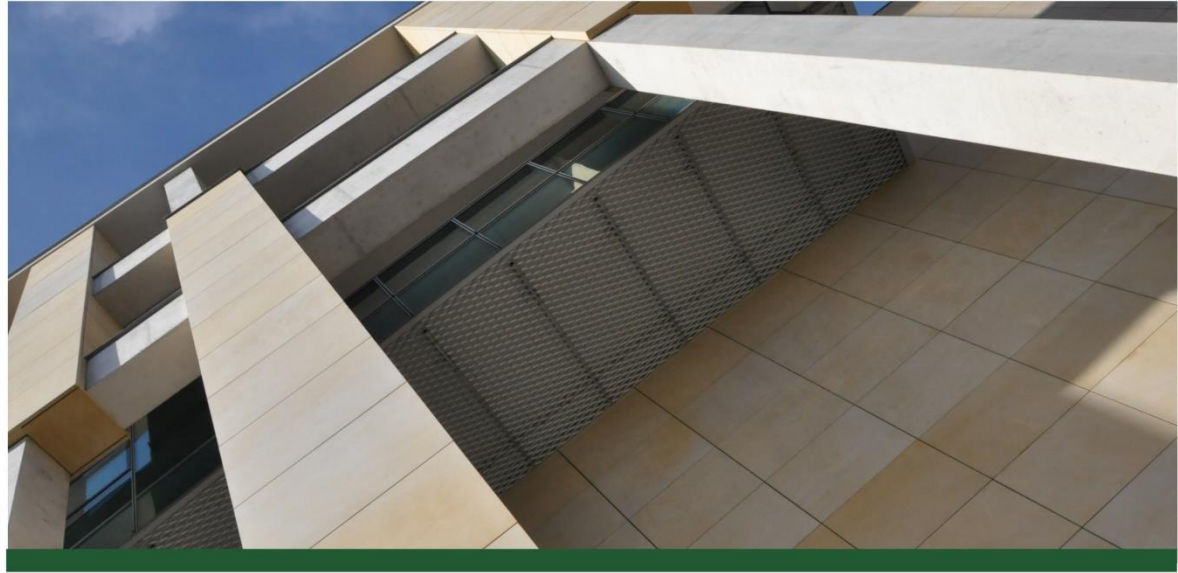




POZNAŃ UNIVERSITY  
OF ECONOMICS  
AND BUSINESS



# Organizational resilience of NGOs in COVID-19 pandemic perspective

Joanna Schmidt

# Organizational resilience

- Internal response of a system to external, unexpected changes and disruptions
- Capacity: coping mechanism, due to which an organisation adopts to unexpected environmental conditions like disasters and economic challenges or internal changes
- Levels of resilience maturity: decline, survive, bounce back and bounce forward



# Resilience of NGOs

- develops from its adaptability to changing policy environment (e.g. professionalisation and commercialisation processes, building hybrid organisations)
- Indicators of NGO resilience:
  - revenue streams (public funding)
  - transformational leadership style
  - operating reserves
  - succession planning
  - volunteering



# NGOs in Poland

- 150 000 organizations
- Location
  - 25% rural areas;
  - 24% small towns,
  - 18% midium-size towns,
  - 34% cities
- Area of activity
  - 35% sports, turism, leisure
  - 14% art and culture
  - 13% education
  - 8% health care
  - 7% social services
  - 6% local develompent
- Average year budget: 28 000 PLN (~540 000 RUB)



# Aim of research

- To analyze and evaluate the organizational resilience of NGOs in Poland in the pandemic context

# Methodology

- Sample of 115 organizations
- April and May 2020 (the initial months of the pandemic lockdown)
- Online questionnaire
- Adopted version of a tool prepared by Nonprofit Institute of San Diego University (USA)
- Resilience: the situation of the organization will „return do norm”/ be worse/ be better/ will not survive



# Findings

- Most of the organizations significantly reduced their activity, more than 1/5 of them ceased their activities
  - Mostly art and culture, sports, tourism and leisure and local development
- Biggest threat: financial operations and liquidity
- About 17% of organizations are very seriously concerned that they will not survive the pandemic.



# Findings: resilience

- The „return to normality” to a large extent is not related to their worse situation after the pandemic.
  - Resilience as *bouncing back* process
- In rural municipalities, NGOs’ recovery is largely associated with the improvement of their situation after the pandemic.
  - Resilience as *bouncing forward* process



# Findings: resilience

- The limit of continuity of NGOs' activities (the need to dismiss NGO employees) is determined by the lack of funds for rent and utilities (not so much by loss or decline in revenues)
- NGOs are becoming more and more market-oriented. They are more focused on finding donors than waiting for subsidies.
- Human capital is more important to them than financial capital.
  - They are less afraid of redundancies than of lack of funds for rent and utilities.

# Findings: changes planned

- Changes much more related to leadership (74%) than organization (26%)
  - Leadership (internal relations)
  - Organization (external relations)
- A need of strong leadership to recover after pandemic

# Thank you!

Joanna Schmidt

Contact: [joanna.schmidt@ue.poznan.pl](mailto:joanna.schmidt@ue.poznan.pl)