis for referring the Civil Service Corps members to training. It is an official document that describes all areas in which employee should improve his/her knowledge and skills. It is prepared in accordance with the tasks that are performed by employee at work.

In 2014 annual training plan was based on information provided in individual professional development programs and results from the competences evaluation.

The organisation noticed that competence management is also a valuable tool for fostering personal growth of the employees. The implementation was started from modifications of recruitment and training system in the CSO according to the competence profiles.

## **2. Educational activities undertaken to raise the competences of the CSO employees**

In 2013 the President of CSO approved a document *The concept of the Statistical Education System implemented by official statistics services until 2017*.

This document was a response to the obligation arising from CSO strategy "*Development Directions of the Polish Official Statistics until 2017*". According to the document one of the main tasks for the immediate future is to establish a Statistical Education System. This

System constitutes the source of statistical knowledge for personnel of official statistics services, respondents and those who are personally interested in statistical information.

CSO conducts a wide array of educational activities for their employees in different ways which are described below.

#### **Train the trainer Programme / The Internal Trainer Programme**

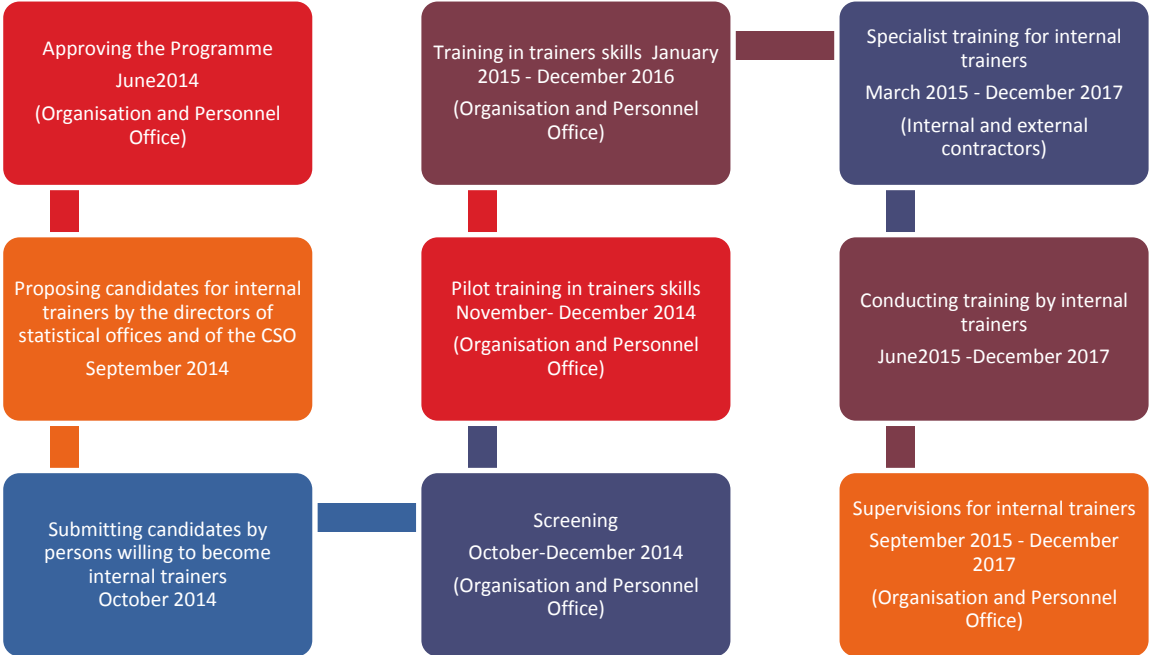
Train the trainer Programme is an element of the concept for the Statistical Education System. This Programme facilitates knowledge transfer between employees which is a key aspect in the organisation's development. It also allows the CSO and other regional statistical offices to implement the concept of a learning organisation, which is currently deemed the only form of organisation that can quickly adapt to the rapidly changing conditions. In line with the principles of this concept in order to avoid stagnation and keep up with information processing, the organisation and all its members need to learn constantly.

Internal trainers are recruited from among the talented, experienced and involved employees, for whom working as a coach constitutes a form of appreciation and enrichment of their work. In total there will be ca. 70 people responsible for training in the field of broadly understood statistics and professional and personal development. Most of them are already involved in various training and educational activities for a broad range of internal and external clients. Thanks to participation in the Programme, they have an opportunity to constantly update their knowledge, improve their qualifications and enrich their skill-sets regarding training and education.

In line with the concept of the Programme" implemented by the CSO, internal trainers will conduct training meeting the standards of the Statistical Education System. They are primarily responsible for trainings on statistical surveys, statistics, and statistical analysis, and also personal development training for pollsters and call-centre personnel. Internal trainers conduct training at the CSO and other statistical offices. It is estimated that each year at least 40% of employees performing this function in the organisation will conduct internal training. This will allow a reduction in the necessity for services offered by external trainers and will make it possible to reduce the cost of training, simultaneously preserving the high level of performance. Internal trainers receive support in improving their trainers skills. The programme for internal trainers is maintained by the CSO Organisation and Personnel Office.

Internal trainers use different forms of training, preferably lectures with some workshop elements. Such a form aims to introduce elements that energise participants for the training, make them involved in the activity and understand the discussed subject from both its practical and theoretical sides.

The implementation schedule for the Programme in 2014-2017 is illustrated on the diagram below.



*The Mentoring Programme*

Mentors are a group of experienced employees willing to provide assistance to their co-workers with shorter job seniority. Mentoring is a master-mentees relationship whereby mentees get familiarised through appropriate actions of their masters with the organisation and its functioning.

Mentors support mentees with their content-related knowledge, indispensable to perform the entrusted tasks. It is necessary to tailor the development prospects to an individual employee, in line with the needs and expectations of both the principal and the subordinate. Mentoring may facilitate this task, increasing employee’s involvement in the organisation and implemented projects. To accomplish the set objectives, mentors must undergo an appropriate preparation. The CSO is still working on the Mentoring Programme. The Programme is aimed at easing the burden of a potential skills gap caused by the incoming wave of retirement-eligible employees. The Programme will offer special training sessions on a wide array of topics, including diversity and cultural sensitivity, conflict resolution, setting goals, problem-solving skills, communication skills. Some examples of actions similar to mentoring can be observed in the CSO today but they are not regulated. The aim is to create and develop the mentoring culture.

### *Training courses and other forms of education, including e-learning formula*

Training activities in the Central Statistical Office are based on the following documents:

- The Civil Service Act of 21 November 2008
- The Act of 26 June 1974- Labour Code
- Regulation of the Prime Minister of 6 October 2010 on the detailed conditions of organisation and conducting of training in the civil service
- Regulation No. 2 of the Director General of the CSO of 9 August 2013 on the forms and rules of raising professional skills of the CSO employees

In 2013, the Division of Education and Development of the Organisation and Personnel Office organised a total of 259 training attended by over 2 900 participants.

	number of training topics	number of participants	including the CSO
Workshops	12	469	84
Specialised	20	749	523
Obligatory	6	338	295
Professional development	30	993	801
External (specialised)	191	409	365
Total	259	2 958	2 068

During the preparation of the Training Plan for 2014, the following elements have been taken into consideration:

- Training priorities consistent with the survey areas determined in the statistical survey programme
- Individual professional development programmes for the CSO employees and results of the competence balance of the CSO employees
- An analysis of training assessment reports

Training objectives were set up on 2014 and included:

- Raising the quality of statistical surveys
- Raising the competences of employees of official statistics services in the field of: making analyses, preparation and publication of survey results, use of IT tools
- Ensuring the increased international participation and role of the Polish statistics
- Raising the quality of organisation management

To reach the goals, CSO were offered wide array of courses:

- Analytical description of phenomena
- Time series analysis
- Quality in statistics

- Work with statistical data- how to find and properly use data?
- Statistics in practice

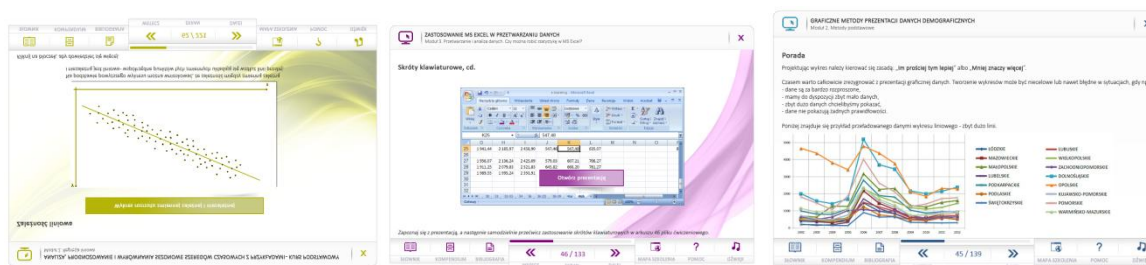
and many others specialised courses and professional trainings.

The data is shown in the table below.

	number of training topics	number of participants	including the CSO
Workshops	5	101	45
Specialised	39	888	373
Obligatory	4	136	116
Professional development	17	446	253
External (specialised)	287	783	469
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>2 354</b>	<b>1 256</b>

The CSO supports the traditional forms of education with the e-learning system. E-learning courses are divided into categories based on statistical fields:

- data analysis
- law aspects
- human resources management
- computer skills
- statistical data visualization
- statistical research
- quality in statistics
- statistical surveys



In the beginning of 2014 five e-learning courses have been launched and 1700 statistical workers altogether completed them. The courses were prepared on the basis of materials produced by CSOs personnel. The first part of the course is the pre-test which determines a trainee's knowledge level. Second part is the key material including learning exercises, interactions, other resources and tests. The final test, provided that one's score exceeds 70%, allows the participant to receive a certificate.



Courses and their trainees are regularly monitored. Administrators can track progress for all participants, time spend on tasks, grades and completion records.

The evaluation part is included and all trainees are obliged to fill the satisfaction survey. Thanks to that information, which is analysed and consulted with experts in the field, e-learning content is upgraded. Also some modifications to the system itself are considered and made upon request.

### *Doctoral studies dedicated to the CSO employees*

Doctoral studies dedicated to CSO workers are another form of education. The special Doctoral Programme in Economics was organized within the Warsaw School of Economics in 2013. It was based on the best European practices, utilizing the benefit of almost 100 years of SGH's experience in PhD education as well as cooperation within a vast international network of SGH partners. Each student takes part in at least 240 hours of obligatory coursework organized into following blocks: general subjects, specialization subjects, research methodology. In 2013 30 students from the CSO started the PhD education.

### *3. The Educational Platform as a tool to enhance competences of the CSO employees*

The pilot Official Statistics Education Portal has been launched in 2009. Portal was separated from the information system of official statistics. The pilot Portal offered two open e-learning training courses in the field of statistics.

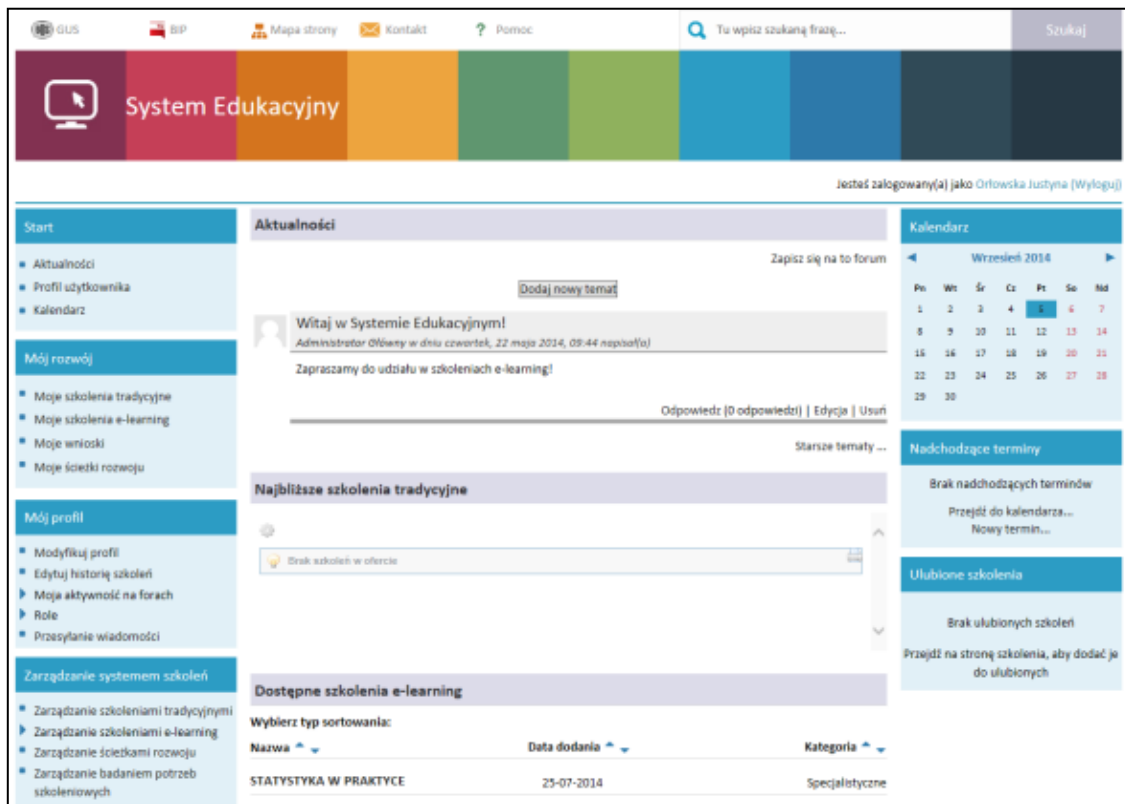
Since 2011 the CSO has been working on IT tools (LMS – Learning Management System) which will support the training management system and integrate it. One of them was a part of the project “The Official Statistics Information System” (SISP). Within the project, among others elements, an e-learning training system was established along with 19 e-learning courses. The courses were prepared on the basis of materials produced by CSOs personnel.

The training management system was first internally released in January 2014. CSO employees and regional statistical offices workers were included in testing and preparing the system to satisfy their requirements and expectations. The aim of the system is to deliver, track and manage training in the whole organization.

Specific objectives of the training management system are as follows:

- facilitate training system processes (recruitment, assessment, reporting)
- organise and plan training activities
- prepare e-learning courses using embedded software and computer programmes
- publish information about new courses that were introduced and important deadlines along with making them accessible to specific/target groups
- conduct training needs survey and analysis
- record the training status and update training history of statistical workers
- provide learning materials and resources

- plan and monitor training budget
- report training activities (e.g. number of courses, number of trainees, cost per trainee, satisfaction of training, test results)



The process of implementation is in progress since 2013. Therefore, every quarter more components and functionalities are available to HR administrators and employees who are beneficiaries of the courses.

#### ***4. The Statistical Competence Academy as a next stage towards modernization of Statistical Education System in the CSO***

The human capital is the most important resource in each organization. Having in mind issues connected with quality aspects, this area is more and more essential. The development of human resources management is a permanent process which requires new approaches.

That is why the Central Statistical Office decided to continue actions by the Statistical Competence Academy. It is a next stage towards modernization of Statistical Education System in the CSO. The project is strictly connected with implementation the Generic Statistical Business Process Model in the CSO.

The aim of the project, that is supposed to be achieved in 2020, is to prepare and introduce a training programme. It will support the process of transformation of organizational aspects

of statistical surveys. What is more, within the project, CSO is planning to implement new, effective solutions in the field of training processes and gaining new competences by the CSO staff. The final result of all these changes will be modern, task oriented organization.