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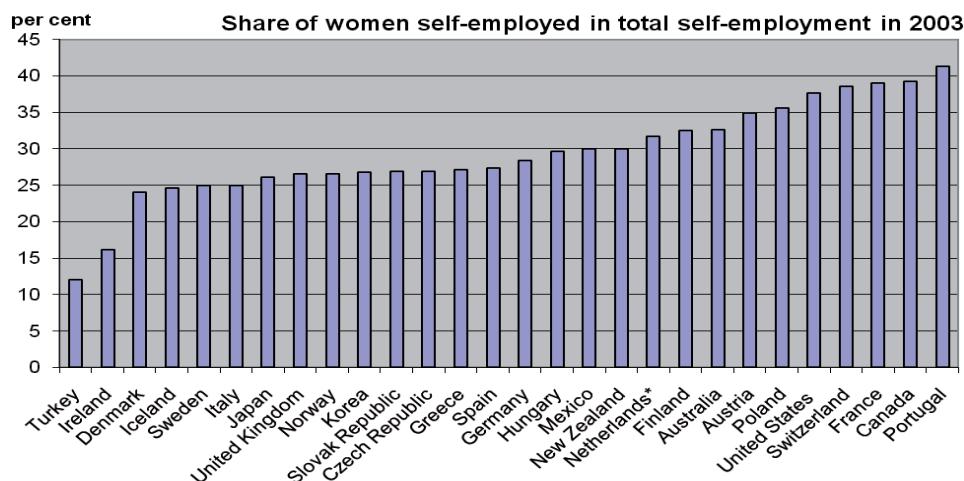
## **Influence of the social-demographic features on women's motivation to set up their own business.**

### **Introduction - women entrepreneurs in Poland**

Polish women are in the lead of the most enterprising women in Europe [Lisowska 2010]. This statement has been confirmed by OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) in the research carried out by SME and Entrepreneurship Outlook. The rate reflecting the share of women in the group of persons working on their own account in 2003 in selected countries of the European Union was calculated. The countries with the highest rate are: Portugal 41.3%, France 39% and Austria 34.9%, while the countries with lowest rate are: Ireland 16.2%, Denmark 24%, Sweden 24.9% and Italy 25%. Women entrepreneurs from Poland with the index of 35.6% are characterized by high professional activeness within the examined area [OECD 2005].

There is no doubt that women in Poland are willing to set up their own economic activities. In the literature, however, one can find only few cases of the research explaining the factors which motivate to such a step – IPSOS-Demoskop, Pentor 2005. Therefore, the subject of women's professional activeness, especially their motivation to run their own firms, is particularly important and interesting.

Figure 1. Share of woman self-employed in total self-employment in 2003



Source: OECD SME and Entrepreneurship Outlook, 2005

The purpose of this paper is to compare the influence of selected social-demographic factors on the motivation to open women's and men's own firms. Among these factors there are: age, sex, education, professional experience, unemployment, family status and place of residence. The following research problems have been presented in the work below:

1. What social-demographic features influence the specific type of motivation
2. The influence of social-demographic features on the specific type of motivation is different for women and men

In the present article one applied the result of the author's surveys conducted in the form of a direct interview in the group of 120 women owners and 120 men owners of small and middle-sized enterprises established before 2008 in Poland. The substantive data, which concerned the years 2008-2010, was gathered by the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students of the University of Economy in Poznań in the first half of 2011. The empirical material was processed by the comparative analysis methods (the chi-square conformity test and the t-student test), while the level of significance  $\alpha = 0,05$  was assumed with the substantive verification of the hypotheses.

#### **The examined problem in literature**

In Poland, the interest in the issue of women's entrepreneurship dates back to 1989, which marked the beginning of the transformation process. The research carried out by Polish women authors focus on the professional activeness issues [Rolnik -Sadowska 2009, Lisowska 2008], the factors and barriers of running one's own business [Zapalska 1997, Lisowska 2001, PARP 2002, Mizgajska

2008a], female management style [Zapalska 1997, Mizgajska 2008b, Lisowska 2009 and Kupczyk 2009] and success factors [Rollnik-Sadowska 2009].

The problem of external and internal factors influencing the decision on establishing one's own firms and the barriers was started in the research by Zapalska [1997] and by IPSOS- Demoskop in 2001 [PARP, 2002]. The works on comparing the meaning of these factors as motivation for setting own enterprises in Poland, Ukraine and in Lithuania were performed by Lisowska [2001]. In these papers the factors influencing women's entrepreneurship were compared with the factors influencing men's entrepreneurship. The most important external factors for establishing one's own business in 2001 [PARP 2002] both, for women and for men in Poland were: lack of another possibility, favorable market conditions and unemployment. On the other hand, Mizgajska [2008a] examined the impact of external (pull) and internal (push) factors on the decision of opening women's own businesses in the region of Wielkopolska. According to her research, the most important factors were favorable market conditions, lack of satisfaction from the previous work and unemployment.

In the Polish literature a number of papers are missing regarding influence of the demographic-social factors on the motivation to open one's own business by women and men. The heretofore existing papers dealt only with the problem of education influence on women's decision to establish their own firm [Mizgajska 2007]. In 2005, H. Mizgajska examined how the level of women's education and participation in trainings before opening their own firms influence their external and internal motives related to the opening of their own companies. According to her research, the level of education determined the hierarchy of importance for the external and internal factors. In 2007 H. Mizgajska continued the research on the impact of education on the motives for setting up own business by women in the group of 109 enterprises run by women. The author [Mizgajska 2011] diagnosed a relation between formal education, professional experience and participation of women owners in trainings and the factors influencing the decision to set up own business as well as the generated results of the enterprises. The work confirmed the hypothesis that education and professional experience of women were decisive as concerns the hierarchy of the importance of the external and the internal factors affecting the decision to form a company. At the same time, the importance hierarchy resulting from the external motives was less differentiated than the internal motives. The quoted research concerned only enterprises run by women.

In the Anglo-Saxon literature there are numerous classifications of research into the factors motivating women to found their own business. Among the most known ones there is the theory of "push and pull factors" [Shapero and Sokol 1982, Hisrich and Brush 1985]. The authors included the following factors in the "push" group: frustration, lack of satisfaction from work, burning out and boredom with

the previous work. Among the “pull” factors there were: independence, autonomy, education, family security. According to the research of these authors as well as Clain [2000] and Orhan and Scott [2001] “push factors” are the main motivation for women to found their own business and “pull factors” provide motivation for men. Another division of the factors affecting motivation is, according to Bartol and Martin [1998], the division into the factors concerning: the characteristics of the person-entrepreneur, the life path and the environmental factors. On the other hand, Partbott each [2000] classifies motivation similarly as: the features related to the entrepreneur’s experience, to the entrepreneur’s personality and to the entrepreneur’s surroundings.

The problem of similarities and differences between the motivation to open own business by women and men is discussed very often in the Anglo-Saxon literature. Some authors’ research indicates that “the pursuit of independence is an important motivation for women and men [Shane et. al., 1991, Hisrich et.al, 1997], while “attaining a higher position in the society” is more important for men than it is for women [Orhan and Scott, 2001]. On the other hand, Moore and Buttner [1997] suggest that the push factors are more important for women. Some of the authors [Chaganti, 1996] indicate that there is no great difference between women and men as far as motivation is concerned. Others, such as [Brush 1992] emphasize that the differences in motivation are the result of the socio-cultural influence of the family, the glass ceiling, etc.. This view of the differentiation of motivation depending on the sex is supported by feminist theories.

On the other hand, research into the relation between education and the motives for establishing own firms was not undertaken very often. The relations between education and the psychological features motivating women to open their own companies were subject to the examination by Okhomina [2004 s. 10]. Okhomina found out that the level of education moderated the relations between the three psychological features such as: the need of achievement, the pursuit of internal control and the tolerance of ambiguity and an enterprising orientation. It means that an entrepreneur with a high level of internal motivation combined with a high level of education is more innovative and competitive than others.

Education and its connection with the factors motivating to establish one’s own firm were examined on the occasion of the social-demographic characteristics of women enterprise owners. According to Uhlaner and Thurick [2007], the decision to establish own business in the case of women depends, among other things, on such demographic features as age and number of small children.

Among the socio-demographic factors affecting women’s entrepreneurship, Bartol and Martin [1998] included education, age, experience, environment and influence of the family.

The influence of age on motivation was examined by Dann and Bennet [2005]. They found out that women above 35 who opened their own business indicated the level of independence as an essential motivation.

In the research by Mattis [2005] conducted in the USA, men (59%) set up enterprises that were connected with their previous profession, while women (42%) formed companies that were completely independent from their previous job.

### Social-demographic features of women entrepreneurs

In the literature one can observe a certain tendency in the distribution of the social-demographic features of women entrepreneurs. Most often, they are women above 40 being in a stable relationship and having one or two children.

The average age of women entrepreneurs in the research is lower than in the heretofore existing literature – it is 43 years. Exactly the same average age was shown for men. The age distribution in the examined groups is even in the age ranges from 31 even to 60 years.

Table 1. The age distribution of entrepreneurs

Age range	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70
Women	4	13	19	22	26	21	19	14	5	1
Men	5	17	23	20	21	23	21	21	7	1

Source: Own study based on research conducted

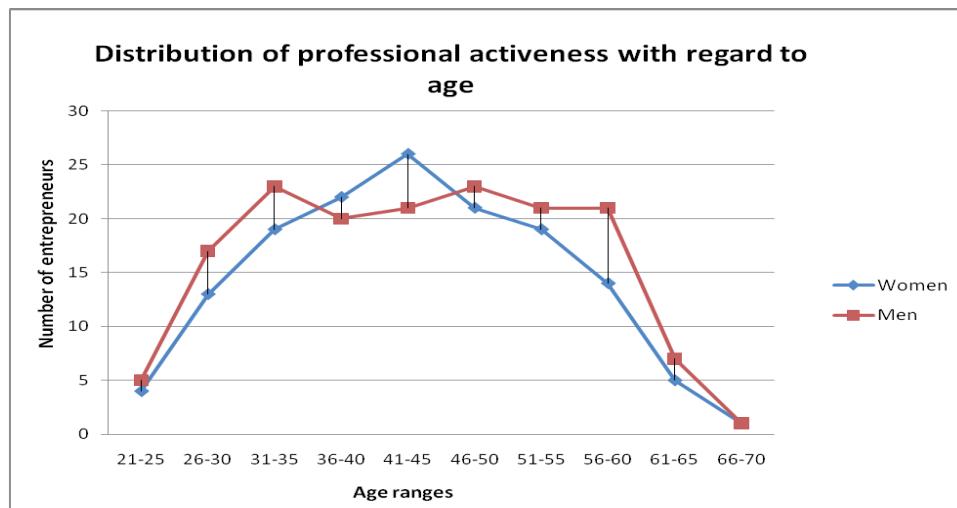
Distribution of the professional activeness of the groups of businessmen and businesswomen with regard to age in the conducted research is presented in picture no. 1. We can observe lower activeness of women in the age group up to 35. The polarization of curves can be caused by the family development phase falling within the given age ranges [Wóycicka 2009].

The phenomenon observed in the analyses is increased activeness of women in the age range 36-45, and the bimodal curve of men's age – meaning decreased activity of men at 35-55.

An average woman running her own business, similarly to an average man, is in a partnership or marriage relationship. They run a household composed of four persons. A woman's family usually has one dependent child, while a man's family has two.

Women who have their own firms live, most often, in smaller localities up to 80 thousand inhabitants – 85 % of the surveyed ones.

Figure 2. Distribution of entrepreneurs' professional activeness with regard to age



Source: Own study based on research conducted

Businesswomen running their own business were very well educated. The comparison of women and men did not show significant differences in the formal education. It is confirmed by the result of the research conducted in the previous years. [Mizgajska 2008a, Demoskop 2001]

Table 2. Level of entrepreneurs' education

Education	Woman	Man
basic	0.00%	0.63%
vocational	11.89%	16.46%
secondary school	45.45%	39.87%
university	42.66%	43.04%

Source: Own study based on research conducted

### Influence of the social-demographic features on the motivation to set up own business - key differences between woman and men entrepreneurs

Running of an economic activity enables an entrepreneur not only to manage her/his own time, tasks or income. Important pros are also: highly valued independence, the willingness to implement one's own ambitions and "being your own boss". However, one should remember about the high risk, duties, numerous overtime hours and irregular payouts – a frequent issue, especially in the initial phase of a company functioning [Rollnik-Sadowska 2010]. At the end of 2010, persons working on their own account constituted 18.74% of all the

employed. Also, looking at the data presented by the Chief Statistical Office, one can observe an increasing tendency.

The purpose of this work is to present the influence of the social-demographic features on women's motivation to found their own business and to show the significant differences in such influence among men. The parameters analyzed entail: age, sex, marital status, education, size of the place of residence, family status and professional situation before the start of one's own activity. In literature, these factors leverage with the establishment of one's own enterprise.

The external and internal factors which are deemed significant for the Polish conditions according to the research by Demoskop from 2001 were assumed to be the factors motivating establishment of one's own company. The first group, also called "push factors", in literature is often specified as less favorable to the society owing to its more negative character. A business person is driven mainly by the willingness to maintain her/his work place [Wasilczuk 2010], for reasons such as: lack of satisfaction with the previous work, lack of development possibilities, unemployment, parents' example, family relations, the "glass ceiling" effect, favorable conditions on the market and flexible work time. On the other hand, the "pull" factors which result from the internal needs of a business person included: the pursuit of independence, the internal need of action, the need of fair salary, the need to be "your own boss", the need to fulfill a personal ambition, the need to dominate, willingness to prove value, a predilection for risk taking as well as the values instilled at home.

The research problem of the present paper assumed a difference in the influence of the selected social-demographic features on the motivation to set up own enterprises among women and men. The difference is visible even in the correlations of the motivating factors, which drove the entrepreneurs. The research conducted on a group of men showed relations mainly with the group of internal motivators – and thus, those which are defined in literature as positive. On the other hand, among women, relations with external factors occur as often as the relations with internal factors. These results can be deemed consistent with the analyses conducted by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development in 2001, which showed that regardless of sex, business people followed mainly the internal factors. Nevertheless, a minor difference was visible in the group of women owners, who chose the external elements more often. In the analysis of the particular elements, men marked factors such as favorable circumstances, independence and a predilection for risk more frequently. Women, in return, marked their willingness to prove value [Polish Agency for Enterprise Development 2001]. The author's research showed that the distribution of the most crucial "push" motivators in the analyzed groups was similar. The most often marked ones were: favorable conditions on the market, lack of satisfaction

with the previous work, lack of the possibility to develop and flexible work time. The difference is visible in the “pull” factors – the internal ones. Men declared a predilection for risk and the need to be “their own boss” more willingly than women did. For women, the need to fulfill their personal ambition and willingness to prove value were more important. The groups selected the key factors consistently: pursuit of independence – 76.22% of women and 82.91% of men, the need of fair salary – respectively, 69.23% and 64.56%.

In Polish literature one can find cases of research presenting an entrepreneur's profile. Referring to the above mentioned work, one can distinguish both, a male and female owner's social-economic features as well as the motivations they followed while setting up their own businesses. However, not numerous analyses are known considering the occurrence of significant dependencies between the examined areas. Can one say that motivation factors of a group of women and men depend directly on the features which determine them?

The work covered the analysis by the t-student and chi-square methods between the mentioned social-demographic features and the push and pull factors in the group of women and men. The conducted research showed that there is no connection between the age and place of living in the group of women and men and the motivating factors.

The factors presented in table 3 were part of the features having a significant influence with distinction between sexes.

Table 3. Significant social-demographic features influencing motivation of entrepreneurs to establish their own businesses.

Sphere	Women	Men
Family situation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of income in the family budget</li> <li>• Marital status</li> </ul>
Education and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education level</li> <li>Running enterprise in accordance with the profession learned</li> <li>• number of work places before establishing one's own business</li> <li>• work on managerial positions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• running one's own company by an entrepreneur</li> </ul>

Source: Own study – p (level of significance) = 0,05

The questionnaire distinguishes the part concerning the family status, which shows: marital status of the owner, professional situation of the spouse,

the number of people belonging to the household with distinction of underage persons and distribution of income within the family budget. The above described aspects of family life have been taken into consideration in the analyses owing to the transformation of the traditional professional model of a family ("the male breadwinner model"), in which it is the man who supports the household on his own. Nowadays, partnership relations also present an equal share in the professional life and in consequence, also in the family budget. Models: "Dual breadwinner", "dual carer model" are becoming popular. In these models duties are divided between both, woman and man [Wóycicka 2009].

In the conducted research one noticed, finally, the relation between the marital status of the person (thus, whether the person is single or in a partnership, or a marriage relationship) and distribution of inflows to the family budget as well as the internal motivators. The mentioned significant relations occurred only in the group of men.

Men in stable marriage or partnership relationships (82% of the examined men) were motivated mainly by the need of fair income. Most of them – 64.55% of the businessmen, driven by the internal need of action, belonged to the group of the sole or main breadwinners. The research confirmed this dependency. Distribution of income in the family budget showed a discrepancy between women and men. With female entrepreneurs, only one in three women is the main or sole breadwinner in the family, and a decisive majority (55.24%) have an equal share in the household income. Male entrepreneurs were not supported so much by their partners. According to the statistics, only one in three owners is supported by his female partner to the same degree, and a significant part (64.55%) indicate themselves as the main or sole breadwinner in the family.

Table 4. Distribution of income in the household budget

What is the share of your income in the family budget?	woman	Man
I am the main breadwinner in the family.	27.97%	48.73%
I am the sole breadwinner in the family.	9.09%	15.82%
The partner is main breadwinner in the family.	7.69%	2.53%
I and my partner have equal shares in the family budget.	55.24%	32.91%

Source: Own study

Another group of social-demographic parameters, which was analyzed, contained issues referring to formal education. This feature entered into reaction only with the analyzed businesswomen.

Female owners with completed university education most often chose the factor: the internal need of action, as opposed to the female entrepreneurs with secondary and vocational education, who deemed the need to be “their own boss” to be the most important factor. Ultimately, one can say that among women there is a dependency between formal education and the hierarchy of internal factors.

Table 5. Influence of the women's education level on the hierarchy of their internal factors

Internal factors	Education		
	vocational	secondary	university
Internal need of action	5.88%	38.46%	57.38%
The need of being “your own boss”	58.82%	27.69%	24.59%

Source: Own study

The research carried out on 120 women showed also some interesting information – women entrepreneurs fulfilling their personal ambitions by running their own company were more willing to participate in trainings than their colleagues for whom this motivational factor was no so important. These ladies spent, respectively, 29 and 12 days on courses in the years 2008-2010.

During the author's measurement, also features included in entrepreneurs' professional experience were specified. Among these features there were: period of service before starting own business, the number of the entrepreneur's previous work places and whether the entrepreneur worked on managerial positions.

The data from the European research presented by the European Commission confirms the professional position of women. In 2008 in Poland, only 34.7% of women worked on managerial positions. To compare, almost twice as many men: 65.3% worked on high positions. With this result, Polish women are placed above the European average, which is 32.5%. The country in the European Union which took pride in the high percentage of women on managerial positions in 2008 was France – 40%. An example, on the other hand, can be the USA, where women had a very large share – 46% of all managers [Lisowska 2010].

64.91% of women entrepreneurs who, in a direct interview, marked the need of fulfilling their personal ambition as an important factor earlier worked on non-managerial positions.

Also, the number of work places in which women worked before founding their own company turned out to be of importance. The first strong relation

occurred with women owners who changed work more frequently. There was a visible relation with the external motivation factors such as: lack of satisfaction with the previous job, lack of development possibilities, crisis, predilection for risk – contrary to other women entrepreneurs related to the positive factors. The most important ones were: pursuit of independence, parents' example and favorable market conditions.

In addition, the authors wished to expand the vision of the professional situation before the establishment of one's own activity – whether the given person worked in a private, state company or was the owner of another company, whether the person was acquiring education or was unemployed. Unemployment was a significant factor in the experiments and analyses carried out in the previous years, both by the author and by IPSOS- Demoskop. Also, the analyses of "Polski biznes '95" conducted by the Warsaw School of Economics showed that the external motivating factor – the threat of losing one's job was selected by 34% of women and 26% of men [Lisowska 2010]. Unfortunately, in the conducted research, the fact of being unemployed and the time of unemployment duration did not have a significant influence on choosing the factors motivating to own business establishment. The entrepreneurs who declared unemployment before opening their own business were: 27.27% of women and 19.62% of men. It can be noticed that ladies encountered difficulties on the labor market more often.

Table 6. Distribution of unemployed persons before they start their own business

Unemployed person before starting her/his own business	Woman	Man
Up to 1 month	5.59%	1.27%
from 1 to 3 months	5.59%	6.33%
from 3 to 12 months	8.39%	9.49%
above 12 months	7.69%	2.53%
I was no unemployed	72.73%	80.38%

Source: Own study based on research conducted

The perspective of work in a family firm turned out to be important for entrepreneurs. The increasing significance of such businesses can be confirmed by the numerous researches conducted by state research institutions, which show that family businesses constitute 36% of the micro, small and middle-sized enterprises in Poland [Polish Agency for Enterprise Development 2009].

The analyzed group of men was divided with regard to the fact of running a business together with the family. Two different relations were observed. Men who ran a family business were unsatisfied with the current work much less frequently – 39%, whilst in the other group even 61.54% of people chose the factor: lack of satisfaction with the previous job. In addition, an important factor for owners of family firms was the need “to be your own boss” (60.98%). One can observe a stronger relation with the positive motivation factors in the team of family business entrepreneurs.

Amongst women entrepreneurs, one distinguished significant references in the sphere of professional experience. In spite of the fact that the aspect of running a family business did not influence women owners' motivation, it turned out worthwhile to emphasize the relation of the position occupied by a woman in the past (whether it was a managerial function) and the profile of the current company's activity.

In addition, half of women owners running their own business consistently with their learned profession found lack of development possibilities to be a significant external factor. This could mean that the previous work did not give them the possibility to develop in their learned profession or that they did not have a position related to their qualifications. Also, women entrepreneurs running enterprises with activity profiles different than their learned profession were related to the push factor – for as many as 23.53% of women family relations were important.

At the end, an entrepreneur had to answer our question whether she/he encountered discrimination practices regarding sex in their life. The subjects of discrimination and the “glass ceiling” are known in literature. In the transformation period women became professionally independent. However, it is common to think that it is easier for women entrepreneur to open their own economic activity than to overcome the invisible barriers on the way to the managerial position [Lisowska 2010]. Nowadays, women are aware of their professional possibilities. According to the conducted analyses, 65.73% of women encountered discrimination in their professional life. Most often, the “weaker sex”, in spite of performing the same duties as the “stronger sex”, earned less or was promoted less frequently. Also, cases of unequal treatment during interviews are frequent. Ultimately, however, the research showed that the discrimination factor, similarly as unemployment, did not influence taking the decision on establishing their own company.

Table 7. Discrimination practices regarding sex

Discrimination practices regarding sex	woman	man
During interview	17.48%	9.49%
Lower salaries of women performing the same duties as men	27.97%	13.92%
Women promoted less frequently than men	18.18%	12.66%
Other	2.10%	1.27%

Source: Own study based on research conducted

### **Conclusions and recommendations for economic practice**

From among the examined social-demographic features only the level of education and professional experience of women were correlated with the internal and external factors influencing the establishment of their own companies.

Women who obtained higher level of education mentioned the internal need of action as the most important motivation to set up their own company. The most important need for owners with vocational and secondary education was the need to be their own boss.

A considerable number of the women entrepreneurs for whom the significant motivating factor was the need of fulfilling their personal ambitions used to work on a non-managerial position in the previous job. In addition, women managers running their enterprises in consistency with the profession they learned earlier mentioned lack of development possibilities as the key motivation. Women who did not work in their profession deemed family relations to be a crucial factor.

The last social-demographic feature which influenced women's motivation to establish their own businesses was the number of the work places in which the owners used to be employed. Women who changed the job more frequently chose the external factors more often – lack of satisfaction with the previous work, lack of development possibilities, crisis, predilection for risk. The following factors were significant for the rest of women entrepreneurs: pursuit of independence, parental example and favorable market conditions.

The conducted research showed differences in the influence of social-demographic features on the specific type of motivation between women and men who established their own companies. Women were driven by external factors more often than men. They were often motivated by development possibilities and fulfillment of their personal ambitions but also, by assuring a workplace consistent with their learned profession.

The relations between the social-demographic features concerning family life and professional experience were important for the entrepreneurs. Men in

relationships selected the need of fair salary as the crucial motivator to set up their own business. Moreover, men driven by the internal need of action were often either the main or sole breadwinners in the family.

The need to be your own boss was significant for the men who ran a family business. These businessmen were less often unsatisfied with their current job than owners of other enterprises.

The economic practices aimed at supporting entrepreneurship among women have been already existent on the labor market. There are numerous projects, most often connected with minimizing unemployment, which incorporate professional activation of women.

The authors are of the opinion that women's entrepreneurship should be promoted because such attitude facilitates development of professional equality and, in consequence, economic growth.

By observing the solutions proposed in France, where work on one's own account and self-employment of women are at the highest level in the European Union, one can set the recommendations with the aim to improve the economic situation: [OECD 2005]

- Practical classes in schools aimed at building enterprising attitudes and awareness of the sex,
- Popularization of the sources of activity financing,
- Organization of local enterprising support groups – this recommendation is meant to activate local authorities: successful businesswomen or advice centers. Business attitudes are promoted among women "from the neighborhood" by giving access to one's knowledge, experience and creative energy.

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### **Abstract**

*We are witnessing considerable changes in the labor market in today's economy, which is based on knowledge. Labor awareness is growing in the society and it is accompanied by the problem of equal professional opportunities for women and men.*

*The purpose of the present work is to assess the relation existing between selected social-demographic features such as: age, sex, marital status, education, size of the place of residence, family status, professional situation before starting one's own activity, and the motivation to set up one's own enterprise. The factors having a crucial influence on establishing one's own economic activity have been divided into external and internal ones. Amongst the external factors, the following ones have been listed: convenient market circumstances, lack of other possibilities, lack of satisfaction with the previous work, lack of growth possibilities, unemployment, parental model, family relations, the „glass ceiling” effect, flexible work time and the crisis. On the other hand, internal factors included: pursuit of independence, the internal need for action, the need of fair earnings, the need to be „one's own boss”, the need to fulfill one's personal ambition, the need to dominate, the need to prove value, the disposition to take risk, the values inculcated at home. In the present work, the author compared the influence of selected features in the enterprises run both by women and men.*

*The empirical material was collected amongst male and female owners of small and medium-sized enterprises (employing up to 249 people) established before 2008 in Poland. The substantive data concern the period 2008-2010. The survey research in the form of a direct interview (240 questionnaires) was carried out in the first half of 2011 by the students of the 2nd grade studies at the Poznań University of Economics. The collected material has been processed by the methods of descriptive statistics and the method of correlation and regression.*