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ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN WOOD ECONOMY AND A PROPOSITION FOR AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MODEL

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activity of the population are of key importance for economic development, creation of new jobs and rise of the public welfare level. Some general researches (for example GEM – Global Entrepreneurship Monitor) showed that the entrepreneurial potential in Slovenia has not been completely maximized. Considering the findings from the research into entrepreneurship in wood economy we can claim the same also for the domain of wood, since we discovered numerous opportunities that are not being used at the moment. Research was made in small wood-industry companies with the help of questionnaires. On the basis of the established facts, a modern, future and development-orientated entrepreneurial model was elaborated, which is based on internal and external factors of entrepreneurship efficiency. Entrepreneurial activity is based on constant, planned and goal orientated learning and transfer (and use) of this knowledge in the business process.

Key words: entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial activity, entrepreneurial model, GEM, wood economy

PODJETNIŠTVO V LESARSTVU IN PREDLOG PODJETNIŠKEGA MODELA

Izvleček

Podjetništvo in podjetniška aktivnost prebivalstva sta ključnega pomena za razvoj gospodarstva, ustvarjanje delovnih mest in dvig ravni družbene blaginje. Nekateri splošne raziskave (npr. GEM – Global Entrepreneurship Monitor) kažejo, da podjetniški potencial v Sloveniji ni povsem izkoriščen. Glede na ugotovitve iz raziskave podjetništva v lesarstvu lahko podobno trdimo tudi za podjetništvo v lesni panogi, saj smo ugotovili precej priložnosti, ki pa trenutno niso izkoriščene. Raziskava je bila opravljena v majhnih lesnih podjetjih s pomočjo anketiranja. Na podlagi ugotovljenih dejstev je bil izdelan sodoben, v prihodnost in razvoj usmerjen podjetniški model, ki ga vsebinsko opredeljujejo tako notranji kot zunanji dejavniki uspešnosti podjetništva. Podjetniška aktivnost temelji na neprestanem, načrtnem in ciljno usmerjenem učenju ter prenosu (in uporabi) tega znanja v poslovnem procesu.

Ključne besede: podjetništvo, podjetniška aktivnost, podjetniški model, GEM lesarstvo

UVOD IN CILJI INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

Entrepreneurship can be defined as a process of searching and/or creation of business opportunities and their exploitation, independent of sources that the entrepreneur has in a certain moment, it also means creating new value with new, creative combination of production agents (GLAS, 2002). Modern entrepreneurship is based mainly on utilization of achievements of modern technologies, where certain completely new (niche) areas with high added value were developed (for example biotechnology), while with the traditional economic activities, such as wood economy, entrepreneurship brings mostly new ways of operations, based on new knowledge about materials, marketing and organization.

Business environment is changing, which especially applies to the last years, when really big changes occurred (DAUM, 2001, KROPIVŠEK/ROZMAN 2007). The development of global business environment has been characterized by increasing individualization. This means that customers no longer wish for standard products or services, but increasingly demand customized service. These trends force many organizations to deliberately incorporate concepts like authenticity, involvement and innovation into their strategy (JANSEN / STEENBAKKERS / JÄGERS, 2007).

This is one of the most important reasons why the entrepreneurship is of key importance in these circumstances. That is why in our research we fully investigated the condition and tendencies of development of entrepreneurial activity in wood economy and compared it with general researches. On the ba-

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sis of the established facts, we elaborated a modern, future and development-orientated model, which was also the main objective of the research. We assumed the following theses:

- We infer that the condition of entrepreneurship in wood economy is comparable with the condition of entrepreneurship in Slovenia.
- According to findings of general GEM research we infer that one of the more important reasons for lower efficiency of small wood-industry companies lies in the fact that individuals decide for entrepreneurship due to necessity – therefore the entrepreneurship in this case is clearly of self-employment surviving type. Other reasons can be / are: low entrepreneurial education, bad and unverified entrepreneurial idea, lack of work experience and financial means.
- We infer that the area of connections and integration in wood economy still has a lot of unused reserves and development possibilities.

METHODS

METODE

Analysis of the condition of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial activity in wood economy (in small wood-industry companies with up to 50 employees) in Slovenia was implemented with the use of the survey method. Small and micro companies represent 98% of all timber companies and employ more than 50% of all workers in wood economy. As the list of companies that was given to us by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia was too long for questioning the entire population, we picked companies for sending questionnaires randomly, by using the function “random” in MS Excel program. This way we sent 410 questionnaires in June 2008; they were sent largely by normal mail with attached empty envelope for answers (200); to 180 companies whose e-mail addresses were at hand we sent questionnaires in electronic form with attached MS Word file and also prepared a web version of the questionnaire. The rest of questionnaires (30) were given to entrepreneurs in person. We received 41 correctly filled questionnaires, which represents a 10% response. Respondents answered some basic data and some other ways of filling out, and then graded most of the claims with the Likert scale with four equidistant levels, where option 1 means an unimportant reason and 4 means a very important reason for the respondent.

Some of the data acquired in this way was then compared with GEM research (REBERNIK/TOMINC/PUŠNIK, 2009; BOSMA ET ALL, 2009) and we ascertained more important deviations. On the basis of the findings of our research, we elaborated a modern, future and development-orientated entrepreneurial model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSION

REZULTATI IN RAZPRAVA

CONDITION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY IN WOOD ECONOMY

STANJE PODJETNIŠKE AKTIVNOSTI V LESARSTVU

Most of the entrepreneurs cooperated in the research, belongs to the age category spanning from 45 to 54 years. Among them, very few were younger than 34 and none younger than 24 years. 7 % of the entrepreneurs are older than 54 years. The results show a large number of older entrepreneurs, which are more operatively orientated in comparison with the younger entrepreneurs with higher education. The respondents were from that population of newly formed companies; most of the companies were older than 42 months, while only 5 % were younger than 42 months.

As much as 6 % of the companies have 1 to 5 employees, 20 % from 6 to 10 employees, and only 4 % of the companies have more than 11 employees. These results are completely compatible with our expectations and prove that micro companies with less than 5 employees dynamically fill the specific gaps on the market but are not capable of competition on the global market.

The respondents expressed the desire for a greater income as the most important reason for entrepreneurship and setting up a company (Figure 1). The presence of good entrepreneurial idea and exploiting of business opportunities was also rated very high among the respondents, as well as a desire for greater freedom and independence at work.

On the other hand, the respondents rated as less important the reasons such as unemployment, social demonstration, and no other options for survival (Figure 1). We also discovered that approx. 5 % of the entrepreneurs decided to set up the company owing to their entrepreneurial ideas. Almost half of them had an entrepreneurial idea, but it was not of key importance. Only 2 % of the entrepreneurs had a non-entrepreneurial idea when setting up a company. From this we can conclude that most of the entrepreneurs in wood economy started their

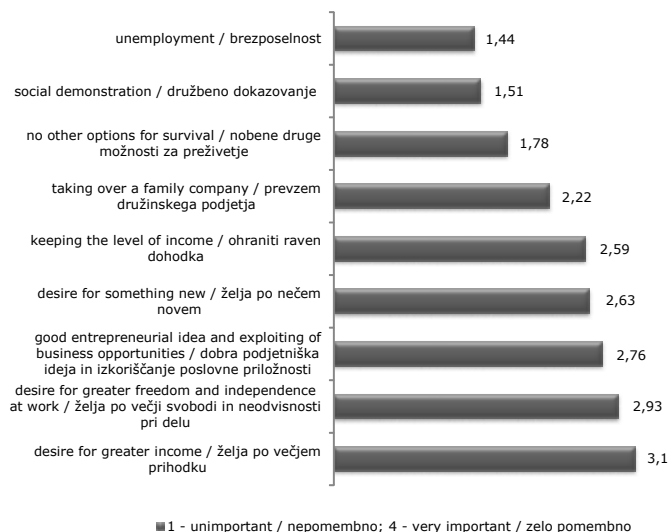


Fig. 1: Reasons for entrepreneurship and setting up a company (n = 41)

Slika 1: Razlogi za podjetništvo in ustanovitev podjetja (n = 41)

business, because they wanted to exploit the business opportunity and not because they were obliged to do so in order to survive. But it needs to be pointed out that the research was made in the first half of 2008, when the economic crisis had not yet begun to take hold.

From Figure 2 it is evident that ignorance and too high initial capital do not pose such a big problem for entrepreneurs as does, thus unsuitably qualified personnel. The complications with the procedure of setting up were graded differently. The results show that small wood-industry companies have bigger problems with complicated procedure of their setting up and lack of experience. These grades probably show the condition in the past, as the field of procedure for setting up a company changed significantly in the last couple of years:

now an individual can set up a company through the web, completely without startup expenses.

KNOWLEDGE ZNANJE

Several authors believe that natural resources, technology, finances, products etc. aren't and won't be the key strategy agents, as today they are accessible and available to everybody under similar conditions. Since the beginning of the 1980s, the proportion of intangible assets has increased from 0 % of the market value of an enterprise to more than 0 % at the end of the 1990s (DAUM, 2001). Intangible assets are the recognition of trademark, level of knowledge and capacity of cre-

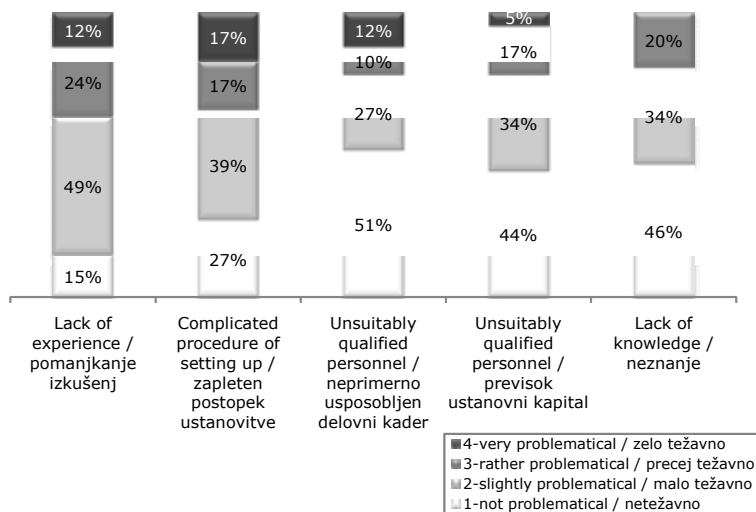


Fig. 2: The biggest problems when setting up a company (n = 41)

Slika 2: Največje težave pri ustanovitvi podjetja (n = 41)

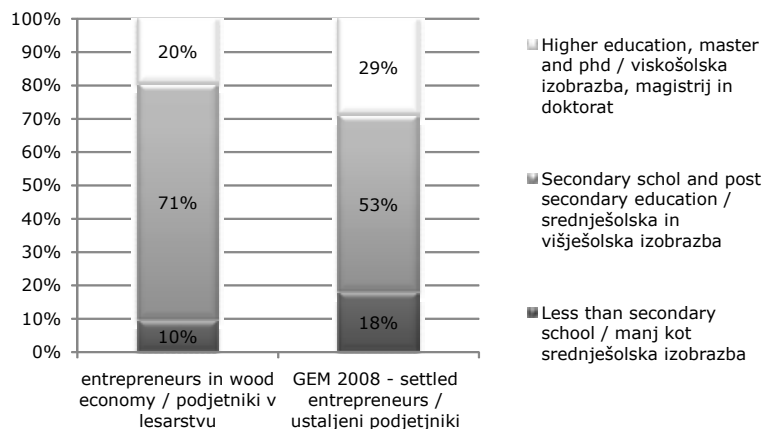


Fig. 3: Educational structure of entrepreneurs (n = 41)

Slika 3: Izobrazbena struktura podjetnikov (n = 41)

ativity. Some authors name it with the expression intellectual capital (DAUM, 2003). Hofman-Bang (DAUM, 2003) state that intellectual capital consists of human capital (employee and their individual knowledge), organizational capital (internal structures, work processes, codified knowledge etc.) and relational structural capital (customer relations, brands, business partner relations) that all interact in order to create financial capital according to a company's specific "business recipe". Key words are therefore knowledge and motivation.

According to the research of entrepreneurship in Slovenia in 2008, most Slovenian entrepreneurs come from the population with secondary school or higher education (REBERNIK/TOMINC/PUŠNIK, 2009).

The entrepreneurs in wood economy have a similar condition, but slightly lower education, at least in the category of entrepreneurs with higher education Figure 3). Education is no warranty for innovative and creative functioning of companies, but it is of key importance for reaching that goal (KROPIVŠEK, 2003).

From Figure 4 we can conclude that the respondents are mostly satisfied with their entrepreneurship. It is evident that for the entrepreneurs of small wood-industry companies in Slovenia freedom at work and the possibility of being creative are the biggest advantages. The respondents gave the worst grades to income and social status. It is interesting that nobody is completely unsatisfied with plan realization, while as much as 2 % are unsatisfied with their independence by decision-making.

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN COMPANIES AND WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS POVEZOVANJE MED PODJETJI IN Z DRUGIMI INSTITUCIJAMI

It is evident from Table 1 that the entrepreneurs find most useful the connections for common marketing. It is followed by purchase of materials and connections for applications for tenders. At the same time, the entrepreneurs do not think that

Table 1: Intentions of connecting between companies and/or with other institutions (n = 41)

Preglednica 1: Nameni povezovanja med podjetji in/ali z drugimi institucijami (n = 41)

| For which intentions do you connect with other companies/institutions? Za katere namene se povezujete z drugimi podjetji/institucijami? | Percentage delež [%] |
|--|-------------------------|
| Common marketing (for example appearance at fairs) / za skupno trženje (npr. za nastop na sejnih) | 31% |
| Purchase of materials / pri nabavi materialov | 28% |
| Application for tenders / za prijavo na razpise | 19% |
| Training and educating the employees / pri usposabljanju in izobraževanju zaposlenih | 10% |
| Common investments into research and development / za skupna vlaganja v raziskave in razvoj | 7% |
| Seeking advisers for different fields (for example law) / za iskanje svetovalcev za razna področja (npr. pravo) | 3% |
| Other: cooperation at projects / drugo: sodelovanje pri projektih | 2% |

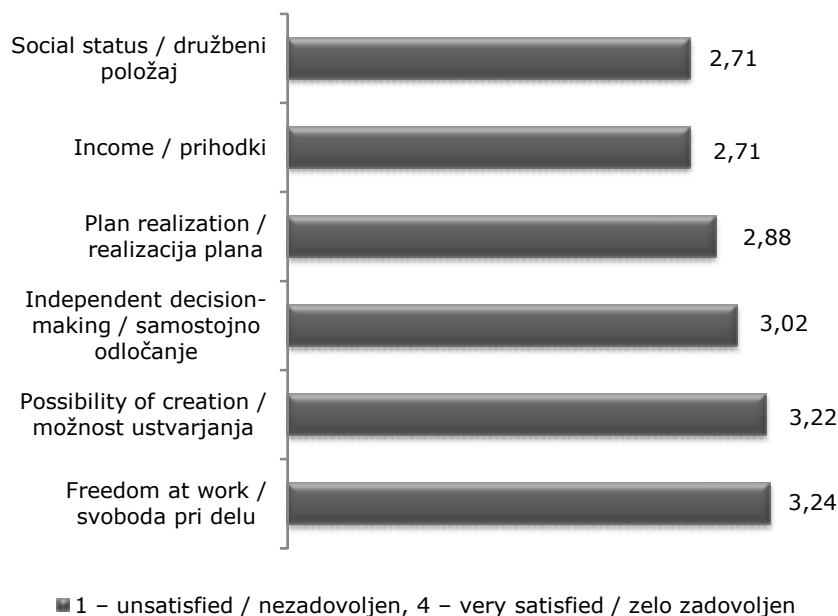


Fig. 4: Satisfaction of entrepreneurs in entrepreneurship (n = 41)

Slika 4: Zadovoljstvo podjetnikov pri podjetništvu (n = 41)

connections for common investments into research and development, training and educating the employees and seeking advisers for different fields such as law, accounting, marketing etc. are important. The results also show that 9 % of the questioned companies do not connect at all.

The questioned entrepreneurs connect mostly (more than 50%) with suppliers, which proves the importance of connections for purchase of materials. Other institutions, such as

“competition”, providers of special services and designers, connect on average in 20 to 30% of the cases. It is interesting that during the survey nobody confirmed any connection with research institutions, such as universities etc., which testifies about “non-investment” into research and development.

It is evident from Table 2 that most of the respondents named lower operating costs as the most important reason for connecting. They rated as very important also the power at

Table 2: The most important reasons for connecting with other companies/institutions (n = 41)

Preglednica 2: Najpomembnejši vzroki za povezovanje z drugimi podjetji / institucijami (n = 41)

(1 – unimportant / nepomembno, 4 – very important / zelo pomembno)

| Reasons for connecting / Vzroki za povezovanje: | number of answers število odgovorov | | | | average of evaluations povprečje ocen |
|--|--|----|----|----|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| Lower operating costs / nižji stroški poslovanja | 4 | 5 | 17 | 15 | 3,05 |
| Power at marketing and sales of the products / moč pri trženju in prodaji izdelkov | 3 | 9 | 14 | 15 | 3,00 |
| Higher productivity / večja produktivnost | 2 | 8 | 20 | 11 | 2,98 |
| Higher quality and bigger assortment of products / višja kakovost in širša paleta izdelkov | 5 | 8 | 12 | 16 | 2,95 |
| More reliable and faster services and better logistics / zanesljivejša in hitrejša storitev ter boljša logistika | 6 | 7 | 11 | 17 | 2,95 |
| Better conditions for development / boljši pogoji za razvoj | 6 | 5 | 19 | 11 | 2,85 |
| More even distribution of high costs of technology, development and marketing among companies / enakomernejša razporeditev visokih stroškov tehnologije, razvoja in trženja med podjetji | 6 | 9 | 15 | 11 | 2,76 |
| Cooperation at tenders for EU funds for R&D / sodelovanje na razpisih za EU sredstva za R&R | 8 | 5 | 22 | 6 | 2,63 |
| Highly specialized (production) technology / visoko specializirana (proizvodna) tehnologija | 7 | 8 | 15 | 11 | 2,73 |
| Easier specialization – concentration on “core-business” / lažja specializacija – osredotočenje na »core-business« | 11 | 12 | 12 | 6 | 2,32 |



Fig. 5: Overview of most important ways of connecting (n = 41)

Slika 5: Pregled najpomembnejših načinov povezovanja (n = 41)

marketing and sales of the products. Other reasons for connections are quite equivalent. It is interesting that cooperation at tenders for EU funds for research and development is considered the least important. Among all reasons, the rather low price of the intention of connecting for easier specialization (concentration on “core-business”) stands out.

Respondents evaluate that for connecting with other companies or institutions the most suitable form is partnership (Figure 5). Other reasons such as branch alliances through connecting institution, cluster, capital alliances and virtual connections with specialists were graded more or less the same, but less important. It is interesting that at the moment none of the respondents uses a virtual connection with specialists such as designers, programmers etc., even though they evaluated them as quite important.

COMPARISON OF CONDITIONS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN WOOD ECONOMY AND IN GENERAL (GEM RESEARCH)

PRIMERJAVA POGOJEV ZA PODJETNIŠTVO V LESARSTVU IN NA SPLOŠNO (RAZISKAVA GEM)

Table 3 shows the comparison of the evaluation results of general conditions for entrepreneurship, such as given by Slovenian entrepreneurs in wood economy (subject of this research), with results of GEM research (“SLO GEM” - for Slovenia and “GEM” for all cooperating countries) (REBERNIK/TOMINC/PUŠNIK, 2009).

Most conditions compared in Table 3 were evaluated by Slovene entrepreneurs in wood economy better than by GEM research (gray colour of evaluation). However, results are not

completely comparable, since the evaluations for entrepreneurship in wood economy were given by entrepreneurs/directors, while in GEM research these conditions were evaluated by selected experts from concerned fields (REBERNIK/TOMINC/PUŠNIK, 2009). According to the comparison of these Entrepreneurial Conditions, the following statements can be made:

- **area A:** entrepreneurs in wood economy that answered the questionnaire (hereinafter referred to as: respondents) evaluated the statement “Disposability of different financial resources for new and growing companies” better than evaluated in GEM research, while the respondents evaluate that disposability of debt financial resources for new and growing companies (A02) is slightly worse than the Slovenian average;
- **area B:** experts of GEM research for Slovenia evaluated state policies with very low grades; the respondents evaluated the statements B05, B04 and B01 slightly better, but still with low grades;
- **area C:** governmental programs, which create conditions for development of entrepreneurship, were evaluated by the respondents slightly better compared to state policies; these statements were evaluated relatively badly by the experts from GEM research, but definitely much worse than by the respondents’ evaluations;
- **area D:** there are greater differences in researches in the issue of range and quality of education and training for entrepreneurship; respondents rated them, on average, as good (grade D1=3,83 and D2=4,12), while GEM research put the conditions for education in the 2nd worst place of grades - they believe that teaching in Slovenian primary and secondary schools does not encourage cre-

Table 3: Comparison of Entrepreneurial Framework Conditions (EFCs) of small wood-industry companies (source: own research 2008; n = 41) with GEM research for 2008 (source: REBERNIK/TOMINC/PUŠNIK, 2009)

Preglednica 3: Primerjava okvirnih pogojev za podjetništvo majhnih lesnih podjetij (vir: lastna raziskava 2008; n = 41) z raziskavo GEM za leto 2008 (vir: Rebernik/Tominc/Pušnik, 2009)

| GEM area sign GEM oznaka področja | Entrepreneurial Framework Conditions (EFCs) Okvirni pogoji za podjetništvo | Average of evaluations povprečje ocen | | |
|---|--|--|------------|------|
| | | Wood economy Lesarstvo | SLO GEM | GEM |
| A | Disposability of different financial resources for new and growing companies. <i>Razpoložljivost različnih finančnih virov za nova in rastoča podjetja.</i> | 3,66 | 2,66 | 2,42 |
| A02 | There are enough debt financial resources for new and growing companies. <i>Na voljo je dovolj dolžniških virov financiranja za nova in rastoča podjetja.</i> | 3,29 | 3,55 | 2,76 |
| B01 | State policies (for example public tenders) consistently favour new companies. <i>Državne politike (npr. javni razpisi) dosledno favorizirajo nova podjetja.</i> | 3,15 | 2,15 | 2,15 |
| B04 | New companies can get most of the necessary permits and concessions in approximately a week. <i>Nova podjetja lahko dobijo večino potrebnih dovoljenj in koncesij v približno tednu dni.</i> | 3,05 | 2,03 | 1,85 |
| B05 | Tax rates do NOT pose a burden for new and growing companies. <i>Višina davkov NI brema za nova in rastoča podjetja.</i> | 3,20 | 1,73 | 2,33 |
| C | Implementation of governmental programs, which create conditions for development of entrepreneurship. / <i>Uresničevanje vladnih programov, ki ustvarjajo pogoje za razvoj podjetništva.</i> | 3,49 | 2,17 | 2,23 |
| D1 | Range and quality of education and training for entrepreneurship in primary and secondary schools. / <i>Razširjenost in kakovost izobraževanja in usposabljanja za podjetništvo v osnovnih in srednjih šolah.</i> | 3,83 | 2,42 | 1,99 |
| D2 | Range and quality of education and training for entrepreneurship after secondary school. <i>Razširjenost in kakovost izobraževanja in usposabljanja za podjetništvo po srednji šoli.</i> | 4,12 | 2,97 | 2,78 |
| F | Quality and accessibility of business, legal and professional infrastructure, which is needed by new and growing companies. / <i>Kakovost in dostopnost poslovne, pravne in strokovne infrastrukture, ki jo potrebujejo mlada in rastoča podjetja.</i> | 3,66 | 3,05 | 2,94 |
| F05 | New and growing companies can easily obtain good bank services (current account, payment transactions abroad, credit guarantees etc.). / <i>Nova in rastoča podjetja zlahka pridobijo dobre bančne storitve (transakcijski računi, plačilni promet s tujino, kreditne garancije ipd.).</i> | 3,10 | 3,66 | 3,26 |
| G2 | Openness and competitiveness on the interior market (entry barriers). <i>Odprtost in konkurenčnost na notranjem trgu (vstopne ovire).</i> | 3,78 | 2,45 | 2,47 |
| H | Access to physical infrastructure, required for business. <i>Dostop do fizične infrastrukture, potrebne za poslovanje.</i> | 3,10 | 3,79 | 3,57 |
| H02 | Access to communications (telephone, internet etc.) for new and growing companies is not too expensive. / <i>Dostop do komunikacij (telefon, internet ipd.) za nova ali rastoča podjetja ni predrag.</i> | 4,02 | 4,23 | 3,69 |
| K | Recognition of business opportunities. <i>Zaznavanje poslovnih priložnosti.</i> | 3,98 | 3,16 | 3,24 |
| K02 | There are more opportunities for setting up new companies than there are people able to exploit them. / <i>Za ustanovitev novih podjetij je več dobrih priložnosti, kot pa je ljudi, ki so jih sposobni izkoristiti.</i> | 3,56 | 3,59 | 3,42 |
| N | Good regulations for protection of intellectual property. <i>Urejenost zaščite intelektualne lastnine.</i> | 3,37 | 3,00 | 2,67 |
| P | Attitude towards women in entrepreneurship. <i>Odnos do žensk v podjetništvu.</i> | 3,85 | 3,56 | 3,16 |
| P05 | Men and women are equally capable of setting up a new company. <i>Ženske in moški so enako sposobni ustanoviti novo podjetje.</i> | 3,93 | 4,57 | 3,83 |

Evaluation scale: 1-I disagree, 5-I completely agree with the statement
Lestvica ocenjevanja: 1-se ne strinjam, 5-se povsem strinjam s trditvijo

activity, independence, personal initiative, does not point out the importance of entrepreneurship and creation of new companies, and does not assure proper knowledge of principles of market economy; this implies that the education does not add up to development of entrepre-

neurial capacities in young people in primary and secondary schools and therefore to creation and growth of companies in Slovenia; this area requires numerous changes and adequate measures;

- **area F:** quality and accessibility of business, legal and professional infrastructure, which are needed by new

and growing companies, were graded slightly better by the respondents than by the experts in GEM research;

- **area G:** openness and competitiveness on the interior market (3.02) was graded higher by respondents than by GEM research, by which they confirm the high grade for implementation of governmental programs;
- **area H:** respondents evaluate that the access to the physical infrastructure (access to gas, water, electricity and canalization) and communication technologies is relatively good;
- **area K:** respondents evaluate that there are numerous business opportunities for creating new companies, even many more than there are people able to realize them; this is completely comparable with the worldwide and Slovenian GEM research, which indicates great possibilities for further development of entrepreneurship;
- **area N:** regulation of intellectual property was graded as very good by the respondents, even slightly better than by experts in GEM researches;
- **area P:** experts of both GEM researches and the respondents in our research also agreed very much that men and women have equal possibilities of access to good opportunities for setting up a new company and are equally capable of setting up a new company; the respondents graded the latter statement slightly lower.

Measures are necessary also within other entrepreneurial frameworks, mostly those that the respondents on one side and experts on the other side evaluated on average with less than 3. The statements with lowest evaluations show that adequate measures are necessary mostly in the fields of state policy, financial support, cultural and societal norms, transfer of researches and development onto entrepreneurial practice and governmental programs. Experts of GEM SLO believe that the following areas are most critical for development of entrepreneurship in Slovenia: tax rates as a burden for new growing companies, new companies still cannot get most of the necessary permits and concessions within one week, new and growing companies do not have enough financial resources acquired with first edition of shares, and state policies do not favour new companies. In their opinion, it is also critical that the national culture does not encourage individuals to take on the entrepreneurial risk and does not sufficiently encourage the success achieved by individuals with their own

work. A big problem also perceived during our research is an unsuccessful transfer of researches and development and therefore of new technological, scientific and other knowledge from universities and public research centers into new and growing companies, and those companies do not have completely equal conditions of access to new research discoveries and technologies in comparison with big recognized companies. Only the existence and efficiency of adequate mechanisms for transfer of research discoveries and technology into entrepreneurial practice would encourage the setting up and growth of companies in Slovenia.

On the basis of a complete analysis of the state of entrepreneurship in wood economy, a SWOT analysis has been implemented as follows:

- Strengths:
 - Adaptability, fast and independent decision-making
 - Great experience (large share of older entrepreneurs)
 - Fast information flow within the company
 - Innovation and creativity
 - Quality of products
 - Connecting for common marketing
- Weaknesses:
 - Operative orientation instead of development orientation
 - Lack of new knowledge (large share of older entrepreneurs)
 - Lack of marketing strategy
 - Relatively bad liquidity of resources
 - Bad connecting with other companies/institutions
 - Falling behind in the area of research and development
- Opportunities:
 - Employment of young and educated workers
 - Connecting with other companies/institutions in development, marketing etc.
 - Fast renovation of business and organization
- Threats:
 - Small size of companies (1-5 employees), without the tendency to grow
 - High average age of entrepreneurs
 - Admission of foreign, bigger competitors
 - Orientation of sales towards the local market
 - Paying indiscipline than can threaten the solvency

PROPOSITION FOR AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MODEL IN WOOD ECONOMY

PREDLOG PODJETNIŠKEGA MODELA V LESARSTVU

Business model of a modern company must provide for an adaptive realization of the strategy, include modern technological achievements into the business, and encourage innovative behaviour and organization of business processes, which are included in the proposed model (Figure 6).

Entrepreneurial activity is based on three internal agents of success (Figure 6):

- entrepreneur/team (entrepreneur and a group of individuals that have certain knowledge and capacities and are capable of realizing and idea and exploit a business opportunity)
- idea/opportunity (is a key element of entrepreneurial process: its important characteristics is its feasibility and suitability according to market needs)
- assets/resources (are necessary for realization of ideas, since the ideas come to life with their help; they are often not permanent, and are being adapted to needs of the entrepreneurial process).

It is a fact that the best cause for setting up a company is a good entrepreneurial idea as well as exploiting a business

opportunity and providing for innovations during the whole life cycle of a company. As the realization of each idea is subject to many traps and threats, it is necessary for the entrepreneurs to develop their ideas as much as possible, where they can help themselves by preparing a business plan. Our analysis of entrepreneurship in wood economy showed a worrying fact that as many as 44% of the entrepreneurs do not have an implemented business plan and that most of them do not use it. Connecting between companies and other institutions, too, is more the exception than the rule in wood economy. At the same time, it is one of the important agents of success, as it is closely associated with providing for personnel (knowledge) that will realize the idea, as well as with all other resources or instruments that will make the idea feasible.

We know two types of entrepreneurial orientations (KIYOSAKI / LECHTER, 2005): (1) entrepreneurship of small and micro companies, which are not ready to grow (the so-called self-employment companies for different specialists (for example accountant), which arise from the need and conviction to create a position of employment for themselves, as they have certain special knowledge that they can offer on the market), and (2) entrepreneurship of small companies that have a big tendency to grow and develop through a longer period in time (the so-called real entrepreneurship, which is not about knowledge and work of an entrepreneur, but about his capacity of delegation and working as a team). Mostly the latter com-

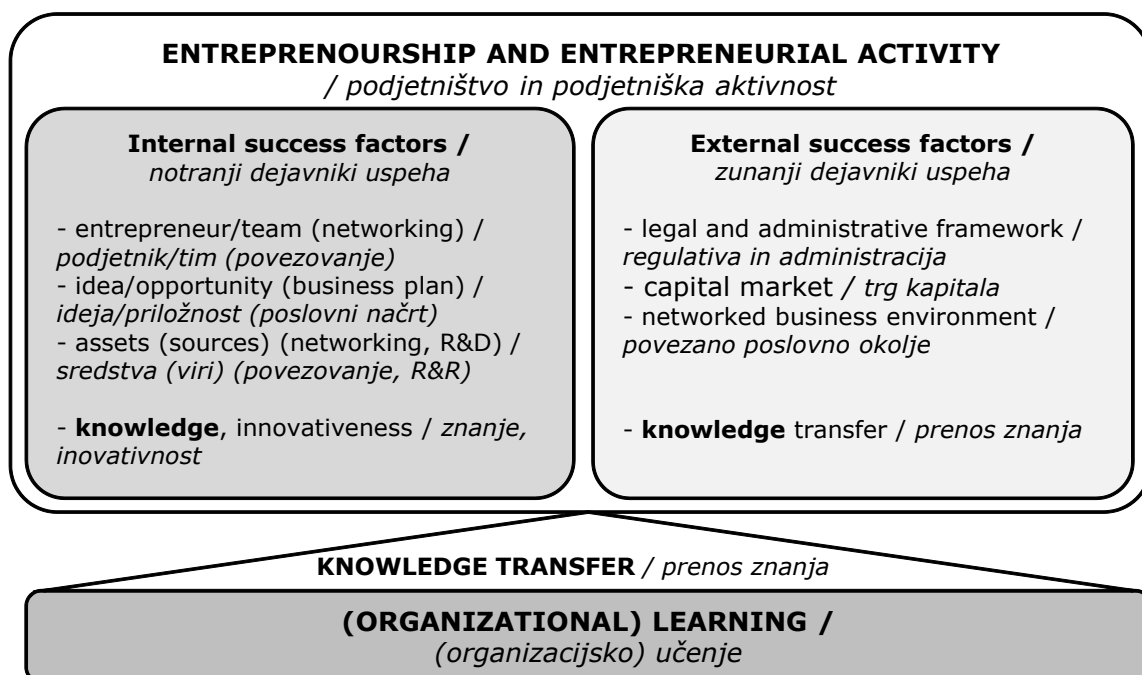


Fig. 6: Modern entrepreneurial model in wood economy

Slika 6: Sodoben podjetniški model v lesarstvu

panies are the ones that are capable of spreading throughout the world and are therefore of key importance for providing for new jobs as well as for the society's fast economic development. But, of course, in the competition big companies can also work with dynamical entrepreneurial approaches, introducing certain ideas of entrepreneurship in their traditional (as a rule more rigid) organizational operations (for example interior entrepreneurship, forming of spin-off companies, etc.).

The business of a company is largely influenced also by exterior agents of success (Figure 6), on which the company fundamentally does not have a major impact and is trying to adapt to them. The field of regulative and administrative procedures (including the procedure of setting up a company) is, on the one hand, being simplified and is, on the other hand, becoming more and more complex due to the internationalization and globalization. The capital market is constantly changing, which can make it much easier for the skilful entrepreneurs to get financial resources. The business environment is becoming more and more connected and networked, which consequentially forces the companies to seek partners and thus their way of business.

The only healthy base for growth and development of companies is the intellectual capital, which is often shown in the companies in the form of knowledge. The latter is linked up to people, their capacities, whose development and use must be planned, goal orientated and adapted to an individual, his personal goals, character, initial knowledge and his other characteristics (KROPIVŠEK, 2007). The more knowledge an individual has, the more he can handle his work, the more creative he can be, the more satisfaction the work brings him and is also better prepared to accept new challenges. This also shows the important role of (organizational) training. Knowledge is the thing that the competition cannot copy (fast). A key to the success of the company and entrepreneurship in general is a creative individual that can work as an entrepreneur or as part of a creative entrepreneurial team. The fact is that the more an individual is motivated and the more knowledge he possesses, the more he is willing to learn and develop as well as think creatively at his work.

CONCLUSIONS ZAKLJUČKI

If we conclude that entrepreneurship is a process based on individuals who decide for an entrepreneurial career, we can establish on the basis of the GEM (= Global Entrepreneur-

ship Monitor) research that in 2008 Slovenia had as much as 11.8% of total entrepreneurially active population, meaning of all forming, new and established entrepreneurs, which is much more than in 2007, when the figure reached approximately 9%. In 2008, almost 159,000 persons were thus involved in entrepreneurship (adult residents of Slovenia).

The entrepreneurship in wood economy also follows this trend. With the analysis of the condition of entrepreneurship in small wood-industry companies it was established, that companies with less than 10 employees were predominant. Such companies very dynamically fill certain gaps on the market, but are not capable of competing on the global market and/or of face the global competition. This is the key issue is raised – is Slovenian wood economy destined to stagnate and (slowly) decline, or are the timber companies capable of transforming firm niche companies into stronger global companies that will manage to spread huge Slovenian knowledge about wood throughout the world.

It is a pleasing and encouraging fact that the respondents evaluated the presence of good entrepreneurial idea and exploiting business opportunities as a very important reason for entrepreneurship and setting up a company. Similar as most entrepreneurs in Slovenia (according to GEM research), the entrepreneurs in wood industry, too, embarked on entrepreneurship in order to exploit the business opportunity and not because they were forced into it in order to survive. This is important mainly because the entrepreneurs that create companies due to necessity have smaller ambitions to grow and show smaller tendencies for employment and development in comparison with the entrepreneurs that start the business out on opportunity. Consequently, the countries where entrepreneurship, due to opportunities, is prevalent show a lower level of failure of new companies. As far as education is concerned, in wood economy as well as in general, there is a prevalence of entrepreneurs with secondary school or higher education, which testifies a satisfactory level of knowledge in companies. **With these proofs we partially rejected the second thesis.**

Almost one third of the questioned companies do not connect with other companies nor with institutions, **which confirms the third thesis**, that the area of connections and integration in wood economy has a lot of unused reserves and development possibilities. The other two thirds of the companies limit their connecting mostly to common appearance at fairs and purchase of materials. Otherwise the companies connect mostly for lower costs of business and bigger market

power, where they mostly use the partner approach of connecting. This area needs a lot of efforts in the future, since connecting is of key importance for the companies' growth and developments.

Comparisons of evaluations of general conditions for entrepreneurship between respondents in wood industry and results of the GEM research did not show any particular deviations. **With this we confirmed the first thesis.** The statements with lowest evaluations show the need for adequate measures, which can be seen in particular in the fields of state policy, financial support, cultural and societal norms, transfer of research and development into the entrepreneurial practice and governmental programs. It is necessary to point out that the research was implemented in the first half of 2008, when the economic crisis had not yet begun to take hold.

In the elaboration of a modern, future and development-orientated entrepreneurial model in wood economy we divided the success factors into internal and external ones, with high focus on the internal factors. Those are the factors that are formed and realized by the company itself, by using mostly connecting principles, providing for the intellectual potential, and other resources for business and precise development of an idea into a real business opportunity. The companies try to adapt to external factors and fundamentally do not have a significant influence on them. The entrepreneurial activity is based on constant, planned and goal orientated learning and transfer (as well as use) of this knowledge in the business process.

POVZETEK

Poslovno okolje se spreminja, kar še posebej velja za zadnja leta, ko je le-to doživelo zelo velike spremembe, ki spodbujajo in omogočajo hiter razvoj podjetništva, če ga razumemo kot proces iskanja in/ali ustvarjanja poslovnih priložnosti ter njihovo izkoriščanje, neodvisno od virov, ki so podjetniku trenutno na voljo. Podjetništvo in podjetniška aktivnost prebivalstva sta torej ključnega pomena za razvoj gospodarstva, ustvarjanje delovnih mest in dvig ravni družbene blaginje. Zato smo v raziskavi podrobneje raziskali stanje in tendence razvoja podjetniške aktivnosti v lesarstvu ter ga primerjali s predhodnimi širše zasnovanimi raziskavami (npr. GEM – Global Entrepreneurship Monitor), ki kažejo, da podjetniški potencial v Sloveniji ni povsem izkoriščen.

Raziskava je bila opravljena v majhnih lesnih podjetjih s pomočjo anketiranja. Izmed 410 poslanih vprašalnikov smo prejeli 41 pravilno izpolnjenih in jih podrobneje statistično obdelali. Med njimi je bilo največ takšnih, ki imajo manj kot 10 zaposlenih, kar ustreza trenutnemu stanju v lesarstvu, kjer prevladujejo majhna podjetja. Anketiranci so kot zelo pomemben razlog za podjetništvo in ustanovitev podjetja ocenili dobre podjetniške ideje in izkoriščanje poslovne priložnosti. To je pomembno predvsem zato, ker imajo podjetniki, ki ustanavljajo podjetja zaradi nujnosti, manjše ambicije po rasti in izkazujejo manjšo nagnjenost za zaposlovanje in razvoj kot podjetniki, ki se podjetništva lotijo zaradi priložnosti. To ima neposreden vpliv na razvoj panoge in gospodarstva nasploh. V lesarstvu prevladujejo podjetniki s srednješolsko ali več kot srednješolsko izobrazbo, kar priča o zadovoljivi ravni znanja v podjetjih.

Sicer pa se podjetja pri svojem poslovanju slabo oz. zelo omejeno povezujejo med sabo in/ali z drugimi institucijami. Na tem področju bo v prihodnosti treba storiti še veliko, saj je povezovanje ključnega pomena za rast in razvoj podjetij ter razvoj celotne panoge.

Primerjava ocen splošnih pogojev za podjetništvo med anketiranci v lesarstvu in rezultati raziskave GEM niso pokazala večjih odklonov. Najnižje ocenjene trditve kažejo na potrebo po ustreznih ukrepih, kar se kaže predvsem na področju vladne politike, finančne podpore, kulturnih in družbenih norm, prenosa raziskav in razvoja v podjetniško prakso ter vladnih programov. Ob tem moramo opozoriti, da je bila raziskava opravljena v prvi polovici leta 2008, ko gospodarska kriza še ni bila.

Na podlagi ugotovljenih dejstev in analize SWOT, v kateri so ta dejstva podrobneje prikazana, je bil izdelan sodoben, v prihodnost in razvoj usmerjen podjetniški model v lesarstvu. Pri oblikovanju tega modela smo dejavnike uspešnosti razdelili v notranje in zunanje, pri čemer smo namenili pozornost predvsem notranjim. To so namreč dejavniki, ki jih oblikuje in udejanja podjetje samo, pri čemer pa se odločae predvsem za povezovanja pri zagotavljanju intelektualnega potenciala in drugih virov za poslovanje ter natančnega razvoja ideje v pravo poslovno priložnost. Zunanjim dejavnikom pa se podjetja poskušajo prilagoditi, saj nanje nimajo bistvenega vpliva. Podjetniška aktivnost pa temelji na neprestanem, načrtnem in ciljno usmerjenem učenju ter prenosu (in uporabi) tega znanja v poslovnem procesu.

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