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EVENTS KIBS ON THE BUSINESS SERVICES MARKET – A NETNOGRAPHY ANALYSIS

KRZYSZTOF BORODAKO,1 JADWIGA BERBEKA,2 MICHAŁ RUDNICKI1,3

1 Cracow University of Economics, POLAND
e-mail: borodako@uek.krakow.pl
2 Cracow University of Economics, POLAND
e-mail: jadwiga.berbeka@uek.krakow.pl
3 Cracow University of Economics, POLAND
e-mail: michal.rudnicki@uek.krakow.pl

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ABSTRACT Two important roles of KIBS, knowledge sources for innovation and the recognisability of Internet offers for these kinds of services, are rarely amalgamated. To fill this gap, both research streams were integrated to investigate the level of interest in specific types of KIBS services in the online environment. To achieve this goal, a netnography analysis has been used. As a result of the analysis of the KIBS offer on the Internet, the following groups of KIBS were identified: leaders, advanced, promising and professional niche. The level of competition among firms in KIBS industry was additionally measured by introducing a KSD (Keyword Search engine optimisation Difficulty) parameter.

Introduction

Over the last 25 years the importance of the business services market has increased exponentially, which has been recognised in both business practice and numerous scientific studies. One of the most significant changes has been the increasing importance of knowledge-based factors in service processes and the development of information communications technology, especially on the Internet (Whiting, Hansen, Sen, 2017). A company’s online presence
has become an objective necessity and is an important feature of its business, constituting a significant determinant of market success. However, in order for KIBS to support the activities of other companies, their offer must be visible online, which has become the main source of information and basic communication tool. This is particularly true of Events KIBS (E-KIBS) – their knowledge and innovations determine the success of events organised by clients and reports from such events build the client’s image in the eyes of potential customers and competitors.

Nevertheless, the roles of KIBS as knowledge sources for innovation and the recognisability of their offer on the Internet are rarely connected. To fill this gap, in this article both research streams were integrated to investigate the level of interest in specific types of KIBS services in the online environment. To achieve this goal, a netnographic analysis has been used, which has gained popularity in recent years as a method of research in various fields of science (Seyfi, Soydaş, 2017).

**KIBS and their role on the business services market**

Companies are offering more novel customised solutions and the role of knowledge-intensive business services (KIBS) is increasing in significance (Muller, Zenker, 2001). KIBS firms provide services based on professional knowledge, making a strategic contribution to their clients’ business activities (Miozzo, Grimshaw, 2005). As a result, companies must incorporate such services into their offers. According to Doloreux and Shearmur (2010, p. 611), “KIBS refers to establishments that are characterised by high knowledge intensity and that offer predominantly non-routine services to their clients.” KIBS combine various types of highly specialised knowledge in order to develop (either innovative or non-innovative) problem-specific solutions (Muller, Zenker, 2001).

Based on research concerning KIBS (Miles et al., 1995; Muller, Doloreux, 2009) and Borodako, Berbeka, Rudnicki (2014; 2016), it has been shown that event services have identical characteristics to those of other types of services provided by KIBS. Hence the following KIBS classification was incorporated into the research:

- Market services:
  - market research,
  - advertisement,
  - social science research.

- Company services:
  - legal services,
  - accountancy,
  - work agency/recruitment agency services,
  - business, management consultancy services and public relations.

- Technical services:
  - architectural services,
  - IT services,
  - engineering services.

- Event services:
  - fair & congress services,
  - incentive travel agency services,
  - catering,
  - audio-video-lighting (AVL) services.
Muller and Doloreux (2009) acknowledge highly specialised business services as a unique subsector of services because the services provided by KIBS are complicated, unstructured and characterised by their adaptation to the unique needs of the client (Bettencourt, Ostrom, Brown, Roundtree, 2002, p. 101). The same traits describe event services which support and create innovation and “customisation” – unique solutions linked to “tacit knowledge”. That knowledge remains an aspect of the human factor whose invention is a critical element determining the success of the whole event. Interaction with clients and firms generates new knowledge (Muller, Zenker, 2001) that may result in the development of service innovations. That is why the KIBS offer must be clearly visible on the Internet by bringing together companies interested in close cooperation.

The role of the Internet in business operations conducted by service providers

The Internet opened a new procurement channel for companies, which allows them to reach customers all over the world. Its development influences the way marketing communication is conducted. Although the focus has been centred on companies that act solely on the web, the Internet may substantially affect companies that sell their services through traditional channels.

The literature highlights the crucial role of social media (SM) (Boyd, 2010). SM allows the company and customer to communicate with each other, but also allows customers to communicate with each other about the company and create an electronic word of mouth (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, Gremler, 2004). For companies, well-managed social media provides a potential tool to gain insight about customer attitudes, as well as an opportunity to spread commercial information using the customer as an information channel (Vilnai-Yavetz, 2016).

In the literature it is claimed that with the rapid advancement in ICT the economy is moving towards a more information-based economy (Kumar, Kumari, Ruan, Garza-Reyes, Akkaranggoon, 2014). A study by Rauyruen and Miller (2007) suggests that B2B service providers need to understand the nature and circumstances of their customers. One form of customer behaviour is searching for information about a potential client or partner on the Internet.

Internet search engine marketing (SEM) is a form of company activity on the Internet. This form of marketing is acknowledged as being minimally invasiveness because of the lack of intrusive tools (usually pop-up advertisements), and because it is in line with a customer’s search for specific content.

The presented study focuses on organic (natural) search engine results, leaving aside the issue of paid advertisements appearing as sponsored links. The reason for this approach was our research objective, related to the analysis of business services promoted and researched on the Internet. The level of difficulty in obtaining a specific website among the initial results provided by search engine is one form of competition on the Internet. This issue is related to the term page optimisation, i.e. optimal positioning in search results (called Search Engine Optimisation – SEO).

The literature contains statements suggesting that relevant phrases or keywords significantly affect positioning in search results. The selection of these keywords is particularly important when positioning (Ostrowski, 2012). Keyword analysis makes it possible to identify new concepts not yet used by competitors or corresponding to new consumer trends (Frontczak, 2006, p. 39).
Methodology

The research based on interviews conducted with selected KIBS companies some years ago confirmed that one of the two key ways of acquiring new business clients (on the B2B market) was the Internet – positioning and advertising on the Internet. Based on this conclusion, we implemented a relatively new method: netnography. The name suggests its essence; it is a combination of Internet and ethnography. The main aim of using this method is an analysis of online communities (Kozinets, 2010), but it is also used in marketing research related to consumer behaviour, needs and trends (Belk, 2017). The standard procedure for this method is based on data available directly from computer-mediated communications by members of the online community. In this study, a modified version of the method was applied, adjusted to research on the B2B market where relations differ from those of final consumers. The data available from online tools was implemented by companies in their Internet marketing activities, mainly Google Trends, Google Adwords and KeyWords Finder. All these tools allow authors to analyse the activities of companies that want to advertise successfully on the Internet.

![Conceptual process for data selection with use of Google Trends](image)

Source: own elaboration.

The procedure was divided into two steps. These steps were preceded by an analysis of the Polish Classification of Goods and Services, where KIBS firms were identified according to the applied KIBS classification. The literature review was conducted throughout preparation of the selection. The first step was collecting the data from 2009 to 2017 for all types of KIBS with Google Trends. By using Google Adwords, it was possible to find the keywords that are more frequently used by Internet users when they are looking for particular type of KIBS. The second step involved using Google Trends to analyse data from the last 12 months with a parallel analysis of data by KW Finder. These two data sets were compared to determine whether the changes were similar. Finally, only KW Finder tool was used for further study because it offers more detailed data and provides absolute data on inquiries for the analysis. The conceptual process of selecting the data is presented in Figure 1.

KIBS in the Internet environment — results of the empirical research

On the basis of the most frequently used keywords selected, we conducted an analysis of the popularity of KIBS firms in the Internet environment. The first approach to the study was to calculate the average number of search queries for selected English keywords in the Google search engine. Each type of KIBS was compared and the difference in interest within groups of KIBS was investigated. In the first approach, three dominant types of services were indicated: advertisement (over 15 thousand), architectural services (almost 12 thousand) and
Events KIBS on the business services market – a netnography analysis

legal services (almost 11 thousand). These three types of KIBS can be called “leaders” and have the highest scores. Three other groups of KIBS can also be distinguished: “advanced” – these include: accounting services, work agencies and AVL services – these services (in other words keywords associated with these services) are entered into a search engine over 30 thousand times a month. The third group is consists of five types of KIBS (the biggest group with the highest spread/range of number of search queries). They can be called “promising” KIBS, because their potential to develop in the Internet environment should significantly improve in the near future. This group includes: market research, IT services (with over 20 thousand results), social science research, catering, and fair and congress services. The last group of services identified in the research were KIBS called “professional niche”, which describes both the structure of this group and the specific features of these services. This group includes: management services and public relations, engineering services and incentive travel agency services. This represents a mixture of all three groups of KIBS, because the selection included: Company KIBS, Technical KIBS and Event KIBS (Figure 2).

![Figure 2. Average number of keyword queries connected with KIBS on the Internet (in English)](image)

Source: own elaboration on the basis of the research.

The second approach in the netnography analysis was an attempt to identify and measure the competition between companies within each type of service and, on a smaller scope, among other KIBS. In this analysis, the authors applied a measurement used in Internet marketing (in particular in search engine optimisation) called “keyword SEO difficulty” – KSD, which represents the level of competition for keywords used to position the webpages of companies (mostly supported by professional marketing agencies). The higher this measurement is, the greater the competition in search engine results positioning in the case of these keywords. In other words, if a company wants to be positioned high in search engine results, for example on the first page or at the top of the first page, it must make an extra effort to achieve it.
The structure of the KIBS is similar as in the previous analysis; there were groups of KIBS and particular types of KIBS. Competition in the KIBS industry is noticeably very strong. The three services with the highest level of KSD were identified – architecture, legal and market services (scores between 64-58, qualified in the system as “hard” to be successful). The next two types of KIBS with a high level of KSD were fair and congress services and advertisement (both with scores of 53, at the top of these spread values). All other types of KIBS were described as “possible” areas for achieving success, and only AVL services were described as “easy enough”. No KIBS were classified in the ranges described as “just go”, “valuable to go”, “easy”. This analysis confirms that competition in KIBS services in the Internet environment is very intense. KSD levels and the range of recommendations for marketers are presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Level of keyword search engine optimisation difficulty (KSD) for terms connected with KIBS on the Internet (in English)

Source: own elaboration on the basis of the research.

Trend functions in the number of Internet searches for specific groups of KIBS services (see Table 1) were estimated for a 12-month period (December 2016 – November 2017).

Table 1. Linear trend line equation and $R^2$ value for the number of keyword searches for groups of KIBS services on the Internet from December 2016 – November 2017 (keywords in English, searched in English on the Internet)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KIBS group</th>
<th>Trend line equation</th>
<th>$R^2$ value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>$y = 1246.2x + 57433$</td>
<td>$R^2 = 0.5486$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>$y = 652.56x + 41231$</td>
<td>$R^2 = 0.2233$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>$y = 253.38x + 42088$</td>
<td>$R^2 = 0.0385$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>$y = 289.67x + 12073$</td>
<td>$R^2 = 0.3303$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own elaboration on the basis of the research.
The estimated trend functions had different matching ratios: acceptable ($R^2 = 0.5486$) for Market services, a little weaker for Company and Event services, and, in the case of Technical services, very weak.

The interpretation of parameters of trend functions describing changes in the number of searches for particular groups of services on the Internet shows that in the initial period (December 2016), the most Internet searches referred to keywords connected with Market services (over 57 k times in a month). The other two groups (Company and Technical) obtained a starting point that was lower by more or less 1/4, receiving over 41 k searches. The group of services described as Event was the subject of Internet searches with much lower frequency at just over 12 k times.

The analysis of parameter “a” proves that the dynamics of changes in interest in particular types of KIBS services expressed by Internet searches during the analysed period was the highest for Market services, in which interest increased by nearly 1,250 searches monthly. In the case of Business services, that increase was by 650 searches monthly. Growing interest in Event services led to an increase in the number of searches by 290 monthly and in Technical services by over 253. This illustrates the potential of Event services.

Conclusions

The results of the netnography analysis reveal that KIBS are a significant part of the services market; demand for them is intense and has continued to grow in 2017. As a group, KIBS play different roles on the market, as measured by the number of Internet searches.

Within Event KIBS, client interest measured by the number of Internet queries is the highest in the case of AVL services and the lowest for Incentive Travel Agency services. The number of queries for Event KIBS services in comparison with the other three KIBS groups is lower. This suggests that services within this group are in the introduction/growth phase of their life cycle.

The difficulty of positioning Event KIBS is the highest in case of Fair & congress services, which underscores the fierce competition between companies offering these services.

The dynamic increase in the numbers of searches for Event KIBS on the Internet in 2017 was not as high as for Market and Company services, but it was higher than for Engineering services.

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References


GREEN BONDS AS A TRANSFER OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IDEA INTO FINANCIAL SECTOR

KRYSTYNA BRZOOZOWSKA

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: krystyna.brzozowska@wzieu.pl

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Keywords sustainable development, financial institutions, green bonds, green bond markets

Abstract The aim of a paper is to evaluate a development of green bonds – bonds issued by banks and dedicated to help in resolving sustainable development problems. Research is based on overview of literature regarding to issues of sustainable development, bonds, capital markets approach to sustainable development idea, and published data.

Generally financial institutions and markets are focused on activities against climate changes in the world. Green bonds were created to fund projects with positive environmental benefits. Green bonds allow investors to use the debt capital market to fund climate-related projects. Their structure, risks and returns are identical to those of traditional bonds. The only difference is that the proceeds from the issuance of a green bond are used solely to finance “green” projects, or those that are environmentally friendly. Possible projects covered by green bond funding should be connected to renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable waste management, sustainable land use.

The green bond market started in 2007 by European Investment Bank and the World Bank Group. From the beginning to 2012 the increase of value of issued green bonds was rather modest, but in 2014 result was 2 times bigger than in previous year. In 2017 green bond market amounted near $156 billion and the same it was a sharp growth of about 78% in relation to 2016. Europe accounted for 48% of the global green bonds market issuances. Poland has also started as issuer of green bonds with 2 very successful transactions run in 2016–2017.

Introduction

Growing economies have caused an increase of main country ratios like GDP from one side, and still decrease of environment with deepening level of pollution of earth, air, water, forests, etc. from other side. Protection of environment has become one of the most important priorities worldwide and global mobilization to their achievement. Public concern about poverty, hunger, disease, unmet schooling, gender inequality, and
environmental degradation lead to expanding an idea of sustainable development. Problems of sustainable development have been more and more often underlined at debates, recommendations, strategies of important institutions; corporations, social organizations and financial institutions.

Almost all countries, global and local institutions, social lobbies have undertook a lot of efforts to promote and fulfill sustainable development priorities. Financial sector also – in global, country and local scale – have presented more and more serious attitudes to widespread actions against sustainable development threats, especially in the last 10 years. Global financial institutions have taken an active position in a battle with imbalance of natural, economy and social environment. Idea of sustainable development has been reflected in their strategies and current activities.

The aim of a paper – of contributive nature – is to evaluate a development of green bonds – special bonds issued by banks and dedicated to resolve sustainable development problems. Research is based on thematic literature regarding to issues of sustainable development and data published mainly by World Bank and Climate Bond Initiative.

**Literature review**

Framing of sustainable development was started in early 80. as a trial to overcome a gap between environmental problems, with increasing numbers of negative examples of environmental results of human activity and social-political aspects of human development (Mebratu, 1998; Lozano, 2008).

Defining sustainable development in all aspects is a challenge because of its interdisciplinary nature (environment, economy, social and political issues) (Robinson, 2003).

Sustainable development, meaning economic growth that is environmentally sound, is a practical necessity. Environmental goals cannot be achieved without development (Sachs, Reid, 2006). Another definition underlined that sustainable development – process or evolution – is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundland et al., 1987). This aspect was also underlined by Glavic and Lukman, who emphasized that sustainable development is the evolution of human society from the responsible economic point of view in accordance with environmental and natural processes (Glavic, Lukman, 2007).

Sustainable development idea is reflected in financial products and services provided by main financial institutions. Generally financial institutions and markets are focused on activities against climate changes in the world, and more often have implemented special designed products and product lines to finance projects to diminish climate changes or adopt environment to effects of climate changes.

**Results**

Green bonds, as the name implies, are conventional bonds that feature an environmentally conscious use of their proceeds. Green bonds were created to fund projects with positive environmental and/or climate benefits. They allow investors to use the debt capital market to fund climate-related projects. Such activity has been undertaken by leading multilateral institutions, like as European Investment Bank, European Bank of Reconstruction and Development, International Bank of Reconstruction and Development as a part of World Bank Group. Other important issuers: Ginnie Mae and Fannie Mae – bonds secured by mortgage labeled „green”, EIB, Meryll Lynch,
Green bonds as a transfer of sustainable development idea into financial sector

Barclays, HSBC, Bank of China. Green bonds also help investors diversify their portfolios while contributing to the well-being of the environment.

Structure, risks and returns of green bonds are identical to those of traditional papers (Table 1). The only difference is that the proceeds from the issuance of a green bond are used solely to finance “green” projects, or those that are environmentally friendly.

Table 1. Main features of green bonds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designated instrument (green labeled)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt financial instrument with fix interest rates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital reimbursed to investors after expiration date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interests reimbursed according to coupon formula in whole period of validity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of green bonds is treated in terms of tax preferences (in many countries)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Green bonds usually must undergo third-party verification to establish that the proceeds are funding projects that generate environmental benefits (Green Bonds, 2016) or investors to ensure that their investment is being used appropriately for an environmental cause, green bonds need to offer transparency. Possible projects covered by green bond funding should be connected to renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable waste management, sustainable land use (forestry and agriculture), biodiversity, clean transportation and clean water (compare to Table 2).

Table 2. Categories and Sub-categories of selection to Green bond Use of Proceeds

| Green Bond Category          | Sub-category                                                                 |
|-----------------------------|                                                                            |
| Alternative energy          | Wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, waste energy, wave tidal, small hydro (<25 MW), biogas, bio-fuels (first and second generation). |
| Energy efficiency           | Demand-side management, battery, fuel cells/hydrogen systems, smart grid, other energy storage, superconductors, natural gas combined heat & power, LED lighting, compact fluorescent lighting, insulation, hybrid/ electric vehicles, clean transportation infrastructure, industrial automation, IT optimization service & infrastructure. |
| Pollution prevention & Control | Environmental remediation, waste treatment (excluding landfill and incineration), reuse & recycling of waste, low toxicity/VOC, conventional pollution control. |
| Sustainable water           | Water infrastructure and distribution (with impact on waste quality and access), rainwater harvesting, smart metering devices, drought-resistant seeds, desalination, waste water treatment, water recycling equipment and services, watersheds conservation efforts,. |
| Green buildings             | Green certified residential and commercial properties based on local environmental performance standards, green certified residential and commercial properties based on local environmental design standards, uncertified green property investments (top 15% energy efficiency within local market). |

Source: Barclays... (2014).

Green bonds can be issued as government, municipal, corporate or financial institutions securities in form of standard (corporate, municipal, multilateral, agency) with re-course to issuer with the same rating note to bonds and the issuer, with non-re-course to issuer and secured by project revenues, project bonds to one or many projects with recourse or no recourse to issuer, and securitized bonds (www.climatechange.net, 2016). It should be underlined a significant role that governments play in supporting the green bond market by adequately utilizing...
public capital in funding environmental projects. Government standardization and policies can also increase the issuance of labeled bonds (Labeled..., 2017).

A green label provides additional transparency to investors by disclosing the types of projects a bond will finance. A much broader universe of “unlabeled” green bonds exists, but investors are increasingly seeking the transparency that labeled green bonds provide so that they can better assess the impact their investment is making. Because self-labeling of green bonds didn’t provide sufficient assurance to investors, the International Capital Market Association (ICMA) created four Green Bond Principles to provide more transparency (Table 3).

**Table 3. Green Bond Principles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of rule</th>
<th>Explication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of proceeds</td>
<td>the issuer should declare the eligible green project categories if intend to support, and clear definition of the environmental benefits connected to the project finance by proceeds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation and selection</td>
<td>it should be underlined that decision making process follows the eligibility of individual investments using the green bonds proceeds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attestation</td>
<td>the proceeds should be moved to a sub-portfolio or otherwise attested to by a formal internal process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting</td>
<td>the issuer should report at least annually on the investments made from the proceeds, detailing all the environmental benefits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: by own based on Green Bond Highlights 2017 (2018).

Green bonds are listed in some stock exchanges, like as London, Oslo, Stockholm, Luxembourg, Johannesburg, and Mexico. Since 2014 number of ratings agencies and financial institutions have created indices to exclusively cover green bonds. The first one was Solactive Green Bond Index, and few months later S&P Green Bond Index and Green Project Bond Index, Bank of America Merill Lynch Green Bond Index, and the most known Barclays MSCI Green Bond Index. The launch of numerous green bond indices is a sign of the market’s growing maturity. Moreover, these indices are playing an important role for driving demand for green bonds among institutional investors (Summary..., 2017).

**Results supply**

The green bond market started in 2007 by the European Investment Bank and the World Bank. The World Bank Group has been a pioneer in the green bond market issuing a first green bond in 2008. Since then World Bank’s global issuances to institutional and retail investors have reached up to $10 billion in 18 currencies through near 130 transactions, World Bank supports this way projects that will reduce CO₂ emissions, increase energy savings, power generation from renewable sources, improve water management and restore forests.

The market has gained popularity among investors as a way to climate-proof their portfolios and still enjoy a diversified benefits. The market has grown considerably in the last ten years. Dynamic increase of green bonds issuance activity can be treated as coherency of worsening environment conditions to sustainable development, necessity of leveling effects of climate and environment changes, and needs in new projects fully eligible to environmental criteria.

From the beginning to 2012 the increase of value of issued green bonds was rather modest, but in 2014 result was 2 times bigger than in previous year. The same proportions appeared in 2016 to 2015 (Figure 1).
In 2017 green bond market amounted $155.5 billion and the same it was a sharp growth of about 78% in relation to 2016 with over 1,500 issuances prepared by 239 different issuers in 37 countries on all 6 continents. The largest single green bond issuance was for $10.7 billion.

The last 2 years changes were marked also in share of labeled green bonds – in 2016 labeled green bonds amounted to 17% of value of total issued ‘climate aligned’ bonds, while in 2017 such share increased to 25%.

Proceeds from green bonds in 2017 have been spent mainly for projects of 4 sectors: renewable energy, energy efficiency, transport, and water management (Figure 2).

The United States was a ultimate leader in green bonds market in a whole, second place from the last 4 years is occupied by China and the next a few of European countries. These relation is presented on Figure 3.
Figure 3. Cumulative and 2017 issuance of green bonds

Europe (France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Spain) has represented over 48% of total issuances in 2017, the next North America (16%) with the United States and Asia (23%) with China (compare Figure 4).

Figure 4. Green Bond 2017 Issuance by Country

In 2017 Europe accounted for 48% of the global green bonds market issuance. European issuers have dominated global issuance this year with nearly $38 billion of green bonds issued versus $22 billion in 2016. France accounts for 40% of this starting with a $7.5 billion green bond and a $527.4 million sovereign green bond issued by French public sector financial institution. Sweden issued its third green bond worth $500.0 million. Denmark has debuted into the green bond market with $559.1 million issued by its local government funding agency. In Norway municipality-owned power company issued its inaugural five year green bond worth $58.2 million (Europe..., 2017).

Poland, like as France, in the end of 2016 started into green bond market with issue of €720 million 5-year sovereign green bonds. This transaction was finished immediately with great success of issuer. The main objective
of the issue was to finance or refinance project with positive impact on the environment (Poland’s, 2017). At the beginning of 2018 Poland issued next sovereign 8.5-year EUR denominated green bonds for value EUR 1 billion. Demand for Polish green bonds exceeded EUR 3,6 billion. Proceeds from the issuance will be spent also on environmental projects (EUR, 2018).

Conclusions

The growth of bond markets provides a wide opportunities to finance green economy projects. Green bonds can stimulate financial, economy and regulatory reforms to boost green growth and can help countries make changes into low carbon economies. Preparing highly specialized financial instrument, as green bond is, has to insert a great and deep efforts to recognize problems of unsustainable development problems. Its worthy to quote that “processes connected to green bonds issuances will accelerate sharply and will create a market by 2020 more 10 times bonds issued in 2016” (Figueres et al., 2017), it means $1 trillion for green finance.

References


THE EFFECT OF INFLUENCERS ON BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE GROUP OF RECIPIENTS

Urszula Chrąchol-Barczyk

University of Szczecin, Faculty of Management and Economics of Services, POLAND
E-mail: urszula.chrachol@wzieu.pl

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Abstract Influencers are becoming an increasingly popular communication tool thanks to which a company can gain a lot. Influencers, by being authentic, build strong relationships with the group of its recipients. Companies that invite such people to their campaigns may influence the increase of sales volume, increase of brand recognition, and the involvement of consumers in the company’s activities. However, choosing an influencer is not a simple task. The article presents the definition of the influencer concept, activities to be performed by selecting an influencer and examples on the Polish market of the use of influencers in company activities. The aim of the article is to show that influencers can be an effective tool of communication between a company and a group of consumers, and influence the building of relationships.

Introduction

Influencers are a popular trend in marketing communication. Their number has been systematically growing for a few years. This is also reflected in the business marketing companies, which more often cooperate with bloggers, vloggers or profile owners in other social media.
This trend also affected the emergence of the concept of Influencer marketing, which is defined as the field of marketing based on the recognition and position of people involved in the promotion. It is reminiscent of recommendation marketing, however, it focuses only on the opinions of influential Internet users (Knowledge base).

Increasing importance of influencers is confirmed by the results of research, which show that over 53% of buyers declare that the decision to buy the product was taken under the influence of the person they are watching in social media. Internet users often consider vloggers to be experts in a given field. Their recommendations and the ability to discuss and comment, make publications about brands on vlogs more reliable for them than traditional advertising on TV, radio, press or on billboards. The marketing industry began to cooperate with influencers due to the relatively low cost of building coverage. Today, many top companies are able to pay very much for the top creators. In the US, already 65% of companies use influencer marketing in their communication. In Poland, this market is still young. The number of ads and expenditures on them are growing at a slower pace than the amount of content, but more and more brands are aware that thanks to cooperation with creators, they can reach specific target groups more effectively. However, many companies still do not know how such cooperation should look like.

There is no belief in influencer ideas (Nowak, 2017).

**Influencers — who are they?**

Influencer is a person who has a strong influence on their recipients – their views, opinions, shopping habits. The distinguishing feature of someone like this from any other person, which could also be said that he or she affect others, is building relationships with their recipients.

An influencer should be a person who owns a blog, a vlog, an account on Youtube, Snapchat or other Social Media and may influence the opinion of at least a few hundred people (Kawalec, 2016) Not always influencer is a specialist in the field in he or she comments. The second group of influencers are public figures – celebrities, artists, athletes, politicians, etc., whose reach is often larger than people known for running a blog.

Influencers are not a homogeneous group and they can be divided depending on the number of users who follow the profile of a given person in the social network (Makuch, 2018):

- microinfluencers (from 1,000 to 100,000 followers),
- mid-tier influencers (from 100,000 to 1,000,000 followers),
- top-tier influencers (over 1,000,000 followers).

Thanks to cooperation with brands, influencer can transform your passion into regular work. However, it is not enough to have a good idea for interesting content, especially if the creator is working on the YouTube channel. The traffic on the channel depends on many factors. The appropriate title, description and also watch-time (time of watching the material) or presence in the tab ‘recommended’. The technological aspect is important. You need to skillfully use all the functions and rules that affect the result of the channel, that is its subscription (Nowak, 2017).

Forms of cooperation with influencers are various: product placement in their program, testing and product review, special episode dedicated to the product, organization of competitions with a given product, participation in brand mobilization in social media, advertising spots, press.

Influencers very often show exaggerated images of themselves, e.g. women, who 3 weeks after the birth of a child returned to the former figure and show themselves in pictures in full make-up. By contrast, by showing
different hardships, such as tiredness after training, and not perfection at any time, you can build with the fans much more understanding and trust.

In many cases, consumers trust in smaller influencers than the top ones. The strength of microinfluencers lies in their naturalness, authenticity and commitment. They are often perceived as “people from the neighborhood”, they give the impression that interneters know them personally, which translates into credibility and lasting relationships with a group of recipients. This makes their content more effective than traditional advertising. The average level of generated involvement under the posts by microinfluencers of inda Hash is even 5 times higher than in influencers with large ranges. By engaging several microinfluencers, you can get the same range as the woth top-tier influencers, getting a higher commitment rate (Makuch, 2018).

The group of recipients called digital natives, constantly connected to the network, is bombarded every day with advertising messages and remains insensitive to artificial communications, therefore authenticity matters much more. There are influencers who understand this. In the group of parenting bloggers also honesty is more and more in price, much more than the photos of equally arranged blankets, as seen on the example of Maia Bohosiewicz, who on her Instagram account shows motherhood without icing or on the blog nostressbeauty, where Maria Kowalczyk does not use artificial embellishments, despite that the blog is about beauty. Influencers, at least in principle, build their title influence on knowledge, sharing experiences, ideas or own creativity (Przybylski, 2017).

**Influencers — how to choose them?**

First of all, the influencer should be matched related to the given brand. If someone has a clothing store, they should look for, for example, influencers who have nice pictures in the designs of the istagram. When choosing from among several known people, many indicators should be taken into account. First of all, in the network, especially on the websites of agencies that cooperate with influencers, there are rankings (Figure 1). They contain numerical data about the size of subscriptions and impressions as well as the increase in subscriptions on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. This is important, because the fact of having many subscribers does not guarantee the continuing popularity of a given person. Therefore, when analyzing the subscription growth, it is possible to check how many subscribers come on a regular basis and whether the given influencer still enjoys such a high popularity as for example a year before.

Secondly, an estimate of the influencer’s reach requires data such as the number of fans on Facebook, Twitter subscribers, YouTube channel subscribers, as well as the number of page views and unique users on the website or blog. However, it is a mistake to perceive the creator of the internet through the prism of reach. The fact that an influencer has a wide audience does not mean that it is matched to the group of recipients of the product. Most companies do not appreciate smaller influencers because they think that one action with a large range is more effective. Meanwhile, cooperation with a larger group of smaller, in terms of reach, creators allows for achieving higher ROIs. Such activities require more work, so it is good to run them through an agency that knows who to work with, both in the case of range advertising and content marketing (Nowak, 2017).

Depending on the specific social media one can ask about internal statistics, but it is also needed to check those visible ones. In the case of Facebook, it is the number of likes, the frequency of entries, the quantity and quality of comments under the entry, participation in other campaigns. YouTube is the number of subscribers per channel, the number of views of individual videos, the quantity and quality of comments under the video being displayed, and how the influencer responds to them.
The target group that the company wants to reach is also important. Then, one look at the demographic structure of the influencer’s group of contributors and decide if it is consistent with the target group of the company. Table 1 contains information that should be analyzed when deciding to cooperate with influencers.

Table 1. Places to acquire data about influencers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet monitoring</td>
<td>using the internet monitoring tools, e.g. Brand24 or SentiOne, one can find people who often express their opinions on topics related to a given product or service. Such research will also allow to follow how the statements of the potential influencer are commented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>Sotrender’s trend reports enable to see which channels on Youtube, FB fanpage, Instagram and Twitter profiles were the most popular recently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rankings</td>
<td>both the companies and the influencers themselves undertake to create different types of rankings of bloggers, youtubers, Instagram accounts, etc. The most popular ones are the review of the most influential bloggers of Jason Hunt. Andrzej Tucholski also creates his ranking. Youtubers with the widest range can be found in the already described vStars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google search engine</td>
<td>you can also search for influencers in Google. The easiest way is to enter a key phrase, e.g. “fashion blog”, “parenting blog”, “culinary blog”. Another way is to enter a specific phrase related to a given product. If you are looking for a technology influencer, you can search for reviews of a particular phone model. In the top 10, a blog will definitely appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram – similar profiles</td>
<td>if you want to get involved with instagamers, you can find one whose profile meets expectations and start watching it. A similar profile will appear over the profile, which is also related to the subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contests</td>
<td>bloggers and youtubers can also be found among the winners of contests such as the annual Gala of Creators (formerly Blog of the Year) or Grand Video Awards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups on facebook</td>
<td>is a great place to look for microinfluencers as well as an unusual target group. For example, if you need to find bloggers owning a cat, or youtuber, which will soon be getting married, you can post on a blog group (Blogs – cooperation, interior design blogs) on influencer marketing (e.g. Influencer Polska – virtually on influencer marketing). Bloggers and youtubers, not being the addressee of the query, will be happy to recommend their friends. Microinfluencers can be found on industry groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The effect of influencers on building relationships with the group of recipients

Platforms

The most convenient way to search for influencers is to use the platform grouping creators. For example, in the WhitePress platform, influencers can be searched by topics, tags and channels in social media. Profiles are also sorted by ranges and prices. You can immediately send an inquiry to the influencer and conveniently carry out the campaign without unnecessary e-mails and contracts. In the platform, you can easily find microinfluencers, who are often willing to square up in the form of barter.

Events

They are an opportunity to establish relationships with influencers. It may be a typical blogging event like SeeBloggers, but also thematic – a medical conference, a meeting of women running companies, etc.

Source: Górecka (2017).

The involvement of the influencer in the brand campaign means primarily its credibility, increasing trust, reaching a new audience and tightening ties with them, thanks to the emotional relationship. However, for every marketer it is the conversion that matters, i.e. whether the user has decided to buy. During the campaign, the opinion leader may encourage participation in the competition, entry to the brand website, purchase for a voucher lowering the value of the basket. Giving an individual code, tagging the campaign will allow retargeting to people who have entered the brand’s website. You can build their profile and send them a dedicated message at the right time and place. Thanks to performance marketing, the brand can measure the influence of the influencer on sales (Nowak, 2017).

Examples of campaigns with the involvement of influencers

In the network you can find numerous examples of influencers’ involvement in promoting brands. Special articles and rankings of the best case studies are created, also with the divisions into industries.

Figure 2. Post regarding the Apple phone on the Duże Podróże blog

Source: 10 campaigns... (2017).
The author of the blog Duże Podróże has partnered with the Apple brand and the official distributor of its products on the Internet, iSpot.pl – she prepared for her readers a guide on the most useful applications available on iOS. Systematic publication is an extremely important issue for every blogger: even when Aleksandra is many thousands of kilometers from home, she can easily prepare new entries, process photos or edit movies (10 campaigns..., 2017).

Marta Muszyńska, the author of the blog Podróżniczo.pl, decided to give a few hints to her readers: she prepared the arrangements with Westwing, a brand dealing with interior design accessories. Scandinavian, American or French style – a travel atmosphere and a stylish finish guaranteed (10 campaigns..., 2017).

The Amica brand introduced a new blender to the market and decided to invite famous bloggers to cooperate. WyzwanieKoktajl campaign included Jessica Mercedes, Maciej Mazurek (Zuch Rysuje), Koszulkowo, Mediafun or Kocham Gotować – its aim was to involve them in creative promotion, dissemination of the supporting hashtag and gaining popularity in social media. The action definitely paid off: over 28 blogs were published, the brand gained new ambassadors and successfully promoted its new blender. In addition, the community involved actively exchanged the recipes for healthy cocktails (50 campaigns..., 2016).

Michał Szafrański, the author of the popular blog Jak oszczędzać pieniądze (How to save money) established one-year cooperation with MasterCard. As part of it, he prepared a compendia of knowledge about bank cards and the course “Defeat your debts”. He shared his knowledge, advised, answered questions – that is, he did what...
The effect of influencers on building relationships with the group of recipients

he has done so far on his blog – thanks to which he gained many new readers, and the brand got a very good place for promotion. Also the Ikea brand, on the occasion of the premiere of the new catalog, organized a photo session with bloggers, which then went on personalized covers. In addition, each of them described their day with the Swedish furniture brand, added photographs behind the scenes, and at the same time promoted Ikea in social media. In action took part, e.g. Vanitas, Szafa Sztywniary or StayFly (50 campaigns..., 2016).

![Figure 4. The Amica brand campaign on the Pruskigotuje blog](image1)

Source: 50 campaigns... (2016).

![Figure 5. Ikea brand campaign on the StayFly blog](image2)

Source: 50 campaigns... (2016).
Conclusion

Influencers have invaded the world of marketing communication tools for good and certainly this trend will continue to develop. Forecasts for 2018 indicate development in the microinfluencers group and that Instagram will have the largest number of campaigns using influencers. This is certainly influenced by the change in Facebook policy regarding the reduction of organic ranges.

Watching different people online, using bloggers’ advice influences building trust between the user/observer and the person running the medium. Through the authenticity of a person, the quality of his/her entries and opinions it becomes a pattern that influences the creation of opinions in others, and thus their purchasing behavior. In this process, the relationship between these parties is being built. As numerous research results show, consumers less and less trust television advertising, and they are more likely to believe in influencers. This is also reflected in the marketing activities of companies that are constantly trying to build relationships with groups of their buyers. The involvement of influencers for this purpose can help them, and it is important that it is a cheaper and more effective tool than many other campaigns massively used by companies.

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NON-FINANCIAL REPORTING AS A CHALLENGE FOR THE CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

HANNA CZAJA-CIESZYŃSKA

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: hanna.czaja@wzieu.pl

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KEYWORDS non-financial reporting, information system, accounting, sustainable development, CSR

ABSTRACT
The purpose of the article is to analyse and evaluate the degree of development of non-financial information reporting in Poland with particular consideration given to the role of accounting as a generator of information in this scope. The following considerations serve as an input to the debate and, as a result, the author formulated the research hypothesis as follows: non-financial information reporting in Poland is in its early phase of development. In order to evaluate the actual state, the author carried out the quantitative analysis of non-financial reports published by Polish economic units in the international register kept by the GRI as well as in the Polish Register of Reports kept by CRSinfo.

It appears from the study that obtaining comprehensive financial, non-financial, quantifiable and descriptive information requires moving away from treating accounting as a closed system and requires its development. In this context, social accounting, being a broader field in accounting, is getting more and more popular.

Research methods applied in the study: literature studies, legal regulations analysis as well as the method of deductive reasoning and synthesis.

Introduction
Recent years have brought a dynamical increase in the importance of the idea of sustainable development and the related concept of the corporate social responsibility. As a result, the increasing expectations of investors, society and other groups of stakeholders forced companies to use a new form of communication with the environment, that is, publishing non-financial reports.
The purpose of the article is to analyse and evaluate the degree of development of non-financial information reporting in Poland with particular consideration given to the role of accounting as a generator of information in this scope. The implementation of such a research task required the division of the article into three parts. The first one defines the term information and shows the place and role of accounting in the accounting information system of a company. The second part describes sources and premises of non-financial information reporting. The third part, in turn, includes the analysis of the Polish legal system in this scope and the quantitative evaluation of the degree of development of non-financial information reporting in Poland.

The following considerations serve as an input to the debate and, as a result, the author formulated the research hypothesis as follows: non-financial information reporting in Poland is in its early phase of development. For the purpose of this article, the author applied the following research methods: literature study, the analysis of legal regulations as well as the method of deductive reasoning and synthesis.

The importance of the accounting information system

Etymologically, the word “information” derives from the Latin informatio and means idea, explanation, notification (Drewniak, 2000, p. 79). In Poland one of the first authors, who in the seventies of the 20th century defined the concept of information was J. Ratajewski. In his view, information is “a mutual relationship between at least two items (objects, organisms) consisting of a meaning (content) and a physical carrier (form), used for conveying signals of one entity (object, organism) to the other one (object, organism)” (Ratajewski, 1973, p. 8–9). In the context of conducting business activity, the term information means all the content of a message used actively by economic entities to make economic decisions (Oleński, 2010, p. 178). In this sense, information embraces all the paper and electronic databases, files, documents and oral instructions, which are generated, conveyed and collected in the enterprise’s information system (Madej, 2002, p. 138).

The importance of the role of information for the efficient functioning of the enterprise cannot be overestimated. It is a significant strategic factor, frequently more important than capital or work (Kolbusz, 1999, p. 91). It contributes to the enterprise’s development, prejudges the rationality and effectiveness of management and is used to communicate with the environment. In this context, apart from the amount of information, its quality also plays a significant role in business management. The term quality of information refers to a set of characteristics specifying its suitability for the protection of specific needs, resulting in particular from the objectives and activities implemented by the entity. The basic qualitative characteristics distinguishing useful information from the useless one are relevance, accuracy, timeliness, completeness, coherence, format, accessibility, compatibility, safety and verifiability (Miler, 1996).

The basic and most popular source of information meeting information needs of different groups of stakeholders is accounting. As A. Karmańska claims, accounting provides 70% of economic information essential for the enterprise’s functioning (Karmańska, 2006, p. 274). The example highlighting the information nature of accounting is its definition from 1953 coined by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), which states that accounting “is a process of identifying, measurement and communication of economic information with the aim to enable information users to make reasonable judgement and take a decision” (Helin, 2004, p. XXIX). A similar approach is visible in another definition, in the light of which “accounting is an information system, which identifies, informs and keeps a record of economic events of some business entity for interested users” (Weygandt, Kieso, Kimmel, 2002, p. 2). The place of accounting in the information system is depicted in Figure 1.
The requirements of the recipients of information generated by accounting are higher and more diverse both in relation to the scope of disclosed information and the form of its presentation. Accounting has to be subject to amendments in order to meet these requirements. Over the last several decades, accounting has had to face, among others, the process of globalisation or the information age which has led to its intensive development. It is manifested in harmonization and standardization of accounting principles, increasing use of fair value in business assets valuation and in the necessity to report non-financial information.

Sources and premises of disclosing non-financial information

In the literature, the notion of “non-financial information” is interpreted in many different ways. There is no one common definition, which could be regarded as the one generally accepted and used (Sobczyk, 2017, pp. 395–401). According to J. Krasodomska, the notion of non-financial information embraces all the information (descriptive or numerical one, not necessarily expressed in cash) published (compulsorily or voluntarily) in the enterprise’s annual report, apart from the financial statement and auditor’s opinion and report (Krasodomska, 2014, p. 28).

In recent years, disclosing non-financial information has become a trend and it constitutes a response to increasing expectations of stakeholders in the scope of the multilevel informing about the company’s operations. This information can be of a different nature and concerns various aspects of enterprise’s functioning (economic, social and environmental), which is closely related with the development of the concept of sustainable development and the corporate social responsibility. The corporate social responsibility is a strategic and long-term approach, based on high ethical standards both in relation to employees and society and to environment. One of the broadest definitions of social responsibility was published in 2010 by the International Organization for Standardization ISO. According to ISO, CSR is “an organization’s responsibility or the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behaviour that (ISO 26000:2010):

- contributes to sustainable development, including the health and welfare of the society,
- takes into account the expectations of stakeholders,
The main objective of disclosing non-financial information is, therefore, the reduction of information gap between stakeholders’ information needs and information provided by traditional financial reporting (Dziawgo, 2016, p. 105). In this context, a broader field of accounting, that is, social accounting, is more and more often discussed. Social accounting involves “providing information about social and environmental effects of the company’s activities focused on economic goals and exerted on individual groups of stakeholders and the society as a whole” (Gray, Owen, Maunders, 1987). One of the methods to communicate in this scope is to publish non-financial information in the form of the so called social reports, sustainable development reports, CSR reports, business or corporate reports. These constitute the form of dialogue between the company and the environment and this information should be complete, reliable, useful and comparable in each reporting period (Fijałkowska, 2012, p. 148).

Disclosing non-financial information may bring the company a number of benefits, mainly due to the company image. The most important reasons for providing non-financial reports by companies are the following (Kaputa, 2013, p. 116):

- transparency and the willingness to show the company’s engagement in different social and ecological initiatives,
- improvement of the company’s reputation and credibility for investors,
- demonstration of the ability to participate in competitive markets,
- sustainable planning of the company’s activities,
- support in solving current problems and reacting to them,
- creation of greater awareness of the CSR issue and facilitated implementation of sustainable development.

In conclusion, it is important to highlight that non-financial reporting is applicable to all public, private and non-profit organizations, regardless of their size or location. It can be compulsory or voluntary. Despite the fact that it concerns mainly large enterprises, more and more frequently non-financial reports are published also in other economic sectors, e.g. in small and medium-sized enterprises and in non-governmental organizations.

**Development of non-financial reporting in Poland**

The basic legal act regulating the accounting system in Poland is the Accounting Act of 29 September 1994 (Journal of Laws 2018 item 395). Until 2017, there was practically no reporting of non-financial information in Polish
legislation and it was limited to information disclosure in the report on the operations (relevant information about the company’s assets and financial position, including evaluation of results as well as indication of risk factors and description of threats). It was only the amendment to the Accounting Act of 15 December 2016, which transposed the EU directive on disclosure of non-financial and diversity information to Polish law, that introduced a number of relevant changes in this scope (Directive 2014/95/EU). Firstly, non-financial information reporting became compulsory for the so called public trust institutions. Public trust institutions are entities, in which the average annual employment is over 500 people for two consecutive years and one of the two financial criteria is exceeded – the balance sheet total over 85 million PLN or net revenue from sales of goods and products over 170 million PLN (The Accounting Act 2018, art. 49b, item 1). The obligation of reporting non-financial information refers to financial statements for the financial year 2017. Secondly, reporting of extended non-financial information can be in the form of a statement, as a separate part of the company’s operations report, or in the form of a separate non-financial report. In both cases it has to include at least (The Accounting Act 2018, art. 49b, item 2):

- a concise description of the company’s business model,
- key non-financial performance indicators related to the company’s activities,
- description of the policies adopted by the company in relation to social and employee issues, natural environment, human rights respect as well as combating corruption and description of results of these practices,
- description of due diligence procedures,
- description of relevant risks that may adversely affect the company’s activities, including description of the management of those risks.

Thirdly, the legislator did not impose the applicable legal framework being the basis of non-financial reporting. This means that the entities making an effort in this scope may rely on the national, the EU or international policy framework. Examples include, among others, the GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) standards, the International Integrated Reporting Framework (IR), the UN Global Compact Initiative, guidelines of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for multinational enterprises or the abovementioned ISO 2600 standard of the International Organization for Standardization.

The most popular reporting standards for responsible business and sustainable development both in Poland and in the world are the GRI standards. In accordance with the situation as at 1 March 2018, non-financial reporting has been adopted so far by over 12 thousand entities in the world, which published 46,5 thousand reports, including 63% of reports prepared in accordance with the GRI standards (http://database.globalreporting.org). Quantitative summary of non-financial reports published by Polish economic entities is presented in Table 1, which shows the number of non-financial reports registered in the International Register kept by the GRI and in the Polish Register of Reports kept by CRSinfo.

Until the end of 2017, 286 reports were published in the international base kept by the GRI, whereas 370 reports in the national Register of Reports. The presented figures clearly indicate that reporting of non-financial information in Poland is in its early phase of development. It is even more visible when compared with the results in other European countries, such as Greece – 437 reports, the Netherlands – 1175 reports, Germany – 1439 reports or Spain – 2133 reports. The number of non-financial reports published in the selected European countries is presented in Figure 3.
Table 1. The number of non-financial reports registered in Poland until 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of publication</th>
<th>The number of non-financial reports registered in Poland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The GRI Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>until 2003</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 3. The number of non-financial reports registered in the GRI base until 2017 in the selected European countries

Source: own elaboration based on http://database.globalreporting.org (1.03.2018).

However, it should be underlined that Poland is now in a period of transition as all non-financial reports have been published voluntarily so far. The statutory obligation to disclose extended non-financial information for public trust institutions introduced in 2017 will influence the number of published reports only at the end of 2018. It is estimated that in 2018 obligatory non-financial reports will be published by about 300 enterprises.
Conclusions

The growing importance of the concept of sustainable development imposed the necessity to develop contemporary reporting methods by the accounting system. Enterprises, which want to increase their value in the eyes of their stakeholders, cannot concentrate solely on presenting financial information. It is, therefore, publishing non-financial information that constitutes a true expression of concern for the relationships with the environment. This means that accounting, in its current form, is no longer able to meet the requirements of its users. In this context, social accounting, being a broader field of accounting, is getting more and more popular. Obtaining comprehensive financial, non-financial, quantifiable and descriptive information requires moving away from the traditional financial reporting into the multidimensional non-financial one.

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ORGANIZATION OF GOODS DELIVERY IN E-COMMERCE

MACIEJ CZAPLEWSKI

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: maciej.czaplewski@wzieu.pl

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e-commerce, logistics, goods delivery

Customers using e-commerce expect fast delivery of ordered goods, including quick delivery of tangible goods. The fulfillment of this postulate requires proper organization of delivery of tangible goods purchased online and underlines the importance of the delivery phase in the e-commerce transaction process. The main aim of the article is to describe and to some extent also analyze the role of an adequate delivery phase organization in order to ensure a smooth e-commerce transaction process. In consequence the article assumes a hypothesis: ensuring an efficient organization of the delivery phase of material goods acquired online is an important factor supporting the rapid pace of e-commerce development. In order to achieve the assumed goal and prove the adopted hypothesis, the author presents issues connected with the essence of e-commerce, the role of transport and logistics in the e-commerce value creation chain and pursued delivery solutions in e-commerce, including the directions of their improvement and the observed co-evolution of e-commerce development and transport as well as used logistics solutions.

Introduction

The subject of e-commerce transactions may be:

– digital goods, for which the entire transaction process can be carried out using electronic channels,
– tangible goods that require delivery with traditional means of transport.
Customers using e-commerce expect fast delivery of ordered goods, including quick delivery of tangible goods. The fulfillment of this postulate requires proper organization of delivery of tangible goods purchased online and underlines the importance of the delivery phase in the e-commerce transaction process.

The aim of the article is to present the role of proper organization of the delivery phase in ensuring a smooth e-commerce transaction process.

The article assumes the following hypothesis:

– ensuring an efficient organization of the delivery phase of material goods acquired online is an important factor supporting the rapid pace of e-commerce development.

In order to achieve the assumed goal and prove the adopted hypothesis, the article presents:

– the essence of e-commerce,
– the role of transport and logistics in the e-commerce value creation chain,
– pursued delivery solutions in e-commerce, including the directions of their improvement and the observed co-evolution of e-commerce development and transport as well as used logistics solutions.

### The essence of e-commerce

The wide use of the virtual market space in business leads to the creation of e-business. So far, one commonly accepted definition of e-business has not been developed. M. Norris and S. West assume that e-business covers “all problems related to the purchase and sale of goods and services available through the network” (Norris, West, 2001, p. 16). The definition of e-business presented by IBM (No year indicated, p. 28) is more extensive, according to which e-business is a “safe, integrated and flexible approach to providing various business values through the combination of systems and processes leading to proper business operations using the Internet technology”. Even more detailed approach indicates that in the context of e-business, Internet technology is used in contacts with clients, within the enterprise itself (via Intranet) and in contacts with suppliers (via Extranet) (Choi, Stahl, Whinston, 1997, p. 12). It should be emphasized that the rapid development of the Internet has led to the emergence of new sectors of the economy, either directly or indirectly related to the functioning of the network (Drab-Kurowska, 2013, pp. 501–511).

A graphic depiction of this system and its use to distinguish two concepts: e-business and e-commerce, clearly presented P. Staehler. This is presented in Figure 1.

The approach shown in Figure 1 shows that companies utilizing e-business use Internet technology in three basic relationships:

– with clients (Internet),
– with business partners (Extranet),
– within the company (Intranet).

This figure also shows that e-business is a broader concept than e-commerce, the essence of which boils down to the use of Internet technology in the relations between the company and customers.

The concept of e-commerce is also defined in various ways. According to B. Gregor and M. Stawiszyński, e-commerce is “the process of selling and buying products and services, and thus entering into commercial transactions using electronic means, conducted via the Internet (where often traditional tools like fax or telephone are also helpful)” (Gregor, Stawiszyński, 2002, p. 79). L. Mueller-Hagedorn (2000, pp. 49–57) claims that
Organization of goods delivery in e-commerce

E-commerce involves transactions of paid exchange of goods carried out between independent entities using interactive electronic media, such as the Internet.

Florian Gierke (2005, pp. 4–78) defines e-commerce as the beginning, negotiation and implementation of commercial activities using the Internet network. In turn, K. Frank, J. Kerp and F. Globisch (2001, pp. 16–114) point to the fact that e-commerce can be both - part of an e-business system focused on distribution as well as an independent solution.

Making an attempt to generalize the characterization of e-commerce, according to the author, the following three features should be emphasized:

- E-commerce is based on the use of interactive internet technology in the processes of buying and selling goods and services,
- Is a part of e-business, including transactions between the company and buyers of its products,
- Internet technology can be used to implement all phases of the transaction process, and the minimum condition for its recognition as e-commerce transaction is the use of the Internet in the implementation of the basic phases of this process, i.e. during negotiations and arrangements (Dobosz, 2012, p. 1).

The role of transport and logistics in e-commerce value creation chain

Dynamic development of e-commerce, including the growing demand for e-commerce services as well as increased competition between e-sellers as well as between electronic and traditional trade, encourages e-sellers to find ways at best to adapt to the requirements of e-buyers. This involves the need to organize non-complex, transparent chains of value creation, guaranteeing their speed and efficiency. This requires:

- possible minimization of the number of necessary processes carried out between e-sellers and e-buyers,
- ensuring strong consistency of these processes.

To achieve these goals, one can use a procedure that goes down to (Osterloh, Frost, 2006, p. 27):
– separation of processes of basic and secondary importance. This division is usually made on the base of two criteria:
  – the importance processes from the customer’s needs point of view,
  – the possibilities of distinguishing from the competition;
– separation of basic functions as part of the processes, which must be implemented in the event of a transaction. An important function in this respect is the logistic connection of the place where the purchased goods are located with the place to which they have to be delivered. K. Iwińska-Knop (2004, p. 11) states that distribution is currently one of the most important factors determining the company’s competitive advantage.

The actions taken in the first step primarily lead to the prominence of sales processes and marketing activities used to support sales. On the other hand, actions taken in the second step allow to emphasize the role of logistics in the chain of e-commerce value chain creation. This role is primarily indicated by a direct link between the classic marketing concept of 4P and logistics activities, as shown in Figure 2.

![Figure 2. Linkage between marketing and logistics activities](image)

The importance of logistics in the e-commerce value creation chain is primarily connected with the need to rationally link the place where ordered via the Internet goods are located with the place to which they have to be delivered. In graphic terms, this is shown in Figure 3.

Considering the interest of customers in the efficient delivery of goods ordered online, the e-sellers must make every effort to ensure effective and efficient delivery of goods to the e-buyers. Thanks to the e-commerce properties, the delivery processes are characterized by a high level of electronic channels use, and the technical progress and the decrease in the costs of its use is conducive to further improvement of this level (Cellary, Stryjowski, Remesz, Toboła, 2002, p. 49). This promotes the creation of electronic supply chains (Stryjkowski, Cellary, 2006, p. 45). Supply chains, oriented to customer needs and satisfying these needs by combining business processes with the increasing use of virtual networks, A. Harrison and R. Hoek (2010, p. 272) described as agile supply chains.

An important feature that distinguishes supply chains that use electronic networks from traditional chains is the ability to separate information flow streams from goods flow streams. Information can be treated as an element of competitive advantage, and at the same time a source of this advantage. It is important to constantly acquire, process and use more and more information in less and less time (Budziewicz-Guźlecka, 2013, p. 88). Subsequently this creates the possibility of quick and adequate response to changes in demand for specific final goods. It also facilitates quick response to changes in the volume of orders for a given good and adapting to these changes delivery solutions.

Special opportunities in this regard occur in e-commerce transactions regarding the acquisition of digital goods, where the value creation chain is related to:

- lower production costs of these goods,
- the possibility of skipping the costs of packaging and traditional transport.
Despite a special impact of modern information and communication technologies, in particular the Internet, on rationalizing logistic processes servicing e-commerce transactions, which are digital goods, these technologies also significantly support the rationalization of logistics processes serving the supply of tangible goods. In relation to these transactions, the positive impact of modern information and communication technologies boils down to:

- promoting flexible cooperation between e-sellers and e-buyers, allowing a better coordination of the delivery time of numerous small shipments and their grouping in logically combined collective loads,
- limiting incorrectly organized and implemented delivery processes due to continuous and efficient flow of information between e-sellers, e-buyers and the carrier.

**Applied delivery solutions in e-commerce**

The area of using logistics and transport in e-commerce is closely related to the scope of Internet use in individual transactions. This scope is primarily dependent on the type of goods being the subject of a particular transaction. In the situation when all transaction phases are implemented using electronic channels, there is no need to use physical logistics and transport processes. This is possible only when the subject of the transaction is in a form of a digital good. When the subject matter are tangible goods, e-sellers need to apply logistic solutions that take into account the necessity to physically prepare goods for transport, appropriate linking of individual shipments that allow rational use of transport means and the efficient delivery of individual shipments to recipients.

The general approach to the use of logistics in e-commerce is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Basic logistics solutions in e-commerce**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope of using the Internet in e-commerce transactions</th>
<th>Transaction characteristics</th>
<th>Logistics requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the pre-sale and sales stages</td>
<td>use of electronic channels in the information phase of order recognition</td>
<td>the need to organize physical processes to prepare a good for transportation, combining individual shipments in consignment parties and delivering individual parcels to recipients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the pre-sale, after-sales and after-sales phases</td>
<td>use of electronic channels in the phase of information orders, delivery and delivery charges and in the after-sales phase (e.g. complaints) recognition</td>
<td>no need to use traditional transport processes and logistic organization of these processes. Possibility to limit to e-logistics, using only electronic media in organizing the way of carrying out e-commerce transactions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own elaboration.

E-commerce transactions, the subject of which are tangible goods in a natural way involve engaging logistic solutions that require consideration of traditional warehouse, cargo and transport processes.

The general approach to the structure of delivery channels used in e-commerce is shown in Figure 4.

In the organization of tangible goods supply, the following strategies are primarily used:

- on-time delivery (just-in-time) – allowing to limit inventory, rationalize costs and improve operational efficiency,
- quick response - aimed at improving the relationship between the level of costs and the quality of delivery service by fast transfer and exchange of information on demand and stock levels,
Organization of goods delivery in e-commerce

- effective customer response - aimed at effectively satisfying the client’s needs while maintaining the lowest possible stock of inventory by using modern information and communication technologies in contacts between the participants of the logistics chain (eg. between the e-seller, the cargo dispatcher and the carrier).

**Figure 4.** Basic delivery channels used in e-commerce  
Source: own elaboration.

The significance of the logistics strategies mentioned above results in particular from the fact that they have contributed to giving logistics the role of one of the central assets for efficient organization of the entire transaction process, including fulfilling the function of coordinating and controlling the supply chain.

Expanding and improving the system of sales channels used by Internet companies, allows to talk about a certain e-commerce co-evolution and logistics solutions used in it. Co-evolution is due to the fact that:
- growing e-commerce and high requirements set by e-commerce users in the field of fast delivery of numerous small shipments to spatially distributed individual customers, have set new requirements for delivery systems,
- meeting these requirements was associated with the need to improve distribution systems.

**Conclusions**

The basis of e-commerce development is the use of the Internet potential in order to conduct sales activities. However, it should be noted that the subject of e-commerce transactions are not only digital goods, but also (or even at most) tangible goods. In the case of such goods, their delivery must take place using traditional transport services, in which transport and logistics operators specialize. This means the dependence of the implementation of many e-commerce transactions on the use of traditional transport and logistics solutions.

The search for transport and logistics solutions that take full account of the needs of e-commerce is based on: developing logistic models and on using the Internet’s potential.
Such activities allow to rationalize the demand of e-commerce for transport and logistics services implemented by specialized companies. This improves the quality of transport services of tangible goods purchased over the Internet. An important positive consequence of improving the quality of deliveries service of goods purchased online should be the further development of e-commerce, resulting in, among others, an increase in demand for transport and logistics services related to the service of goods purchased via the Internet.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN POLAND IN COMPARISON TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

RAFAL CZYŻYCKI

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: rafal.czyzycyki@wzieu.pl

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Abstract Sustainable development has been the subject of scientific research for almost half a century. Despite the fact that the term “regional development” was first used in 1972, it still has not been clearly defined. Therefore, various researchers differently perceive the issue of sustainable development, which is still the subject of multiple research articles. On the basis of the Web of Science only, it can be indicated that in 2015, 909 articles were published, which had “sustainable development” in their title, in 2016 there were 1080 of such articles, and in 2017–1039. The subject of this article is to evaluate the importance of sustainable development in Polish regional policy as well as the analysis of its level in comparison with other EU countries in 2016.

The issue and importance of sustainable development

The definition of sustainable development differs significantly from the pure economic definition of sustainable economic growth. The notion was first used in 1972 at the first UN Conference on Environment and Development, where it was stated that “sustainable development is a desired economic development, which does not substantially or irremediably infringe the human living environment, does not lead to biosphere degradation and does not violate
the laws of nature, economy or culture” (Siekierski, 2013, p. 140). However, the notion of sustainable development was disseminated only owing to the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: “Our Common Future”, known as the Brundtland Report, which defined sustainable development as the right to satisfy developmental aspirations of the current generation without restricting the rights of future generations to meet their developmental needs. This means that the economic and civilizational development of the present generation should not take place at the expense of exhausting non-renewable resources or destroying the environment, which would result in the reduction of developmental possibilities of future generations. The concept of sustainable development introduces a qualitatively new form of the aware and responsible, individual and social life by way of development along with the environment – social and natural one – taking into account ecological restrictions and social expectations (Skowroński, 2006, p. 51). Sustainable development is understood as the socio-economic growth compatible with the natural environment, realizing social expectations and aspirations in the scope of the perspective of meeting the needs and self-fulfillment (Mazur-Wierzbicka, 2017, pp. 255–256), and the overarching principle of sustainable development is meeting not only ad hoc needs, but also the needs of future generations, aiming at the balance between environmental, economic and social systems (Dembińska-Cyran, 2006, p. 14). Rogall (2010, p. 44) claims that “sustainable development aims to ensure that all people living today and future generations have sufficiently high environmental, economic and socio-cultural standards within the strength of the Earth’s natural limits, applying the principle of intra-generational and intergenerational justice”. However, Bajerowski (1998, see Piontek, 2002, p. 16) indicates that sustainable development is not a state but a process and the proper course of each process is guaranteed by the control and management of different factors. Therefore, the process of sustainable development must be a process of choosing the line of development, based on minimization of losses and maximization of benefits. Managing sustainable development at a macroeconomic level means stimulating production and consumption through technological advances, increase in the efficiency of resources and materials use, integration of socio-economic development with environmental protection as well as adjustment of economic growth to the needs and capabilities of the region (Adamczyk, 2017, p. 8).

The international importance of the issue related to sustainable development is evidenced by the fact that in June 2012 Rio de Janeiro held the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. One of its results was the decision of the UN member states concerning the inauguration of the process for developing the set of new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In September 2015, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York the UN Sustainable Development Summit adopted the document “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which includes 17 SDGs (Resolution, 2015):

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
Sustainable development in Poland in comparison to the European Union

– Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
– Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.
– Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
– Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
– Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
– Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
– Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
– Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

The issue of sustainable development in the European Union

Sustainable development was recognized as a fundamental objective of the European Union in 1990 at the summit in Dublin. In addition, in 1992 the Treaty on the European Union stressed the EU transition towards sustainable development, and the EU’s 5th Environment Action Programme for the years 1993–2000 defined basic determinants necessary for effective implementation of the sustainable development strategy involving, among others, adoption of the principle that the consumption of goods by one generation cannot take place at the expense of the successive generation, or the promotion of a rational use of resources and raw materials assuming that their amount is fixed (Kosior, 2008, pp. 206–207). The importance of sustainable development for the EU was also underlined in the Preamble to the Amsterdam Treaty (1997), which states: „determined to promote economic and social progress for their peoples, taking into account the principle of sustainable development and within the context of the accomplishment of the internal market and of reinforced cohesion and environmental protection, and to implement policies ensuring that advances in economic integration are accompanied by parallel progress in other fields” (OJ, 2008, p. 15). In 2001, the Gothenburg summit adopted the EU sustainable development strategy, which included the so called Impact Assessment, i.e. the assessment of the decisions in the context of sustainable development. However, in 2006 the EU Council adopted the Review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS) – Renewed Strategy, which stressed that its overall aim is “to identify and develop actions to enable the EU to achieve continuous improvement of quality of life both for current and for future generations” (CEU, 2006, p. 3). Sustainable development was also included in three priorities of the EU strategies published on 3 March 2010: Europe 2020: a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, which constitutes a long-term socio-economic programme of the EU.

Legal aspects of sustainable development in Poland

The importance of sustainable development in Poland is reflected in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which states: „The Republic of Poland shall safeguard the independence and integrity of its territory and ensure the freedoms and rights of persons and citizens, the security of the citizens, safeguard the national heritage and
shall ensure the protection of the natural environment pursuant to the principles of sustainable development.” (CRP, 1997, art. 5). The second source of law with regard to sustainable development is the Act on Spatial Planning and Development. The law specifies the principles of spatial policy realized by local government units and government administration bodies as well as the scope and procedures in cases of using lands for specific purposes as well as the principles of land-use and building development regarding spatial order and sustainable development as the basis for these activities (The Act, 2003, art. 1.1). The notion of sustainable development was also defined in the Environmental Protection Law, which states that sustainable development “means social and economic development, which integrates political, economic and social activities while maintaining natural balance and permanence of basic natural processes in order to guarantee the possibility of satisfying basic needs of particular communities or citizens of the existing generation and the generations to come.” (The Act, 2001, art. 3 par. 50).

Sustainable development in Poland compared to other EU countries

Literature does not provide one generally applicable system of sustainable development indicators that would allow making direct and automatic comparisons of the level of sustainable development in individual countries (see Bell, Morse, 2008). Regardless of the adopted set of such indicators for comparisons, they should comply with specific standards. The most frequently indicated, minimum requirements with regard to this type of indicators are based on the SMART principle (The Ministry of Regional Development, 2012, pp. 11–12): S – Specific, simple – described in detail, related to specific problems and clearly defined, M – Measurable – measurable when using appropriate tools, A – Available/accessible/acceptable – information needed to measure the indicator is or will be available during the project’s implementation at an acceptable cost, R – Realistic/relevant – possible to realize or accomplish with the available resources, T – Timebound – a timeframe should be determined for achieving the assumed in the application form indicator’s value as well as the frequency of its measurement. The currently binding set of the EU sustainable development indicators directly related to the EU SDS includes 10 thematic areas (fields) and reflects 7 key challenges of the EU SDS. They are: socio-economic development, sustainable production and consumption, social inclusion, demographic changes, public health, climate change and energy, sustainable transport, natural resources, global partnership and good governance. However, a broader set of indicators, describing the current situation of 154 countries in the world and including 99% of the world’s population, that enables detailed comparisons has been made available by the Sustainable Society Foundation (http://www.ssfindex.com). On the basis of the analysis of the published 21 indicators describing the level of sustainable development, it can be assumed that the Polish situation in this scope does not significantly differ from the average situation in all EU countries (see Figure 1).

Poland has a higher level of sustainable development compared to the EU average in such areas as: Safe Sanitation, Education, Income Distribution, Population Growth, Biodiversity, Consumption, Energy Use, Genuine Savings, Employment and Public Debt, whereas a significantly lower level is observed only in the areas of Renewable Energy and Greenhouse Gases. Detailed information concerning the value of particular indicators of sustainable development in Poland compared to the average, maximum and minimum ones in the EU is presented in Table 1.
Sustainable development in Poland in comparison to the European Union

![Sustainable development indicators comparison](image)

**Figure 1.** Values of sustainable development indicators in 21 research areas on a scale of 1–10 (10 = sustainable, 1 = not sustainable)

Source: author’s own elaboration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>European Union</th>
<th>Poland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient Food</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient to Drink</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Sanitation</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Life</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equality</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Distribution</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Growth</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Governance</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewable Water Resources</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Use</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Savings</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhouse Gases</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewable Energy</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Farming</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genuine Savings</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Debt</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: author’s own elaboration.
Conclusions

The issue related to sustainable development is still highly relevant despite many years of research. The main problem in this scope remains the lack of a clear definition of sustainable development and, therefore, the lack of general consent how to investigate this development as well as how to make measurements, and which areas of human life should be the subject of particular interest in this scope. However, it should be taken into account that sustainable development is different from socio-economic development or the level of economic prosperity. When analysing the average value of the above-described 21 sustainable development indicators, it can be noted that the highest level of sustainable development is in Denmark, and then in Sweden, Romania, Slovenia and Latvia, and Poland, taking the 12th place, is followed by such EU countries as Germany, the UK, the Netherlands, France or Greece, which occupies the last position.

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DOUBTS OF THE TSL ENTERPRISES TO SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY BASED ON THE RESULTS OF RESEARCH

IZABELA DEMBIŃSKA

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: izabela.dembinska@wzieu.pl

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ABSTRACT The article presents the doubts and negative attitude of companies towards corporate social responsibility. Companies from the TSL sector were used as an example. Considerations divided into two parts: theoretical and empirical. In the theoretical part, was reviewed literature together with respond to the problems identified. The purpose of this section was to indicate that doubts and criticisms which are presented in the case of social responsibility. In the empirical part were quoted research results, based on which were defined objections to the social responsibility that the company of the TSL formulate, and their causes.

Introduction

Criticism of the idea of social responsibility has already appeared in the early sixties of the twentieth century due to doubts about the sense of applying the concept of social responsibility in the company, propounded by Milton Friedman. He was even widely regarded as the creator of a critical approach to the concept of social responsibility. He claimed (Friedman, 1970; Sternberg, 1994) that “there is one and only one social responsibility of business –
to use your resources and engage in activities designed to increase profits, as long as you stay within the rules of the game, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud. “He argued that the company is responsible for maximizing the value for owners by making as much money, and that this is their moral duty. Immoral is, however, putting social and environmental objectives over profit.

In Friedman’s rhetoric fits today many economists. Elaine Sternberg (1994) opines that the use of business resources for purposes unrelated to business activity is not justified. Similarly believes Aneel Karnani (2010) in his article published in the Wall Street Journal. He states that action to the public is not an obligation or duty to the company. He notes that evidences presented publicly by the company of socially responsible projects are false. The real reason for taking a socially responsible attitude is prosaic – to maximize profit (Dembińska, 2014). Corporate social responsibility is used as an effective tool of marketing (Dembińska, 2013).

Peter Fleming and Marc T. Jones (2013) called social responsibility as “a kind of alibi for business.” Moreover, they believe that it is ended before it really started, because it does not bring any significant changes in the economy. The same arguments against social responsibility can be found in the article by Clive Crook (2005), which appeared in 2005 in a special issue of The Economist, devoted exclusively to social responsibility. He called social responsibility as “a license to hide” and indicates that the application of its principles brings only cosmetic changes.


David Henderson (2001) called social responsibility for the “wrong virtue”, stating that corporate social responsibility requires voluntary acceptance by the wider business objectives, the use of complex procedures and more demanding standards, and all of this could weaken the economic parameters of the company. He believes that social responsibility causes excessive pressure on businesses and threatens excessive dependence of efficient allocation of resources from external interference.

Indicated authors are a representation of, undoubtedly, a wider group. Mention more comments expressing doubts and criticisms in relation to social responsibility, due to the limited volume of studies is difficult. Therefore, based on the revision of contemporary literature, you can make a summary of views:

1. The basic doubt is whether companies in general should deal with social responsibility? Is the essence of business activity, the purpose for which the company operates on the market, are not discrete delimitation? It seems that there is no such danger. Still, it is clear that the essence of the company is completed the production function or service, depending on the profile of the business, and the original purpose of the operation is profit. Social activities are not implemented as activities from the core business. Rather they define criteria that a company can be guided in carrying out their basic tasks. Moreover, they are expanding the scope and introduce new contexts of relationship with the environment and with stakeholders.

The issue of whether companies should take social responsibility or not, also seems to be clear. Constantly emphasizes the voluntary nature of social responsibility. There is no settled law that would suggest to implementation of social responsibility. In this range there are no standards, which are mandatory. The issue is whether to treat social responsibility as a duty, necessity or informal fashion. In other words, which attitude should adopt a company for social responsibility, which is obviously related to the motives of this attitude.
2. Reflecting on this, that social responsibility regarded as a duty or an informal necessity it can be stated that the duty is related to the responsibility of voluntary and reflected the attitude of the contribution, while the informal necessity is related to the liability imposed and enforced and can manifest an attitude of resistance, obligation or reaction.

How can you argue a duty to be socially responsible? Conducting business operations means that it is included in a given reality, which is very often complex system of events, processes and relationships occurring in belonging to its subjects and between them. In this system they are realized and are implemented various signs and personal values. The company intervenes in such a reality, having already shaped the character and structure, leading economic activity. Any interference of enterprise is always a greater or lesser violation of the existing order, which results in some changes – both positive and negative. The balance of these changes, that is, which ones prevail, depends on the form and strength of interference, which is based on awareness of company in respect of that interference. There is no interference with the only positive consequences. In other words, there will always be some negative changes. This situation creates a cause-and-effect responsibility of company for their economic actions and decisions. Undoubtedly, a sense of duty in this context stems from a sense of guilt, and thus – the question of whether company would take social action without any reasons, if they do not feel guilty for their negative impact on the reality in which they are established, appear to be rhetorical. Following this line of reasoning, there is a problem of proportionality of responsibility to the size of the negative effects of business operations. You could set up a relationship directly proportional, but in order to it could work in practice, it would create some negative impacts of company on social environment together with an indication that in connection with the occurrence of an impact you should do this or that. In other words, it would codify a list of negative impacts of companies in the field of social activities carried out in return. And it is rather difficult to do, if only because of the complexity of interactions.

3. In the context of typology of attitudes emerges a question – if you can qualify companies to socially responsible and irresponsible in the system of zero-one, i.e. satisfies the condition – does not satisfy the condition? It is said in fact “socially responsible company”, without specifying the level of responsibility. It may suggest the suspicion that it is enough to do anything to be recognized as a socially responsible company. What are the minimum eligibility frameworks to attribute the company as a socially responsible? The question is even more difficult if you bring up the voluntary nature of social responsibility.

4. Doubts about corporate social responsibility come down also to the perception of it in terms of “wishful thinking”. Underlying this perception is not convinced of its effectiveness. It is hard to disagree with such thinking, because the principles and social activities, as practice shows, are real. Quite another problem is the ability to achieve them. And here you can agree with another charge that managers are not always equipped with appropriate powers to carry out the company according to the canon of social responsibility, and that sometimes these actions are intuitive, which may affect the accuracy of decisions. However, this is not an argument so important to act against social responsibility. You can certainly argue that the good intentions are sufficient. However, it is expected that the promotion of social activity will result in a short time to extract the organizational structure of enterprises separate managerial positions responsible for issues of social responsibility.

5. Very often they discussed is subjected to the question of who, really, is responsible? Is there a correct formulation of ‘responsible business’ or ‘responsible company’? The starting point in this case is the reasoning Friedman’s arguments. M. Friedman stuck with the view that only men may be responsible, as neither business nor the company are not persons and are only artificial, abstract responsibility. This argument seems to be
correct, because the people are responsible for their actions and decisions. Therefore, it can be assumed that the formulation of corporate social responsibility is shorthand, which absolutely does not relieve people of responsibility. At the same time, there is no need for a conceptual revolution, just to clarify that people are carriers of responsibility. However, agreeing that responsibility lies with the people, there is another question – whether all employees of companies are responsible for the negative impact of companies on social environment or liability should apply only to the owner or principal managers? After all, they manage the activities and approve and take decisions in the enterprise. It seems that you cannot completely shift the responsibility on the owner or management, because it would mean that employees carry out their tasks, having no impact on their course and their effects. All employees of companies, including the owner and managers should take the attitude of socially responsible, whereby owner and managers will need to take a lead role.

6. Opponents of social responsibility emphasized that the intentions of companies that take social action, are not sincere. They are adulterated or apparent. They indicate that companies use corporate social responsibility only for marketing purposes, in addition, in a consciously calculated way, thus revealing its double standards. It is alleged that if the actions of social responsibility were not profitable, companies would not take them. Must admit that social activities work well as public relations tools and, as earlier stated, this should not be sought as something bad. As far as social effects are achieved, there is no need to prohibit companies using social responsibility also for other purposes. And settlement of the issue of double standards, you can start from doubt whether the business is marked by moral motives. Selecting position in this dispute depends on the interpretation of what is appropriate and what is not. This in turn is determined by the adopted system of values, which, as is known, may be different, depending on the context, place, time, etc.

7. Often, in critical discussions about social responsibility, is recalled the topic of cost. It is argued that corporate social responsibility costs too much. Costly is not only the introduction of the strategy of social responsibility in the functional area of companies, but above all, its actual realization. In this respect it is pointed out problem of contrary to the objective of minimizing costs. Another problem, which in this case refers, relates to compete. It compares the possibility of competing companies that take social action, and thus incur the respective costs, with the company, which does not engage in corporate social responsibility. In this context, social responsibility is seen as a limiting factor for the competitiveness of companies. Counterargument to such accusations may be the fact that the current field of competition is very broad and is not limited to the cost. In this field becoming increasingly important, as practice shows among European and global companies, organizational culture. This allows you to think about social responsibility as a factor of competition. There is no denying that the activities carried out within the framework of social responsibility are cost carrier, but you should wonder on what can be done to gain competitive advantage through these activities. It should be emphasized that customer awareness of corporate social responsibility also becomes bigger. Consequently, whether company meets the objectives of social responsibility or not, it is today in the canon of the factors determining the selection of a supplier or business partner.

8. Critical remarks are also recognized to norms and standards. It denies the possibility of the development of global guidelines in ISO 26000. The problem is that it is subjected to the question whether it is possible to establish a global system of values. National standards, apply to a national social group and its national values. International standards may apply to different national societies and make sense when they are limited to the shared values of the peoples in the region. Global standards must therefore apply to all groups of society and be
determined on the basis of global social values, and such a set of social values has not been found yet. You can only talk about some common elements.

**Empirical study of the attitudes of the TSL companies towards social responsibility**

**Method**

The research was part of a research project of the National Science Centre 2011/01/B/HS4/05088, entitled Corporate social responsibility of TSL sector in Poland – diagnosis and futures challenges. The project was implemented in the years 2011–2013. The study was conducted from October 2012 to May 2013, using the technique of computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). The geographical scope of the study included the Polish territory. The study included the following populations: companies providing logistics services, transportation and shipping operating on Polish territory on the day of the study. The survey was attended by 391 companies. The standard error of the fraction with a confidence level \( \alpha = 0.05 \) is 5%.

Sampling took place with the condition of representativeness of the results from the sample. The main purpose of sample selection was the ability to generalize the results of research to the entire study population / general, with a probability equal confidence interval – in the case the research of 95%.

In the sample, the share of large enterprises amounted to 4.8% (Figure 1). Most were micro-enterprises – 54.7%.

![Figure 1. The structure of the study population by the number of employees](source: author's compilation.

To maintain the requirement of representativeness, the sample was separated employing the random stratified selection – proportional. For the study of social responsibility in enterprises of TSL population was divided into layers by such features as:

- the type of services: logistics, transportation, freight forwarding,
- company size: large, medium, small,
- the location of the seat of companies: on the basis of the administrative division of Polish,
- the period of operation of the market,
- operating range.

Controlled variables were the type of service and size of the company. Within each layer, the selection of the respondents was made at random.
Results

In assessing the level of progress of implementation of the strategy of social responsibility in companies in the TSL sector in Poland, the results (Figure 2) indicate that almost half (44%) of companies do not see the need to implement principles of social responsibility. Only 22.6% of the companies confirmed the implementation of the principles of social responsibility, while in 13.1% of cases actions do not have a formalized form.

Figure 2. Level of implementation of the strategy of social responsibility in companies of TSL
Source: author’s compilation.

Asking about the reason for failure to principles of social responsibility (Figure 3), most companies, up 42.9%, indicated that they are too small. Another important reason for the lack of interest in the activity in the area of social responsibility is the need to sacrifice time. For this reason, indicated 25.7% of the companies. An equally large group of companies, i.e. 20% do not perceive social responsibility benefits. Benefits are generally understood, without specifying a generic layer. The obstacle turns out to be the high costs of actions undertaken in the framework of social responsibility. At this answer indicated 8.6% of companies that have declared no need to implement principles of social responsibility. Only in 2.9% of cases assertive attitude of companies towards social responsibility stems from the lack of knowledge of how to implement such a strategy.

Figure 3. The reasons for not implementing the strategy of social responsibility in companies of TSL
Source: author’s compilation.


**Figure 4.** Percentage of enterprises of TSL, planning the implementation of the strategy of social responsibility

Source: author’s compilation.

**Figure 5.** Problems noticed in enterprises in the implementation of the principles of corporate social responsibility

(5 – the highest level of validity)

Source: author’s compilation.

In the case of mentioned earlier response is difficult to determine whether the identified reasons implication is completely critical attitude of companies towards social responsibility or may need to be considered in the category of objections. Analysing the data shown in Figure 4, it can be assumed that in most cases these are not objections.
Asking in fact that the companies are planning to implement a strategy for social responsibility more than half of them (62.2%) answered in the affirmative. Negatively refers to the question almost 30% of the companies. This group includes companies that previously argued primarily that they are too small to implement the strategy of social responsibility, as well as that they do not see the benefits of such activities.

Objections to social responsibility may occur not only in the case of companies which have not yet implemented, but also can be reported by those companies that already implementing the strategy of social responsibility. When asked what the most important problems are perceived in enterprises in the implementation of the principles of social responsibility mentioned most often: vaguely defined objectives of social responsibility – 42.2%, the need for financial expenditure – 32.1%, not recognizing the effects of the daily activities of the company – 32.5%, the need to dedicate time – 25.0%. Relatively low important problem is the lack of knowledge and skills in implementing the principles of social responsibility to apply them in practice. It is interesting that as many as 68.7% of companies cannot identify problems associated with the implementation of social responsibility. No fewer interesting is the fact that 41% of enterprises do not notice such problems at own company.

**Discussion on the basis of test results**

The essential question that arises as a result of the analysis of behavior of companies in the TSL sector in relation to the strategy of social responsibility is whether the identified attitudes are typical for the test group of companies? In other words, whether they are typical of attitude for operators in the sector of TSL? Another question concerns the causes of these attitudes – whether they should be treated in a general way, or are specific to this area of business? Getting the answers to these questions requires a reach for the results of other studies, where a layer of problems is the same. It is reasonable to refer to studies in which the random sample was not differentiated by type of activity, as well as research, conducted on a random sample consisting of companies representing one kind of economic activity.

Answering the first question, you can rely on the results of a survey conducted by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, entitled “Evaluation of the implementation of the standards of corporate social responsibility”, made in 2011. The data indicate that 70% of the representatives of large companies are aware of the concept of CSR, and 84% of them have implemented the strategy of corporate social responsibility in their business. The situation is worse in the case of micro and small companies. Understand the concept of CSR declared only 26% of companies in the group, and the use of corporate social responsibility strategy – 36%.

Other studies conducted in the SME sector of agribusiness in rural areas (Wołoszyn, Stawicka, Ratajczak, 2011) confirm the results referred to above. At the same time, they provide the answer to the second question. They show a very poor knowledge of the concept of social responsibility among entrepreneurs of agribusiness industry. More than half of as much as 60% of respondents admitted that they do not know the concept of CSR. Only 16% of entrepreneurs confirmed unequivocally that, the principles and standards of corporate social responsibility are known to them (24% of entrepreneurs said that rather know the concept of CSR).

What are the biggest barriers to the implementation corporate social responsibility in a small or medium-sized company? In this case, the results of research carried out in a group of companies from the TSL coincide with the results of other studies and the opinions widely available. The greatest obstacle is the lack of funds and lack of time. Important, though already less, is the lack of awareness and knowledge of not just corporate social responsibility in general terms, but in terms of its potential of utility and methods of its use. You can also note that representatives
of small and medium-sized companies do not have sufficient knowledge of what assistance can benefit in the implementation of the strategy of social responsibility, both substantive assistance and financial aid.

**Conclusions**

On the basis of the considerations set out in the paper, one can formulate general conclusions:

1. A way for understanding corporate social responsibility influences how it is treated in the sphere of not only cognitive, but also emotional. This in turn shapes the form and direction of behavior of entrepreneurs against it.

2. The higher is the level of awareness of corporate social responsibility, the more formalized form take action in their respective areas as well as they are more integrated territorially.

3. In the TSL sector, corporate social responsibility is not a popular strategy yet, although there are reasons to believe that this strategy will be gradually implemented by a growing number of companies. You can see a clear distinction between large enterprises, with a strong market position, which consciously pursued a strategy of corporate social responsibility, and small and medium-sized companies that see the need to implement such a strategy.

4. An attitude of SME in the sector of TSL does not deviate from attitudes of SMEs in other industries. They are also similar to the behavior that can be observed in other European countries, which means that the problem of poor activity of SMEs is not only a problem in Poland, is set at the level of the European Union.

There are also some questions for further discussion:

1. To stimulate the activity of small and medium-sized companies in the field of CSR activities, regardless of the industry, you should seek answers to the questions – how to encourage SMEs to implement the strategy of corporate social responsibility, what instruments use to effectively stimulate their activity, who should be responsible for this?

2. One may be wondering if perhaps the behavior of SMEs is correct. Maybe corporate social responsibility, by nature, should be reserved for large companies? Maybe the representatives of SMEs have a right to believe that the strategy of corporate social responsibility will not bring benefits for their business, and although it is not worth to invest in it.

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CLAIMS OF TRAVEL AGENTS IN CASE OF INSOLVENCY OF THE ORGANIZER OF TOURISM IN THE LIGHT OF EU DIRECTIVES

PATRYCJA DOLNIAK

University of Physical Education in Katowice, Sport and tourism management department, POLAND
e-mail: p.dolniak@awf.katowice.pl

Abstract

The aim of the study is to analyse the protection scope of claims of insolvent travel agency's customers under EU law. The thesis assumes that the protection granted to the customers by the EU legislator covers all financial claims that may arise as a result of the failure of the tourist event in the consequence of the insolvency of the trader. At the same time, the tendency of the EU legislator is to deepen the scope of protection granted to the customers, through, among others, expanding the catalogue of entities benefiting from increased normative protection. This extremely broadly defined by EU law standard of customer protection means that any incoherence to the rule, permitted by national legislation, will constitute an improper implementation of the Directive. This in turn can lead to a Member State's liability.

The topicality of the above mentioned problem increases the requirement for maximum harmonization of the legislation of Member States introduced by Directive 2015/2302, the implementation deadline for which is January 1, 2018. The aim of the EU legislature is to bring the rules of the Member States closer together so that customers can enjoy a homogeneous range of protection, regardless of where they purchased a tourist event.

Introduction

The purpose of this publication is to demonstrate that the protection afforded by EU travel insurance covers in principle all the costs incurred by the customer due to the failure of the tourist event in case of insolvency of entrepreneur. This almost absolute standard of protection means that any derogation from the rule allowed by the national legislation would imply wrong implementation of the directive. From this assumption, in turn, there is only
a step to determine the liability of a Member State. Moreover, the protection of travellers, already large-scaled, is to be the subject of additional entity enhancement. According to the new directive, the entitlements previously granted to consumers may also in certain circumstances be granted to entrepreneurs.

Method

This paper, which is theoretical in nature, uses the method of analysing legal acts in the form of directives. Considerations concerning EU normative regulations have also been referred to the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as the Court or the CJEU) and the statements made by the doctrine representatives.

Results

According to Art. 288 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Official Journal C 326, 26/10/2012 P. 0001-0390), the directive is binding on the result, leaving the Member States free to choose the form and means of introducing it into the national legal order (Domańska, 2014, p. 24). Applying a legal act in the form of a directive means that legislation process will be conducted in two stages. The first is to set a target at EU level. In the second stage of legislative development, the objective of the directive is transposed into the national legal order by the adoption of the relevant legislation (Adam, Safjan, Tizzano, 2014, pp. 138–139; Galster, 2006, p. 138). In view of this “two-stage nature” of legislation, the Member States, when implementing the directive into national law, are required to take all necessary measures to ensure that the Directive is fully effective, in line with the aim pursued (Wróbel, 2005, pp. 45–47, judgement of 10.04.1984 in case 14/83 Von Colson and Kamann v. Land Nordrhein-Westfalen, European Court Reports (1984, p. 1891). The Directive which currently regulates the scope of protection of customers of tour operators is the Council Directive 90/314/EEC on package travel, package holidays and package tours of 13 June 1990 (Directive 90/314, OJ L, 23.6.1990). It was repealed by Directive 2015/2302 (Directive of 25.11.2015, OJ L 326/1), however, the date of implementation of the latter expires on January 1, 2018.

An entity who receives special protection is a consumer. Consumer is, according to Directive 90/314, the person who takes or agrees to take the package, or any person on whose behalf the principal contractor agrees to purchase the package or any person to whom the principal contractor or any of the other beneficiaries transfers the package, ie. ‘the transferee’ (Article 2 (4) of Directive 90/314). Regarding the content of the recited provision, there are doubts as to whether the concept of “consumer” under Directive 90/314 covers also entities acquiring a tourist event in connection with their economic activity (Gnela, 2008, p. 52). Anticipating further comments, it should be noted that in Directive 2015/2302 the EU legislator opted out of the notion of “consumer” in favour of the term “traveller” arguing that the terminological change was necessary in order to cover with the consumer protection also certain entrepreneurs. Accordingly, the author’s assessment is that Directive 90/314 does not cover entities purchasing a tourist event in connection with their business activities in the field in question.

The importance of protecting the financial interests of consumers has already been emphasised by the preamble. According to its assumptions, if the contract is not fulfilled, or if the organizer does not expect to be able to fulfill it in whole or in part, both for consumers and for the tourist events sector, it would be beneficial to place on the organizers and/ or retailers the obligation to properly document financial collateral in the event of their insolvency (Stefanicki, 2014). The purpose set out in the preamble is to implement Art. 7 of the Directive (Kolasiński, 2008,
Claims of travel agents in case of insolvency of the organizer of tourism in the light of EU directives

According to its content, in the event of his insolvency, the organizer and/or retailer who is a party to the contract should provide sufficient collateral to allow the refund of the overpayment and the return of the consumer from the trip (Dolniak, 2017, pp. 26–27; Nesterowicz, p. 24; Walczak, 2007, p. 160; Cybula 2006, p. 137; Cybula, 2005, source: Lex; Wanat-Połeć, Sordyl, 2015, pp. 636–637).

Correct interpretation of art. Article 7 of Directive 90/314 has been the subject of numerous judgments of the CJEU. The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that a client of an insolvent entrepreneur should not incur any costs associated with not completing a tour or a part thereof. If these costs were incurred, they should be returned in full. Historically, the first judgement on the scope of customer claims is the CJEU judgement in Dillenkofer case (Joined Cases C-178/94, C-179/94, C-188/94, C-189/94 and C-190/94, 1996, Reports of Cases 1996 I-04845; Sekuła-Leleno, 2017, p. 130; Thorson, 2016, p. 233). The Court held that Art. 7 grants the entities individual rights to pursue, in the event of the insolvency of the organizer, the claim to recover the sums paid to the organizer before the start of the tourist event. In addition, customers are entitled to return to the place of departure or to another place. If national law allows organizers to collect advances, the correct transposition of the directive takes place only if the amount of the advance payments is also secured.

Correct interpretation of Art. 7 should also grant the customers of the travel agencies with the cover of the cost of hotel accommodation in case of insolvency of the organizer. CJEU in the judgement of 14 May 1998 decided that if the customers of tourist agency, due to its insolvency, are obliged to cover the costs of hotel accommodation, the obligation of refunding these costs to the consumers is transferred to the insurer (Case C-364/96 Verein für Konsumenteninformation, European Court Reports 1998 I-02949).

In the judgement of December 1, 1998 (C-410/96, ECJ judgement in Ambra case, LEX No. 112553), CJEU stressed that the obligation to provide financial security to guarantee the return of clients to the country and the refund of money overpaid is a minimum level of customer protection that the Member States should provide. This hedge must not only exist but also be immediately available in case of necessity to pay for the return of the customers to the place of departure (Cybula, 2012, p. 83). For the scope of protection that tour operators have to offer, the circle of recipients of their offer is irrelevant. Even if the addressees of the tour offer are members of a narrow group of recipients, such protection should be ensured in such a way as to ensure that the objectives of the directive are adequately ensured (CJEU judgement in Rechberger’s case of 15.6.1999, C-140/97, European Court Reports (1999), I-03499; Kunkiel-Kryńska, 2013, p. 37; Sekuła-Leleno, 2017, p. 131).

The actual reason of insolvency of the travel agency is insignificant for the sums of customers’ claims (CJEU judgement of 16.2.2012, C-134/11 on Blödel-Pawlik case, unpublished). In the case in which the Court stated the position, the company declared bankruptcy before the planned date of journey, but it was apparent from the file that the trader did not intend to carry out the journey and that his behaviour was indicative of fraud. The Court in its decision of January 16, 2014 concluded that Art. 7 of Directive 90/314 must be interpreted as precluding national legislation which, in the event of insolvency of the travel organizer, does not lead to effective reimbursement to the customer of the full amount of money he paid and do not guarantee his return from the journey (Case C-430/13, Ilona Baradics et al. vs. QBE Insurance (Europe), published in Electronic Repositories).

New Directive 2015/2302 continues the ideas of the Directive 90/314. It is, however, based on the principle of maximum harmonization. This means that Member States have only a small margin of freedom in implementing its regulation. As a consequence, after the deadline for its transposition into national law, Member States will not be able to maintain regulations providing for a different level of legal protection (Kubiak-Cyrul, 2015, p. 21).
As already stated above, Directive 2015/2302 primarily extends the scope of the protected entities envisaged in it. To date, this protection has been restricted to consumers (different Gnela, 2008, p. 52). The new directive clearly departs from this premise. As it states already in the preamble, other buyers of services should also be covered by it. Accordingly, the protection standard set out in Directive 2015/2302 should also apply to business travellers, including professionals or self-employed persons or other individuals, when the journey is not organized under a general contract. The consequence of the above is the departure from the term “consumer” in favour of a much more comprehensive formulation – “traveller”. Traveller is, in turn, any person who wants to enter into an agreement or is entitled to travel on the basis of an agreement concluded within the scope of application of Directive 2015/2302 (Article 3 (6) of Directive 2015/2302).

This is a significant extension of the catalogue of beneficiaries of increased protection in the event of insolvency of the entrepreneur. The consumer’s concept of Directive 90/314 is, in the opinion of the author, considerably narrower. Although there is no single general definition in EU legislation, it can be said that the consumer is usually perceived to be a natural person, undertaking activities unrelated to his or her professional or business activity (Gwoździcka-Piotrowska, 2008, pp. 66–67). In such a way, consumers are defined, for example, by Directive 2011/83 of the European Parliament and the Council (Directive of October 25, 2011, OJ 2011 L 304/64). The abstention by the EU legislator of the use of the word “consumer”, together with the explicit declaration contained in the preamble, means that the scope of protection in the event of the insolvency of the trader is to be the same for both consumers and other persons, even if the trip was carried out in connection with professional activities. Consequently, the acquisition of a tourist event in connection with one’s occupational or economic activity will not automatically result in the exclusion of the possibility of claiming the insolvency of the trader on the basis of provisions currently hitherto protecting only the consumer.

The new directive still leaves the Member States free to choose the form of financial collateral in the event of the insolvency of the trader. It also continues to impose the assumption of Directive 90/314 on the scope of the potential claims. Under the new regulations, Member States must provide a legal framework that will guarantee full protection in case of insolvency of the organizer. Organizers should have security in case of need to return all payments made by or on behalf of travellers and the return of travellers to the country. However, it should be possible to offer travellers a continuation of the event. Protection should be effective, which means primarily its immediate availability. Efficiency is also the appropriate level of security. This is to include predictable amounts of payments and, where appropriate, foreseeable costs of returning to the country (recitals 39–40 in the preamble to Directive 2015/2302).

The mentioned assumptions are materialized in art. 17 of the Directive (Sekula-Leleno, 2017, 129–130). It stipulates that Member States shall ensure that entrepreneurs have collateral for the refund of all payments made by or on behalf of travellers, in so far as the services in question have not been provided due to the insolvency of the organizer. The hedge must be effective and include reasonably foreseeable costs. In the event that a traveller requests a refund for a non-performance of the service, the refund should be made immediately (Article 3 (16) of Directive 2015/2302).

Directive 2015/2302 also explicitly refers to the concept of redress for wasted holiday time, worked out under Directive 90/314 (Kuska-Żak, 2008, p. 169; Kolasiński, 2008, p. 247). Under the new directive, the traveller should have the right to have their problems solved while travelling, and if a substantial part of the contracted travel services
cannot be provided, suitable alternative services should be offered. If these services are not offered within the time
limit set by the traveller, he or she should be able to do it on his/her own and claim reimbursement of the necessary
expenses. This situation will in particular be the case if an immediate remedial measure is required, for example
when, due to the delay of the bus provided by the organizer, the traveller must use the taxi service to catch the flight.
According to the preamble, travellers should be entitled to a reduced price, termination of the tour or compensation
for damage. The latter should also cover non-pecuniary damage such as compensation for loss of pleasure from
travel due to serious problems in the provision of adequate tourist services (recital 34 in the preamble to Directive
2015/2302). Referring to the stated assumptions, Art. 14 (2) of the new directive states that the traveller is entitled
to receive compensation from the organizer for any damage he or she suffered, as a result of any incompatibility.

Conclusions

The primary goal of the EU directives regulating the tourism sector is to create a single market governed
by equal legal rules connected with the provision of services and the protection of entities using the offer of tour
operators. The need for maximum harmonization of regulations is particularly highlighted by the Directive 2015/2302.
The scope of claims for customers of insolvent organizers determined by both directives is extremely wide.
The new directive repeats the current regulations in this area. This means that also after January 1, 2018 Member
States will be obliged to create such legal framework that will guarantee the protection of all expenses incurred by
travellers. These expenses include not only the refund of the cost of returning to the place of departure, but also any
other fees that were paid in connection with an event which was not realized, fully or partially. The provisions of both
directives do not envisage any exceptions in this regard. Additionally, the new legal regulation further extends the
scope of entities subject to special protection. They are no longer “consumers”, but “travellers”. In the light of the
explicit declaration of the EU legislator, travellers are also persons travelling in connection with their economic or
professional activity.

The ruling in the Dillenkofer case leaves no doubt that shortcomings in the implementation of Directive 90/314
may be a sufficiently serious breach of EU law. This may lead to a Member State’s liability for improper transposition
of the directive (see Cases C-6/90 and C-9/90, Frankovich and Bonifaci, European Court Reports (1991). I-5357;
I-10239).

Article 7 of Directive 90/314 gives individuals the right, in the event of the insolvency of the organizer, to
reimburse the amount paid to the organizer before the event and return to the place of departure or other place.
If, as of the date of implementation of the directive, the customers did not receive the standard of protection
provided for therein, the Member State shall be liable for that condition. This conclusion did not undermine the
broad discretion of the Member States on the measures to ensure the implementation of the objectives of Directive
90/314 (Zawistowska, 2008, pp. 241–242; Brzezinski, 2010, pp. 119–120). These considerations are all the more
true in the case of Directive 2015/2302, which aims at maximum harmonization of Member States.

This represents a serious challenge for the national legislature. As is clear from our experience, Poland has
not always been able to meet the requirements imposed by the EU legislator on the proper transposition of Directive
90/314 (NSA judgement of 24.9.2014, II GSK 1157/13, Lex No 1572609; SN in Warsaw judgement of 28.5.2015,

References


Claims of travel agents in case of insolvency of the organizer of tourism in the light of EU directives


REGULATION OF ACCESS TO POSTAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN POLAND ON THE EXAMPLE OF SELECTED EUROPEAN UNION COUNTRIES

ANNA DRAB-KUROWSKA, Michał Kuściński

1 University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: anna.drab@wzieu.pl
2 The Jacob of Paradies University, POLAND
e-mail: michal.kuscinski@wp.pl

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Abstract The purpose of the article is to attempt to recognize the problem which is access to postal infrastructure in the context of selected European countries. The article presents the following research hypothesis – Increasing the use of postal infrastructure will allow for more effective management and an increase of competitiveness of postal operators. In reference to the assumed goal and adopted hypothesis, the following research question was posed in the article – which model of cooperation in the field of access to postal infrastructure is appropriate? In an attempt to answer the question, the article refers first to the situation on the postal market in Poland. Next, it concentrates on the essence of the postal infrastructure, referring to the basic elements. In addition, it focuses on presenting elements with which the postal operators can achieve a synergy effect. The key element of the article is the presentation of proposals for measures to increase the efficiency in the provision of postal infrastructure.

Introduction

In recent years, significant development of postal markets has been observed. This is the effect of changing consumer preferences and the development of modern technologies. Along with technological development, there is a change in the behavior of prosumers – from prosumers whose activity is controlled by companies who give them individual elements so that they can make or modify a product according to their own preferences – to prosumers
whose activity elude from the control of companies; when consumers on the basis of products create new solutions according to their own ideas and only later do companies find out what consumers do with their products (Budziewicz-Guźlecka, 2017). As a result of e-substitution and the economic crisis in the area of traditional postal services (Crew, Brennan, 2014, p. 17), clear downward trends in revenues from activities in the area of letter post in most EU countries, including Poland, are noticed. On the other hand, the importance of package services for business and consumers due to e-commerce (Hearn, 2017; Marcus, Petropoulos, 2017) increases. The purpose of the article is to attempt to recognize the problem which is access to postal infrastructure in the context of selected European countries. The article presents the following research hypothesis – Increasing the use of postal infrastructure will allow for more effective management and an increase of competitiveness of postal operators. In reference to the assumed goal and adopted hypothesis, the following research question was posed in the article – which model of cooperation in the field of access to postal infrastructure is appropriate? In an attempt to answer the question, the article refers first to the situation on the postal market in Poland. Next, it concentrates on the essence of the postal infrastructure, referring to the basic elements. In addition, it focuses on presenting elements with which the postal operators can achieve a synergy effect. The key element of the article is the presentation of proposals for measures to increase the efficiency in the provision of postal infrastructure.

**The postal services market in Poland**

Postal services, despite growing competition from modern forms of electronic communication and the emergence of new telecommunications products (Budziewicz-Guźlecka, 2009), are still a significant and necessary tool for exchanging information and goods, providing society with important social and economic benefits. The total value of the Polish postal services market in 2016 amounted to PLN 7,649.98 million. As at the end of 2016, there were 291 entities in the register of postal operators, however, a significant part did not undertake the postal activity or suspended it. 151 postal operators (Raport..., 2017) were active in the provision of postal services. For several years, the Polish postal market has also been the place of liberalization changes resulting from three subsequent directives of the European Parliament and the Council (Tochkov, 2015). The guidelines included in the European Union directives have been implemented into the Polish legal order by the Postal Law Act (Tochkov, 2015). In the light of this Act, of great importance to the Polish postal services market is article 71 which defines the concept of a designated operator,¹ elected for a period of 10 years by decision of the President of the Office of Electronic Communications (UKE) from among the postal operators selected in a competition announced by the President of UKE. The competition may be entered by any postal operator conducting postal activity on the basis of an entry in the register, who has economic and technical capacity including at least:

- A network of post offices,
- Network of distribution centres,
- Means of transport,
- Organization of the enterprise,

¹ A designated operator in accordance with article 46 of the Postal Law Act is obliged, among others to provide universal services in a uniform manner in comparable conditions, at affordable prices, while ensuring distribution of post offices and postal mailboxes throughout the whole country, with postage flow time indicators at a frequency ensuring at least one emptying of the outgoing mailbox and delivery of postal items at least every working day and not less than 5 days a week, excluding public holidays, in a manner enabling the sender to obtain a document confirming the receipt of a registered consignment.
Financial liquidity – enabling implementation of tasks of the designated operator.

In 2015, in Poland, the competition for the postal designated operator was won by Poczta Polska SA who will provide universal services until 2025.

**Post offices as a basic element of the postal network in Poland against the background of selected EU countries**

Postal designated operators in all European Union countries pursuant to the provisions of Directive 2008/6/EC have a legal obligation to make available to other operators selected elements of their own postal infrastructure, as is apparent from Article 11a. In the remaining scope, the Second Postal Directive does not, however, introduce specific harmonization provisions, but leaves it to the discretion of the Member States how to regulate this access depending on the needs of the domestic postal market. These regulations are different because Postal laws adopted in individual countries are of a comprehensive nature. This means that access to the postal infrastructure must be considered jointly, inter alia, with such stipulations as the question of the provision and financing of the universal service.

The starting point for the analysis of the network of postal operators is the reference to post offices, which constitute a basic element of the postal network. Based on the data obtained, it was demonstrated that in the years 2008–2016 the total number of post offices in the countries surveyed increased by 3.1% on average each year. In the case of universal service providers, this dynamic was at the level of approx. 0.6% each year, while in the case of other postal operators, the growth was at the level of about 8.2% annually. This trend was disturbed in 2015-2016 when there was a clear drop in post offices in the group of other postal operators. The main reason was the decrease in the number of these facilities in Poland (from 16,908 in 2015 to 8,616 in 2016). This was due to the fact that in 2016 a key competitor of Poczta Polska SA, after losing the contract for the delivery of court correspondence, withdrew from the market of letter-post items, and most of its nationwide outlets were liquidated. Nevertheless, in some countries, the number of post offices has increased significantly, as in countries, such as Germany (92.3%), Estonia (61.8%) and Denmark (45.5%). Figure 1 shows the number of post offices of universal service providers and other postal operators in the years 2008–2016 in selected European countries.

An essential element of the postal infrastructure, which has been gaining more and more importance in recent years, is the parcel lockers system. Parcel lockers is a system of automatic postal boxes (or postal terminals) used to send and receive parcels. These devices constitute a significant support for the postal infrastructure of a postal operator, as they are located in public places, easily accessible 24 hours a day. Analysis of the elements of postal infrastructure including parcel lockers revealed that not all national regulatory authorities monitor this element of infrastructure. However, the upward trend clearly emerges; their number is growing as expected. The exceptions are declines in the Czech Republic, where the number of parcel lockers of universal service providers has dropped by 50% and in the Netherlands, where there was a 21% decrease for parcel lockers of other universal service providers.

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2 The study includes data obtained from universal service providers and other postal service providers for the following countries: BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, IS, IT, FY, HR, HU, LT, MT, PL, PT, RO, RS, SI, SK. It should be pointed out that the data of countries where information on post offices is available only to universal service providers are not taken into account.

3 Only one-third of the countries surveyed: BE, CY, CZ, DK, EE, ES, FI, HU, IS, LT, NL, PL and SI, collect some data on parcel lockers. On the other hand, the national regulatory authorities of some countries (CH, HR, IT, MT, SK23), even those authorized to collect data related to parcel lockers, did not collect this information until 2016.
providers. It is necessary to clarify the situation on the Polish postal market. Despite the fact that Poland has this element of postal infrastructure, the presented statistics indicate the lack of this form of postal infrastructure for other providers of universal services in the years 2015–2016. It results from the fact that the network of parcel lockers was sold (and then transferred back) to an entity that is not a postal operator, therefore the national regulatory authority was unable to collect data on this entity. Table 1 presents the number of parcel lockers for universal service providers and other postal operators.

**Figure 1.** The total number of post offices of universal service providers and other postal operators in 2008–2016 in selected countries

Source: ERGP (17) 36, p. 75.

**Table 1.** Parcel lockers of universal service providers and other postal operators in the years 2013–2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>USP/Incumbent</th>
<th>Other postal service providers</th>
<th>var. 2013/2016 (%)</th>
<th>Other postal service providers</th>
<th>var. 2013/2016 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>–50.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>253.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>2,305</td>
<td>472.0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n.a. – not applicable.

Source: ERGP PL (17) 38.
The number of parcel lockers increased significantly in some countries, especially in Spain and Poland. In Spain, the impressive growth in the number of parcel lockers in 2015–2016 results from the strategy of a universal service provider who in 2015–2016 massively installed automatic postal boxes. At the end of 2016, the number of parcel lockers in Spain was the highest in comparison to other surveyed countries and amounted to 2,305. It should be pointed out that this element of postal infrastructure began to play a significant role especially in the context of the development of electronic commerce, both B2B and B2C dimension. Due to the increasing use of the Internet, as well as the growing number of entities making online payments, there was a certain gap in the market, which was now filled by parcel lockers (Ciepaj, 2012). Interestingly, in Poland in 2016 alternative operators had 8,615 outlets, while the designated operator had 7,497 post offices. It results, among other things, from the fact that, to an ever greater extent, postal services are provided with the use of machines for postal customer service.\(^4\)

**Regulation of access to the postal network**

Access to the postal network is one of the obligations of the universal service provider imposed to ensure competition in the postal market. An analysis is necessary to indicate what limitations appear in access to the postal network on selected European postal markets. It should be pointed out that depending on the situation on the postal market and national legislation, access to the network is perceived in various ways.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. The scope of access to the postal network – regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The scope of access to the network in legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>universal services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) Raport... (2017), p. 5.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N.A.</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
<td>There are many companies – mainly acting as consolidators and end competitors who seek access to postal infrastructure for complementary regions and areas where they are active – after concluding contracts for access to sorting department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
<td>No entities applying for access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
<td>The universal service provider publishes virtually the same offers for postal service providers (for access to the postal network) and for contract customers (companies, mass envelopes or mail consolidators). There are currently 9 agreements on access to the postal network in Lithuania.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The legislation provides for commercial negotiations on access to the network between postal operators, including universal service providers, and for the market regulator to impose on universal service providers the network access obligation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
<td>The national regulatory authority believes that PostNL has a significant market position and should, therefore, provide access to its network under other obligations on the basis of transparency and non-discrimination in order to mitigate the potential damage to competition resulting from its significant market position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>The designated operator in Poland is only required to provide operators with access to postal infrastructure components: post-office boxes, own mailboxes, a zip code system identifying areas for postal items delivery and a database with information on address changes for the purpose of re-addressing postal items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In 2016, the universal service provider published an access offer, which is currently being analyzed. In addition, the national regulatory authority is currently resolving a dispute between the universal service provider and other postal operators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>In Serbia, access is defined in the contract between the universal service provider and the applicant/recipient of access to the network (no contract has yet been concluded).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No postal operator providing substitute services for universal service has yet asked for access to the network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If the interchangeable service provider requests access, and the access agreement is not concluded within four months, the provider of interchangeable services may require the national regulatory authority to decide on access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
<td>The postal act includes access to other infrastructures, such as a postal code system, address database, post office boxes, delivery boxes, change of address information, redirection service and sender return service. Spanish law provides access to universal services and other infrastructures. In practice, the universal service provider ensures network access to alternative operators through mass reception centres in accordance with the terms “negotiated” with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
<td>Royal Mail provides access to the bottom of its network at the entry point to internal shipping centres. Here the final sorting of postal items takes place, and then the mail is forwarded to the Royal Mail delivery offices to be delivered to the destination. The regulatory office has recently carried out a review of postal regulations, including the access framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
<td>Source: ERGP PL (17) 38.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In most of the countries surveyed,\(^5\) it was found that the universal service provider ensures access to its postal network to other postal operators. In Spain, the universal service provider is required to draw up a standard contract for access to the postal network, which will be approved in advance by the national regulatory authority and published both on the website of the operator and the national regulatory authority itself. Similarly, in the Czech Republic and Croatia, the universal service provider is required to publish a reference offer. It should be pointed out that representatives of ten countries with negative responses stated that the universal service provider does not provide access to the postal network. In France, the universal service provider does not provide access to the network, but offers tariffs for wholesale postal items, which each market participant may use depending on the terms of the offer. An interesting solution occurs in Slovenia. If the service provider requests access and the access agreement is not concluded within four months, the postal operator may require the national regulatory authority to decide on access.

**The access regulation model for postal infrastructure**

An analysis of European legislation has shown that different models of providing the postal network are used. By examining individual markets, three models of cooperation between postal operators can be distinguished, as shown in Figure 2.

![Figure 2. Models of cooperation within the framework of access to postal infrastructure](source: own study)

From the models of postal infrastructure provisioning shown in Figure 2, a solution that would ensure that non-public operators use the designated operator’s infrastructure in a different scope is considered to be justified. On the other hand, elements of the postal network whose sharing is not an obligation resulting from the provisions should be made available on a commercial basis. It should be considered important to establish the possible

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\(^5\) In seventeen out of twenty-seven subjects.
scope of cooperation between operators, and appropriate prices that will ensure the profitability of the service and will allow for avoiding disputes. An account of the costs incurred and the benefits obtained will have a key role in deciding whether to share the network. All postal operators should strive for solutions favouring the synergy effect of both parties, while avoiding the situation where competing entities will use access to its infrastructure to maximize their chances of winning and become a leading operator, limiting the role of a designated operator who is a universal service provider, to the role of a subcontractor. Figure 3 presents elements affecting the achievement of the synergy effect that both the designated operator and alternative operators face.

![Diagram showing elements influencing the achievement of the synergy effect](source: own study)

The application of the recommendations presented in Figure x will allow postal operators to effectively use their infrastructure. In addition, it should be emphasized that the designated operator has a chance to obtain additional revenues resulting from cooperation with other entities operating on the postal market.

**Conclusions**

The analysis of the European postal market has shown that there is still a need for administrative control of access to postal infrastructure, especially where it is still not strictly defined in the legal framework, and there is a clear limitation in the context of the functioning of competitive entities. In Poland, alternative operators expand their network mainly with a model of external collection points and through a network of parcel lockers. Poczta Polska, in accordance with the new strategy for 2018–2022, gradually develops its own network of post offices, but also, just like the market does, expands the click & collect network, i.e. external collection points for e-commerce clients. However, support by the regulator is necessary in order to promote the development of competition in the postal sector.

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Regulation of access to postal infrastructure in Poland on the example of selected European Union countries

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Raport o stanie rynku pocztowego w 2016 roku (2017). Warszawa: UKE.


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WORK SATISFACTION AND HAPPINESS AT WORK

KAROLINA DRELA

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: karolina.drela@wzieu.pl, karolina.drela@usz.edu.pl

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Keywords work, labour market, happiness at work, motivation

Abstract The aim of the deliberations in this article is presentation of chosen issues associated with happiness at work, professional motivation and satisfaction from work. A hypothesis was put forward: professional work affects satisfaction from work, and a change of an employer causes that an employee becomes happy. In the beginning deliberations concerning happiness at work were placed. Then professional motivation and work satisfaction were presented. For a better illustration the most important factors affecting work satisfaction were shown. The subject matter of a successive part was satisfaction from work and employees leaving the job. The final part deals with more important conclusions of the deliberations.

Introduction

Work is a job, but also a place where most of one’s life is spent. Thus it should give employees not only adequate remuneration, but also a feeling of happiness and fulfilment. Although only a few years ago everyday duties were for Poles a certain kind of coercion, at present they are more and more often assessed positively. Satisfaction from work is a factor of a key meaning not only for the analyses concerning management, but also for the practice of the
functioning of enterprises or general satisfaction from people's lives. Hence the subject of a particular interest within the framework of the present article is the issue associated with happiness at work and work satisfaction. Due to the scope limits of the present publication, an attempt was made to present selected issues associated with happiness at work, professional motivation, satisfaction from work, putting forward a hypothesis: professional work affects satisfaction from life, a change of an employer causes that an employee becomes happy. In the analysis of the data the descriptive method and the secondary data analysis were used.

**Happiness at work**

Contemporary work environments are often a source of discomfort. Long-lasting staying at a sitting position, stress, uncertainty of employment, working overtime, these are the causes of such a situation. Present models of work are rarely conducive to well-being. Organizational culture or arrangement of office spaces also often does not take into account some biologically conditioned needs of a human. Therefore scientists maintain that in the 21st century it is just diseases caused by office work that will be the main group of professional ailments. It seems that a kind of rescue can be the increasingly important issue of maintaining a balance between professional activity and a rest – a holistic approach to the issue of so-called well-being. Despite undertaken, by more conscious employers, initiatives promoting well-being in the workplace (corporate wellness) it is still a topic requiring broader understanding and implementation (Łydkowska, 2018).

A definition of happiness, especially in reference to work, is difficult to define. It means different things to different people – adequate remuneration, a balance between duties and private life, a possibility of the development or consequent climbing up a career ladder. In reality an employee often thinks of himself/herself as happy, although he/she would not recommend his/her work to his/her family and friends.

The job agency Jobhouse (Jobhouse, 2017) in 2017 (Happiness at work of Poles) carried out studies concerning the level of happiness at work (Stańczyk, Bogdan, 2018). In the carried out studies this concept was not defined, but it was assumed that happiness is a subjective concept, therefore each of the respondents himself/herself assessed what he/she felt towards his/her work. For the majority it was a concept convergent with the feeling of satisfaction from work. The employees in the 0 to 10 scale assessed their level of work happiness at 6.3. This result should be treated as positive. It seems obvious that there is still a lot to improve, but this result is satisfying. The employees should be aware to what extent they feel happy in their workplace and from what this satisfaction or dissatisfaction results. If they are able to define the causes of the discomfort or not achieving happiness at work, they should eliminate or change them. It should be noticed that a change of a job is not always necessary. Sometimes a talk with the superior and the performance of a larger number of tasks that give people satisfaction and are less tiring for the employee, is sufficient.

Not only the work itself influences the feeling of happiness, but also the workplace, the town, the locality and district in which the work is performed have the same effect (Jobhouse, 2017). Nearly every second respondent thinks so (47%). Only 11% of the surveyed maintain that they first choose the place of living and the job they want to do. 42% of the surveyed think of the work itself as the most important, the place where they perform it, is not of such great significance to them. As many as 63% of the surveyed would consider the change the place of residence in favour of a better job. However, only 29% of the surveyed would recommend their work.

Not only one works to receive high remuneration. This can be confirmed by everyone who earns much and is not happy at work (Society for Human Resource Management, 2016). Good remuneration is important
Work satisfaction and happiness at work

and the respondents mentioned (Jobhouse, 2017) it as the first factor responsible for happiness at work (88%), but immediately afterwards they listed coworkers on whom one can rely (84%) and a possibility of professional development (81%). Thus the material aspect is still very significant to the employees, but the human factor is not of no significance, either. Important factors deciding about happiness at work are also the values of employees which should be consistent with the values of the organization, the employees should be aware of them and should manage them in everyday choices.

The managers emphasise that 3 factors decide about work happiness:

- talent (whether we are good at what we are doing or have predispositions to it) (Society for Human Resource Management, 2016),
- passion (whether we like what we are doing) (Piątkowska, 2018),
- the so-called reward (what we get for work: remuneration, perceiving a deeper sense of our work, being appreciated by superiors and the development through work) (Dobre, 2013).

Most of the people dissatisfied with their work have a loss in one of the three foundations. It often happens that work enjoys the worker through a definite time, and then it stops. Psychologists call it professional burnout. However not always the organization, the employer or even the work itself is hopeless. The employee often lacks challenges – the employee has mastered his tasks and they start boring him/her. In this case it is worth: determining what the worker likes at work and wants to do it more, and what he/she does not like, and wants to do it less, and also he/she wants to start to “leave” his her sphere of comfort – e.g., sharing their knowledge with others during public appearances.

The lack of happiness is felt by workers, but HR departments should improve the quality of work, taking into account the fact that the worker is unhappy: the behaviour of a person who once was smiling, and at present does not participate in the life of the organization should be a sign that something is going wrong. Apart from the observations, a talk is the most important. Good moments to start the topic on work satisfaction are e.g. periodic assessments of employees. It is worth asking the employees about their feelings – about the determination of processes, situations, tasks or factors that have changed for better and for worse in the enterprise and of those that the worker lacks for being happy. HR, like each worker, can change in a real way the atmosphere in the firm. Common initiatives of the workers strengthen the ties between them, therefore it is worth participating in them. Whereas, if the problem is the employer’s behaviour, it is worth defining it from the point of view of what does not suit the worker, it is worth thinking about emotions caused by such behaviour and conveying this in a diplomatic way to the manager. This can be done personally or by a trusted person (Stråberg, 2010).

Concluding, the situation on the labour market is conducive to a possibility of choosing a satisfying job, giving people happiness. Those who are looking for a job, and those who are working, do not have to undertake a job that does not meet their expectations. People professionally active have increasing awareness that happiness or lack of it spread on other fields of life, therefore they search for the organization which would provide it with a larger probability. However it should be remembered that it is not only the employer who takes care of the development of the employee and the balance between private and professional life. First of all the employee has a significant influence on it, therefore it is necessary to define what each worker can do in order to achieve happiness at work.
Professional motivation and satisfaction from work

Many European countries change their attitude towards the employee. France is thinking of shortening working time, in Scandinavia more and more often free Fridays and certain minimum remuneration are mentioned and for years working hours have been meticulously controlled and overtime is only in extreme case permitted. Poland also decisively tries to introduce changes, but still not too effectively. Increasingly more people in Poland focus their attention to the possibility of keeping the so-called work-life balance. The employees do not think only of a promotion and of how to earn more at the expense of private life. They more often point to the need for the time for family and for non-work passions and for, mentioned earlier, happiness at work.

Many employers attach great importance to the worker’s satisfaction, assuming that an increase in satisfaction will result in the growth of work effectiveness (Grabowska, Slotwińska-Roslanowska, 2017). Satisfaction from work, despite the fact that the relation between satisfaction from work and the effectiveness of the worker is not unambiguous (Springer, 2010), is mentioned as one of the key tools of the worker’s motivation. Satisfaction from work is important and necessary. When the worker is satisfied with what he/she does every day, he/she works and lives better, is healthier and happier. However, as the studies of 2016 of the Gallup organization report, only 6% of people in Poland feel this satisfaction from work. What the employee needs to work pleasantly, in order that the employee is involved in what he/she does, is a very individual matter. Table 1 presents the factors that affect work satisfaction.

Table 1. The most important factors affecting work satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Relations with people: interaction with competent people, with other people, being a part of a close-knit team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance between life and work/separation of private life from work</td>
<td>Relations with people: interaction with competent people, with other people, being a part of a close-knit team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of rat race</td>
<td>Attentiveness to the employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovativeness</td>
<td>Good atmosphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly defined objectives and realistic expectations</td>
<td>Remuneration and benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A feeling of security, aim and sense, competence, self-agency, justice</td>
<td>A possibility of doing what the employee can do best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locality/good access ways to workplace</td>
<td>Motivating tasks and challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual and group work</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for the employees/mutual respect</td>
<td>Work consistent with interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural environment</td>
<td>Openness to changes and in relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise/appreciation</td>
<td>Helping others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reliance</td>
<td>Stabilisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convergence of the value of the firm with the values of the employee</td>
<td>Business trips or lack of them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: the author’s own description.

From the report “Non-wage benefits”, prepared by the ARC Rynek i Opinie (the ARC Market and Opinions) in 2018 (Luszczysz, 2018), it can be seen that the meaning of each motivators of non-wage labour have changed. The so-called work-life balance, which for the employees was one of the most important factors, and still is important, has however been replaced by a more friendly atmosphere of work. It has also been overtaken by
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stability of employment, locality of workplace, a good access way to work, a kind and form of employment and a possibility of the development and promotion. There has also been a change in understanding of the balance between professional and private life. Work and private life complete each other and combine in a various way depending on the stage of the employee’s life. The employers have begun to perceive the significance of the needs of the employees, such as tolerance towards personal life and flexible working hours. The possibility of separating work from personal life constitutes one of the elements of the present definition of the concept of work-life balance.

There has been an increase in the percentage of workers who think that they maintain “a complete balance between work and personal life” (32% of the surveyed). At the same time the group of people who think that they do not keep this balance at all amounts to 6%. It turns out that the balance is more often declared by men, the employees within the age range between 26–45 and people with high education. Independently of the gender and the level of education the general work satisfaction has decreased. Such factors as, for example, flexible working hours (42%) and also “part-time job” (17%) would help the employees achieve the dream balance.

What should then the entrepreneurs do to increase the employees’ satisfaction? The employers more and more often enable their workers to perform their duties at home, in the workplace there are more partnership relations, the employee’s personal and intellectual development is taken care of. Increasingly more people think that work is an important sphere of life, but it should not be separated from the remaining life activities by an artificial barrier, nor should it be a dominating sphere. Not accidentally at the top of ranking list of non-wage benefits are: a friendly atmosphere, a location of the firm, a possibility of the development. All these benefits refer to the sphere of personal satisfaction. The skilful use of this trend by employers gives them a chance for good relations with the employees at relatively low costs.

Work satisfaction and the employees’ leaving work

Not all working people do a dream job – only a few such a job possess, but it does not mean that it is not worth looking for such one that will make us happy. If there is a reason that an employer has no need for searching for a new job, it is worth considering what to do to derive more pleasure from the current job. In such a case the theory of work modeling, the so-called “job crafting” will be helpful. American scientists have been developing this theory since 2001. They think that due to modeling it is possible to find a feeling of sense of work (the lack of a feeling of a sense leads in turn to occupational burnout) which is strictly connected with being involved in it. The method consists in the analysis of the employees’ everyday duties, and whenever possible, adding to them such ones that give a concrete person the most satisfaction. Gradually, the ones which are burdensome to the employee, are eliminated or their intensity is decreased. Job crafting consists in taking over more initiative in the current professional life of a given worker’s professional life. This kind of method is already used by some corporations which encourage their employees to change the range of their duties. They do not do that without a reason. As presented by the Gallup organization (kariera.goldenline.pl), the employees involved are by 50% more productive and bring the organization by 33% higher profits, and the clients with whom they cooperate show by 56% larger loyalty.

However, what happens when the workers are not satisfied with the current job? According to the Hudson and Great Digital research (Tymczyj, 2018), as many as 35% of the employees are not satisfied with their workplace and seriously think of changing it. Whereas 45% of the surveyed, despite general satisfaction from present work, consider changing the job to a different one. More than half the respondents want the change because of the lack of possibilities of the development in their firm, and 45% as a reason for leaving give the dissatisfaction with level
of remuneration and the benefits achieved. Whereas 41% of the employees admitted that the factor which inclines them to search for a new job is a bad atmosphere prevailing in the enterprise.

Sometimes a tiny aspect can cause that the employees will start looking for a new workplace. In order to prevent the employees’ uncontrolled leaving the job, it is enough to check cyclically their experiences connected with the workplace and implement adequate action which improve their feelings.

The examination of the employees’ experiences connected with the enterprise and an appropriate reaction to their suggestions raises the satisfaction of the group and transfers on multi-dimensional benefits for the organization. Firstly, an increase in the involvement of the employees spreads on the effectiveness of their work. A direct benefit for the firm are lower costs of work – within the framework of the same remuneration more tasks are realised. An indirect benefit for the organization is a growth in the satisfaction of the clients and the achievement of long-term relations with them. The involved employees become the ambassadors of the firm and thus form tighter bonds with contracting parties.

Secondly, the satisfaction with work limits, in a natural way, staff rotation and thus enables budget savings. The creation of friendly workplaces on the basis of the information collected from the employees will make it possible in future to keep valuable specialists to limit the costs associated with free job quitting.

Thirdly, the care of a positive experience of the employees with the firm increases a potential attraction of the employer on the market, and so, the number of the required candidates. People want to work in firms in which a say of the employees is taken into account and is significant to the superiors. High comfort of work and realization of good practices in the context of the relations the worker – the employer transfer on the number of applications and provide the enterprise with access to the qualified staff. A regular analysis of the employees’ experiences with a given firm allows the employer to react quickly to challenges that appear in the organization, and positively influence the atmosphere and, the most significant, decrease the risk of the loss of good workers.

**Conclusions**

The labour market undergoes large changes. The employees are the participants in the 4th industrial revolution which will affect the way and the attitude towards work. The attachment to one position, one career path or one employer will be a rarity. The development or keeping the firm on the market will require from its employees knowledge (“knowledge workers”) and new skills, inter alia, skills in learning throughout the whole life (“life-long learning”), including getting rid of old habits, skills in shaping one’s own professional path, undertaking additional professional activities or work in favour of some entities in various projects, competent management of one’s own time and agile regeneration of one’s own energies.

Many employers still prefer directive way of management and do not take a say of the employees into account. Such an attitude inhibits the development of an enterprise and can result in wrong decisions. Open communication and recognition of the employees’ perspectives result in benefits for the whole enterprise. If the employer wants his/her employees to be involved in shaping their workplace and talk about their needs, he/she has to prove that it is important to him/her.

Thus, the hypothesis put forward in the introduction should be rejected. Professional work influences satisfaction from life, however not always, and a change of the employer, also not in every case, causes that the employee becomes happy at work: he/she can work in worse conditions than at present or is accustomed to the performed job and does not need to change the employment. Searching for an ideal workplace, it could seem, that
it is important to do what one likes doing. Really, it is still one of the most important criteria that give the employer a chance for the development consistent with interests and for happiness at work. However it is worth drawing attention to one’s own predispositions and first of all to organizational culture. To everyone important is a different thing: development, promotions, training courses. But there are also people who do not like many changes and prefer a safe workplace in which they know their duties well. Thus it is worth adjusting one’s workplace so that it would really be suitable for a given employer and bring satisfaction from work performed.

References


DIRECTION OF CHANGES IN DEMAND FOR RAIL FREIGHT TRANSPORT WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION COUNTRIES IN THE YEARS 1990–2013

JULIUSZ ENGELHARDT

The University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: juliusz.engelhardt@wzieu.pl

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ABSTRACT The article discusses the main trends of changes in the volume of rail freight transport in the European Union between 1990–2013 in the context of the entire EU freight market. Furthermore, rail freight transport was analysed breaking it down to the “old Fifteen” countries and the new member states of the European Union – EU 11. In the EU 15 group, the demand for rail freight transport differed from the corresponding demand in the EU 11 countries. The aim of this article is a preliminary verification of the hypothesis, according to which reforms of the railway sector undertaken by means of its demonopolization and general liberalization were to lead to a significant increase in the share of rail transport in the EU freight market. In the final part, the main factors shaping the demand for rail freight were indicated.

Introduction

Following the restriction included in the title, the article discusses only the main factors, which in the author’s opinion, affect changes in the level and structure of rail freight transport in the European Union countries, identified on the basis of available transport statistics. The implemented policy of changes in the EU railway sector constitutes a general framework for the analyses presented in the article. On the basis of the European Union’s policy papers,
it can be pointed out that the main objectives of the railway sector reforms undertaken at the beginning of the 1990s were, inter alia:

- demonopolization of the railway sector, through the abolition of state railway monopolies and admission of many independent domestic and foreign transport operators to the railway network,
- separation of railway infrastructure management activities from railway operation-transport activities,
- elimination or alleviation of existing barriers to enter the rail freight transport market for new enterprises, in particular private ones – development of intra-industry competition in railway transport by “soft” licensing of entities entering the sector, as well as elimination of barriers in the scope of international rail transport and further development of this segment of transport.

The implementation of these objectives was to lead to an overall improvement in the rail transport efficiency, a relative reduction in the cost of its operation, improvement of the quality and competitiveness of transport services, and, eventually, an increase in the relative share of railways in the transport markets. It can be assumed, in a conventional manner, that the re-evaluation of the concept, as well as the effect of broad political discussion on the further functioning of the railway sector in the European Union, resulted in the adoption of Directive 91/440 on the development of the Community’s railways by the Council of the European Union on 29 July 1991. The date of adoption of this directive is an important turning point in the history of the European rail industry. Since that moment, demonopolization and liberalization of railway transport, aimed at a comprehensive introduction of market mechanisms in rail transport and enabling new railway undertakings to enter the transport market, has become the fundamental standard of the European Union rail transport policy in the scope of shaping a new market order. The first “liberalization” railway directive from 1991 was followed by further regulations. Due to the fact that they were grouped in the past (several legal acts adopted in the same period of time), the name “railway packages” was adopted for a part of these regulations. Since 2013, following the adoption of the next directive, there has been functioning the Single European Railway Area.

The aim of this article is a preliminary verification of the hypothesis, based on the available transport statistics, according to which reforms of the railway sector undertaken by means of its demonopolization and general liberalization were to lead to a significant increase in the share of rail transport in the EU freight market.

**The European Union rail freight market in the years 1995–2013**

An analysis of transport statistics allows identifying some market trends occurring especially during longer periods of time. Tables 1 and 2 present numerical data of the freight transport market in the European Union in the years 1995–2013 expressed in the indicators of transport services in tonne-kilometres. Based on the data from Table 1, it can be observed that the entire freight transport market in the European Union increased in 1995–2013 by 635 billion tkm (or 22.3%). However, considering the particular branches of transport, this increase has not been

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2 The first package was adopted in 2001, the second one in 2004, whereas the third was adopted in 2007.
4 Statistics on freight and passenger transport published in the European Union cover 28 member countries. In the case of railway transport, however, transport statistics concern 26 countries, as two Member States, i.e., Cyprus and Malta, do not have a railway network.
evenly distributed. Road transport increased during this period by 430 billion tkm (33.4%), which is 11.1% more than the increase in the entire market, while rail freight transport increased by only 19 billion tkm, i.e., by 4.7%, thus being much below the growth rate of the entire market. In the period of 1995–2013, the average annual growth rate of road transport amounted to 1.6%, while rail transport increased at the rate of 0.3% per year. It is also worth noting that during the period in question, inland waterway transport increased by 31 billion tkm (25.1%).

Table 1. Freight transport in the European Union countries in the years 1995–2013, in billion tonne-kilometres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Road transport</th>
<th>Rail transport</th>
<th>Inland navigation</th>
<th>Pipeline transport</th>
<th>Maritime navigation</th>
<th>Air transport</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1,289</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>1,303</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1,352</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1,414</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1,461</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1,029</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1,509</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>1,067</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1,553</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>1,083</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,292</td>
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<td>1,603</td>
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<td>133</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>1,100</td>
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<td>124</td>
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<td>137</td>
<td>133</td>
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<td>3,601</td>
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<tr>
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<td>416</td>
<td>139</td>
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<td>139</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1,224</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1,925</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>1,190</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,843</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1,891</td>
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<td>146</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1,164</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,771</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>1,062</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,755</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>1,693</td>
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<td>150</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>1,113</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,719</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>1,089</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,481</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Maritime navigation and air transport only in the scope of internal transport.


Table 2. The structure of freight transport in the European Union countries in the years 1995–2013, in % tonne-kilometres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Road transport</th>
<th>Rail transport</th>
<th>Inland navigation</th>
<th>Pipeline transport</th>
<th>Maritime navigation</th>
<th>Air transport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>32.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>46.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>47.8</td>
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As a result of the above trends, the indicators of relative market share presented in Table 2 have increased especially in the scope of road transport from 45.3% in 1995 to 49.4% in 2013, and decreased in the scope of the rail transport from 13.6% in 1995 to 11.7% in 2013. The table also shows that inland navigation in 2013, due to the increase number of transport services, maintained its market share from 1995, while maritime navigation, despite a significant increase in transport services, decreased its relative market share in 2013 by 1.5%, if compared to 1995.

### Rail freight transport in the European Union countries in the years 1995–2013

The previously indicated decline in the share of rail freight in the entire transport market did not equally concern all European Union countries, as shown in Table 3 and Figure 1. Table 3 lists the volumes of rail freight transport in billion tonne-kilometres by country. The data indicates that in 1990–1993, the rail freight market was decreasing in almost all countries of today’s European Union. The only exception were the small rail freight transport markets in Portugal and Luxembourg. In many countries, the downward trend in rail freight transport was stopped in 1994–1995. Since then, there has been observed a division of the EU’s entire rail freight market into three segments, i.e. growing, stable and decreasing. In some economies of Western European countries, such as Germany, the United Kingdom, Austria, the Netherlands and Sweden, the growing trend of the rail freight market was maintained in the years 1995–2013. It is worth noting a similar trend in this period in smaller countries of Central and Eastern Europe, such as Lithuania and Latvia, as well as Hungary or Slovenia. On the other hand, the market of the third Baltic country, i.e., Estonia, was characterized by a large amplitude of fluctuations in 1995–2013, from transport at the level of 3.8 billion tkm in 1995 to 10.6 billion tkm in 2005, and then to 4.7 billion tkm in 2013. The fluctuations were highly affected by the changes in railway transit transport to and from Russia. The markets stable in terms of rail freight transport in the years 1995–2013 include Belgium, Denmark, Croatia, Portugal and Finland. It should be noted, however, that the total share of these countries in the entire rail freight market in the European Union was not high. The previously not mentioned countries of the European Union were characterized by the decrease in the rail freight market between 1995–2013. This group mainly includes countries of Central and Eastern Europe, such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia, as well as Italy and France. In the case of Italy, changing trends concern the rail freight market in 1995–2013. The market in this country grew from 21.7 billion tkm in 1995 to 22.8 billion tkm in 2000. After that period, it decreased to 20.3 billion tkm in 2003, to rise again to
### Table 3. Rail freight transport in the European Union in the years 1990–2013 (billion tkm)

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Vol. 27/1, 3/2018
25.3 billion tkm in 2007, and once again observed a decrease at the level of 19.0 billion tkm in 2013. In the context of fluctuations observed on the Italian market, it is worth noting a spectacular decline in rail freight transport in the years 1995–2013 in France. In 1995, France, with transport at the level of 48.3 billion tkm, constituted the second largest railway freight market after Germany. By 2013, the French market fell to the level of 32.0 billion tkm (33.7%). As a result of this decrease, France moved to the third place in terms of the size of the rail freight market in the European Union. Poland took the second place with transport at the level of 50.9 billion tkm.
Figure 1 presents aggregated data concerning the rail freight market in the European Union in the years 1990–2013. Additionally, a group of the so-called “old 15” countries was compared separately with the group of the “new” EU-11 countries that joined the EU in 2004–2007, together with Croatia, which became part of the EU in 2013, but, without Cyprus and Malta, as they do not have a railway network.

With regard to the entire EU rail freight market in the years 1990–2013, various development phases can be observed on the basis of the data presented in the figure. In the years 1990–1994, the market decreased from the level of 526.3 billion tkm in 1990 to 380.2 billion tkm in 1994, i.e. by 27.8%, and then from 1995 it faced a quite slow, several-year long upward trend until 2007. During this period, the entire market grew from 388.1 billion tkm in 1995 to 452 billion tkm in 2007 (16.5%). In 2008–2013, apart from the fluctuation in 2011, the declining trend of the entire market was maintained again, as it fell from the level of 442.8 billion tkm in 2008 to 406.5 billion tkm in 2013, i.e. by 8.2%. When analysing the data presented in the figure concerning the groups of the EU-15 and EU-11 countries, there could be observed phenomena that both groups followed the general trend, as well differed from it. Undoubtedly, the downward trend of markets in the years 1990–1994 was consistent with the general trend of decrease in rail freight transport, with the fact that the market decline in the EU-11 group was greater (40.5%) if compared to the EU-15 (14.4%).

Starting from 1995, the markets of the entire EU-15 countries experienced a growing trend, which continued until 2007. During this period, the rail freight market increased in this group of countries from 222.7 billion tkm to 292.5 billion tkm, (31.3%). In the same period, the rail freight market in the EU-11 group decreased from 165.4 billion tkm to 159.5 billion tkm, (3.6%). In the years 2008–2013, both analysed groups of countries experienced declines in the rail freight transport market. In the EU-15 group, the 2013/2008 decline in the market amounted to 8.8%, while in the EU-11 group this decrease was equal to 7.2% for the corresponding period. Continuing the analysis of data from Figure 1, it is worth noting that the entire rail freight market in the European Union experienced decrease from the 526 billion tkm in 1990 to 407 billion tkm in 2013, or 22.6% in relative terms. In the same period, the freight transport market in the EU-15 group, starting from 257 billion tkm in 1990, and then subject to various fluctuations, reached the level of 264 billion tkm in 2013, thus it increased by 2.7%, in comparison with the starting year. However, the rail freight market in the EU-11 countries suffered a decrease from 267 billion tkm in 1990 to 143 billion tkm in 2013 (46.4%). As a result of this process, the relative share of EU-11 countries in the EU rail freight market decreased from 50.8% in 1990 to 35.1% in 2013.

Conclusions

The preliminary conclusion resulting from the analysis of transport statistics covering the commodity market, in the context of the railway liberalization policy implemented in the European Union, is that the argument stating that liberalization should lead to an increase in the relative share of rail transport in the transport market is not fully confirmed. The statistics clearly show that in the 1990s, when the liberalization policy of the railway sector was
initiated, and later in the 2000s, the freight market had been systematically growing with the main beneficiary being road transport. On the other hand, the rail transport in total either decreased or increased at a low pace from 1990 to 2013, which led to a decline in its relative share in the market.

However, when taking into account two important aspects, it seems that the preliminary conclusion does not contradict the general idea of the railway sector liberalization policy. Firstly, currently, when more than a quarter of century has passed since the implementation of the policy of liberalization and demonopolization of the rail sector in the European Union, the development of the transport market could not be verified, if the reforms liberalizing the railway sector were not undertaken, thus maintaining sector monopoly in all countries, as it was the case in the early 1990s. However, it is hard to imagine that railway monopolies, which were legally established in accordance with railway legislation, would participate in effective competitive struggle, especially with road transport companies, and would thus increase in the next quarter-century the share of rail in the transport market to a level significantly higher than the level of 11.7% achieved in 2013. Secondly, the railway sector liberalization policy has led, and continues to do so, to an increase in the competitiveness of railways in relation to other modes of transport, for example, by directly influencing the adaptation of transport capacity of railway undertakings to competitively take over cargoes from other modes of transport, pressuring to reduce costs while improving the quality of transport and customer services. However, this policy itself does not generate other important demand factors for rail freight transport.

The level of demand for rail transport depends on various factors affecting the demand side of the rail freight market. The most important factors include (Engelhardt, 2014, pp. 79–81): the status of economic development and the level and rate of GDP changes; the level of investment in the economy, especially infrastructure investments; the structure of exports and imports in the interchangeable relations of individual countries; flexibility of both price and income of the demand for rail freight transport; “craving” of potential customers for comprehensive, logistic transport services; the degree of development of cargo containerization and intermodal transport systems; potential of transport modes substitutable to the rail; as well as competitive transport prices offered by these modes. Demand for rail freight from the supply side of the market also depends on many factors, such as (Engelhardt, 2014, pp. 79–81) spatial availability of stations and loading points; quantity and quality of equipment (processing capacity) of border, port and the so-called rail – port terminals; competitiveness in terms of location of transit rail transport through a given country; existence of capacity and transport reserves in specific transport relations (desired by potential customers); general quality of railway infrastructure, determining the speed of cargo shipments, punctuality and timeliness of transport; as well as price competitiveness of railway undertakings determined mainly by labour costs and external prices: repair services, fuels and electricity, as well as the level of access rates to the railway infrastructure.

As presented above, there are many factors that determine the overall demand for rail freight transport. Most of them are exogenous in nature with respect to railway undertakings, thus causing fairly loose relationships between the policy of liberalization of the sector and the volume of demand for rail transport.
Direction of changes in demand for rail freight transport within the European Union countries in the years 1990–2013

References


INVESTMENT ACTIVITY OF THE TERRITORIAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN POLAND

AGNIESZKA JACHOWICZ,1 MAGDALENA KOGUT-JAWORSKA,2
JOLANTA ZAWORA3

1 University of Dabrowa Gornicza, POLAND
e-mail: jahowicza@interia.pl
2 University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: magdalena.kogut@wzieu.pl
3 University of Rzeszów, POLAND
e-mail: jolazawora@gmail.com

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Abstract The character of the territorial self-government units activity in Poland and realization of their constitutional goals (own or delegated) is the driver which forces them to undertake investment activities and to make particular expenditures (financial or material). The self–governmental activity and expenditure on investment should, by definition, be aimed at development of the communal infrastructure which will ensure good standard of living for the local population. Equally, the development will contribute into achieving additional economic, social and environmental goals.

The issues related to the financial aspect of the self-governmental investment activity in Poland are the subject of this paper. In particular, the major objective of the author is to analyse the existing financial conditions for investment made by the territorial self-government in Poland and to assess attractiveness of investment financing through intersectional co-operation within public-private partnership. The realization of the objective of the paper has been based on the methods of comparative or descriptive analyses and on the method of descriptive statistics.

Importance and character of investment in territorial self-government units

The topic of realization and financing of the self–governmental investment in Poland has been a frequent object of research (Jastrzębska, 2012; Patrzalek, 2010; Burzyńska, 2012; Hajdys, 2013; Ziolo, 2012; Swianiewicz, 2011; Brzozowska, Gorzalczyńska-Koczkodaj, Kogut-Jaworska, Ziolo, 2013; Maślach, Sierak, 2013). The dominating view says that the level of investment expenditure mirrors in the best way the investment activity of self-governments.
Other measures of the activity are also stressed, especially those referring to the basic budget characteristics, such as: own income, operational surplus, expenditure on own property (Zawora, 2014). The effect of limited budgets and, at the same time, growing investment needs, leads to intensified search of new forms and methods aimed at realization of investment ventures planned by the territorial self-government units, including co-operation with the private sector within public-private partnership, also called the PPP (Hajdys 2013; Ziolo 2013; Jakubowicz, 2013). The summary of the empiric research confirms firmly the importance of investment expenditure in self-governmental finances and their impact on social and economic development. Self-government investment influences positively living conditions and standards of the local community, as well as the environment created for business activity. However, the analysis of the literature leads to the conclusion that the commercial investment differs considerably from the self-governmental type of investment. The latter has a non-profit character and, by definition, the entities do not generate income. Financial means are exchanged for other assets as the effect of realization of investment implemented by the self-governments. It needs to be added that the self-government investment has a continuous character and the connected outlays burden regularly the budgets of communes counties or regions.

Well as further development of the territorial self-government units require constant investment expenditure. The level of the expenditure is conditioned by numerous internal and external factors. The external ones are connected with the rules of financing aimed at achieving public goals, within the existing legal framework and with reference to the overall economic, social and political situation in the country and in the world. The internal factors are connected with the situation inside the self-government, in particular, with the financial, economic and political aspects.

When analysing investment expenditure of self-governments, the objectives set by the laws and regulations need to be taken particularly into consideration. Social objectives do seriously limit possibilities of investment expenditure. On the other hand, investment opportunities are undoubtedly broadened and supported by the EU funding and other external sources for financing development activities (e.g. credit, loans, issuering of bonds). It must be indicated that the EU Funds has been considerably intensifying investment activity of self-government units in the last years, despite existing difficulties – namely the necessity to bring in own financial input.

It must be also remembered that, the territorial self-government investment expenditure is also conditioned by the amount and pace of growing of the sovereign debt. As a consequence, exceeding the allowed amount enforces some limitations for application of external sources of investment funding. Equally, it impels to search alternative methods in order to realise the ventures. Public-private partnership seems to be an innovative and useful way for implementation of investment ventures with the application of the EU funds (or without doing so), when the investment budget limited.

Identification of the determinants conditioning realization of investment activity performed by the territorial self-government units

Investment activity of territorial self-government units is influenced by economic conditions which are determined by non-financial factors, those legal and organizational ones in the first place.¹ However, one of the decisive criteria for starting investment is finding and securing ways of its financing (Sierak, Górniak, 2011).

The aim of this part of the paper is to analyse financial conditions for investment activity of the territorial self-government units, as well as the scope and main directions of investment by self-governments. The time frame of the analysis covers the 2009–2016 period. The empirical material comes from the Bank of Local Data of the Main Statistical Office of Poland, the Ministry of Finance and also from the National Council of Regional Accounting Chambers (KRR).

The assessment of the financing aimed at investment activities of the territorial self-government units has been based on the following indicators:
- own income in relation to total income (W1),
- operational surplus in relation to total income (W2),
- investment expenditures in relation to total expenditures (W3),
- total of operational surplus and property income in relation to property expenditures (W4).

### Table 1. Indicators of assessment of opportunities for investment financing by territorial self-government units 2009–2016 (%)

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Source: own material based on data from the Main Statistical Office and from the Ministry of Finance (Wskaźniki…, 2017).

Estimate of operational result is useful for analysis of financing capacity of the territorial self-government units. The value of the operational surplus indicator (W2 in Table 1) shows that regional self-governments had relatively more financial means on investment implementation than the other units. On the other hand, counties featured the lowest capability for financing of investment. It must be stressed that the indicator increased in the years 2015–2016, which is noticeable for all types of the self-government. The cause of the increase is the new mechanism for indebtedness limitation introduced in 2014, according to which the level of the operational surplus achieved decides about possibilities of indebtedness of the self-government unit (Ustawa o finansach..., 2009, article 243).
The Analysis of self-financing levels shows a broader assessment of investment capabilities of self-governments. The indicator of self-financing (W4) demonstrates to which extent the self-government finances investment by its own means. The level of self-financing was fluctuating considerably in the period researched. However, in majority of the self-government units, it was staying below 100%. The lowest level of the indicator was observed in the years 2009–2011, when investment expenditures of self-governments were the highest, which means that the self-government units reached more often for repayable sources of financing, due to their lower financial capabilities. In the period analysed, the most indebted group among self-government units were district towns (Raport... , 2017).

The value of the W1 indicator – participation of own income in total income – shows that district towns featured the highest level of financial self-dependence (the average value of the indicator was 63%, on the other hand, the lowest level of the self-dependence was a feature of the counties (29%). Moreover, the counties showed the lowest level of the investment expenditure indicator in relation to the total expenditure (W3), which on average, amounted to 15.7%. The regions (voivodships) spent most means on investment in relation to total expenditure, on average 38.5% in the period researched. In the years 2009–2011, the investment expenditures were the highest, which was connected with European Union funds application, as well as with an increase in the self-government indebtedness. In the following years, the share of the investment expenditures was decreasing, the most visibly in 2016. The considerable drop of the indicator was influenced by a sharp increase of the current expenditures (by 22.1% in comparison with the previous year), mainly because of the realization of a new social scheme (“Family 500+ programme) resulting from the Parliamentary Act on Family Support aimed at helping parents who bring up children. Besides, the decrease in investment was the effect of the interim period in the EU funds allocation, which concerned both, the old and the new financial perspectives.

Table 2. Investment expenditures of the territorial self-government 2009–2016

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Source: own compilation based on the KRRIO data (Sprawozdanie... , 2017).

The major part of the self-governamental investment is realized by the communes and district towns – their total participation in the period researched exceeded 70% of all territorial self-government investment. The self-government units spent almost 300 bln PLN on realization of investment ventures in the period 2009–2016,
the most of that was spent by communes (120 bln PLN) and district towns (94 bln PLN). County budgets were least burdened by investment activity – 29 bln PLN (Table 2).

Figure 1. Structure of investment expenditure by the territorial self-government units according to particular branches of economy or administration in 2016 (%)

Source: own compilation based on the KRRIO data (Sprawozdanie..., 2017).

The main investment direction chosen by the self-government units have not been changing in the last years. The dominating scope of the territorial self-government investment activity has been transport and communication. In 2016, the expenditure on road construction end modernization accounted for almost a half of the total self-governmental expenditure (46.9%). The less supported spheres of activity included education (10.4%) as well as utilities and environment protection (9.0%). The above mentioned scopes of investment activity performed by self-governments were determined by the social and economic needs as well as by objectives set for the local self-government entities.

Public and private sector partnerships in financing self-government investments

Public private partnerships are a tool for completing public projects and combine private innovation and public duty. This part of the article deals with the situation of Polish PPP regarding public projects, especially in self-governing units. The study researches of Polish public self-governing units, which are now engaged in PPP agreements.

Public Private Partnerships create the possibility for the public sector to complete major projects, in collaboration with partners in the private sector. On the public side, the incumbent government has the obligation to satisfy ever-growing social needs, and fulfilling these expectations presents difficulties, especially with a growing deficit which limits the possibilities of investment. The private sector is interested in this form of partnership, as it presents it with an opportunity to win public sector contracts that will increase long-term profits (Jachowicz, 2016). The aim of public private partnerships could be described as the optimization of resources for completing large-scale projects, which lie within the competence of the public sector.
In reality, the cooperation of two economic entities means a division of duties and risks adequate to their capacity. It was pointed out by the European Committee, which claims that “(...) partners have their shared rights and duties, and when the terms are not followed, this partnership does not work. The partnership requires the will to cooperate from all the involved parties (...)” (EU, p. 12).

The force behind the PPP project is the private partner with its management skills, access to technology and capital capacity. The public partner is responsible for the project through all its stages and, contrary to traditional methods, is not a service provider any more, but a project manager throughout the agreement. It carries the responsibility for the development of cooperation between the partners, taking into account the aims, standards and legislation involved (Korbus, Strawiński, 2006).

According to W. Orłowski’s estimate, the Polish public service sector needs an annual investment growth from 4.4% GDP to 5% GDP between 2020–2022 (based on 2010 data), to reach the current Western European level. The difference between the available and the estimated resources shows the investments needed. The gap set between 2011–2022 amounts from about 111 billions PLN to almost 2000 billion PLN (at fixed prices for 2009). Annualized investment value is placed between 4–7 billion PLN, which is insufficient to decrease the gap between Poland and developed EU countries. The question is – how to finance those ventures? Public private partnerships create a chance to take the strain off the public sector budget while completing planned and necessary investments (Jachowicz, 2015).

According to the Institute of PPP’s (2017) and the author’s research (2017), in the period from the beginning of 2009 till the 30 June of 2017, the number of PPP agreements, in Poland, rose to 490 (Figure 2).

As we can see from figure 2 the vital role was played by the self-governing units, especially communes, as they had debt limits and had to calculate accordingly the individual gearing ratio, which came into force in 2014. The next very important factor was novelisation i.e. the Polish law about PPP in 2008 and the concession laws in 2008 and 2016. The results show that the scale of the Polish PPP market amounted to 5,000 million PLN. That amount was invested in projects of different value, which are illustrated in Figure 3.
Since 2009, more small-scale projects have been realised. This situation originates from the fact that these projects are prepared by self-governing units, mostly communes, whose budgets are not as large as that of the central government. The results of this are seen in the sectors, where private public partnerships were involved (Figure 4).

As we can see, individual projects are being realised in different sectors but the most common areas are sport, transport and energy efficiency, so in these fields, where the needs are the most important, self-governing units are the responsible entities.

The data confirms the previous statements that Polish PPPs take place mainly between the Polish private sector and local self-governing organisations. In Poland, it is local ventures, initiated by the smallest units of local
government i.e. communes, which prevail. The highest value projects are usually highway projects, which are completed by provincial government authorities (Jachowicz, 2017).

Conclusions

In the chapters of article, there is presented the analysis of the financial conditions for investment activity of the territorial self-government units in Poland, as well as the main directions of the development of these units. Co-operation with the private sector as a form of investment support for the recommended solutions was also presented. The current situation and future opportunities for financing of the self-government investment was analysed basing on empiric data.

The main conclusions drawn from the paper indicate that the main part of the self-governmental investment in Poland was implemented by communes and district towns (over 70% of the total). However, having considered participation of investment expenditure in overall spending, the regions featured the highest ratio (of 38.5%). In the years 2009–2011, outlays on investment of the territorial self-government units were the highest and in the following years the share of the total spent on such activity was decreasing. The reason for the drop was primarily a high level of indebtedness resulting from realization of investment projects in the previous years (also those co-financed from the EU financial programmes).

The analysis shows also that in Poland, the most common model of PPP are small scale, local projects. Large regional or national investments have only been started. The initiative to take part in the PPP ventures which influences and creates the climate for future developments, occurs in the local government sector, especially at the communal level. Despite the difficulties and lack of the central government support, local government units have begun to see the PPP partnership model as a tool for effectively completing important public sector projects.

References


FACTORS AFFECTING THE LEVEL AND STRUCTURE OF INSTITUTIONAL CONSUMPTION ON THE CRUISE SHIPPING MARKET

JOANNA KIZIELEWICZ

Gdynia Maritime University, POLAND
e-mail: j.kizielewicz@wpit.am.gdynia.pl

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ABSTRACT
It follows from the data of Cruise Market Watch (2016) that nowadays there are in total 52 cruise lines managing the fleet of 298 cruise ships on the cruise shipping market. Cruise ship companies aspire to increase the sales volume on a regular basis in order to generate profits, but strong competition on the market forces them into saving and minimizing cruise travel unit costs per one passenger. These activities aim at reducing cruise travel prices to attract more and more travellers. Therefore, cruise travel operators strive to find various solutions, including e.g. those related to modelling the cooperation with goods suppliers and service providers or seek other solutions. The objective of this study is to identify factors affecting the cooperation between cruise ship companies and goods and services producers and providers. The research results can constitute interesting plausible material for entities involved in rendering services on the market of cruise ship tourism in coastal tourist destinations.

Introduction
According to M. Gorynia (1999, p. 779) “new institutional economics represents interdisciplinary approach to economic phenomena” including the theories of economics, theories of organization and jurisprudence. M. Gorynia (1999, p. 778) believes that „company is a network of contracts the essence of which being the form of employment (…), and the company objective involves profit maximization”. Whereas, M.E. Sokowicz (2015, p. 197) believes
that “institutions within the new institutional economics are perceived (…) as a set of limitations for the operation of entities striving to maximize their own usability”. On the other hand, institutional consumption refers to the relations between entities representing the economic and/or public sectors which aim at producing and supplying goods and services to individual consumers. A. Szwajlik (2015, p. 43.) emphasizes that institutional consumption occurs when the clients of service companies include legal persons, the so-called institutional purchasers (entrepreneurs). Each sector of economy is characterized by another group of entities which establish mutual business relations to produce and supply the final product or service to individual consumer (the so-called final consumer). In the case of cruise shipping market individual consumers include cruise ship travellers, whereas institutional consumers include a wide range of entities involved in preparing, promoting and supplying the cruise ship offer. This phenomenon has only been ambiguously defined in reference publications, in particular when it comes to the sector of maritime economy and tourism industry.

According to Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA, 2017, pp. 3–4), in 2016 another record was broken as for the number of cruise ship travellers amounting to as many as 24.2 million of travellers, which constituted an increase by 4 per cent compared to 2015 with 23.2 million of travellers. The increase in demand for cruise travels among various groups of travellers exerts influence on the activities taken by cruise ship companies. They decide to purchase new cruise ships, which involves incurring long-term financial liabilities to various financial institutions. The newly built ships are increasingly larger and more expensive, such as e.g. Harmony ship built at STX France shipyard for the Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines regarded as the most expensive (1.3 billion dollars) and at present the largest cruise ship (225 282 GT) introduced into the market. The ship can take on board over 6 thousand passengers plus crew (Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd., 2014, p. 96). The maintenance and services of large ships require from cruise ship companies engaging more goods suppliers and service providers to ensure good quality and variety of goods and services offered on the ship. Whereas, the increase in the number of passengers results in growing needs related to passenger service at departure ports (the so-called home ports) and visited ports (the so-called ports of call). Cruise ship companies have to establish business relations with numerous economic entities in the ports of call, i.e. with local carriers, tour guides and tour operators to render services for thousands of travellers. Strong competition on the market forces cruise ship companies to minimize transactional costs to reduce unit costs per cruise ship passenger so they can provide potential customers with more favourable cruise travel offer.

The objective of this study is to identify factors affecting the cooperation between cruise ship companies and goods and services producers and providers. In this study the following research questions were formulated: (1) What kind of entities participate in institutional consumption on the market of cruise ship tourism? (2) What is the level and structure of institutional consumption represented by the leading cruise ship companies? In this study, exploratory method was applied as well as deductive approach and „desk research” method. The analysis of existing materials was conducted, including the reports of world known organizations studying the cruising market, and scientific papers from trade publications and also annual reports and marketing strategies of the leading cruise ship companies.

**Entities on the cruise ship tourism market**

The entities operating on the cruise shipping market can be analysed from the supply and demand point of view. The first group includes mainly cruise ship operators who are at the same time cruise ship owners, ship building companies and global tour operators and tourist agencies offering cruise travels, but also travel agent’s at
the visited coastal tourist destinations (ports of call) responsible for providing attractive sightseeing offers (the so-called shorex – excursion on the shore). Apart from the a/m entities, on the cruise shipping market there are also numerous entities handling and supplying shops in home port, i.e. sea ports management, maritime agencies, port companies, producers and suppliers of food produce, hygiene and sanitary produce and cosmetics, and also clothing and other products (to on-board stores), and the suppliers of petroleum and water and other products indispensable for the ship to operate and handle thousands of passengers and crew members (Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** The model for the development of cruise travellers’ consumption in coastal tourist destinations

Source: own elaboration (Kizielewicz, 2016, p. 281).

Whereas, entities operating on the demand side of cruise shipping market are represented by passengers who, depending on time they spend in visited destinations and volume and structure of consumption, can perform various functions relative to the visited tourist destinations, i.e. the function of excursionists (<24h) or tourists (>24h), and also passengers who do not take the offer presented at coastal destinations (Kizielewicz, 2016, p. 93). Among the entities operating on the cruise shipping market there are thousands of crew members and on-board personnel who, on the one hand, render services for ship owners and passengers, and on the other, represent the demand for work.

The increasing demand for cruise ship travels results from the fact that cruise ship-owners, for one thing, enlarge their cruise ship fleet, and for another, seek to attract clients on a very competitive market. It requires
cooperation with numerous entities and continuous work to establish good relations in order to ensure good quality of offered services for reasonable (meaning: competitive) prices acceptable for the majority of passengers.

The subject of analysis in this study refers to institutional consumption, namely business relations between entities on the supply side of cruise shipping market. The leading entities on this market include cruise ship owners who choose contractors to cooperate with in home ports, ports of call and also incoming ports. The role of coastal tourist destination on the market of cruise ship tourism determines the volume and scope of business relations between cruise ship owners and goods suppliers and service providers.

Factors affecting the volume and structure of institutional consumption

Cruise ship owners select tourist destination where they intend to run business activities generating, as a result, the demand for various goods and services in order to handle their fleet of ships and passengers. They seek partners for cooperation by negotiating favourable market conditions. Business relations between the a/m entities constitute typical examples of institutional consumption. The volume and structure of institutional consumption on the cruise shipping market are influenced by numerous factors, among them the most important include, e.g.:

- formal and legal requirements (MARPOL, SOLAS conventions and other),
- function of sea port on the cruise shipping market (home port, port of call, incoming port),
- state of infrastructure and development level of service facilities in cruise sea ports and in their vicinity,
- management strategy in cruise ship companies,
- scope of activity and type of offer presented by cruise ship owners,
- competition on the cruise shipping market resulting from introducing new and larger cruise ships onto the market,
- seeking savings by cruise ship owners in order to reduce unit costs (price competition),
- changes in global demand manifested by the increase in the number of passengers representing various age groups of other preferences relative to the type leisure activities (mass tourism).

Cruise ship companies are obliged to respect various regulations concerning safety at sea and protection of marine environment. It is stated e.g. in MARPOL convention (International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships) (MARPOL, 1972). In cruise sea ports sewage and waste water are collected for a fee, which requires contracts between ship owners and receivers, namely port authorities or port companies and sometimes local authorities who own the sewage collection facilities and systems.

The largest volume of business transactions between entities on the supply side of the cruise shipping market refers to regions where home ports are located, where the ships begin and end their cruise travels. They are usually the seats of cruise ship owners and location of facilities for handling cruise ships (passenger quays, facilities for supplying ships with petroleum and water, sewage collection, port companies handling pilotage, towing and mooring of ships, etc.) and passengers (passenger terminals with all the facilities, car park for vehicles and buses on land, car rental services, etc.). Smaller number of business transactions related to handling cruise ships can be observed between ship owners and other entities in the ports of call and incoming ports. They are limited mainly to indispensable operations related to handling ships in the port. Most frequently they refer to towing, pilotage and mooring the ship, protection of ship in the port and supply of petroleum and water for further travel, which is provided by port companies operating within the port. The new EU regulations require sea port authorities to adjust the ports
to collect waste water from passenger ships; otherwise in a few years they will not be able to handle such ships. These and other restrictions require, so to speak, establishing trade contracts between cruise ship owners and service providers in the ports of call.

Significant impact on the volume of transactions concluded between cruise ship owners and market entities comes from preparing the facilities available in sea ports. Sometimes, ship owners are forced to establish business relations with entities located outside port areas, which is caused by poor port infrastructure and unavailability of particular services in the port, and then external companies supply water or petroleum to the ship with the use of water carts.

The key factor on the volume of business transactions comes from the cruise ship company development strategy. In the day of strong competition on the market, including tourist market, cruise ship owners reach for various management strategies. The conducted studies (Kizielewicz, 2017, p. 314) prove that leading cruise ship companies reach for various strategies, such as e.g. CCL – applies cost and demand strategy, RCCL – coast and demand strategy and market penetration, and NCL – demand and competition strategy. Today, cruise travels are recognized as part of the strongly developing sector of mass tourism. Therefore, cruise ship companies face challenges related to preparing the leisure time offers for a wide group of travellers of different interests and personality profiles. It requires establishing cooperation with various entities based on business contracts – institutional consumption. Within the savings strategies, cruise ship owners decide not to order services from external companies but from newly established daughter companies handling ships and passengers. Such strategy is applied e.g. by Norwegian Cruise Line who purchased a private island where they transport passengers, and provide their own hotels, restaurants and tourist agencies offering tourist services.

Many cruise travels aim at visiting attractive and popular coastal tourist destinations. Therefore, cruise ship companies provide two solutions, i.e. they cooperate with local tour operators ordering attractive tourist programs and passenger service from them or establish their own travel agent’s responsible for passenger service on land. For instance, Carnival Corporation & plc managing Westours and Princess Tours in Alaska own a fleet of 500 coaches and 20 railway carriages (Klein, 2006, p. 264).

**Volume and structure of institutional consumption on the cruise shipping market**

The studies conducted by *Business Research & Economic Advisors* (BREA) regarding the economic impact of the cruise shipping market on coastal tourist destinations prove that between 2014 and 2015 the total income amounted to 3.16 billion American dollars and it was recorded in only 35 most important coastal tourist destinations which participated in the study (BREA, 2015). Institutional consumption, and in particular expenses incurred by cruise lines relative to calling at seaports, including harbour charges and taxes, and charges for services provided by local tour operators and other suppliers of goods and services was estimated at 400.8 million American dollars. It was also estimated that average costs incurred by cruise ship owners for one call of 130,000 GRT cruise ship with 3,000 passengers on board and 1,250 crew members totalled 110,000 American dollars (FCCA, 2017, p. 4).

CLIA provides that in 2016 cruise ship owners cooperated with 25 thousand travel agents involved in promoting and distributing their tourist offer around the world (Kennedy, 2017, p. 16).
Cruise line owners notify of their demand for various goods and services. It requires establishing cooperation with numerous producers and suppliers of goods and services in home ports and ports of call. According to CLIA calculations, in 2016 ship owners spent worldwide on consumption goods for cruise ships, taxes and harbour charges, commission for tourist agents and administrative expenses and remuneration for employees on land and ship crew the total amount of over 36.66 billion American dollars (CLIA, 2016, p. 20). More than 17.2 billion American dollars, which constituted 44% of global market share, referred to expenses incurred by cruise ship owners for institutional consumption in the United States, where seats of the three most important cruise ship companies are located, i.e. Carnival Cruise Line, Royal Caribbean International and Norwegian Cruise Line. Moreover, in the US there are the most important home ports handling the largest number of cruise ships, i.e.: Miami, Tampa and Everglades on Florida and San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego on the West Coast of the United States.

Whereas, in Europe in 2016, cruise line owners spent on institutional consumption in total 15.22 billion American dollars, which constitutes 39.37% share on the global market. It is worth emphasizing that the dominant role was played by three main home sea ports, i.e. in Barcelona, Copenhagen and Southampton (Table 1).

The highest costs on the part of cruise ship owners refer to orders for new cruise ships at shipyards. Here, we can observe the necessity to establish cooperation between cruise ship owners and financial institutions in order to obtain capital for the purchase and maintenance of newly built ships. Therefore, cruise ship companies cooperate with various entities, i.e. banks, leasing companies, investment funds and private investors. Additionally, cruise ship owners need to take care of the technical state of their fleet, which requires cooperation with entities rendering services regarding maintenance, repairs and modernization of cruise ships. According to Cruise Ship Orderbook until 2020 (CLIA, 2015, p. 2) cruise ship owners contracted the purchase of new cruise ships in the amount of over 24.8 billion dollars.

In order to meet market trends cruise ship companies provide travellers with tourist packages containing not only cruise travel but also flights to home ports, transport from airports to hotels, and accommodation before and after cruise travel (flight & cruise package). Preparing such offers requires cooperation with airlines, local transport carriers in home ports and hotel chains. We can also observe here the phenomenon of institutional consumption since cruise ship owners establish business relations with the a/m entities to ensure services for their passengers.

The studies by CLIA Europe proved that in 2015 cruise ship companies in Europe spent 16.89 billion euro (Table 2), including significant amount, i.e. 4.6 billion euro of liabilities towards shipyards related to the purchase of new cruise ships as well as renovation and maintenance of cruise ship fleet, and 1.44 billion euro – liabilities towards companies for financial, insurance, advertising services and other. Moreover, cruise ship owners had to pay as much as 815 million euro to tourist agents for the distribution and sale of cruise ship offers and 590 million euro was spent to cover liabilities resulting from petroleum supply on ships. In 2015, in Europe expenses for cruise ship supply with food and beverages amounted to 690 million euro in total. In the cruise ship owner’s budget significant

### Table 1. Cruise ship-owners expenses in 2016 in billion USD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses of cruise ship owners ($)</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Rest of the North America</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Rest of the World</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenses of cruise ship owners (%)</td>
<td>17.20</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>15.22</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>38.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share (%)</td>
<td>44.49</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>39.37</td>
<td>12.91</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

expenses referred to the organization of passenger service, namely the cost of flight purchased as flight & cruise packages and their stay at home ports (accommodation and food), and flight after the cruise, and also tourist services at the ports of call. Expenditure resulting from cooperation with subcontractors in the ports amounted to 3.83 billion euro in total (CLIA Europe, 2016, p. 4).

Table 2. Direct cruise lines purchases by industry (millions), 2015 (excluding shipbuilding)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Purchases € Million</th>
<th>Shares in Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Mining and Construction industries</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles &amp; Apparel</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper &amp; Printing</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petroleum &amp; Chemicals</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone &amp; Glass</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metals</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery</td>
<td>766</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Manufacturing</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation &amp; Utilities</td>
<td>1,668</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial &amp; Bus. Services</td>
<td>1,427</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Service. &amp; Government</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6,900</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


More thorough analysis of expenditure incurred by cruise line owners in Europe in 2015 proved that the most substantial expenses in the budget, i.e. as much as 20.5% refer to financial & bus services and the purchase of petroleum & chemicals (11.4%), and also purchase of various devices (11.1%) and food & beverage (10.0%) (Table 2). The producers of food and beverages delivered on the ships recorded income of 687 million euro. Moreover, the petrochemical industry recorded income of 789 million euro resulting from the supply of petroleum on cruise ships. Cruise ship owners also purchased various equipment and machines, such as e.g.: engines, lighting and communication equipment and computers for 989 million euro. The call of cruise ships in ports involves paying harbour charges and incurring costs of services rendered within the port for the cruise ship owner. The a/m expenses on the part of cruise ship owners amounted to 1.6 million euro (CLIA Europe, 2016, p. 17).

Table 3. Cruise industry expenditures for new buildings and refurbishment (millions), 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>New buildings € Million</th>
<th>Refurbishment € Million</th>
<th>Total € Million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>1,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1,006</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>1,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other EU + 3</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>1,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3,672</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>4,604</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Europe until 2019, numerous investments have been planned regarding the construction of new fleet of cruise ships and renovation of the existing one. The largest investments regarding the construction of new ships between 2016 and 2019 have been planned in Italy with resources amounting to more than 1 billion euro, and in Germany – 961 million euro. In these countries the majority of expenses were taken by repairs and renovations of the existing cruise ships. In Germany, significant part of investment is scheduled for another AIDA Cruises ships. Furthermore, in Germany and Italy thriving shipyards building cruise ships are located, which significantly improves the development of investments.

Conclusions

Summing up, it is worth emphasizing that cruise ship companies are forced to cooperate with various economic and public entities on the market in order to handle the fleet of ships and passengers in home ports and ports of call. Since every year the number of cruise ship travellers has been increasing, which results in ordering larger and larger cruise ships, cruise ship owners have to establish various forms of cooperation with subcontractors and different contractors. Taking care of competitive offers on the market, cruise ship companies minimize the costs of business operations by providing at the same time proper quality of service (value for money) and consequently apply various strategies, such as e.g.:

1. Concluding long-term business contracts with contractors to negotiate more favourable terms of transactions, in particular in home ports.
2. Preparing package offers to reduce costs of travel for consumers and improve their comfort, which requires cooperation with carriers and companies from the tourist and hotel sector.
3. Establishing own travel agent’s in coastal tourist destinations to reduce costs of passenger service on land (the so-called shorex).
4. Investing in the purchase of private islands on the Caribbean Sea, and in hotel and catering infrastructure to reduce the number of external orders in the ports of call.
5. Minimizing unit costs per one cruise ship passenger by establishing active price policy in cruise ship companies.
6. The demand for consumer goods and services generated by cruise ship companies provides an incentive to establish new production companies and service providers in the vicinity of ports visited by cruise ships. As a result, new workplaces are created, tourist and para-tourist infrastructure is developed, and all of this exerts positive influence on the social and economic development of coastal tourist destinations.

References


THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SMES IN POLAND DURING AND AFTER FINANCIAL CRISIS AND ECONOMIC DOWNTURN – ON THE EU-28 BACKGROUND

Dominika Kordela
University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: dominika.kordela@wzieu.pl

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Abstract
The aim of the paper is to assess the financial condition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland during and after financial crisis 2008–2010 and the economic downturn. In this paper a thesis was advanced that the consequences of the downturn were felt by the entire sector, but each group of the companies was affected to a different degree. The companies in the sector of SME were assessed based on selected financial data. Moreover, the article includes assessment of the sector’s importance for the polish economy. The analysis is based on data from secondary sources published by Central Statistical Office, Eurostat and Polish Agency for Enterprise Development. The temporal scope of the study encompasses the years 2007–2016. The analysis of selected financial data is enough to state that although the economic downturn led to a temporary fall in the revenue level, financial result or profitability, the economic standing of the sector generally improved throughout the period analysed (2007–2016).

Introduction
Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises constitute 99.8% of all economic entities in Poland. The significance of this group of entities for the economic growth and employment is unquestionable, which is proved by scientific research and numerous reports. Qimiao Fan indicates that SME’s are not only an engine for the growth but also essential for competitive and efficient market as well as critical for the poverty reduction (Fan, 2003).
The importance of SME’s for economic growth, as well as creating the competitive private sector has been proven in many studies (e.g. Ayyagari, Beck, Demirguc-Kunt, 2003; Beck, Demirguc-Kunt, Levine, 2003; Rahman, 2010).

The economic crisis (2008–2010) resulted not only in bearish sentiments on stock exchanges, problems of financial institutions and sovereign debt crisis of some of the European countries, but in economic problems across Europe as well, manifesting themselves in the downturn, or even recession.

Against the background of Europe, Poland turned out to be relatively resistant to the transmission of turbulences on the financial market to the real economy. Nevertheless, the economic downturn did affect Poland, which was why studies on the condition of the sector were commenced. Nevertheless the financial crisis also has its beneficiaries, it teaches humility and modesty, it gives new impulses (Sadowska, 2010). It is possible that the beneficiaries might be SMEs.

The aim of the present paper is to assess the condition of the sector of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland in the times of the economic downturn following the financial crisis till 2016. A thesis was advanced that the consequences of the downturn were felt by the entire sector, but each group of the companies was affected to a different degree. The companies in the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises were assessed based on selected financial data (revenues, financial result, profitability, investment). Moreover, the article includes assessment of the sector’s importance for the economy, performed through the determination of their participation in the added value or employment. The analysis is based on data from secondary sources published by the Ministry of Economy, Central Statistical Office, Eurostat and Polish Agency for Enterprise Development. The dynamics of the basic financial data and digits typical of the sector of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises were analysed.

The paper is organized as follows: the second chapter presents a brief view on the economic situation in Poland in 2008–2016. The third chapter describes the economic significance of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland comparing with EU-28 and then the fourth discusses the development and financial standing of micro, small and medium-sized companies in 2007–2016. The final part contains conclusion.

**The view on the economic situation in Poland in 2007–2016**

The real economy in Poland started to feel the consequences of the financial crisis later than the countries of the European Union or the USA, namely, in 2009. Between 2006 and 2007, the GDP pace exceeded 6% per annum and was twice as high as in the EU Member States. In the years 2007–2012, despite drops on the stock exchange and a significant downslope of the GDP growth rate in the EU, in Poland, the GDP was still positive. In next years between 2013–2016 the growth of GDP both in Poland and EU-28 showed the similar tendency and was in both cases positive (Figure 1).

Next to the drop in the GDP dynamics, there were other signals of the economic downturn in Poland, like decided drop in investment dynamics or rise in unemployment. Dynamic of the investment was positive in 2007–2008, then there was decrease in 2009 and very low growth in 2010. In the exception year 2011 the growth was recorded, but as it is visible on Figure 2 there was no clear positive tendency in this area. The polish entitles were careful in deciding on investments.
The performance of the SMEs in Poland during and after financial crisis and economic downturn – on the EU-28 background

Figure 1. Real GDP growth rate in EU-28 and Poland in 2007–2016
Source: Eurostat.

Figure 2. Investment Dynamics in Poland 2007–2016
Source: Central Statistical Office.

Economic significance of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland in 2008–2016 — main issues

The Polish Act on Freedom of Economic Activity stipulates the same criteria for distinguishing company categories, divided by size, as are in place in the European Union.¹ Similarly to the European Union, the dominant type of companies in Poland are micro companies, which constitute 96% of the total number of enterprises (Działalność przedsiębiorstw..., 2016). Their participation in the overall number of all companies is higher than the average in the EU, which might be caused by the high self-employment rate in Poland. On the other hand, the number of small companies is lower when compared to the average of all EU countries. This, in turn, might suggest potential problems with the development of the activity from the micro to the small scale.

¹ There are: the number of employees, the value of turnover and the value of balance sheet total.
Participation in added value and participation in creation the workplaces are commonly used criteria for assessing the importance of the sector of micro, small and medium for the economy of the particular country. The table below presents the comparison of the strength of SME’s in European Union and Poland, the presented indicators are used by European Union’s institutions for assessment of the importance of the sector for the economy.

**Table 1.** The percentage of companies, percentage of the employed and participation in added value – micro, small and medium-sized companies in Poland and in the European Union in 2016²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Micro</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium-sized</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>99.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>99.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment</strong></td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>68.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Added value</strong></td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>56.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Muller et al. (2017).

According to Annual Report on European SME’s prepared by European Commission micro, small and medium-sized companies in Poland create 68.5% of workplaces. The great significance on employment have especially micro companies that engage more that 36% of the workforce in Poland. As previously mentioned the higher rate than EU-average (29.8%) is caused by high level of self-employment which actually is type of micro-enterprise.

In accordance with the data by Eurostat the sector generate in Poland added value at the level of 52.6%. As indicated by the Eurostat data, the participation of the sector of micro, small and medium-sized companies in Poland in gross added value is lower than the EU average. Data in the table 1 point to the significantly smaller participation of the micro and small companies in added value and bigger than in the EU added value generated by medium-sized enterprises.

The data mentioned above indicates that micro, small and medium entities play a very important role in a national economy of Poland similarly like it is in other EU-member states. Although the significance and the strength of both the entire sector and the each group of companies differs from EU average.

**Development and financial standing of micro, small and medium-sized companies in 2008—2016**

Although, in principle, in the period subject to the study (when we compare 2016 to 2007), the number of companies in all groups of the sector grew (Table 2), the data point to significant growth in the number of enterprises liquidated in 2008 (small and medium-sized ones), in 2009 (micro) and in 2011 – back then. The number of liquidated entities grew (especially in 2008 and 2011), however the number of active in 2008 and 2011 was higher than in the previous year. Which actually may suggest that in this period there was a growth of the new registered companies

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² In accordance with the methodology of Eurostat, the number of companies does not include the economic entities which run business activity in the following sectors: agriculture, forestry, fishing industry, educational services, health protection sector.
but actually the issue is more complicated. The data of Polish Agency for Enterprise Development consists the information about: total number of registered enterprises, the number of active enterprises, the number of new registered enterprises and the number of enterprises liquidated. Analysis of these data indicates that in 2008 there was an increase in the number of new registered companies in each group of the sector (comparing to 2007) but in 2011 the increase was noticed only in the group of small and medium companies.

Table 2. Number of active enterprises in sector SME in years 2008–2016 in thousands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>1,714.8</td>
<td>1,604.4</td>
<td>1,655.1</td>
<td>1,710.6</td>
<td>1,719.2</td>
<td>1,693.8</td>
<td>1,764.6</td>
<td>1,838.4</td>
<td>1,937.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>57.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study based on data of the Raport o stanie sektora... (2017) and Reports: Działalność przedsiębiorstw...
It can be said that the financial crisis and economic downturn did not significantly affect the sector of small and medium-sized companies in terms of revenue. The dynamics of the growth in the revenue (YoY) in all groups was negative only in 2009. It afflicted small enterprises the most (–10%), while micro and medium-sized companies reported a drop by 6%. In medium-sized companies the dynamics of revenues was as well negative in 2012 and 2013, in the group of small-sized companies was negative in 2015 and 2016. Actually the best conditions – in terms of the dynamics in the revenues – during hole period were among micro and small companies. Namely comparing 2016 and 2007 it was increase of respectively 41 and 50%.

Analysis of the gross financial result points to the heterogeneity of the sector of micro, small and medium-sized companies in this scope. Micro-companies reported negative financial result dynamics in 2009, 2011 and 2012, while in small companies, the pace of the growth was negative in 2009 (amounted to –19%) and in 2014 – as well quite deep drop by more than 14%. Medium-sized companies coped with downturn in the financial result the worst (the negative growth pace was reported in 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012 and 2016). The recovery of medium-sized companies was the weakest among SMEs – the growth of revenues comparing 2016 and 2007 amounted 19%, and was lower than in micro and small onces.

Assessment of the level of profitability of gross turnover is indicative of its relative stability in the period analysed (differences from 1 to 3% in each group). The highest rate in the sector of micro, small and medium-sized companies belongs to micro-companies and in the period in question fluctuated between 11.40 (the lowest in 2012) and 17.57%. The profitability of small companies was the poorest in 2011 and in 2016 (respectively 6.58 and 5.5%). Medium-sized companies are characterized by the lowest profitability in the entire sector (between 4.0% in 2012 and 6.73% in 2010).

The downturn in the economy causes the restricted expenses’ decision in companies. Analysis of the expenditures on investments indicates that micro-companies increased them successively throughout the period analysed, while small and medium-sized companies reduced their expenses in 2009–2010. But actually differences in each group during hole analysed period (2007–2016) were not very high.
The performance of the SMEs in Poland during and after financial crisis and economic downturn — on the EU-28 background

Figure 5. Gross turnover profitability rate in percentage
Source: own study based on data of the Raport o stanie sektora... (2013) and Reports: Działalność przedsiębiorstw...

Figure 6. Total investment outlays in PLN millions
Source: own study based on data of the Raport o stanie sektora... (2013) and Reports: Działalność przedsiębiorstw...

The data presented above indicate that Polish SMEs have already recover from the consequences of the financial crises and the economic downturn. Moreover performance figures presented in the Annual Report on European SMEs (pp. 27–28) at EU-28 level show very positive developments of this group of entities in Poland and proof a strong recovery from the last financial crisis and economic downturn. It is worth to add that Poland is among nine EU countries that show complete recovery in terms of number of SMEs, employment in this sector and added value created in this group of entitles.

3 The other eight member states are: Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Luxemburg, Malta, Sweden and the United Kingdom.
Conclusions

The analysis of selected financial data is enough to state that although the economic downturn led to a temporary fall in the revenue level, financial result or profitability, the economic standing of the sector generally improved throughout the period analysed (2007–2016). 2009 was definitely the most difficult year. An improvement in the condition of enterprises in 2010 allowed for an increase in all important financial indicators.

We can hazard a guess that it was the micro-companies that handled the downturn best. Apart from 2009, they reported growths in revenue – the pace of their growth was only negative in 2009 and their investments as well grew (except 2012 and 2016), so they boasted the highest gross turnover profitability ratio when compared to the rest of the sector.

Against the background of the sector, it was the medium-sized companies that handled the economic downturn the worst. In 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2012 the dynamics of their financial result were negative and their expenditures on investment in 2009, 2010 and 2012 dropped as well. Moreover, this group of companies is characterised by the lowest level of gross revenue profitability in the whole sector.

The studies and analyses confirm the thesis that the economic downturn affected each of the size groups of the sector of small and medium-sized companies to a different degree and had different impacts on the indicators of the assessment of their condition.

References


FROM THEORIES OF EFFICIENCY TO SPECIFICATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFICIENCY OF MUNICIPAL SERVICES

AGNIESZKA KWARCiŃSKA

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: agnieszka.kwarcinska@wzieu.pl

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ABSTRACT This article presents issues related to assessment of the efficiency of municipal services from the point of view of both theories of efficiency available in literature and the specific features of municipal services. Many attributes of municipal services differ from those of other services. Therefore, to consider municipal services from the perspective of efficiency, the need to adopt separate assessment criteria arises. This article aims to present the prevailing trends in research regarding the assessment of the efficiency of municipal services within the context of theoretical considerations available in economic literature.

Introduction

Contemporary management, both in global, national, regional, and microeconomic terms, takes place in face of the growing impact of digitization processes and the need to verify both management solutions applied thus far and the effects generated thereby. In development programs and strategies, efficiency (alongside knowledge and innovation) is of particular importance. According to many researchers, efficient management helps to strengthen...
enterprise competitiveness and, as a result, accelerate the socio-economic development of regions and countries. As such, the search for solutions for increasing efficiency has in recent years gained fundamental significance, both in terms of economic theory and practical applications for contemporary management science. However, the complex and multifaceted nature of the phenomena shaping the increased efficiency of enterprises, including in the areas of management and motivation, has resulted in the need to search for optimal methods for assessing the implementation of such phenomena.

Efficiency is most often considered from an economic perspective and with regard to a wide range of management issues. Although the connotation of the term ‘efficiency’ is ever positive, the concept must nonetheless be examined in a certain amount of detail. This is also the case with regard to the efficiency of municipal services, for which it is reasonable to consider various aspects of efficiency and to apply specific assessment criteria.

This article aims to present the prevailing trends in research regarding the assessment of the efficiency of municipal services within the context of theoretical considerations available in economic literature.

**Efficiency — Theoretical approach**

Efficiency is a term frequently used in various contexts. It is often equated with an economic calculation, i.e. accounting for the effects obtained in relation to the inputs necessary to obtain such effects. Efficiency may be analysed on the scale of an entire economy, whether in macroeconomic or microeconomic terms, with references to such aspects as individual business entities, organizational units, processes, projects, products, and services.

The most general determination of efficiency focuses on resources which are available yet limited and their use to satisfy broadly understood human needs (Mankiw, Taylor, 2009, p. 35; Czarny, 2011, p. 23). In this sense of efficiency, satisfaction of needs falls in the effects category, whereas the available resources fall in the inputs category. As such, efficiency is considered as the full utilisation of resources to obtain the greatest possible benefit. The lack of waste is also a significant issue in the consideration of efficiency, as noted by P.A. Samuelson and W.D. Nordhaus (2000, p. 61). Limited resources necessitate rational management in a manner which allows for the achievement of the best possible set of benefits. The reasonable allocation of such resources – without loss – determines the most beneficial satisfaction of needs. The condition regarding waste takes into account the efficient and economical management of specific resources, i.e. the distribution and deployment thereof, according to the given process, to achieve the greatest possible amount of good to satisfy needs.

Effective allocation – in the sense of the Pareto principle – means a state in which an increase in benefits for one person may only be achieved by reducing the benefits for another person. Thus, it is not possible to reallocate resources to improve one person’s situation without harming another. This manifestation of efficiency is often taken into account by economists (Brümerhoff, 2007, p. 42; Pindyck, Rubinfeld, 2009, p. 766; Varian, Buchegger, 2007, p. 17; Case, Fair, 2007, p. 14). It refers not only to such problems as scarce resources and the economic viability of management thereof, but also to the necessity of the selective allocation of such resources. This also provides a specific foundation for all economic considerations regarding the rationalness of applied and implemented economic activities.

Both the analytical context and the scope of application of efficiency determine its definition and assessment. For example, the efficiency of an organization, determined primarily by the results of its activities, and additionally considered as its ability to implement a strategy and to achieve certain goals (Skrzypek, 2002, p. 190), is also subject to extended and multifaceted evaluation. R.S. Kaplan and D.P. Norton (2001, p. 27) consider the efficiency
of an organization in terms of four perspectives associated that organization’s strategy: the financial perspective, which measures the current financial success of the organization as a business; the client perspective, indicating the sources of such success, including market position and customer satisfaction; internal processes, regarding processes taking place within the organization; and development, determining the ability of the organization to further change and grow, on which the future success of the organization depends. In contrast, G.A. Rummel and A.P. Brache (2000, pp. 54–55) analyse three interdependent levels of efficiency: organization, process, and employee.

In turn, the efficiency of planned investment activities and projects is analysed primarily in the context of the financial benefits (Pastusiak, 2009, p. 113; Wrzosek, 2008, p. 13). The economic viability of such is determined by obtaining financial benefits of greater value than the expenses incurred.

In the subject literature, the efficiency of a product is also considered through the prism of the relationship between expenditures and obtained effects (Storoniak-Palczak, Szwaja, 2013, p. 47). An efficient product is one in whose effects are greater than the amount of expenditures associated with the production thereof. The inefficiency of a product is demonstrated by the excess expenditure required to product said product in relation to the effects generated thereby.

In summary, efficiency which determines the rationales of economic activity remains a generally useful economic category. It may be analysed in various contexts and interpreted in many aspects. The fundamental rule of obtaining greater effects than the amount of inputs necessary to achieve such effects remains unchanged. Accepting principled considerations on the subject of efficiency as a basis, the efficiency of municipal services may be discussed. Assessment of the efficiency of this particular type of service requires specific treatment.

The features of municipal services as the primary determinants of the specifications for assessment of the efficiency thereof

The necessity to apply a special approach to the assessment of the efficiency of municipal services results primarily from the specific features of municipal services, which, in addition to social and administrative services, constitute public services (Dylewski, Filipiak, 2005, p. 459). The collective needs of a specific community are the foundation for the provision of municipal services. The satisfaction of such needs in accordance with Polish law is the responsibility of the municipality (The Act of March 8, 1990). The principles and forms of implementation of such responsibilities are also regulated by law and are related to municipal management (The Act of December 20, 1996). In turn, this includes responsibilities which are by nature public utilities, aimed at the current and continuous satisfaction of the collective needs of the population through the provision of publicly available services. Legal provisions both confirm the importance of municipal services and set the basic conditions for implementation thereof, i.e. the provision of municipal services in an ongoing and uninterrupted manner, ensuring universal access thereto.

In relation to municipal responsibility, municipal services constitute a set of services, including: supplying water, disposing of sewage, collecting municipal waste, maintaining landfills and disposing of municipal waste, maintaining sanitary facilities, maintaining general cleanliness and order, supplying heat, electricity, and gas, providing local public transport, and providing public housing. The aforementioned services are characterized by

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a high degree of significance for the function of each local community. The source of the demand for such services are needs which may be considered as basic (obligatory) needs. The occurrence of such needs incurs the necessity to swiftly and effectively satisfy them. The efficiency of their satisfaction determines the fundamental conditions of existence. This is why it is so important both that services be provided in an ongoing and uninterrupted fashion to meet these needs. The related problem of maintaining continuity in the provision of municipal services is in turn an extremely important determinant of their efficiency.

However, the most important condition which distinguishes municipal services is their universal availability. In simplified terms, this is understood primarily as the easy, unencumbered access of each and every member of the local community to such services. However, detailed consideration of such requires consideration of various aspects of availability (Babis et al., 2000, p. 13; Kwarciński, 2009, p. 66). The first such aspect, economics, refers primarily to the price paid for the service. The second aspect, time, may be analysed as the waiting period for the service or as the service completion time. The next aspect, space, should take into account, for example, the geographical distribution of access to a municipal service (e.g. connection to a water supply or sewage network, or the distance to waste collection facilities). The last aspect of accessibility, information, should be treated as access to information on specific municipal services, on the prices, and means of provision thereof, and on the entities providing such services.

From the perspective of the importance of the accessibility criterion, the provision of municipal services assumes supremacy in the implementation of social responsibilities. The primary corollary of this is the subordination of economic concerns, including economic efficiency. Thus also follows the premise for specific recognition and analysis of the efficiency of municipal services.

Apart from the primary features distinguishing municipal services, one should also indicate several more significant features, as these also significantly determine the need for a specific assessment of the efficiency of municipal services. Often, the provision of municipal services is associated with great dependence on technical infrastructure, of which both the creation and maintenance requires appropriate expenditures. In addition, the product delivered as part of municipal services is often homogeneous, standardised, and without substitutes. Related to this issue are demand-side market limitations concerning changes in the service provider and the given standard of service, and on the supply side, the occurrence of so-called local monopolies and applicable requirements, including those of legal origin, in relation to the quality of specific services. In addition, municipal services are provided to a specific local community with the appropriate features, age structure, property resources, spatial distribution, etc. This means that service providers do not choose a client but provide a service to everyone who belongs to a given community.

When characterizing municipal services, one should pay attention to specific legal regulations referring to the markets for specific types of municipal services, such as the imposition of maximum prices, and additionally to entities which provide services where there appear specific requirements with regard to both service providers and to services, which must fulfil certain established quality standards. Undoubtedly, all regulations have their own justifications, simultaneously affecting the efficiency of municipal services.

In summary, the features of municipal services indicate the determinants for the specifications for assessment of the efficiency of such services. Among them, the most important can be considered as: the ongoing and uninterrupted nature of municipal services, the economic, temporal, spatial, and informational accessibility of municipal services, the supremacy of social responsibilities with regard to implementation, dependence on
From theories of efficiency to specifications for assessment of the efficiency of municipal services

technical infrastructure, the lack of available substitutes, the existence of local monopolies, legal regulations concerning the markets for municipal services, legal regulations concerning entities providing municipal services, legal regulations concerning specific municipal services. The presented characteristics of municipal services warrant a particular approach to assessment of the efficiency of such services, which in the broadest sense should take into account both economic and non-economic aspects.

Basic aspects and criteria for assessment of the efficiency of municipal services

Due to the specificity of municipal services, the assessment of their efficiency should not be focused solely on the classic economic approach. Even the most important social and organisational issues confirm that such a multi-aspectual approach to the concept of efficiency is justified. It may be noted that in the case of providing municipal services, there are three main groups of entities. First are municipalities, which are legally obliged to satisfy the collective needs of their population through implementation of their responsibilities. Municipalities are primarily the initiators and organisers of municipal services. They are responsible for ensuring the availability of such services. They decide on the methods of implementation and financing of such services, creating specific conditions. Municipalities also often participate in investment processes.

The second group of entities are enterprises which directly provide municipal services. They assume the burden associated with the provision of services. They act as a contractor performing specific activities in the field of municipal management, assuming the risk of operating a business, with the awareness of all rights, limitations, and both economic and non-economic liabilities. As all other business entities, they operate in a specific environment, accept all external and internal conditions, and achieve their goals. By engaging their resources, enterprises organize the process of providing municipal services and remain in direct contact with their stakeholders, including clients. Their image is based on the proper implementation of municipal services in the consciousness of the entire local community. Thus, enterprises represent the nexus of municipal responsibility and the reporting of collective needs by communities.

The last group are members of a community who are connected by a common area of residence and who require specific, obligatory needs. They play a dual role. On the one hand, they initiate the necessity of a municipal service by reporting the need for such, and on the other hand they are the consumers of municipal services. The conditions for satisfying such needs are a set of specific postulates regarding the nature of municipal services, whereas satisfaction levels are the subjective feelings of consumers. At the same time, consumer responses may concern both the actions of the municipality in fulfilment of its legal obligations regarding the provision of municipal services as well as the broadly defined activity of enterprises providing such services.

Due to the presented involvement three groups of entities in the process of providing municipal services, it seems reasonable to take into account economic and non-economic aspects, including primarily organizational and social aspects, in analysing the efficiency of municipal services. In each of these scenarios, it is important to achieve greater results in relation to inputs. It should be emphasized, however, that in the case of the efficiency of municipal services in an economic context, both results and inputs are more easily measurable than social and organisational factors. This is often not a simple calculation, especially when subjective and qualitative measures arise. This issue also concerns another very complex issue related to the selection of methods, tools and specific measures to assess the efficiency of individual municipal services and requires separate study.
Meanwhile, focusing on the basic features of municipal services and taking into account the need to conduct multi-aspectual assessment of the efficiency of municipal services, one may indicate the fundamental criteria for such assessment. These are:

- ongoing satisfaction of the collective needs of the population,
- uninterrupted satisfaction of the needs of the population,
- widespread availability in economic terms,
- widespread availability in spatial terms,
- widespread availability in temporal terms,
- widespread availability in informational terms,

The presented criteria do not exclude and do not diminish the importance of applying conventionally and widely used criteria for efficiency assessment. Instead the above criteria are complementary and emphasise the specifics of municipal services. Their consideration allows for more precise analysis and evaluation of the efficiency of such services.

**Conclusions**

Efficiency is a category that is referenced very often and in various contexts. Its economic dimension, based on the basic principle of obtaining greater effects in relation to the incurred expenditures, also translates into a non-economic dimension. Accounting for non-economic aspects of efficiency is not simple, but is important and justified when assessing the efficiency of municipal services in particular. The specificity of these services implies the need for broad recognition of issues of efficiency and creates the necessity of applying differentiated research instruments. The assessment of the efficiency of municipal services should be preceded by identification of the determinants of such efficiency. This is the basis for identifying the main aspects of efficiency, which in the case of municipal services include, in addition to the economic approach, organizational and social dimensions.

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From theories of efficiency to specifications for assessment of the efficiency of municipal services


The Act of March 8, 1990 on municipal self-government. OJ 1990, no. 16m item 95


CONSUMPTION OF DENTAL SERVICES: MEDICAL TOURISM IN CEE

ADRIAN LUBOWIECKI-VIKUK

Poznan University of Physical Education, POLAND
e-mail: lubowiecki@awf.poznan.pl

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Abstract The aim of this paper is to explain the growing phenomenon of the consumption of dental services beyond the place of the patient’s permanent residence. The essence and the scope of the phenomenon are discussed and the main factors affecting its development are indicated. The elements of the service package offered by dental clinics are identified. A critical analysis is conducted of relevant literature items. The paper constitutes an introduction to further research that will take account of medical tourists’ leisure activities, the dental tourism dysfunctions and the specificity of the medical tourism sub-segment in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).

Introduction

Globalization is becoming a reason for still open debates on its significant social, cultural and economic impact. Undoubtedly, globalization reinforces the trend towards privatization, commercialization and competitiveness of health care institutions. Combined with the tendency for consumerism now observed in the post-modern society,
it improves mobility and creates an opportunity to receive treatment in parallel with the consumption of tourism services.

In the subject literature and in the industry itself, medical tourism is understood as “the process of travelling outside one’s local area of residence for the purpose of receiving medical services” (Global Buyers Report 2016–2017, 2017, p. 4). Connell (2013) additionally points out that the process includes the use of tourism packages. The consumption of medical services most often concerns the following areas: cosmetic and dental surgery, cardiac surgery, orthopaedic and bariatric surgery, in vitro fertilization and organ and tissue transplantation. Dental services definitely have the biggest share in this basic group of the medical tourism product, and interest in their consumption is still on the rise (Miyashita, Akaleephan, Asgari-Jirhandeh, Sungyth, 2017).

As observed by Youngman (2014), in order to use dental services, inhabitants of North America travel to Mexico and Latin America (Argentina, Costa Rica, Peru), European patients – to CEE countries, Asians – within the continent (to India, Korea) and Australians – to South-East Asia (Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand). This phenomenon is referred to as ‘dental tourism’/‘dentourism’, ‘dental travel’ or ‘dental holiday’. The size of the market has not yet been fully identified. It is estimated that the participants in this category (sub-segment) of medical tourism constitute a third of the total number of medical tourists worldwide.

The aim of this paper is to explain the essence and scope of dental tourism by: (1) indicating the main factors affecting the development of the phenomenon, with respect to CEE countries; and (2) identifying the elements of the package of services available on the market. The work draws on a critical analysis of desk research results.

‘Dental tourism’

The American Dental Association (2009) defines dental tourism “as the act of travelling to another county for the purpose of obtaining dental treatment”. According to M. Jaapar, G. Musa, S. Moghawemi and R. Saub (2017) dental tourism is understood “as activities related to travel and to hosting a tourist who stays at least one night in the destination region for purposes which include maintaining, improving or restoring health through dental care intervention”. K. Dhama, B. Patthi, A. Singla, J. Kumar and M. Prasad (2016) add that “dental tourism means travelling abroad for economical dental treatment as the cost of treatment is high in one’s own country”. In the analysis of the cross-border provision of dental care services, some researchers perceive the phenomenon as the flow of mobile patients resulting from high costs and/or high co-payments for dental services in the patients’ country of origin and from the country’s legal regulations. Dental services have enjoyed the greatest popularity among tourists. They are well known in professional circles and receive extensive coverage in the media.

The dentourism concept is complex. The phenomenon gives rise to two types of travellers: (1) classic dental tourists – those who travel to a foreign country to access dental treatment being either the sole purpose of the visit or part of a holiday package; and (2) migrant tourists – those who return to their native country for a holiday or to visit relatives and then access dental treatment during their stay (Iqbal, Shah, Ashley, 2014; Chandu, 2015). Nonetheless, it is observed that dental tourists are most often national patients and those coming from neighbouring countries (Österle, Balázs, Delgado, 2009). Their convalescence period usually does not exceed a week. In the case of maxillofacial surgery services, they stay for 7–10 days. Dental tourists also include those who have been dissatisfied with dental care in their place of residence. For this reason, such great importance is attached to interpersonal communication with due consideration given to ethical issues. A. Conti, P. Delbon, L. Laffranchi and C. Paganelli (2014) point not only to communication as such, but also to the patient’s autonomy over the
practitioner’s choice, his/her informed consent, security, as well as the possibility of continuity of care. With respect to the latter, D. Panteli, U. Augustin, J. Röttger, V. Struckmann, F. Verheyen, C. Wagner and R. Busse (2015) suggest that patients undergoing planned treatment were more satisfied with all aspects of care and reported that follow-up care had been required less frequently. This of course does not mean that the patient was denied such aid if needed. Considering the above, it may be assumed that dental tourism concerns both domestic and foreign travel of different nature (business, holidays, ‘bleisure’, VFR, shopping etc.) combined with the consumption of dental services.

It seems that the relatively low cost of dental care in some countries where the cost of living is lower is the main reason for seeking treatment beyond the permanent place of residence, disregarding potential complications, but making sure that appropriate quality of service is maintained (Dhama et al., 2016; Kesar, Mikulić, 2017; Romita, Perri, 2017). According to Patients Beyond Borders (Double-time dental, 2017), a patient could save as much as $4,400, $5,800 or $6,400 travelling to get implant-supported dentures (upper and lower) to Costa Rica, South Korea or Singapore, respectively, compared to the same treatment purchased in the US. However, J. Köberlein and D. Klingenerberger (2011) point to the fact that “the decision for or against foreign dentures and the extent of the willingness to pay depend on a range of criteria, of which price is only one and not the decisive factor”. Beside the high cost of local care, L. Turner (2008) mentions other reasons for the development of dental tourism, such as delays in obtaining access to local dentists, competent care in many international clinics, inexpensive air travel and the Internet’s capacity to link ‘customers’ to ‘sellers’ of health-related services. J. Connell (2013), on the other hand, views the development of dentourism as the consequence of the fact that many forms of dental surgery, especially cosmetic dental surgery services, are not covered by insurance in some countries, e.g. the UK and Australia. The findings of H. Rodrigues, A. Brochado, M. Trollo and A. Mohsin (2017) are valuable in this context. The authors claim that the decision whether to purchase such services is strictly related to other consumers’ opinions and the direct associations triggered for them in connection with the phenomenon. These associations include the following words: treatment, clinic, happy, recommend, service, confidence, and cost. What is important, though, is that male patients referred more often to ‘service’ and ‘cost’, whereas for women ‘treatment’, ‘recommend’, and ‘clinic’ were more common. J. Hanefeld, N. Lunt, R. Smith and D. Horsfall (2015) prove that there are other important reasons behind the patient’s decision to choose a specific treatment, provider and destination. While distance, costs, expertise and availability of treatment are all significant in this respect, the decision is largely affected by informal networks, including web forums, personal recommendations and support groups.

The synergy between dental and tourism services is treated not only as business (Kamath et al., 2015), but also as an important factor in the development of many towns and regions (Louveau, 2009; Jurišić, Radović, 2017). Some CEE countries, e.g. Serbia (Ignjatjević, Čavlin, 2016), despite having the necessary potential for dental tourism development, have to face management and marketing problems that arise as early as at the level of direct providers of dental services. The graphical description of the dental tourism phenomenon shows the main factors in the selection of a given dental clinic (Figure 1). It can be seen clearly that there are a lot of determinants of dentourism development, but it is the clinic itself – the way its representatives communicate with potential consumers, the image they create and, generally, how they present the services they have on offer – that seems to be the key to success.
The desired market should offer a dental tourism package made up of dental, tourist and complementary services. The results of the studies conducted by Jaapar et al. (2017) indicate that it is the last of these three components that has a significant impact on the dental tourist satisfaction. However, considering the consumers' needs, it is rather the dental services component that should be taken into account. The services should be appropriately tailored to meet the patients' specific needs not only when treatment is already in progress, but also before the patients leave and after they return to their place of residence. The package itself has to be flexible, for example to take account of persons that might possibly accompany the patient (Gheorghe, Zürcher, Filippi, 2017). Additionally, the package distribution channel should be selected carefully. A special role is assigned here to medical tourism facilitators/brokers (MTF/B) co-operating with employing establishments, insurance agencies or tourist offices offering dental tourism services in the first place. In the case of a direct channel, communication between the dental clinic representatives and the consumer is essential. The Internet is of key importance here (Constantin, Kavoura, 2016). It enables contact and development of mutual relations between the patient and the service provider based on trust, understanding and equal partnership.
Functioning of dental clinics on the CEE medical tourism market — selected aspects

In Poland, inbound and domestic dental tourism is exclusively provided for by private dental establishments. This a consequence of the fact that a vast majority of dental practices are private and operate under no contracts with the National Health Fund. Also in other CEE countries dental service costs are covered from the consumers’ own financial means, which is probably the effect of increasing incomes per person in households (Janoś-Kresło, 2007). As a result, it is possible for those consumers (for the others it seems rather a necessity) to seek treatment in clinics beyond their permanent residence area that will be cheaper but demonstrate the same standard of service.

The prices of dental services in CEE are attractive for consumers from western countries. For example, having a dental implant procedure performed in Poland, citizens of the UK or Germany can save more than 60% (Figure 2). Compared to Poland or Slovenia, the service price is even more attractive in Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Moldova (savings of up to and higher than 80%) Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Britons and Germans prefer buying dental treatment abroad, where they can make savings of almost 70%, let alone the lower costs related to food, accommodation and transport. The selection of Poland as the dental services consumption destination is also dictated by the availability of transport, the high quality of medical services offered at a reasonable price, the availability of medical technologies in dental surgery and prosthetics (the most specialized region is the Silesian voivodeship, with the second highest number of dental practitioners in the country after the Mazowieckie voivodeship) and a well-operating system of health care (Rab-Przybyłowicz, 2016; Romaniuk, Szromek, 2016; Wisla, Sierotowicz, 2016).

![Figure 2. Savings on dental implants in CEE compared to average prices in the UK and Germany (USD)](source: own)
Compared to other CEE countries, the number of dentists in Poland is rather low. However, it should be noted that the range of their qualifications is wider compared to dentists in the UK, Hungary or Slovenia. For example, they may specialize in maxillofacial surgery, whereas in other countries this is only possible for doctors. Moreover, Poland – despite the competition among others the Czech Republic – is the only CEE country listed in the Medical Tourism Index, as a country where dentourism is in the oligopolistic position (Lubowiecki-Vikuk, Rab-Przybyłowicz, 2015; Lubowiecki-Vikuk, Kurkowiak, 2017). Due to the specificity of dental services, the country’s promotion as a dental travel destination and tourism competitiveness, Hungary emerges as Poland’s strong competitor. It has the highest number of dental clinics in CEE. Other factors play a role here too: Hungary is easy to reach, the dentists’ reputation is high and there are enough of them to choose from (Chang, Chang, 2013). Kovacs and Szocska (2013) name the following to prove the high quality of the dental profession in Hungary: (1) Hungarian dentists are extremely well-qualified; (2) dental practice standards are up-to-date and often supervised; and (3) dental techniques match European standards and make use of state-of-the-art materials and equipment.

Dental clinics may apply for accreditation from the ‘Global Clinic Rating’ (GCR, 2017), and thereby be included in the international ranking of this type of establishments. Clinics from the following CEE countries are rated the highest: Lithuania, Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia, where as Poland, the Czech Republic and Kosovo are ranked the lowest. Interestingly enough, Serbia and Montenegro rank so high despite the fact that, as indicated by the Eurostat data (2016), the number of dentists per 100,000 inhabitants there is lower compared to other CEE countries. Bulgaria, which has the highest number of dentists, does not rank high. The presented rankings should not be treated as the most essential argument in the discussion of the development of dentourism in CEE, but rather as a point of reference to reality. With regard to the dental tourism industry and its development, Adams et al. (2017) point to the need to analyse specific conditions or structures of control.

Conclusions

A dentourism package requires personalization and a wide range of services, which is imposed by the nature of the demand side. This can be achieved in modern dental clinics with sufficient accommodation (or co-operating with hotel facilities) and a large number of specialists, including coordinators dealing with foreign patients. In this respect, the leading CEE countries are Hungary, Croatia, Poland and the Czech Republic. Individual medical practices are based on their dentists’ reputation, on the quality of the specialist services they render (e.g. prosthetics) and co-operation with foreign institutions. It seems that such can be more flexible in attending to the patients’ needs, potential and availability. Their services are available all year round on the 24/7 basis and they allow payment by instalments. Patients are found without the participation of MTF/B’s. Word-of-mouth marketing is used here instead.

The paper presents characteristics of the dental tourism phenomenon but the presentation is by no means complete. It is just a contribution to further studies taking account of the patients’ leisure activities and the following dysfunctions of this leading medical tourism category: (1) social differences between inhabitants and their incomes in individual CEE countries; (2) draining of local resources (personnel, equipment and infrastructure) by dental tourists; (3) treating dental treatment as a business area only; and (4) inflating prices of dental services for local patients.
Consumption of dental services: Medical tourism in CEE

References


Adrian Lubowiecki-Vikuk


ENVIORNMENTAL RISK MANAGEMENT OF FUEL COMPANIES IN THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

ADAM LULEK

University of Szczecin, Faculty of Management and Economics of Services, POLAND
e-mail: adam-lulek@wp.pl

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ABSTRACT The word risk has been with us for centuries. Over time, it has evolved and today we can talk about different types of risks, including environmental risk. Listed companies, in particular fuel ones, through their operations affect the surrounding nature. Therefore, they should inform customers, shareholders, investors of their doings. The best way to do this is an appropriate presentation of information on risk management in the enterprise. Unfortunately, the present state of affairs is not ideal. Data presented in reports that relates to the said aspect is incomplete, poorly illustrated and unreadable. In their presentation of risk management, companies should take account of its stages. Stakeholders should be able to read about the identification, assessment, essence, description, financing and administration of environmental risk. All this information should be presented in a coherent, easy-to-find and clear manner. As a result, shareholders or investors will be able to make better investment decisions concerning a given company.

Introduction

The proper functioning of economy, including financial and capital markets, should ensure the financial stability of a business entity Sadowska (2010, p. 76) and determine the minimization of risk of business activities, especially environmental risk. Environmental risk is characteristic of many production enterprises. It concerns in particular fuel,
energy and chemical companies. Their activities are connected with landfill, hazards during operational activities and other fortuitous events which a management board is not always able to predict.

In financial statements, listed companies often describe various types of risk. One of them is environmental risk. Depending on what an entity deals with exactly, they can concern different situations, entities or subjects. However, in order to reduce this aspect of business activities, entities should manage environmental risk properly. How do they do that? This is something we learn from financial statements which are the main source of such information. What do companies exactly describe and is this data sufficient for interested parties?

Environmental risk

The term risk can be already find in the Middle Ages as riscum, that is expeditions and natural disasters. Over time, the term was subject to modifications. In the 16th century in banking risiko, that is rational human activities, emerged. A hundred years later, British money dealers started to use the word risk when searching for regularities governing fate of fortune. No until the 19th century, strokes of fate, destiny or fortune were replaced by assessing the likelihood of desirable or undesirable events Solarz (2005, pp. 15–16).

Currently, risk means negative (sometimes also positive) deviations from intended goals. Every enterprise’s business activity is exposed to risk. It stems from the fact that enterprises operate in an environment which is changeable and unpredictable. It accompanies all decisions which are made Buk (2006 p. 374). In other words, “risk means such a situation in which future events cannot be predicted with certainty, however, the probability of distribution of these events is known” Czekaj, Dresler (2001, p. 35). In literature, we deal with various types of risk and one of them is environmental risk Holliwell (2001, p. 5).

It can be defined as a possible impact of enterprise’s operations on the natural environment which constitutes an element of enterprises’ sustainable development1 Sadowska (2016, p. 396). Obviously, this statement was written with a negative aspect in view as it concerns ecological degradation. When undertaking business activities, many companies expose nature to irreversible changes. They can be caused by:2

– improper resource management,
– fortuitous events,
– lack of responsibility and awareness of the management,
– unskilled employees,
– specific character of given business activities,
– lack of environmental rules and procedures in an enterprise.

The influence of the aforementioned factors on the environment can be reduced through proper risk management in a given business entity. Information concerning the above statement is not always clear in listed companies. Interested parties would like to know what risk occurs in an enterprise and how it is managed.

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1 It is postulated that enterprises should run business activities on the basis of the balance between economic, social and ecological goals and have respect for the natural environment in mind. More: B. Sadowska (2016), p. 396.
2 The author’s own conclusions.
Environmental risk management

According to the ISO 31000:2009 standard and the Polish PN-ISO 31000:2012 standard, risk management means coordinating activities concerning management and supervision of an organization with regard to risk. This process comprises several stages:

1. Risk identification – a fundamental element of the risk management process. It involves searching for risk effects.
2. Risk quantification – a description of risk, what risk means, its causes and effects.
3. Risk assessment – stipulating risk potential resulting from enterprise’s activities and external influences.
5. Risk administration – risk is attributed to a relevant person or people on the basis of an enterprise’s structure.

Therefore, it can be assumed that environmental risk management means coordinated activities aimed at reducing or eliminating a negative impact of enterprise’s activities on the natural environment. However, is it possible to distinguish particular stages of this process in enterprises? Is data included in financial statements and concerning the discussed issue properly presented? Can interested parties receive a proper amount and quality of information on that issue? In order to answer these questions, one should analyse Table 1.

Table 1. Investors’ risk connected with environmental information published in periodic reports by listed companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Type of financial statements</th>
<th>Environmental risk connected with the functioning of companies and significant for stock investors</th>
<th>Risk management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PKN ORLEN</td>
<td>Report on the operations of PKN ORLEN for the year 2012, annual report for the year 2012</td>
<td>– risk connected with the launch of biofuels, – risk connected with carbon dioxide emission, – risk connected with conducting operations (random loss)</td>
<td>The Capital Group creates provisions for future liabilities due to reclamation of contaminated land or water or elimination of harmful substances if there is such a legal or constructive obligation. Environmental provision for reclamation is periodically reviewed based on reports prepared by independent experts. The Capital Group conducts regular reclamation of contaminated land that decreases the provision by its utilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGNiG</td>
<td>Report of the Management of the PGNiG Capital Group for the year 2011, annual report for the year 2011</td>
<td>– the need to ensure compliance with environmental laws in Poland and abroad may significantly increase the PGNiG Group’s operating expenses, – significant capital expenditure and costs on ensuring compliance of its operations with the even more complex and stringent regulations concerning safety and health at work, as well as environmental protection, – hydrocarbon deposits developed by the PGNiG Group are often at great depths, consequently, the risk of hydrocarbon blowout or leakage is very high, which in turn may pose a threat to people (workers and local populations), the natural environment and production equipment</td>
<td>To date, more than three-quarters of the PGNiG Branches and the PGNiG Group key companies have implemented, certificated and had in place the Environmental Management System (EMS), frequently integrated with other systems, such as quality, OHS or information security management systems. In 2011, another two gas companies completed the implementation of the Environmental Management System. Also in 2011, the identification methods and assessment criteria for environmental aspects of the operations were standardised for gas companies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 The article author’s own definition.
LOTOS
Integrated annual report of the Lotos Group for the year 2012

- the EU regulations related to biofuels,
- risk related to pollution,
- risk related to failures (technical and production)

The refinery uses technologies and equipment meeting the BAT criteria (Best Available Techniques). Process units are equipped with adequate safety and security solutions. Alarm, emergency stop and shutdown systems are deployed in order to prevent uncontrolled development of an emergency situation and serious damage to machinery and equipment.

All measures for prevention of fires, failures and similar incidents also aim to minimize possible environmental impact. We have also adopted safety standards in sea transport which help mitigate various risks, including the risk of an environmental disaster caused by tankers leaking oil or petroleum products. We have established relationships with providers of sea shipping services operating fleets that meet high technical requirements and properly observe maritime safety conventions. We use the services of ship owners who satisfy very strict requirements on the mitigation of the risk of maritime accidents.

SERINUS
The report of the management for the year ended on 31 December 2012, annual report for the year 2012

- certain licenses have restrictions which may not be removed on a timely basis,
- operations are subject to regulation and intervention by governments that can affect exploration, production and abandonment of fields and licenses

The Company is engaged in relatively high risk activities. The Company is committed to both safety in operations and to preserving and protecting the environment. The Company believes it fully complies with or exceeds all government regulations and industry standards in the countries of operation. However, operations are subject to regulation and intervention by governments that can affect exploration, production and abandonment of fields and licenses. Rights and licenses can be cancelled, may expire or be expropriated, and regulations can change. Certain licenses have restrictions which may not be removed on a timely basis. Certain areas in which the Company operates are politically and economically unstable and the assets and operations may be affected by changes in government policy, social instability or other political or economic developments outside the control of the Company. Contingency plans are in place to ensure a timely response to a safety or environmental event. A security program is also in place to protect the Company’s assets and staff.

DUON
Report of the management on the operations of the Duon Capital Group for the year 2012, annual report for the year 2012

- low risk because of the fact that the company is a gas provider

In 2012, we had a comprehensive review of risk in order to check whether we are well-prepared to prevent and react properly to emerging, both expected and unexpected challenges. This review was very useful and constitutes a solid basis for the development of DUON in 2013 and the following years. No details were mentioned.

PETROLINV
Report of the management on the operations of the Issuer’s Capital Group for the year ended on 31 December 2012, annual report

- risk of the introduction of stricter requirements resulting in significant additional liabilities and deterioration of the Group’s development prospects,
- risk of the introduction of regulations on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

No specific information on environmental risk management.

Source: own study on the basis of financial statements of the mentioned companies.
Table 1 shows information concerning environmental risk included in annual reports and financial statements on operations of companies from WIG-Paliwa (Fuels) sector and data referring directly to the management of such risk. What results from the information in the table is that in fuel companies’ documents we can most often read about risk connected with:

- raw materials and fuels,
- investments in fixed assets connected with the natural environment,
- improvement of effectiveness and production quality, what has an influence on the environment,
- adaptation to applicable standards and provisions of law,
- training for employees in order to raise their ecological awareness.

The aforementioned information has an influence on risk of fuel companies’ operations which, in their case, is high with respect to the natural environment. Most often, this risk pertains to toughening national and EU regulations related to the natural environment and possible pollution as a result of fortuitous events.

After analysing data connected with risk management, it can be assumed that not all enterprises provide specific information in this respect. On a case-by-case basis, it is difficult to find data concerning the analysed issue, what is unacceptable in such companies. Some of them provide selective information. The management board tries to manage risk, however, the way they do is not included in reports. The vast majority of entities give limited information on the aforementioned process. Most often, one can learn about the allocation of relevant investment funds, application of relevant standards or regulations, creation of reserves for potential events and implementation of modern technologies.

**Method**

During writing the article, the methods of inductive and deductive reasoning as well as descriptive analysis were used. The research process involved the identification of a research problem, that is the problem of environmental risk insufficiently described in financial statements. The next research stage was about commenting on the phenomenon by analysing environmental information included in financial statements of fuel companies which have been listed in a table. The study shows the current state of the presentation of environmental risk and its management stages by selected listed companies in reports. On the basis of the above, conclusions were drawn. The author tried to assess and show how information on environmental risk management should be presented in financial statements. In order to devise own concept, financial statements and risk management stages presented in the environmental realities were analysed.

**Results**

As it was mentioned in the previous subchapter, listed companies provide insufficient information on environmental risk management in fuel companies. Investors are not able to answer any of the posed questions. Currently, in reports:

- information on risk management divided into stages cannot be found,
- the way to minimize environmental risk is not sufficiently indicated,
- data concerning the issue is often presented in a chaotic way and it is spread across several dozen pages,
- there is a mediocre amount and quality of information in terms of the issue,
- data is insufficient for stock investors to make decisions on the purchase or sale of securities.
On the basis of the given division of risk management, details of this process can be provided for fuel companies. Table 2 presents the author’s proposal.

Table 2. Risk management stages in fuel companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Specification</th>
<th>Presentation in fuel companies – how it is now</th>
<th>How it should be</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk identification</td>
<td>A fundamental element of the risk management process. It involves searching for risk effects</td>
<td>Fuel companies do not have much difficulty in distinguishing the first stage. Financial statements of enterprises include quite detailed information on this issue. Depending on what a company does exactly, this data can vary respectively, however, it is still available</td>
<td>Nevertheless, there is a problem with presenting the aforementioned data. A report could have a separate section only devoted to risk and its management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk quantification</td>
<td>A description of risk, what risk means, its causes and effects</td>
<td>Indicating risk is at a satisfactory level, whereas a detailed description is not. It is difficult to find data on risk causes or possible effects in reports. This data is often “scattered” over the whole financial statements and, as a result, their users lose valuable time when making decisions</td>
<td>Companies should provide comprehensive information on causes and effects of a given risk in their reports. Users of data from financial statements have the right to know what failure to take proper precautions can result in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk assessment</td>
<td>Stipulating risk potential resulting from enterprise’s activities and external influences</td>
<td>The next problem is the lack of information on the extent of possible risks. Interested parties do not know where, e.g. production, transport or storage of crude oil can lead to. Companies do not mention risk potential, and it should be changed</td>
<td>Companies should describe comprehensively and assess the potential of a given risk as well as possible ways to eliminate it. Interested parties have to be aware of what environmental problems a company deals with and what it does to prevent them. They should also have a possibility of reading information on the scale of risk which should be fixed and described</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk reaction</td>
<td>Conscious risk modification</td>
<td>In some reports, it can be observed that enterprises try to reduce risk through the introduction of relevant quality standards. However, this information is not clear and complete enough</td>
<td>Companies should provide in-depth data on what exactly has been done in order to reduce risk. Thanks to reports, interested parties should have a possibility of verifying what a company would do, if a given risk occurred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk administration</td>
<td>Risk is attributed to a relevant person or people on the basis of an enterprise’s structure</td>
<td>Practically nothing is known about this stage. In financial statements, there is no information on who is responsible for risk stemming from enterprise’s operations</td>
<td>Interested parties should be aware of the fact that it is not only the management board that is responsible for a company, but also lower-level employees, e.g. managers, executives. Reports should include their data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk financing</td>
<td>Securing funds for risk avoidance, control, transfer or retention</td>
<td>In fact, some companies secure some funds in case of potential unexpected events. However, it is not also described in detail and does not pertain to all companies</td>
<td>Companies should precisely indicate what funds have been allocated to risk occurrence or transfer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own work.

Conclusions

If fuel companies, which are particularly exposed to risk resulting from the impact on the natural environment, presented information of risk management in the way suggested in Table 2:

- interested parties would know the process of risk management in a company divided into stages,
- the scale of risk and the value of funds allocated to reduce it could be assessed,
- users of financial statements would receive a great amount of qualitative information which they could use to make investment decisions,
- data concerning environmental risk would be presented in a coherent, easy-to-find and clear manner.
References


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TOWARD STANDARDIZATION
OF JOB COACHING SERVICES

EWA MATUSKA, 1 PIOTR NIEDZIELSKI 2

1 Pomeranian University, POLAND
e-mail: ewa.matuska@apsl.edu.pl
2 University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: piotr.niedzielski@wzieu.pl

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Abstract The aim of the article is to present possible path for standardization of the career coach profession via using functionalities of ESCO – European System of Competences and Occupations. The proposal is based on the literature review and its critical analysis and authors’ experiences gained from international Erasmus + project “Job coach for persons with disabilities” where European standards for similar occupation were established. Authors propose to locate job coach profession among subgroup of “Personnel and careers professionals” and they have presented job description including main tasks and responsibilities of job coaches. The educational path of job coaches in terms of European Qualification frame is recommended as the next necessary step toward job coach occupation standardization.

Introduction

A job coach is an individual who helps people with career development, professional goals and long-term workplace success strategies. This role may be played occasionally by manager or supervisor at employer’s settings, or it can be filled by member of human resources staff. Some career-minded professionals also hire independent job coaches on their own to help them strengthen their skills and advance in their careers. Traditionally,
job coaching was considered kind of professional career service addressed to people with different kinds of adoption problems. However today, when many people several times repeat their career choices, there seems to be necessarily go ahead of old frame of supported employment system and to perceive job coaching as the service for everybody. Unfortunately, the very term coaching as well as the outline of its goals and methods till now were not able to develop sufficiently accepted theoretical background (Carey, Philippon, Cummings, 2011) and still more conceptual and practice-based research are necessary, in order to develop coaching (and job coaching as its variant) as a respected cross-disciplinary profession. Moreover, common practice of certification of job coaches by professional organizations after different kinds of short term courses and supervision of more experienced colleagues (Carroll, 2006) seems to be deeply not sufficient in terms of professional standards. This is why, authors have decided to project standardization path for job coaches as professionals who offer career support service for individuals as well as to employers searching for suitable candidates. The standardization of job coach occupation in space of Europe can be projected in a similar way like it was proposed by the international team of the Erasmus+ project who have developed European Qualification standards for job coaches for disabled persons (Röttgers, Metje, 2016).

Customers of job coaching services

Currently the context of supported employment in European space (EUSE, 2014) is used for the wide range of disfavoured groups. It includes not only different areas of disability (i.e. physical, mental health, sensory disabilities, etc.), but also other groups widely defined as being in the ‘disadvantaged situation’ on labour market: group of NEETs – young people not in education employment or training, offenders and ex-prisoners and people recovering from substance abuse and most recently – refugees massively entering European countries and needing effective adoption process to the rules of their labour markets.

However, going behind the frame of supported employment policy it can be stated that dominating group of potential clients for job coaches represent just all people during their career transition (Latack, 1984; Bańka, 2006), all who finish one stage of career and start with new one. Among them will be surely Millennials for whom changing jobs from time to time is a part of rational career planning, and they probably will not search for job coaching service. But, according newest research (Joia, Mangia, 2017) the important group of customers of career services may be IT specialists who are starting early exhausted with work in the IT area and more and more frequently decide for career transition to other functional areas. This trend, together with digitalization of economy will probably widening. Nevertheless, there already exist many other groups of potential customers, for example: young graduates who has realized their educational profile is not very profitable as gives them only under skilled job opportunities, women who plan to come back to labour market after break connected with care for children, people 50+ and too early retired who want to prolongate their vocational activity. All these clients need support in their career planning, vocational profiling, finding suited jobs, and later – depends on situation – also in maintaining already posed jobs. All above suggests the demand for adequately skilled job coaches is in progress.

Job coach profession formal demands

Job coach profession till now isn’t formally registered in EU although many similar professions are present in a work-space reality (Grant, Cavanagh, 2004). As non – registered occupation in Europe, job coach qualification is also (till now) not regulated in terms of the EQF- European Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning (European Council, 2008) – the recommended rules of European Council and Commission addressed to the process
of acquiring any qualifications. EQF demands the orientation of educational curricula on earlier defined educational outcomes which have to be described in a form of competences expected as the result of education. The new competences, planned to be acquired by the trainee: units of the new knowledge, learned new skills and trained new attitudes and behaviours – should prove (after successful finalizing the whole learning programme) that educational outcomes are filled – thus, the new qualification was really acquired by the trainee. Promoting development of job coach profession in a space of EU needs to respect the status quo, that is:

- lack of recognition of essential tasks and responsibilities, skills and competences of job coaches,
- lack of European standards for the content of education/training for job coaches,
- lack of accreditation procedures for job coach profession accepted across the Europe,
- widely offered job coaching service by different professionals without authorization.

Description of the job coach as the occupation and its probable qualification path in terms of EQF opens the gate to the standardization of this profession in space of EU. For the limited space of this paper authors will only signalize the initial stage of the standardization of job coaching services – job description of job coaching in terms of its tasks and responsibilities.

**Job coach occupation description**

As the potential target group for job coach services is systematically widening, thus also the concept of job coaching is during revision. The wider scope of customers means professionals who help people from different target groups in their access to open labour market are more and more needed and that they have to demonstrate profoundly differentiated specializations. The success of job coaching is when the client is able to hold satisfying job position as long he/she wants and is able to develop professionally.

Contemporary, 'job coach model' work requires complex, continuous and holistic approach to the client and his surroundings. Adopting five stages of supported employment system, job coaching process can be divided into five stages, which are: 1) client engagement; 2) client vocational profiling; 3) job finding; 4) employer engagement and optionally – depends on the situation – 5) on/off job support. On each stage is demanded flexible and individual approach to every particular client. From job coaches first is expected personnel service to client in a form of "person centred planning for career development ", but this service should represent holistic personnel strategy targeted to not only to potential employee, but also to the employer.

Authors have used the frame of ESCO – European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations Internet platform (ESCO, 2013) which offers opportunity for placing any occupation in agreement with rules of European occupational classification systems. To do it successfully needs first designing job description of proposed occupation and further – describing possible qualification path for give occupation. Examining the index of occupational titles collected by ISCO – 8, the current version of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), developed by International Labour Organization (ILO 2007, 2008) – we will not find the occupation of 'job coach'. The most fitting occupation group for the 'job coach' in ISCO-8 seems to be the occupation group number: 2423 – Personnel and careers professionals. In ISCO jobs classification it is located in a following hierarchical way:

- 2 major group – professionals,
- 24 sub-major group – business and administration professionals,
- 242 minor group – administration professionals,
- 2423-unit group – personnel and careers professionals.
Using ESCO platform with the aim to identify the possible place of 'job coach' occupation – we will see similar localization like in case of ISCO-8: personnel and careers professionals. The ESCO is still during matching its content with ISCO-8 classification but uses similar categories of occupational groups and occupations. An occupation group in ESCO clusters occupations or occupation groups with common characteristics in a hierarchical way. However, oppositely to the ISCO-8, which is only statistical tool, ESCO functionalities are much broader. ESCO is the project realizing one of the main objective of the Strategy Europe 2020 (European Commission, 2010) and its goal is to facilitate the internal EU work force mobility and work transition through easy comparing skills, competencies and qualifications obtained in different EU countries. Trying to identify on the Figure 1, the ISCO – 8 occupation group 2423 – Personnel and careers professionals in ESCO frame, we have to follow the hierarchy of occupations from “up to down”, as proposes ISCO-8, until the level of unit groups (the lowest level of ISCO-8 signed as ‘D’). The next lower level belongs already to ESCO – and just here can be placed 'job coach' occupation. The proposed position of the JC occupation is between more narrow occupations being examples of the unit level of the group 2423 – Personnel and careers professionals, but there isn’t (till now) enumerated such example of occupation as ‘job coach’.

![Figure 1. Proposed job coach occupation in ESCO classification](source: authors' elaboration)

Placing the job coach occupation in a wider category of ‘Personnel and careers professionals’ we have to agree that job coach job description have to fulfil general demands for the work tasks and responsibilities which are referred to this category, namely its:

1. General occupational role – providing professional business services such as employee recruitment or development, occupational analyses and vocational guidance.
2. **Main tasks of the occupations:**
   a) advising on and performing personnel functions relating to employee recruitment, placement, training, promotion, compensation, and employee-management relations or other areas of personnel policy;
   b) studying and analysing jobs performed in an establishment by various means, including interviews with workers, supervisors and management, and writing detailed post, job and occupation descriptions from data obtained;
   c) preparing occupational information booklets or working on occupational classification systems;
   d) advising and working on the foregoing and other aspects of job and occupation analyses in such fields as personnel administration, manpower research and planning, training, or occupational information and vocational guidance;
   e) studying and advising individuals on employment opportunities, career choices and further education or training that may be desirable;
   f) performing related tasks;
   g) supervising other workers.

The general job description of the whole group of ‘Personnel and careers professionals’ has to be updated by much more specified job description respecting specific tasks and responsibilities of job coach who works with persons from given target group of customers.

It can be recognized two main areas of tasks of job coaches:
- **career counselling** – representing interests of job seekers, and
- **recruitment support** – representing interests of employers who need to fill vacancies by the best candidate.

The description of job coach’s tasks typically undertaken by them include:
- assisting job seeker in building motivation to be employed on open labour market,
- recognizing labour market trends and organizational structures which can fit to the live situation of the client,
- identifying suitable for the client workplaces and – if necessary – helping employer(s) to adapt workplace for client’s needs,
- preparing client for on-boarding to the job place agreed with employer,
- assisting client with work adaptation and with maintaining or changing job.

Above job description proves job coaches should be perceive as a wide group of professionals offering tailored services to match interest of job seekers and employers. They are more than career counsellors and more than HR recruitment officers. In a wider sense – their role is to meet expectations of supply and demand on turbulently changing labour market.

**Conclusions**

The term ‘job coaching’ appears to be in use as an umbrella term for activities where a career agent guides an individual and the organization in a facilitating way to match their mutual interests – to find suitable job for jobseeker and fill job vacancy of employer with suitable candidate. This has to be win-win situation and both clients: jobseeker and employer have to be equally important for job coach. Job coach’s role is to intermediate process of matching their interest on the basis of the trust given to the both sides of the contract. The occupational role of job coaches can be positioned in ESCO – European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations among occupational
sub – group of “Personnel and careers professionals” with the number of 2423. It means – job coach represents professional job which should be acquired via sufficiently high educational level of education and further long-life learning process. Job coach’s professional roles are quite complex and demand for mixture of knowledge and skills and goes far away out of traditional supported employment frames of counselling services. It acts like special kind of human resources officer offering counselling services both to individual and to organizational clients. Job coaches should be registered professionals who have passed specified qualification path proving their competence. By this way, job coach as till now not registered and popular profession can meet basic standards much clearer than supervision of professional colleagues. If educational path of job coaches would be described in equal terms of European Qualification Frames it will facilitate dissemination of job coaching services across EU member countries – like it is suitable on open European labour market. And the demand for such services will probably grow up as more and more employees are ready at least few times repeat their career choices during lifespan.

Acknowledgments

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References


THE ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY OF OUTSOURCING OF TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS SERVICES. CASE STUDY OF THE POLISH ROAD TRANSPORT MARKET

DARIUSZ MILEWSKI

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: dariusz.milewski@wzieu.pl

Introduction

The strategy of outsourcing is widespread in the economy. The reasons may be lower costs or higher quality of goods or services of an external provider, which can be more efficient due to e.g. the scale of operations, high efficiency of processes, high competence, experience. In the field of transport and logistics the outsourcing can be applied on different stages of a process of a delivery of goods – transport, warehousing, transshipment or
organization of these processes, which can be dealt by a forwarder or a logistics service provider. So the question here arises – what is the justification for the use of such an intermediary of between a shipper (transport user) and a transportation carrier.

The goal of the research made the Author of the paper was to investigate in which circumstances both a carrier and a transport user can achieve the benefits of cooperation with an organizer of a transportation process and how big these benefits can be.

**Literature review**

A customer achieves numerous benefits in cooperation with a freight forwarder (Załoga, Milewski, 2004): professional counseling in the process of concluding a commercial contract, preparation, completion of documents necessary for the proper implementation of the shipment process, increase of the efficiency of the transportation process, obtaining lower prices for transportation services, lower administration costs, guarantee of payment by a client and reliable performance of a service by a carrier. A freight forwarder knows the transport market, has a network of contacts and is able to offer a higher level of services. A forwarding company also can play a financial role – for example, the customs protection, which allows timely completion of customs formalities and reduce administrative time spent in the cargo customs clearance points. It cover freight charges in order to avoid delays in deliveries. A professional freight forwarders can help in solving unusual problems by proposing innovative solutions for trans-loading or securing goods during transport.

Cooperation with a forwarder is also beneficial for carriers (Załoga, Milewski, 2004). A transportation company doesn’t have to deal with the acquisition of transport orders from many transport users and finally with collection of payment from many small customers. A freight forwarders deals with the organization of transportation process on all stages, can better prepare goods for shipment, invest in infrastructure, equipment, acquires new customers, can develop new form of services.

The preferences of transport users vary depending on different factors. For competitiveness of maritime transport a price may be even more important than in the road transport (Bergantino, Bierlaire, Catalano, Migliore, Amoroso, 2013). According to other studies the performance of port operations are of primary importance (Tongzon, 2009).

According to various studies the quality requirements outweighed cost (Danielis, Marcucci, Rotaris, 2005). This is in contrast with observations of behavior of entrepreneurs made for example by the Author of this paper. Very often for transport users price is the only criterion for choosing a carrier or a freight forwarder.

It may seem, that a choice between hired and in-house transport depends to some extent on the characteristic of a cargo transported. In case of specialized technology the propensity to outsource transport services is often lower (Wysocka, 2013).

According to Mirosław Kaczmarek of Polish Chamber of Freight Forwarding and Logistics (2013) very few companies deserve to be called freight forwarding the full sense of this expression. Freight forwarding activity is mostly carried out by road freight forwarding companies. According to the author’s of the report rail freight forwarding practically doesn’t exist in Poland, because it is characterized by a higher than road haulage degree of complexity and required competence.

The phenomenon for outsourcing of transport and logistics services in the food industry in Taiwan and Netherlands has been studied by H.I. Hsiao, R.G.M. Kemp, J. van der Vorst, S.W.F. Omta, (2011). In the Netherlands...
outsourcing in transport and packaging are used more frequently, what may be probably due to the fact that the Thai companies emphasis on cost reduction and the Dutch ones on flexibility. The dairy industry also uses external services to a greater extent than the meat industry, which can be explained by the fact that the latter emphasis on the quality of the food while the dairy industry on flexibility and reliability of supplies.

In recent years views have been expressed that freight forwarding services are to replaced entirely by logistics services. Also the development of information technologies – e.g. the electronic freight exchanges is sometimes perceived as a threat to freight forwarders, because carriers and transport users can contact directly with each other through an electronic platform. Such views are being presented since 90s (Ozsomer, Mitri, Cavusgil, 1993; Here, Murphy, Daley, 1995), but it seems, that these predictions have not come true. Freight forwarders still exist on the market, although indeed the market of alternative services to the freight forwarding is growing rapidly. However, regardless of the phenomena occurring on the market, the problem of the economic efficiency of organization of a delivery of goods still exists. Using a freight exchange is also costly. A “Third party” logistics operator also acts as an intermediary, because often such companies don’t utilize their own fleet but hire external carriers. So still, the question arise what are the benefits of using such services both for a carrier and a transport user?

Model of economical efficiency of cooperation with an organizer of a delivery of goods

In order to study economical efficiency of the cooperation of a road carrier and a transport user with an organizer of transport a simulation model has been developed. The simulation concerns the Polish market of the road transport and freight forwarding services. Data have been obtained from companies offering such services and the construction of the model has been consulted with practitioners.

The simulations have been made for different variants – 3 three options of a cooperation:

- “Direct”,
- “Better productivity”,
- “Better service”.

“Direct” means, that a transport user uses transport services without an intermediary of freight forwarder and although the prices for the transport services are relatively high, the efficiency of a transport process is low – lower level of mileage (110,000 km/year) and more empty runs (only 80% of mileage stands for the loaded transport);

“Better productivity” is obtained thanks to the more effective cooperation with an organizer of transport – more orders for a transport carrier (130,000 km/year) and more loaded runs (85%). However, because the organizer has to attract a transport user to cooperate, it offers a lower price.

Quite different strategy can be applied, when a freight forwarder offers a “Better service”, for which prices are also higher than in the strategy “Better productivity”. Better service means here a couple of benefits for a transport user: shorter lead time and better punctuality and lower level of damages of transported goods (very serious problem in road transport). The utilization of transport vehicles is however lower (115,000 km/year and fewer loaded runs 80%), because the transport potential has to be dedicated to the requirements of logistics processes of a transport user. Next assumption relates to the costs of a transport carrier, which are also relatively higher in this option – e.g. better and more expensive transport equipment and higher salaries of drivers.

These three variants are modified by changing: demand fluctuations, weight of goods transported and value of them. In total 12 variants have been used. One can expect that the benefits of cooperating with a freight forwarder for a transport user will be higher in case of more expensive goods and relatively more unstable demand. In such
cases logistics costs are higher (in this case – costs of capital tied up in inventories and costs of lost sales). On the other hand however in case of higher values of goods the share of logistics costs in total costs is lower, what should diminish their impact on the overall profitability.

The model, contrary to other models presented in the scientific literature is not of aggregated character but is detailed one and thus can reflect real processes. That means that mathematical formulas have not been applied for calculating for example inventory costs but processes are being simulated on a daily basis. Building such a model and its use is relatively more complicated but the Author believes that such method guarantees more precise results.

**Table 1.** Input data for calculation of economic effectiveness of a road carrier (domestic transport)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variant</th>
<th>Variant “Better productivity”</th>
<th>Variant “Better productivity”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Load capacity (tonnes)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase value of vehicle (PLN)</td>
<td>420,000</td>
<td>450,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of petrol (PLN/l)</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrol consumption (l/100 km)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road fee – ViaToll (PLN/km)</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of roads covered by ViaToll</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tire wear (PLN/km)</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mileage (km/year)</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of mileage</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average speed (km/h)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own on the base of data collected from the Polish transportation market in 2017 year.

First the economical efficiency of a road transport carrier has been calculated. The input data and assumptions are shown in table 1–4. With the use of these data the simulations have been performed in order find out what is the impact of freight rates of a carrier on economical efficiency of both sides.

**Table 2.** Fixed costs per 1 vehicle (PLN/year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variant</th>
<th>Variant “Better productivity”</th>
<th>Variant “Better productivity”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>84,000</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>13,658</td>
<td>13,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax on means of transport</td>
<td>1,534</td>
<td>1,534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages of drivers</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>132,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed costs of a vehicle</td>
<td>135,192</td>
<td>147,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management costs</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total fixed costs</td>
<td>358,884</td>
<td>388,884</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own on the base of data collected from the Polish transportation market in 2017 year.

**Table 3.** Parameters of transported commodities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Buildings materials</th>
<th>Garments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 4. Assumptions for the cost calculation of transport users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Variant</th>
<th>Variant “Better productivity”</th>
<th>Variant “Better productivity”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual rate of capital tied up in inventories (%)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehousing costs (PLN/day/pellet)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of logistics customer service (%)</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>99.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of damages (%)</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own on the base of data collected from the Polish transportation market in 2017 year.

Results

The results are shown on figures 1 and 2. The starting point is the variant of the direct cooperation between a carrier and a transport user. The assumed freight rate in this variant is 3.5 PLN/km.

![Figure 1] Benefits of cooperation with an organizer of transport for a carrier

Source: own on the base of data collected from the Polish transportation market in 2017 year

The level of freight rates has the significant impact on the profitability of a road carrier. Despite higher productivity of a carrier in case of cooperation with an organizer of transport, a freight rate cannot be too low – the minimum acceptable price for the transportation service is 3.1 PLN/km (3.26 PLN/km for an organizer of transport...
and a transport user). Such price on the other hand is the highest acceptable price for a transport user and this level will be used in the next calculations.

The rate for a better service, when the productivity is lower in comparison to the variant “Better productivity”, is much higher – 3.7 PLN/km for the carrier and 3.89 PLN/km for a transport user. Despite this considerable increase of the price a transport user obtains the reduction of overall logistics costs thanks to the good logistics customer service. It is worth notice, that changes of freight rates without changing the service level don’t have big impact on profitability of a transport user (see Figure 2). These results of simulation can raise a question what is the justification for the common practice of transport users for economizing on transport costs? Do they properly calculate all costs and benefits of cooperating with a good service provider?

Next calculations for the rest of variants have been made with the use of the above results: 3.5 PLN/km for the direct cooperation, 3.10 PLN/km for the cooperation with an transport organizer and 3.7 PLN/km for better service. The results of simulations are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5. Synthesis of simulation results for all variants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variant</th>
<th>Small variety of sales</th>
<th>Biger variety of sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>more productivity</td>
<td>more service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of a carrier (PLN/km)</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of a carrier’s rate (%)</td>
<td>–11.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase of a carrier’s profits (%)</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>102.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction of logistics costs of a transport user</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>value (PLN/vehicle)</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–1.7%</td>
<td>–36.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>value (PLN/vehicle)</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–0.3%</td>
<td>–82.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Source: own on the base of data collected from the Polish transportation market in 2017 year.
In all variants a carrier obtains considerable benefits – the biggest ones in variant “Better service”. As for the benefits of a transport user the results can be a surprise but on the other hand are possible to explain.

In the variant “Better productivity” the logistics costs reduction is relatively bigger in case of cheaper building materials (–1.7%), than in case of more expensive garments (–0.3%), what can be a proof, that economizing on transport costs can bring small benefits.

Much more profitable is increasing the quality of service, but the benefits depend on the value of commodities – bigger savings of logistics costs have been obtained in case of garments (–82.3%) than building materials (–36.0%).

This impact was lower for bigger fluctuations of demand (–71.6%, and –33.2% respectively), what was the unexpected results. The explanation can be probably that providing good service when demand is unstable and unpredictable is costly.

Conclusions

The conducted simulations confirmed that there are benefits of outsourcing of transport and freight forwarding services and using service of high quality especially in case of goods of high value. The greatest impact have the quality of a service. The results of simulations seem to confirm the results of the research conducted for years, that the impact of the efficiency of logistics processes in the form of good logistic service of customers, may be more important than a reduction of costs (Tracey, 1998; Stank, Goldsby, Vickery, Savitskie, 2003; Qrunfleh, Tarafdar, 2013). Economizing on prices for transportation services, what is a common practice in this market (not only in Poland) is hard to justify. Reducing this price can have little impact on profitability of a transport user but even a small decrease of price can dramatically reduce profitability of transport carriers and freight forwarders. It seems, that not all companies are aware of this and understand the value of good quality of a service.

It should also be remembered, that not all benefits of outsourcing can be measured and not all of them can be expressed in the economical terms. The model presented in the paper can only be a support in making decisions concerning cooperation with external service providers. Final decisions should be made by managers in companies using transport and freight forwarding services.

References


MANAGEMENT OF THE PERSONNEL FUNCTION IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

JUSTyna MARIA MYszAK

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: justyna.myszak@wzieu.pl

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Abstract The main goal of the article is to show the importance of an analysis of a company’s environment in the context of the implementation of the personnel function. The study presents the structure of the environment (divided into micro- and macro-environment) in an orderly way, along with a description of individual elements in relation to the development of human capital in an organization. Exploration and monitoring of individual areas of the environment by organizations is at present a necessary condition, which not only fosters the formulation of a company’s unique strategy, but also enables making the right decisions that guarantee survival on an extremely dynamic market.

Introduction

Contemporary, changeable market situation, which results from inter alia fast-paced globalization and internationalization of business, has made it relatively difficult for an organization to anticipate various opportunities and threats coming from the environment. Companies that want to survive on the market must anticipate the changes that take place in the environment in advance. Hence, a market environment analysis is helpful. For entrepreneurs,
elements of the macro-environment, influencing the personnel function (also called the HR function), seem distant only seemingly. Market trends do not often attract the attention of managers who, in the course of managing the enterprise and being preoccupied with current or short-term problems, underestimate the importance of the macro-environment analysis. Current problems in the labour market, related to the lack of employees and the need to “import” them from Ukraine and even Asian countries, are an good example here. What is more, there is a change in the tendency of transforming the employer’s market into the employee’s market. For the above reasons, the main goal of this article is to try to show the relation that exists between the company’s environment and the personnel function implemented by the organization.

External dimensions (the macro-environment factors) of the personnel function

For the purposes of this study, a dichotomous approach to the business environment has been adopted, as shown in Figure 1. There is a kind of feedback between various determinants of business environment and that is why occurrence of changes in one of them may contribute to the occurrence of changes in the other. What is more, the boundary between micro- and macro-environment conditions is “fluid” and there is not any specific set of connections and impact of individual factors that influence the shape of the personnel function implementation. Therefore, the subject of theoretical reflection and practical solutions are on the one hand the same or similar problems related to the acquisition, evaluation, remuneration and development of employees (which occur in micro-environment). On the other hand, the approach to solving these issues is changing, mainly due to changes that take place”(Pocztowski, 2009) in the macro-environment.

![Figure 1. The components of the personnel function environment](source)

Economic determinants

The economic environment of an enterprise includes all economic phenomena that are shaped by the government's economic policy. They include such indicators as: economic growth rates, interest rates, unemployment rate, exchange rates, inflation level, foreign trade balance and many others (Chrisidu-Budnik, 2005), which will affect the organization and consumers with varying intensity. For example, under high inflation the prices of products increase as it is related to even more expensive acquisition of resources by companies. Moreover, consumers are not willing to borrow money at high interest rates and organizations have to pay more for a loan. High unemployment, on the other hand, allows companies to introduce a very selective recruitment policy (Wajda, 2003), which enables selecting an employee appropriate to a vacant position.

The issue of the economic situation, which has a very strong impact on employment (depending on the phase in which a given economy is in given time) is also significant. For example, in the expansion phase (economic recovery), organizations are more willing to invest, which directly translates into an increased demand for labour, and thus a creation of new workplaces, with the final effect being a drop in unemployment. As rightly noted by Z. Pawlak (2011), "fast economic growth, increase in the company's income also creates opportunities for fast increase of earnings, as well as developing the sphere of social and living benefits for the benefit of employees".

Political and legal determinants

Political and legal determinants in each country are of high importance because they contribute to ensuring socio-economic order. Depending on the adopted rules (as well as the honesty of state authorities in enforcing them), these regulations will affect the functioning of individual enterprises to a lesser or greater degree. It follows from its definition that the political and legal dimension "includes the state regulation of economic activity and relations between the state and economy. It is defined by the constitutions and laws of the countries in which the organizations conduct their activities, in particular by legislation regarding companies, antitrust and tax regulations" (Bendkowski, Bendkowski, 2008). The legal regulations that significantly affect human resources management in the organization include, among others: labour law regulations, civil law provisions, acts on trade unions, the act on the promotion of employment and labour market institutions, commercial companies law, provisions of tax law and many others, such as administration, insurance or financial law regulations (Pocztowski, 2007).

Socio-cultural determinants

In the literature on the subject, the authors very often separate the above conditions by analysing each one separately. They often distinguish an additional dimension, namely a demographic one. For the purposes of this study, however, it was decided to combine the above determinants because the correlation that exists between them is extremely strong. Changes in the socio-cultural determinants should be observed over a longer period of time. Parameters characterizing the social environment, which include (Golebiowski, 2001):

- the level of civilization, i.e. the level of education and qualifications, the health status of the society, the state of security of citizens, the state of social security,
- social attitudes, lifestyle, consumption patterns, i.e. attitude to work, the model of spending free time, the importance of the family, functions of a woman in the family directly affect cultural determinants.
For example in case of attitude to work, the organizational culture “covering all values, norms of rules, behavioural patterns characteristic for employees in a given organization and affecting their actions and behaviours” (Pocztowski, 1998) will be of high importance. In addition, the issue of the culture of a nation is also significant. It “is not identical with the culture of the organization, but to a certain extent, the culture of the organization will reflect the dominant values of the culture of the country in which the organization operates” (Robbins, Judge, 2012). Thus, the socio-cultural factors characterizing a given country exert an extremely significant influence on shaping certain patterns of behaviours, values or ethical and moral norms, which in turn translate into the attitude of people to work and their approach to the implementation of the personnel function.

Technical and scientific progress

Scientific and technical determinants contribute to revolutionary changes in the sphere of functioning of both economy and each organization. At present, companies which do not enjoy this benefit, lose their value. Technical and scientific progress is not only the source of creation of new products and services, but also new qualifications which often decide about their competitive advantage. The facts show, however, that along with scientific and technical progress, the replacement of humans in the work process (including new technologies) is noticed, which directly translates into employment reduction. If employees want to keep their current job, they also have to keep up with progress, for example by improving their qualifications and professional skills or gaining new ones (Janowska, 2010). For instance, in recent years, thanks to the dynamic development of such areas of technology as IT and telecommunications, many new job offers, related to previously unknown professions and specialties, have appeared on the labour market. These include among others tele-working, which in many traditional professions has profoundly transformed not only the system of working time, but also its organization. It should therefore be pointed out that technical and scientific progress indisputably allows for free flow of intellectual capital between countries (Pawlak, 2011), which is a premise of for inter alia fast-paced globalization.

International determinants — globalization

Nowadays international determinants, constituting a specific element of the macro-environment, play a significant role in the life of almost every organization (whether it is ready for it or not). This is “a dimension that affects the state in which organizations that are influenced by economic activity in other countries or are already involved in this activity” (Wajda, 2003). For example, multinational companies such as General Electric, Sony or even Procter & Gamble not only are influenced by the conditions prevailing in (“foreign”) international markets, but they are also directly affected by them. Analysing for instance McDonald’s restaurant chain, one can easily find information that currently the company operates in 119 countries and serves around 58 million customers a day (www.manager.money.pl). It also plays a significant role in Poland, as opening of 402 restaurants in over 150 cities has resulted in the employment of over 22,500 people (www.mcdonalds.pl), which contributes to the creation of new workplaces and decrease in unemployment. The reasons for which enterprises want to expand their business activity on new sales markets are also seen in the strength of competition. “Even companies operating only in one country can meet on the domestic market with foreign competition or use materials or production equipment imported from abroad” (Griffin, 2004).
The international determinants are directly related to inter alia technical and scientific determinants, which, as mentioned above, created the possibility of not only free movement of techniques (machines, devices, transport, etc.), information, but also important intellectual capital between countries. This, in turn, is the premise of globalization. According to G.W. Kolodko (2001), “Globalization is a process of creating a liberalized and integrated global market for goods and capital and the shaping of a new international institutional order, serving the development of production, trade and financial flows on a global scale.” One can be tempted to supplement this definition and state that it also serves the development of the flow of human (intellectual) capital, which affects the development of “universal” international personnel function.

In the context of human resources management, the definition proposed by A. Pocztowski (2007) seems to be more adequate, because according to the author “globalization is the process of integration of the world economy, taking place among others through trade, cooperation of governments and enterprises, international circulation of money, confluence of cultures and the similarity of lifestyles and social institutions”. Thus, it means that as a result of fast-paced globalization, organizations of the 21st century face more and more new challenges that are particularly visible in the sphere of company management. The higher the degree of enterprise globalization, the more noticeable are the effects of decisions taken, which, in addition to the fact that they concern more complex tasks, additionally have a greater range of impact. The question of the personnel function is not without significance. As a result of globalization, the macro-environment determinants are constantly being transformed. This refers to the migration of people (free movement of capital), which enforces an introduction of legal changes in the area of the labour market and employment (Pocztowski, 2007).

**External determinants of human resources management**

The external micro-environment determinants are formed by specific organizations, institutions or groups that influence the functioning of a given enterprise (Bendkowski, Bendkowski, 2008). The impact and selection of specific elements of the institutional environment of course depends on many factors, including the type of business. Nevertheless, Table 1 presents common elements of the micro-environment with a brief characteristic of their impact on human resources management in the organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Micro-environment determinants</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
Currently, clients exert a great influence not only on the functioning of the organization, but also on human resources management as:
- they formulate specific product and quality requirements,
- they expect fast, professional and cultural service.

As a result of this:
- great emphasis is placed on the recruitment and selection process of staff, especially in companies where there is direct contact with the client, e.g. banks, hotel or catering services,
- implementation and conduction of programs, methods and various forms of training, during which employees, for example through staging, demonstrations, trainings (and many other forms), gain appropriate knowledge and skills in conducting conversations with clients, learn how to approach customers and behave in abnormal situations etc.

A particularly visible effect can be seen in the area of:
- selection of employees – some employers unofficially seek candidates among employees of the competition, proposing a more interesting job offer. At present, job offers, e.g. for the position of a sales representative, very often include the following condition: “a candidate with own customer base wanted”,
- remuneration and working conditions – too low remuneration or unfavourable working conditions are often the reason why employees leave their jobs (even the key ones) and joining competing companies. Thus, sufficient market data in the above-mentioned scope is indispensable.

They include above all:
- trade unions and professional associations,
- non-company trade unions, e.g. industry, inter-branch, regional, national trade unions associations (federations) and national inter-trade trade union confederations

They include above all:
- the Confederation of Polish Employers (KPP),
- the Polish Confederation of Private Employers – Lewiatan (PKPP Lewiatan),
- Business Center Club,
- the Polish Craft Association (ZRP).

Their task is, among others, to protect the interests of associated members, representing employers towards the state, self-government and trade unions, conducting collective bargaining, concluding collective labour agreements and other agreements

They include in particular:
- personnel consulting companies which provide consulting services and deal with recruitment and HR selection, manage personnel matters by means of outsourcing in an objective and professional manner,
- IT companies which deal with the production and sales of computer software that supports dealing with personnel matters. Depending on the software purchased by the company, systems include various activities, such as planning, recording, employee evaluation, employment analysis or calculation of wages in the organization,
- training companies, whose scope of vocational education and training is as diverse as their number. These include above all: training and vocational training institutions, schools for managers, foundations and professional associations, as well as universities,
- professional publications, all kinds of literature, such as books, magazines presenting knowledge in the field of human resources management, prevailing development trends on the market, applied methods in practice, tools, concepts, popular profiles of famous managers, personal advisers, etc.

These include in particular:
- the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy,
- Employment Offices (province and poviat ones),
- the National Labour Inspectorate,
- Labour inspectorates,
- State Sanitary Inspection,
- the Office of Technical Inspection,
- Social Insurance Company (ZUS),
- Labour and social security courts

\[1\] More on this subject in: http://www.zwiazekzawodowy.pl.
\[2\] More on this subject: http://zielonalinia.gov.pl/-/jakie-organizacje-pracodawcow-funkcjonuja-w-polsce-11840.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is worth emphasizing that the abovementioned conditions significantly interweave and permeate each other, constituting a kind of chain of interaction. For example, the economic environment of a given country, i.e. the unemployment rate, economic growth rates or interest rates directly depend on the policy pursued in a given country. In the context of, for instance, high unemployment rate, people often migrate in order to seek new and more attractive working conditions abroad. Such actions exert influence on demographic, socio-cultural or even international determinants, which in turn are related to the policy of the European Union. Modern organizations operating in dynamically changing conditions must not only become familiar with the principles that dictate particular conditions, but also have to constantly monitor phenomena occurring both on the local and global market. Understanding, analysing and drawing the right conclusions from both micro- and macro-environment determinants (that basically are more tangible) can provide the company with many valuable information that, if used in an appropriate manner, can contribute to the professional implementation of the personnel function.

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http://www.zwiazekzawodowy.pl.


www.mcdonalds.pl.

INTERNET OF THINGS – CONDITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM

AGNIESZKA NIEZGODA,1 MATYLDA AWEDYK2

1 Poznań University of Economics, POLAND
e-mail: agnieszka.niezgoda@ue.poznan.pl
2 Poznan University of Physical Education, POLAND
e-mail: awedyk@awf.poznan.pl

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Keywords Internet of Things, IoT, tourism innovations, tourism development, individualization, personalization

Abstract The tourism market is very vulnerable to changes due to the existence of the internet. The observation of buyers’ behavior, including e-readiness, prompts agencies to increase the intensity of their online activity. With this potential, which helps to transform many aspects of the travel experience, the Internet of Things (IoT) enables companies to aggregate and integrate large collections of data from multiple sources and instantly personalize the experiences of tourists.

The purpose of this discussion is to explore how we can use new technologies in the form of Internet of Things (IoT) to create personalized offers for tourists. The background to consider is the analysis of the current trends conditioning the use of the Internet of Things in the tourism market, to which authors include phenomena of a general nature: technological and social development and phenomena directly related to tourism: individualization and personalization of offers. The authors hypothesize that the Internet of Things offers huge opportunities in tourism on the supply side, however, tourists do not give up on personalized services. Therefore, one cannot completely give up the contact with the customer. The work is of the reviewed and researched nature. Descriptive and critical analysis methods are also used. In the empirical part, qualitative research was conducted in the form of focused group interviews and quantitative surveys, which included a diagnostic survey using a questionnaire. The research has an exploratory aspect because of the fact that the Internet of Things is still a new issue that needs to be explored more deeply. Survey responses showed that the Internet serves potential tourists to search for travel information and less to book tickets. Researchers also note the shortcomings of spontaneous Internet functions (e.g. the nuisance of “cookies”).
Introduction

Globalization causes that the processes of individualization are confronted with the growing importance of world standardization. The process of simultaneous presence of individualization and standardization enables customers to get what they want, and companies can use their knowledge in R&D. According to R. Butler, “tourists of the 21st century” are different from the tourists of previous epochs, with unprecedented scale and ease of movement to travel (Butler, 2006). The response to these changes is the high level of supply elasticity influenced by changes in the Internet.

As technology is getting cheaper and more efficient, much of the innovation has “shifted” towards the use of smart devices and communication systems to interact with wider environment. Many tourist and hotel brands currently use in their operations, titled in the paper and described in the following part of the work, the phenomenon of the Internet of Things (IoT – the Internet of Things) (Ashton, 2009), experimenting with the introduction of related technology to work with the client. With the potential of transforming many aspects of travel, Internet of Things (IoT) allows companies to collect and integrate large sets of data from different sources and instantly personalize them for tourists.

Tourists are more demanding and consume far more information than ever before. Among the trends characterizing the development of tourism can be noted individualization, standardization of services and increasing self-reliance in developing consumer packages. These trends lead to changes in the ways that companies attract customers and satisfy their needs.

The purpose of this paper is to explore ways of using new technologies in the form of Internet of Things (IoT) to create personalized offers for tourists, taking into account the conditions resulting from both transformations of tourism supply (in particular technological changes) as well as demand conditions resulting from changes in consumer behavior in the tourism market.

IoT as a result of technological changes

IoT is a term invented and first presented in 1999 by Kevin Aston during a presentation for Procter & Gamble. The term refers to the future in a world in which all types of electronic devices can be linked together through the Internet. In 2009, K. Asthon wrote: “If we had computers that knew everything about things – using data collected without any of our help – we would be able to track and count everything, significantly reduce waste, losses and costs. We would know when things will need replacements, repairs, whether they are new or their best time has passed. Internet of Things has huge potential, just as the Internet itself was some time ago. Maybe even bigger” (Asthon, 2009).

In the report “Internet of Things in Poland” (http://iab.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Raport-Internet-Rzeczy-w-Polsce.pdf, access 8.12.2016) the concept of IoT is understood as an ecosystem in which objects can communicate with each other, through or without human participation.

The architecture of the IoT -based tools, in its simplest form, is based upon:

– objects that can communicate, receive commands or transmit information,
– a communications network that mediates the dialogue,

1 In the later part of the work in some cases, instead of the full name of the phenomenon (Internet of Things) will be used the acronym – that is IoT.
— systems and IT solutions processing stored data and transmitting information to devices.

The efficiency and quality of decisions made by the last of the indicated elements is a guarantee of obtaining business value from the use of IoT. To achieve this, an appropriate approach to data analysis and the implementation of automation based on the use of mathematical models obtained, i.e. decision rules, are needed to create intelligence in interaction with objects. Building a data-driven support environment in line with these requirements is based on the identification and appropriate support of two different worlds – the knowledge identification area and the area of its operationalization, i.e. the productive implementation.

Changing consumer behavior in the travel market — individualization and personalization

The tourist market is very vulnerable to changes resulting from the existence of the Internet. Observing the behavior of buyers – including the willingness to use the network (e-readiness) – encourages the agencies to the growing intensity of Internet activity. According to surveys covering the Polish travel industry, 99% of tourism businesses use the Internet in their daily activities (Kachniewska, Nawrocka, Niezgoda, Pawlicz, 2012). One of the most important processes influencing the individualization of consumer behavior is the digitization of the tourist market, and in particular the digitization of distribution channels. This allows the consumer to gain the independence of travel arrangements, to compose tourism packages and to obtain detailed information about destinations, eliminating the partial or complete involvement of agents (Kachniewska, 2014). In the travel market, consumers interact with other network users and contribute not only to one company but to a whole community of professionals, service providers and other consumers. As C.K. Prahalad and V. Ramaswamy define (2005), co-creation replaces the exchange process. The condition of this process is the existence of a forum where there may be a dialogue between the consumer and the enterprise and the existence of rules for participation in the forum, which provide for a structured, productive interaction.

The Internet gives the consumer the freedom and opportunity not only to choose elements of the package but also to compare prices (Butler, 2006). This allows the consumer to construct an individual deal by selecting the components of the service in his own package.

It can be assumed that a result of the development of diverse needs and interests and of increasing opportunities for their realization in leisure time will be the individualization of patterns of travel and leisure. As more and more individual travelers are using the internet, their decision on where to go and what kind of service to use depends on the presence of the site on the internet and the opinions of other consumers. Individualization with the development of the internet is becoming an opportunity for new, not-so-popular tourism destinations (Butler, 2006). In order to recognize the conditions of the uses of the Internet of Things on the tourism market, the exploratory research must be carried out.

Methodology of research

In order to obtain an opinion and understanding of behavior, attitudes and preferences regarding the use of the internet by consumers on the tourism market, focus group interviews and diagnostic surveys were used. The authors realize that the chosen research method is characterized by a lack of representation and it is therefore not possible to estimate the entire population on the basis of the obtained data. It has been recognized, however, that the issue of consumer behavior requires the selection of a qualitative method of data collection. This is a focus group interview, and the results will provide a more detailed explanation of the problem (e.g. information
background, initiation of ideas, needs detection, hypothesis formulation). The study was conducted in 3 groups of 5 to 8 participants. Respondents were young people, students of one of the universities in Poznan. At a further stage of the study, a questionnaire survey (200 respondents) was used to make a preliminary analysis of the respondents’ vulnerability to changes in the Internet. A deliberate selection of the sample is justified by the exploratory nature of the study. It was assumed that young people know the advantages of the Internet and are able to assess the possibilities of its use.

**Internet use by tourists — results of empirical research**

The topic of discussion in the focus group interviews was the preferred way of organizing the trip during the holidays, taking into account individualization of proceedings. The study assumes that tourists with an individualized approach are more likely to use the internet to organize their travel (Niezgoda, 2010; Sonntag, 2006; Kachniewska, 2014). This allows us to understand the demand for using the internet (and the IoT), what is in line with the purpose of this study. In each discussion group, as a primary argument for an individual travel organization, it was reported that it was a “cheaper option”. Such a response may be due to the fact that the respondents were students, for whom economic factors are important. The discussion on the implications of the dependencies related to individualization and standardization in the tourism market indicated that “independence” and “self-satisfaction” are very important for young people. The two groups pointed to the fact that a self-organized trip allows one “to plan holidays in terms of their own interests and needs”, which is evidence of high awareness of their needs in the group of young consumers.

Another argument on this point was to state that during the self-organized travel “you can learn a lot”. In one group, there was an argument called “the control of one’s own actions,” which proves the consciousness of managing their own time. In another group there was an “ability to negotiate” factor, which was related to the new relations between the consumer and the producer described in the earlier part of the article. In one of the groups appeared the argument that self-organized trip “is not limited by terms and dates” and, in another, it is better to organize your own holiday because travel agency does not have a suitable offer. The last statement indicates high and varied requirements of the consumers described in the theoretical section of this article.

In the second stage of the study, a diagnostic survey was carried out to supplement the knowledge about consumers’ behavior determining the use of the internet in tourism. Respondents were also young people studying at the same university. More than half of the respondents (52.8%) prefer the individual way of organizing their holidays, only 11.1% of respondents prefer travel agents and 36.1% use both ways. Taking into account the possibility of using the internet, up to 94.4% of respondents use it “often” or “sometimes”. An analysis of the responses to the internet-related activities was conducted. In the search for information about the region, the internet uses 94.4% of the respondents, 86.1% for booking transport tickets, and 58.3% for booking tourist attractions (given options were “often” and “sometimes”). Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the internet in the above 1–3 steps, where 1 means “rarely”, 2 “sometimes”, 3 “often”, and then calculated the average rating to compare what internet activities play the most important role (Table1).

The results show that for the respondents, the internet has the greatest interest during “searching for information about attractions in the region” (2.78) and “looking for accommodation” (2.69). However, these are analytical activities, and the actual use of the internet that is “booking of transport tickets” and “admission tickets to
tourist attractions”, received relatively low assessment, indicating a less frequent use of the Internet (2.44 and 1.78 respectively). This result may point to capabilities of IoT, because it helps tourists in real time action.

Table 1. Use of the internet when organizing a tourist trip by respondents (scale 1–3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of the Internet</th>
<th>Respondents (Scale 1–3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Looking for accommodation</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booking transportation tickets</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching for information about the region</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism attractions ticket reservation</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: authors’ elaboration.

In the next group of questions, the respondents evaluated, on a scale of 1–5, if they want the internet to tell them what to do in the next steps (where 1 means the lowest and 5 – the highest desire). Answers to another question showed us that the respondents prefer the internet pointing “what to do next” (3.31) rather than “which site to enter” (2.83). This is a surprising result contrary to the claim of the great autonomy of tourists. However, the overall scores on a 5 point scale is not high. In the case of wanting to use internet hints as to what to do next during the holidays, the highest scores (4 and 5 pts) were given by 50% of the respondents.

Another question asked of respondents was to evaluate, on a scale of 1–5, scattering them through “cookies” (1 does not distract me at all, 5 – very distracting). Responses were aimed at assessing the general attitude of respondents to the spontaneous effects of the internet and its certain degree of autonomy, which is the basis of the IoT. The score (3.89) is quite surprising as it indicates that respondents are distracted by cookies. As much as 91.7% answered that scatter their “strong” or “very much” (4 and 5 points). This is certainly a limitation, because spontaneous information sent via the internet are perceived by the respondents as annoying and distracting.

The role of the Internet of Things in tourism development — opportunities and constraints

IoT provides instant access to information and data. Through mobile communications, social media and digitally-created content has completely transformed the way we travel – from booking and buying, to sharing the experiences and impressions by tourists during the travel. Anyone can be an author and a travel writer. Innovations in digital payment methods as well as the ability to quickly verify data have also led to the emergence of new forms of tourism products.

Availability of mobile applications and IoT gives the opportunity to improve the various stages of your journey (Buhalis, Amaranggana, 2015):

- in transportation (e.g. navigation and information about the duration of the journey, type of transportation, timetable, price list, information on current promotions),
- in accommodation (e.g. reservation and check-in, maintain contact after using the services of accommodation),
- in gastronomy, (e.g. location information (navigation) and about the restaurant itself, offerings for specialized diets, variety of meals and ingredients),
- in tourism attractions (e.g. cooperation through digital maps, exchange of experiences and information, update of events, recommendation system),
- in support services (e.g. navigation, general information, data updates).
Use of the IoT for the tourism industry also is raising some concerns. These include:
- storage, processing and analysis of data,
- security and privacy of information,
- energy efficiency and consumption at consumer level,
- difficulty in integrating older systems processes into the IoT,
- the danger of attacks and hacking attempts to take over the data.
Cisco (2016) publishes annual reports on cyber threats and cybercrime. It is worth noting the basic tendencies which include:
- IR devices can be used to distribute malicious software or become a source of denial of service, which could result in damage, but also in extreme cases, loss of life,
- the ability to correlate information from different sources – car, cell phone, home automation, give a much wider idea of the user than looking for information from one device or application; these details of shopping habits or physical location help launch good, highly targeted and personalized campaigns that were not seen before,
- the so-called “forgotten assets” are increasing the number of abandoned and unmanaged IoT devices whose security has not been updated or improved, and as technology advances become an easily accessible form of data.
To combat these threats throughout the continuum of the attack – from attack, during and after, organizations and industries need comprehensive protection. Strengthening the weak links of the security chain is primarily about the ability to create cyber-crime awareness at board level and make cyberbullying an imperative for the company.

Conclusions

Adaptation of the IoT creates tremendous opportunities and challenges. With the continuous flow of information, people can learn more about the world, and at the same time, companies about people. In 2017 it is no longer a discussion on what IoT is, but how to implement it most effectively. According to Gartner (2016) and Cisco (2016) 99% of physical objects that may one day be connected to the network are still unconnected. However, in 2016 with the Internet of Things there are already 6.4 billion devices connected, and this number will increase by 2020, to almost 21 billion (http://www.gartner.com/newsroom/id/3165317).

The phenomenon of Internet of Things is particularly exciting because of the infinite possibilities that can be created by converting consumer applications to commercial and industrial applications, thus transforming the performance of the various industries, including tourism.

As empirical studies have shown consumers notice the opportunities offered by the use of the internet in making an individual offer. Responses showed that the internet gives potential tourists the ability to search for travel information and less to book tickets.

References

Internet of Things — conditions and opportunities for the development in tourism


THE SPECIFIC NATURE OF FUNCTIONING OF THE CENTRES WHERE LARGE RELIGIOUS EVENTS ARE ORGANIZED

STEFAN NOWAK,1 AGNIESZKA ULFIK2

University of Physical Education in Katowice, POLAND
1 e-mail: nowakstef@gmail.com
2 e-mail: aulfik@gmail.com

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Abstract The functioning of the centres, where the places of religious worship are located, is connected with the occurrence of periodic impediments resulting from the large influx of pilgrims in selected periods, so called pilgrimage peaks. The research conducted is aimed at developing a functioning model of the centres in which large religious events are organized on a regular basis to facilitate more effective involvement of the city residents in providing services for arriving pilgrims – tourists and to contribute to the sustainable development of the centres with similar characteristics.

The article presents selected procedures related to the organization and securing of seasonal pilgrimages and analysis of preparations for the celebration of the World Youth Day in Czestochowa, as well as presents the considerations on functioning of the city during this period.

Introduction

The functioning of the centres, where religious worship sites are present, is connected with the occurrence of periodic impediments resulting from the large influx of pilgrims in selected periods, which are called pilgrimage peaks. Depending on the specifics of the city, each pilgrimage centre may have different periods in which significantly more pilgrims arrive to the centre. Because they are cyclical periods, people responsible for the course and safety
of pilgrimage peaks in the city have prepared a series of procedures, implemented almost automatically, ensuring the feeling of relative comfort relative and safety of both pilgrims and residents of the centre. The organization of non-standard events that will attract a lot more tourists – pilgrims is associated with a significant commitment on the part of the organizer and city authorities and means a number of difficulties for its residents.

**Tourism management at the level of the city**

The main purpose of tourism management at the level of the city is raising its competitiveness which results in its sustainable development (Scott, Baggio, Cooper, 2008) i.e. development of touristic functions and other socio-economic functions which are influenced by the above-mentioned competitiveness. That purpose refers to both: indirect competitiveness, which creates conditions for the functioning of touristic entities which enables increasing their individual competitive superiority, and direct competitiveness which acquires abilities helping each region to gain tourists and other benefits, for example: investors, large events organization, EU funds (Jędrzejczyk, 2003).

According to the World Tourism Organization, tourism management at the level of a city or region refers to the creation and implementation of a coherent tourism policy in accordance with its sustainable organizational system, and making effective decisions in this regard (UNWTO, 2010). Mezoeconomic application of these actions allows simultaneous glance from the macro perspective and using experience of practice and theory of formal organizations management on the micro level. In the classical sense, the management consists of four interconnected sequences of logical functions: planning, organizing, leadership and controlling (Stoner, Wankel, 1992). Due to the complexity of urban development processes, they must be verified (Nawrot, Zmyślony, 2009). General principles and methods of strategy construction should be based on the concept of strategic management (Bryson, Alston, 2005), which specifies the manner of thinking, acting and learning, which on the one hand involves a comprehensive and broad view perspective, but on the other hand leads to specific and precise actions selection. It has more often visionary and proactive nature than reactive nature; it is also flexible and practical. Its bases include: outside orientation instead of internal development problems, and the involvement of all stakeholders in tourism development. Strategic management combines continuous analysis of environment, its resources and position towards competition. Due to the concentration in long time horizon it is also possible not to be submissive to short terms which are often treacherous. Therefore farsightedness cannot be confused with a lack of flexibility in the case of the new opportunities or significant changes emergence, which are compared with the previously accepted assumptions.

Development decisions involve many bodies with regard to the planning which therefore should take place in a collegial manner, through discussion and arrangements that affect making decisions and blurring responsibility for prolongation of their implementation. Moreover, development objectives of tourism in the city are multi-faceted, more generally formulated for marketing purposes, and due to non-market tourism functions which are partly irrational and immeasurable may be difficult to formulate (Murphy, Murphy, 2004). The time horizon covered by the planning is relatively longer than business plans, because the results of actions are visible in the long period. E. Inskeep says that this should take from 10 to 20 years, which reduces strategic records of concreteness (National and Regional Tourism Planning, 1995).

The organizational function must be adapted to the complete and complex organizational structure of the city on a larger scale than in formal organizations (Murphy, Murphy, 2004). Under these conditions, the most important
The specific nature of functioning of the centres where large religious events are organized

task is to build the partnership, which does not have hierarchical character, based on the sovereignty and equality of entities belonging to its composition. The establishment and functioning of the partnership structure is primarily a challenge to the existing structure of the tourist region (Machiavelli, 2001). In addition, the process of organizing tactical dimension is associated with the type, size and complementary to the investments of location programming.

It differs to the greatest extend from the activities undertaken by people in organizations. It does not refer directly to people, but to sovereign institution’s entities, businesses and organizations whose activities are based on their own resources and it is consistent with the objectives. Therefore, conduction has participating character and it is implemented in the form of indirect influence on entities’ behaviours who are involved in the creation of the tourist offer (Zmyślony, 2008). Due to the fragmentation and complementarity of the tourism economy of urban bodies, it is important for tourist organization to integrate local authorities, businesses and other institutions involved in the tourism development or to enable creation of partnerships (UNWTO, 2010). We cannot distinguish one universal form and structure of organization which is called Destination Management Organization (DMO) in English.

In Polish cities, this function is performed by public entities, ie organizational units of local government or institutions that are financially dependent on it, tourist organizations or other non-profit organizations, regional development agencies or enterprises established by private entities. The adoption of a particular formula in a city depends on the level of tourism development, the position and strength of municipal authorities, tourist entities interaction, the evolution of the authorities’ organizational structure, legal solutions in the field of tourism or using external funds (Zmyślony, 2008; Wang, 2011). This emphasizes complex and large-scale nature of the territorial tourism product and it means that the DMO should be characterized by a flexible hierarchical structure that can be easily adapted to market demands and changes in the environment. It is worth mentioning that the organization created or extracted specifically for the needs of tourism management in the region or additional business, is able to guarantee a professional tasks performance level in this regard. The boundaries of DMO coincide with the boundaries of administrative units. The controlling functions also have to be understood in a much broader sense, because tourism directly or indirectly affects almost all spheres of social and economic life. To ensure effectiveness, it is important to create a control system, to indicate entities that are responsible for conducting it and gathering information needed for the measurement. One must determine whether tourist activity does not interfere with environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability and whether it includes educational elements and associates with the involvement of the local community (Telfer, 2008). Controlling in the tourist region should apply to the following areas: tourists’ needs satisfaction level, economic effects of social and cultural changes and the impact on the environment. Similarly to the previous tourism management functions, the key to success is cooperation (Uysal, 2013).

Active engagement of local tourist organizations is a vital input to the balanced progression of tourism in the region. Local Tourist Organizations are a basis for collaboration between companies of the tourism branch, industry entities and local government subjects. Their operation is directly influencing the dynamics of the progression of local tourism through the making-off and introduction of business strategy (Stefko, Nowak, 2014; Grabara, 2013).
Preparations for the organization of the Holy Father’s visit to Częstochowa during the World Youth Day in 2016

The World Youth Day (WYD) which was held in Krakow in 2016, took place from 25.07 to 31.07. As it is an international venture with the official participation of the head of state, nearly all state, regional and local services are involved in the organization of the visit. The planned part of the World Youth Day was the visit of the Holy Father in Częstochowa at Jasna Góra, which resulted in the inclusion of the city of Częstochowa for the official celebration of the WYD.

The city of Częstochowa is often referred to as the spiritual capital of Poland as it is the centre where the place of religious worship is situated - the monastery on Jasna Gora. The city of Częstochowa and its inhabitants are accustomed to a significant number of pilgrims coming to the area and to periodically occurring pilgrimage peaks. It is estimated that each year, 3 to 4 million pilgrims visit Jasna Góra. The pilgrimage movement is particularly intensified from May to October; however the most troublesome are the holiday months, which is why many of Częstochowa’s residents are happy to leave the city at that time. In Czestochowa, one can especially point to two peaks which occur during the period: one on 14–15 August associated with the feasts of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and on 25–26 August related to the celebrations of Our Lady of Czestochowa. Figure 1 shows the distribution of recorded average of daily visits to Jasna Góra in the summer months, which well shows the occurrence of pilgrimage peaks. The scale of the difficulties in organizing the celebrations of the World Youth Day and their impact on the functioning of the city is evidenced by the fact that on the day of the Holy Father’s visit, about 300,000 young people arrived at Jasna Góra, and about 400,000 pilgrims took part in the main mass.

![Figure 1. Average of daily visits to Jasna Góra in the summer months](source: own study based on Jasna Góra data's.)

In the city, the president of the city of Częstochowa who is responsible for organizing and securing the work of the World Youth Day, in a special regulation set up working teams covering areas such as:
The specific nature of functioning of the centres where large religious events are organized

1. Working team for security, mainly covering members of the Częstochowa Municipal Office.

2. Medical and sanitary team covering:
   - Department of Health,
   - Team of city hospitals,
   - Emergency Medical Service,
   - Sanitary Inspectorate.

3. Infrastructure and transport team including representatives of the Municipal Road and Transport Administration.

4. Team for maintenance of cleanliness, order, sanitation and local public transport including, among others:
   - Department of Crisis Management, Population Protection and Defense,
   - Municipal Transport Company,
   - Sewage Treatment Plant “Warta” S A,
   - Water Supply and Sewerage Joint Stock Company of the Częstochowa District,
   - Municipal Police,
   - City Treasurer.

5. Social communication team, which includes, among others:
   - Spokesperson of the Municipal Office,
   - Department of Culture, Promotion and Sport,
   - Representatives of the church.

The team was composed mostly of representatives of units subordinate to the President but it included also representatives of the church side and institutions independent of the President. The role of the team was primarily to coordinate activities to safeguard the organized event, streamline key information, and coordinate activities with the security services.

During the organization of the celebrations of the World Youth Day in Częstochowa, the event was secured by over 8,000 policemen, but also about 900 firefighters from the state and voluntary fire brigades. Their tasks included first aid; firefighters from 20 walking patrols provided first aid to 55 pilgrims. In addition, more than 350 people of the city’s services were involved in medical coverage of the event, which included more than 50 walking patrols, 27 ambulances, 5 fixed medical service units (tents), 3 patrols on quads and the command unit of medical staff.

What seems particularly interesting is the case of volunteers who helped to secure the event. According to information provided by Jasna Góra information services, there were only about 150 of them. This amount may be due to the fact that the future volunteers had to buy packages which cost between PLN 50 and PLN 300 depending on which resources they included: a T-shirt, warm meal, transportation and overnight stay.

Functioning of the city during the celebration of the World Youth Day on Jasna Góra

The inhabitants of Częstochowa are accustomed to periodic difficulties connected with the pilgrimage peaks, but the survey conducted directly before the WYD celebrations in Częstochowa showed that a large part of the inhabitants (38%) intended to leave the city during the celebrations. The most frequent reason for such a decision given by the respondents was a problem related to the difficulties of city functioning during the Pope’s arrival. The second reason for leaving the city in the analysed period was the fear of a possible terrorist attack, which may directly or indirectly affect the safety of remaining residents.
During the main ceremonies of the World Youth Day in Częstochowa from 27 to 28 July 2016 further studies were conducted to demonstrate the real impact of WYD on the functioning of the city and its inhabitants. Surveyors were sent to check the functioning of businesses such as shops, bars, service companies and other businesses located within 500m from the centre where the celebrations took place. The interviewers conducted also structured interviews, which showed that the local entrepreneurs suffered heavy financial losses during the WYD celebrations in Częstochowa. The main cause of the situation was the accumulation of all the celebrations in the monastery on Jasna Góra and in the surrounding parks - the organisers did not manage to encourage participants to leave the area and visit the city - and the departure of a significant part of the inhabitants of Częstochowa in anticipation of the impediments to the city functioning in the analysed period. Due to the repeated inconvenience, there is a visible need to develop and implement a concept that will enable greater involvement of the local community in the organization and operation of existing pilgrimage tourism movements, which may improve the attitude of the residents towards arriving pilgrims.

Conclusions

The research conducted by the Authors regarding the attitude of Częstochowa residents to arriving pilgrims - tourists in the context of the comfort of living in the city indicates the lack of special nuisance in functioning outside the main pilgrimage peaks and the low use of economic potential associated with a large influx of tourists-pilgrims among the residents. This leads to moderately negative attitude to the organization of large religious events which significantly limit the freedom of functioning of residents in Częstochowa.

References


UNIVERSITIES PROMOTIONAL ACTIONS AS A WAY TO LEVEL THE EFFECTS OF DEMOGRAPHIC DECLINE

IZABELA OSTROWSKA
University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: izabela.ostrowska@wzieu.pl

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KEYWORDS marketing, universities promotion, demographic decline

ABSTRACT Since 2006, universities have been affected by the demographic decline, which causes that the number of students is decreasing in Poland. A smaller number of potential candidates for studies means that universities must actively promote themselves to encourage young people to choose their services. The article has a research character based on the analysis of available statistical data, the literature of the subject and the results of the survey. The aim of the study and the presented article is to identify places where young people undertaking full-time studies (as it is the dominant form of education at public universities) searched for information about studying opportunities and getting to know their opinions on places where the university should promote itself.

Introduction
In recent years, universities have begun to “feel” the effects of the demographic decline, which decreased the number of students in Poland. Forecasts show that the peak of this decline will take place in 2023. A smaller number of potential candidates for studies means that universities have to compete with each other and effectively encourage young people to choose a particular faculty at a given institution rather than at another university in the area.
Otherwise, the group of students will be reduced every year and the university will be forced to reduce the academic staff. With time, it may turn out that the some of the buildings will become unnecessary and the university, instead of developing, will slowly sell out or rent space to other entities. This is not an optimistic vision, especially for faculties with a long-standing tradition and a significant scientific position. It is forecasted that only a hundred, out of a few hundred, of private universities will survive the decline. Currently, there are about 130 state-owned universities in Poland, however, they also suffer from the effects of demographic decline. Many, also renowned universities, recruit students for full-time studies by the end of September, because they are not able to obtain a sufficient number of candidates (https://www.forbes.pl/kariera/do-2023-roku-zostanie-w-polsce-100-uczelnia-prywatnych/9917kvm).

Method

The article is based on the analysis of available statistical data, the literature of the subject and the results of the survey. The aim of the study and the presented article is to identify places where young people undertaking full-time studies (as it is the dominant form of education at public universities) sought information about studying opportunities and getting to know their opinions on places where the university should be promoted. The survey was conducted in January 2018 on a sample of 149 respondents in one of the economic faculties in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship (the sample was random, the selection was layered, 30% of students in 1st and 2nd degree studies at this faculty were analyzed). The analysis carried out due to the purpose of the article has been limited to the answers given by students who study full-time. The study is not representative, but it can be treated as a pilot and the basis for further research. However, the results obtained on such a small sample can be valuable due to their timeliness. It is intended to repeat the analysis annually to identify changes in the behaviors and preferences of young people.”

Students in Poland over the last decade

Since 2006, the number of students in Poland has been systematically decreasing – Figure 1 shows the number of students per 10 thousand. residents. In the academic year 2016/2017, 1,348.8 students were educated in 390 higher education institutions. In comparison, in 2005/2006 it was 1,953.8 that is over 605 thousand. more people. Within 11 years, the number of students has decreased by 31%. Scholarization rates are the measures of prevalence of education. Gross scholarization rate in higher education grew from 12.9% in the academic year 1990/1991 to 53.8% in the academic year 2010/2011, and then it fell, reaching 47.6% in the academic year 2015/2016. On the other hand, net scholarization rate grew – from 9.8% in 1990/1991 to 40.8% in 2010/2011, while in the academic year 2016/2017 it dropped to 36.8% (GUS, 2017, pp. 25–26). On this basis, it can be concluded that the peak of interest in higher studies in Poland has already passed. The percentage of people deciding to take up higher education after secondary school is lower, and the number of people aged 18-24 decreases, that is from the most important segment for the university (31.0% drop compared to 2005).

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1 Gross scholarization rate it is the ratio of the number of all learners at a given level to the total population of persons in the age nominally assigned to this level of education (for higher education 19–24, as of December 31) expressed as a percentage.

2 Net scholarization rate on the other hand, shows the percentage of learners at the nominal age of education at a given level in the entire population of persons in the age nominally assigned to this level of education.
Universities promotional actions as a way to level the effects of demographic decline

It is worth noting that public and private universities are competing on the higher education services market. Non-public schools have a significantly smaller share in the market of educational services, as shown in Figure 2.

![Figure 2. Share of public and non-public schools in the market of educational services](Image)

In 2016/2017, there were 390 higher education institutions in Poland (including schools of the Ministry of National Defense and Internal Affairs and Administration). 132 of them were public universities in which 1,034.2 thousand students were educated. (76.7% of all students, 76.5% in the previous year). In this period, there were 258 non-public universities educating 314.7 thousand students (23.3% of all students). In comparison to the previous year, the number of non-public higher education institutions dropped, and the number of youth studying there decreased by 4.7% (GUS, 2017, p. 28).

In recent years, an increasing share of students studying at public higher education institutions has been observed, in which full-time studies were the dominant form of education – 78.7% (78.0% in 2015/2016). The opposite situation occurs in non-public higher education institutions in which part-time studies prevail. This form of education was used by 73.9% of students of these universities (75.7% in 2015/2016) (GUS, 2017, p. 29).

For a student choosing to study in the daily system, the main difference is that in public institutions they do not have to pay for the services. In the case of full-time studies, public universities have a significant advantage over non-public institutions. As a result of the demographic decline on the market, practically every person planning to study on a daily basis will be able to easily get to the public university. In the context of the competition for students, full-time studies at non-public universities, which are paid, are predicted in the next 10-year period to almost completely disappear (https://www.forbes.pl/kariera/do-2023-roku-zostanie-w-polsce-100-uczelniprywatnych/9917kvm). Public universities compete for full-time students with non-public institutions, but due to the
decreasing number of people undertaking studies, also the competition between public universities is becoming stronger.

**Promotion of educational services**

The thesis that the student will not choose a university they do not know is out of the question. The basic question is how to reach potential candidates for studies and how to construct a message to convince them to choose a given field of study and a given university. To this end, universities can take advantage of the achievements of marketing and profit from a variety of tools used by companies to communicate with customers. Marketing communication can be understood as the transmission of information between various market players that concern a company, product brand or other aspects of marketing activities undertaken (Bajdak, 2013, p. 44). Marketing communication tools that allow to influence consumer behavior include: personal sales, advertising, public relations, informal communication, sales promotions, sponsorship (Wiktor, 2013, pp. 7–8). These tools differ in terms of the specificity of impact and applications, but all of them can be used by universities to communicate with potential students. In the article, due to the limited content, the analysis will cover tools included in the advertisement and selected public relations activities.

**Constructing promotional messages**

As rightly observed by Łęgowski, the phases of consumer behavior on the market are noticeable. Common elements can be found in many different perspectives of the consumer’s behavior process: identification (awareness) of the need, seeking information, evaluation of possibilities (alternatives), purchase decision, after-sales procedure (consumption of a certain value) (Łęgowski, 2017, p. 95). The process of selecting a university where a young person intends to study is very similar. The task of communication with a potential student is to provide information that will enable assessment of the available selection options and making a decision about willingness to study in a given field of study and at a specific university.

Effective marketing activities require time and proper recognition of the needs of consumers on the market, because only in this way can the recipient be convinced for a specific action. In the survey, students were asked what should be emphasized in promotional messages. The question about this aspect was of the open type, thanks to which every subject could freely answer the questions. The answers have been grouped into six main areas (Figure 3), the order of which reflects their validity, i.e. the frequency of a given answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment prospects after graduation</th>
<th>Premium level of education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comfort and modern equipment of the department</td>
<td>Diversity of faculties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The atmosphere</td>
<td>Internships and trips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.** The most important factors when choosing a faculty in the opinion of the youth

Source: own elaboration based on the results of the survey.
The “employment prospects after graduation” were most often emphasized by the students, that is, obtaining a good education enabling to take a well-paid job. Second was the “high level of education”. For the respondents, it is important that the studies have value not only “on paper”, but that the graduate should have real knowledge of the subject. For students it is also important in what conditions they will study, or “comfort and modern equipment of the department”. This factor can be included in the material certificate in services on the basis of which potential consumers can form an opinion on the quality of services provided. Students are looking for study opportunities at the faculties where “diverse faculties” are offered. This is also important in the case of economic universities, where, in addition to economics, management, finance or accounting, nowadays such faculties as: logistics, tourism, real estate management, entrepreneurship and investments, economic analytics, economic consulting or human capital management are launched. The frequently appearing answers concerned also the “atmosphere of studying” which also included a friendly approach of lecturers to students. For modern young people, studying is also a period of gaining professional experience through internships, as well as trips to other universities. It is interesting that only a few people emphasized that they choose their studies in terms of opportunities to develop their own interests. Obtained answers show a pragmatic approach to the choice of studies, perhaps because the answers were given by students of economic studies. For those who create promotional information, the answers can be an indication of what aspects should be emphasized in order to convince young people to study at the faculty.

The second area studied was the search for information about the possibilities of studying by young people. The answers obtained are shown in Figure 4.

![Figure 4](image_url)

**Figure 4.** Places to search for information about the possibility of studying

Source: own elaboration based on the results of the survey n = 149.

Internet is the most important place to search for information, which is shown by the results obtained. However, the search for information about study opportunities also has its specificity, resulting from the great importance of information reliability. For this reason, young people mention in the first place websites of individual universities (58.1% of responses), which are a reliable and comprehensive source of information about the available fields of study, specialties and recruitment conditions. Search engines take the second place (47.3% of respondents). Thanks to them potential students using keywords can search for specific faculties or specialties and universities, which offer them. Direct talks about college, carried out with friends and family are important (almost 36%
of responses), but they complement the knowledge obtained independently on the Internet. Information presented in educational guides (20.3% of answers) and at educational fairs (almost 19% of respondents) is of less importance but it is worth noting that for 1/5 of the respondents they were an important source of information about the university’s offer. In the next place the respondents mentioned social networking sites in which they viewed profiles of individual universities (18.9% of responses). Interactions during meetings organized in secondary schools are also important for young people, but definitely to a smaller degree (15.5% of responses). Perhaps this is due to the fact that schools cannot organize many of such meetings, because they disturb the rhythm of work at school, especially in three-year high schools, where there is not much time to prepare for the final exams. These meetings certainly do not show the entire spectrum of study opportunities, which is why young people can treat them as a starting point for independent exploration of a given subject. Direct interaction with the university, in order to obtain information on the offered courses, was indicated only by 13.5% of respondents. This means that the information posted on the Internet or in educational catalogs was so comprehensive that a small part of the respondents felt the need for talk or email communication to deepen the subject. Other mass media – TV, radio and press were not listed as an important source of knowledge about study opportunities (less than 2% of indications).

The conclusions from the analysis of the answers given by the young are unequivocal. Universities must first of all inform about their offer on the Internet. The primary place is the university site, where potential candidates seek information. This site should be attractive and modern, but above all it should convince the young person that it is worth studying in a given field and that a particular university is the best choice of place of study. At this point, it is worth recalling the results of the answers to the previous question, i.e. what should be displayed on the website. The communication should emphasize the possibilities of employment after a given faculty, high level of education, show the comfort and modernity of the faculty, large selection of specialties, friendly atmosphere and prospects for valuable apprenticeships or trips within student exchange programs.

On the other hand, universities have to attract potential students to their website and it is necessary to position them in search engines so that candidates can find the offer of a given university in the search results, for example, “accounting”, “tourism” or “logistics” in the first positions. Young people live in the world of social media, which is why universities should also be active in them. These media are governed by specific laws, and the flow of information about the university is multifaceted. On the one hand, the university can actively shape its image, create its own profile and place attractive information on them. On the other hand, it will depend on the users’ activity on how much the profile will be visible – liking pages and making them available to friends causes that “friends” of the students or sympathizers learn about the university. Each participant of a social media can be identified by means of a place of residence, but also by a place of study or work. Therefore, for the university to be visible in social media, it should care for relations with current students, employees, as well as the graduates. All these groups, if they feel connected to the university and identify with it, will be happy to display its name on their own profile, and actively participate in events organized on the university profile, becoming its ambassadors. Potential students visiting the profile of the university or faculty, can trace its timeline and see what events were taking place, how many people liked them and how they were commented. For this reason, the profile of the university/faculty should be managed throughout the year, not incidentally before the recruitment period. It is worth remembering that communication with friends and family is the third source of information about studying opportunities. That is why strong relationships built with the faculty community are the basis of promotional activities and cannot be based only on virtual actions. It’s worth remembering that communication with friends and family is the third source of information about studying
opportunities. Therefore, strong relationships built with the faculty community are the foundation of promotional activities and cannot be based only on virtual activities.

The survey also included a question about where the university should advertise – the answers obtained are shown in Figure 5. While the previous question referred to how young people acted in the past, this question refers to their ideas about the choice of communication channels with young people.

![Figure 5](image-url)

**Figure 5.** Preference for placement of promotional information about the study offer

Source: own elaboration based on the results of the survey n = 149.

The analysis of the answers obtained may be surprising, as the first place included activities carried out directly in secondary schools, i.e. meetings and information posters (46.6% of indications). This means that young people notice the need to reach potential candidates directly with information, in a very traditional way, through a conversation with a university representative or an information poster. There is a valuable indication in this observation that no mass-scale activities can replace a direct relationship with a university representative. Comparing this result with the answers to the previous question, it can be noted that perhaps young people rarely had the opportunity to participate in such meetings, because only 16% of them indicated that they were looking for information about the possibilities of studying during such meetings. Students also emphasize the value of attendance at educational fair (36.5% of responses), despite the fact that they did not use this source of information themselves (less than 19% of responses).

The remaining answers no longer differ significantly – the university should advertise on social media by displaying advertisements (39% of indications), in search engines (30.4% of indications) and through advertisements displayed on various websites on the Internet (26% of responses). It is worth noting that current students notice the importance of advertising in public space – at public transport stops (24.3% of responses), on public transport screens (almost 19% of indications), on billboards in smaller towns (16.9% of responses), on advertising screens on trains (14.9% of indications), at PKS bus stations (13.5% of indications) or in cinemas (12.8% of responses).
The overview of opinions on mass media not used by the respondents themselves, but considered as a good place to advertise is also interesting. For daily press (12.2% of responses as ad space, but 0% of indications as source of information about the offer), for television (12.2% vs. 2%), and radio (8.8% vs. 1.4% of responses). One can try to explain by the fact that young people perceive advertising not as a reliable source of information, but rather as a way to build brand awareness and create a positive image. Analyzing the answers obtained, it can be noticed that the university must invest in direct relations with potential students and advertise primarily on the Internet. At the same time, the university should be visible in the surroundings to build an image among the local community, from which only a small percentage will be personally interested in the university advertisement. This promotion strategy is justified by the fact that young people eagerly choose known and popular universities\(^3\), and parents who have an influence on their choices can be reach easier via traditional communication channels.

**Conclusions**

In the face of many changes and the speed of their occurrence on the market, especially those caused by demographic trends, universities must take active promotional activities in order to reach potential students with information and persuade them to their offer. The concept of promotional activities addressed to young people must be adapted to the specific needs of this market segment and the communication channels used. In this area, there are also quick changes that universities should respond to. The article discusses the results of the survey conducted in 2018, which can be treated as an indication of how to distribute the budget for individual communication channels and how to construct a message to reach potential students and convince them to choose a faculty and university. This is necessary as demographic trends clearly indicate that the drop in the number of students is inevitable by 2023, which may result in closing unpopular departments and connecting universities to improve their profitability.

**References**


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\(^3\) In another question in the survey, as a reason for choosing a specific department, 21% of respondents mentioned a good image, and 5.4% of respondents indicated the opinion of parents.
GRAY ECONOMY AS A PART OF TAX GAP

DARIUSZ PAUCH

University of Szczecin, Faculty of Management and Economics of Services, POLAND
e-mail: dariusz.pauch@wzieu.pl

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Abstract The article attempts to point to the gray economy as an element of the tax gap. The considerations began with the characterization of the tax gap. Next, the concept and importance of the gray economy in the economy was analyzed. The last part includes selected instruments for reducing the gray economy, which were introduced in recent years in Poland. The instruments limiting the gray economy include: receipt lottery, electronic cash register system, limitation of cash payments and mechanisms supporting the collection of taxes.

Introduction

The literature on the subject often uses terms such as “unobserved economy”, “gray market”, “black market”, and “tax gap” or “tax fraud” in the context of lost tax revenue. Some of these terms are often used interchangeably, although there are significant differences between them.
Economists have been interested in the phenomenon of the “gray economy” for several decades. Researchers agree that regardless of the size of the phenomenon, it has a significant, mainly negative, impact on the economy. Estimating the real size of the gray economy is difficult, and the lack of full knowledge of sizes, the ability to indicate all the causes of existence and factors conducive to the development of the “gray economy” also makes it impossible to effectively reduce the scale or even eliminate the above-mentioned phenomenon.

Counteracting the gray economy is crucial for improving the stability and security of the State. The larger the gray economy, the bigger is the corruption, distorted competitiveness and organized criminal groups, which deliberately use legislative weaknesses or the weakness of law enforcement by law enforcement and the judiciary agencies.

The aim of the article is to show the gray market as an element of the tax gap and the presentation of instruments for reducing the gray market in Poland. Due to volume restrictions, only an outline of the functioning of the gray market reduction instruments was made.

**VAT gap**

Polish legislation has not defined the term of “tax gap”. It is assumed that this is the difference between the value of tax revenues, which should theoretically – in line with the applicable regulations and the scale of economic activity – flow into the public finance sector and the value of actually received tax revenues. However, according to the American Internal Revenue Service, the tax gap allows to measure the scale in which taxpayers do not file tax returns and do not pay tax on time (IRS, 2018).

The gray economy (usually) increases the tax gap because it is part of the actual (though not observed) economic activity, which – in accordance with applicable regulations – should be (usually) taxed. The loss of public finance sector revenues resulting from the presence of the gray economy also includes non-tax revenues, e.g. resulting from unpaid social security contributions of unregistered employment. However, the tax gap is not generated by the black market. It is true that it also forms part of the real, though unobserved economic activity, but the transactions cover illegal products or services (e.g. drugs), which, by definition, are not taxed under the applicable law.

The tax gap is a complex phenomenon including (see Figure 1):
- so-called “Gray economy”, understood as activity remaining in accordance with the law, from which, however, the amount of tax due is not paid,
- tax fraud – understood as an activity aimed, in particular, at obtaining property benefits by not paying the tax amount due,
- unpaid tax as a result of the bankruptcy of VAT taxpayers,
- lack of efficiency of the tax office in the control and collection of due taxes, which were disclosed to the tax administration,
- activities aimed only at reducing the liability by means of legal measures but in a way inconsistent with the legislator’s intention, i.e. tax avoidance.

Tax evasion occurs across the EU, leading to significant losses in budget revenues, breaches of the principle of fair taxation as well as distortion of competition conditions (NIK, 2016).
According to Case report (CASE, 2017) prepared for the European Commission, which estimates the size of the VAT gap in individual countries, Poland is characterized by a high level of VAT gap as in 2015 it amounted to 24.5% of theoretical inflows, exceeding the average for the EU countries by 10 percentage points. However, according to the estimates of PricewaterhouseCoopers, the size of the tax gap in the last two years was to be reduced. The actions taken by the Ministry of Finance to limit VAT fraud in Poland were to contribute to this. The examples of instruments are presented in the further part of the article.

The concept and significance of gray economy

The ambiguity of this concept is demonstrated by the multitude of terms functioning in professional literature and in the media. The terms such as gray economy, black economy, underground economy, sub-economy economy, secondo economy, shadow, informal, irregular, parallel economy are often used interchangeably. The fact that all these terms can be found in the world literature means that this phenomenon is permanent and exists in all economies (Krajewska, 1998).

The basic definition defines the “gray economy” as any economic activity that contributes to the official (or observable) GDP, but which remains directly unregistered (Schneider, Enste, 2000). Another definition emphasizes that the “gray economy” involves such economic activities that remain unmeasured or are not reported (Feige, 1979).

According to B.S. Freya and F. Schneider, gray economy is made up of all unregistered types of productive activity (creating added value) at a given time, which should be included in the national product (Frey, Schneider, 2000).

Compliance with the rules is included in the official economy, actions that break the rules are part of “gray economy”. Activities belonging to the “gray economy” are then divided into groups distinguished by the type of broken rules (Cichocki, 2006):
1. Illegal economy – consists of economic activities that violate legal provisions that determine the scope of legal economic activity. It includes, for example, the production of illegal drugs and the exchange of foreign currencies.

2. Unreported economy – consists of activities bringing income not reported to tax authorities.

3. Unrecorded economy – consists of actions not reported to the government statistical institutions.

4. Informal economy – consists of economic activities, which on the one hand avoid costs resulting from any regulations, and on the other hand are not covered by the benefits resulting from the above rules. The literature indicates the following negative aspects of the large share of the gray economy in the economy (Krajewska, 2010):
   - basic economic indicators related to the economy, such as the level and dynamics of GDP, inflation, employment, are distorted – the government has therefore no good basis for conducting a rational economic policy,
   - unfair competition for entities, which have higher costs because they pay taxes and social security contributions,
   - a larger budget deficit resulting from lower tax revenues,
   - higher interest rate resulting from the fact that in an environment of low tax collection, state bonds are an alternative form of financing public expenditure, while the increasing supply of bonds is accompanied by higher interest rates that ensure additional demand for these securities,
   - weakened functioning of the social security system due to the fact that employees employed unofficially are not burdened with social security contributions,
   - negative assessment of the government by the society, which is not conducive to carrying out reforms that increase the effectiveness of economic policy.

One cannot omit the fact of the benefits of the “gray economy”. The positive sides of the existence of the above phenomenon include (Pater, 2007):

1. From the point of view of the economy, unrecorded work increases the labor market, although mostly jobs with low productivity and low wages are created, which would not have been created in the formal area of the economy.

2. Those employed in the gray economy are purchasers of goods and services, thus they increase consumer demand, indirectly contributing to increasing budget revenues from VAT, and to some extent also contributing to the creation of new legal jobs.

3. From the point of view of an employee, unrecorded work is a source of income, the absence of which would increase the risk of poverty for the working person and his/her family. For a certain group of employees, especially those with low qualifications, the possibility of taking up unrecorded work is in practice the only chance for their own income.

4. Employers also profit from unrecorded work. Of course, the most important benefit is lower labor cost, and sometimes this is an essential factor influencing the final decision about employing an employee. Due to administrative barriers, unrecorded employment is the only way to quickly get a job done by a short-term employee. Unrecorded employment also reduces the economic risk associated with recorded employment (e.g. financing sick absence during the first 33 days of the year).
The instruments to limit gray economy

The following instruments that have been introduced in recent years by the state administration in Poland can be distinguished.

Receipt lottery

The receipt lottery is a mechanism addressed to consumers in Poland and is aimed at encouraging the transactions be confirmed by a receipt that plays the role of lottery ticket. Similar solutions are also used in many other countries, e.g. Portugal, Slovakia or Croatia. According to the assumptions of the lottery, it should result in an increase in the number of transactions subjected to VAT (a reduction of the VAT gap in this respect) and an increase in revenue taxed with income tax.

The system of electronic cash registers

This mechanism, already implemented in some European countries, aims at limiting the gray economy in the field of not registering transactions between the seller and the consumer. The mechanism consists in introducing the obligation to use cash registers, which automatically send data about completed transactions to the tax authorities via the electronic system. The aim of the mechanism is to increase the degree of registration of transactions carried out in the consumer turnover by providing tax authorities with information on ongoing transactions. This means that these authorities can immediately analyze and identify suspicious transactions and unjustified changes in the amount of turnover and, as a result, take appropriate action on an ongoing basis to clarify doubts and ensure tax collection.

In order to improve the efficiency of taxpayer activity control, reduce tax evasion and ensure conditions of equal competition among economic entities, the electronic cash register system is being introduced in a growing number of countries, including Bulgaria (from April 2012), Croatia (from January 1, 2013), Slovenia (from 2016). In 2013–2014 such a system was introduced in Hungary, which according to the report of the Hungarian central bank – could lead to an increase in VAT revenue in 2014 by about 150 billion forints (0.5% of GDP).

Limitation of cash payments

Promotion and support of the development of non-cash transactions is one of the important elements in the fight against the gray economy. In the gray economy, payments are almost exclusively made in cash, so that there are no traces of transactions in the financial system. Activities supporting non-cash transactions from the state include, for example, introducing the possibility of paying with cards in offices, which would certainly convince many consumers that card payments are convenient and safe.

Electronic payments, unlike cash payments, leave a trace in the banking system, making it difficult to hide transactions. In this way, they can be an important tool in fighting the gray economy. Therefore, in many European countries there are limits defining the maximum value of cash transactions, e.g. in settlements between entrepreneurs or between entrepreneurs and consumers. The electronic trace in settlements between entrepreneurs makes it difficult to implement illegal activities related to tax evasion, but other activities, such as money laundering, support of terrorism or acquisition of products of illegal origin are also somehow prevented. In the case of consumer transactions, electronic payments allow primarily to limit the scale of transaction non-registration and evasion.
of payment of tax due. In Poland, the mechanism of enforced non-cash transactions concerns only transactions between entrepreneurs and consists in the obligation to make or accept payments via a bank account, when the single value of the transaction exceeds the equivalent of PLN 15,000.¹

**Systems supporting correct tax collection**

**Reverse charge mechanism**

The reverse charge mechanism is a means of counteracting the occurrence of tax fraud and is mentioned as an administrative mechanism for counteracting economic crime. In Poland, the above mechanism was introduced on April 1, 2011 and was initially in force in connection with the performance of activities such as the sale of greenhouse gas emission allowances and trade in scrap metal. The reverse charge mechanism assumes that the purchaser of goods or services is obliged to settle the tax due on the activity subjected to VAT. This mechanism is an exception to the general rule, according to which the VAT settlement is made by the seller who performs the delivery of goods or provides the service (Pauch, 2017).

**Joint and several liability**

Joint and several liability introduced into the Polish legal system from October 1, 2013, is a measure intended to increase the effectiveness of the fight against VAT fraud by motivating taxpayers to verify their contractors, suppliers of so-called sensitive goods and securing the collection of tax resulting from transactions aimed at VAT fraud. Under this mechanism, the VAT payer is jointly and severally liable with the supplier for the tax arrears of the supplier in a proportion of the tax proportionally attributable to the delivery made to the buyer, if (Ustawa o podatku od towarów i usług, 2004):

- the value of these goods without the tax amount exceeded PLN 50,000 in the given month, and
- at the time of delivery of these goods, the taxpayer knew or had reasonable grounds to suppose that the entire amount of tax due to the delivery of these goods or part thereof to it would not be paid into the account of the tax office.

The model of joint and several liability adopted in Poland is aimed at limiting the use of the “disappearing taxpayer” mechanism and consists in imposing on the buyers of certain goods, particularly vulnerable to frauds involving VAT fraud, joint and several liability for the seller’s tax liabilities. This mechanism is to have primarily a preventive function, manifesting itself in closer monitoring of the contractors by taxpayers and securing the interest of the state budget by recovering fraudulent amounts from a buyer, which is not careful enough.

**Split payment**

In the split payment model, the buyer of goods or services, as part of payment for a good or service, pays VAT to a bank account controlled by tax authorities, which the supplier of goods or a service provider may only use for VAT purposes and to pay VAT to tax authority. The purpose of this mechanism is to ensure that the tax for the services rendered or the sale of the goods is properly paid to the tax office. The effectiveness of this mechanism is

¹ The limit is effective from January 1, 2017.
a result of cutting off the offenders from having the amount of due VAT and eliminating cash settlements between entrepreneurs. At the same time, this is a solution that significantly affects the financial flow of VAT taxpayers.

**Central database monitoring VAT settlements**

This mechanism consists in creating a central register of invoices and VAT register, in which taxpayers would be obliged to generate invoices or enter invoices issued outside the register. Invoices in the register would go to buyers. The purpose of the mechanism is to provide the tax authorities with access to all invoices of the taxpayer, and as a consequence, the tax authorities would have the possibility of ongoing control of transactions. In addition, the introduction of additional IT tools would allow faster detection of anomalies and irregularities related to issued invoices. Thanks to the application of this model, tax authorities obtain direct access to data of issued invoices and the ability to perform ongoing and constant control of transactions. This favors increasing the efficiency of tax authorities by allowing them to take immediate action to prevent tax fraud, for example blocking the VAT refund, deregistering the taxpayer, initiating a tax audit, blocking bank accounts.

**Conclusions**

Conducting a thoughtful and effective policy in relation to unofficial forms of economic activity is not an easy task. This applies both to the conceptual stage (designing economic policy) and the implementation stage, which generally possess the greatest problems. When choosing a set of instruments for the implementation of the assumed objectives (policy mix), not only the size of the unofficial economy measured by the percentage share of GDP should be taken into account, but also its impact on income redistribution processes and the implications for micro- and macroeconomic efficiency.

Economic policy towards the gray economy should take into account many different aspects and dimensions of social and economic life. The selection of instruments for its implementation, allowing to prevent the occurrence of undesirable phenomena (e.g. in the form of uncontrolled growth of unofficial forms of economic activity) and effectively enforce existing legal regulations, should be particularly careful. The government's policy towards various types and areas of the gray economy was active and used various instruments of economic, administrative and legal methods. The instruments indicated in the article make it difficult for fraudsters to operate, but they also create additional obligations for honest taxpayers.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY BASED ON INNOVATION

HANNA PONDEL,1 IZABELA BLUDNIK2

1 Poznan University of Economics and Business, POLAND
e-mail: hanna.pondel@ue.poznan.pl
2 University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: izabela.bludnik@wzieu.pl

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ABSTRACT The article presents the concept of sustainable development and attempts to evaluate the assumptions of the Polish development policy based on innovation in relation to this concept. It points out the need for a more thorough discussion on this subject and moving away from the adopted primacy of economic growth, typical of mainstream economics for a more comprehensive perspective, taking into account primarily the natural environment. The theoretical achievements of heterodox economics, especially Post Keynesian Economics, could be helpful in building such a comprehensive approach.

Introduction

The issue of sustainable development has been present in the literature for a long time. In recent years, however, the interest in it has significantly increased, especially in the case of one of the dimensions of sustainable development, namely the natural environment. The obvious reason for this is the increasingly voiced concern about the impending ecological disaster. More and more representatives of various schools and theoretical strands take
up this subject, as one of the challenges every modern society has to face. This intellectual revival is especially noticeable within heterodox economics, which is hardly surprising when one takes into account its foundations: fundamental uncertainty, historical time, path dependency, lack of automatic market forces, or irreversibility of decisions. They constitute an excellent starting point for the analysis of the environment, ecology, resource depletion and the limits of growth. At the same time, deeper reflection on this subject is not to be found under mainstream economics, which – based on the neoclassical principles – still succumbs to a fetish of GDP growth, without noticing the resulting threats and limitations.

This intensification of research in the area of sustainable development and its environmental dimension, which may contribute to the evolution of a new approach – the economics of sustainable development, does not appear to have any major impact on the ongoing discussions on development policy in Poland. Although the documents presented by Prime Minister Morawiecki, i.e. the Responsible development plan (2016) and the Responsible development strategy 2020 (2017) do express the ambition to enter the path of economic development based on innovation, many of the relevant burning issues remain unnoticed or underestimated.

The aim of this article is to present the concept of sustainable development and to assess the assumptions adopted in Poland’s development policy based on innovation in relation to this concept. In Poland, there is still a lack of a comprehensive approach to contemporary challenges, and in the planning of long-term development, a neoliberal approach (with emphasis on economic growth) is still more visible than the heterodox one (accentuating the environmental aspect, combined with economic and social aspects).

The essence of sustainable development

The beginnings of activities that fit into the concept of sustainable development date back to the 1960s and the rise of awareness of environmental issues resulting from industrial revolutions or the demographic revolution started in the nineteenth century. The turning-points in the concept dissemination can be found in the attempt at formulating its principles during the international conference in Stockholm in 1972, concretizing the concept sustainable development during the Third Managing Session of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) in 1975, or forming its explicit definition in Brundtland Report entitled Our Common Future, published in 1987. In the said Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) it was emphasized that Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable – to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Report..., 1987, p. 24). Such a general definition of sustainable development influenced the universal acceptability of the concept and its use in various programs and documents in the years that followed.

With time, new proposals to define and understand sustainable development appeared; they emphasized more its economic, social and environmental dimensions, as well as the necessity of actions aimed at achieving the so-called integrated order.¹

Despite the huge number of definitions, some elements recur in most of them: sustainable development is a type of socio-economic development, it includes both current and future generations, it integrates the activities of various entities, it must be considered in a multidimensional way. Munasinghe (2001) notes that there is no single

¹ Sources of information on sustainable development most often indicate three of its dimensions: economic, social and environmental, while some of them also include other dimensions: spatial, institutional or political, and institutional.
Sustainable development and development policy based on innovation

discipline that can cope with the multiplicity of issues related to sustainable development and proposes sustainomics, resulting from the need to analyze various areas affecting the success of implementing this development concept.

The analysis of the changes that the concept of sustainable development has undergone over the years, allows distinguishing several turning points of particular importance for the formulation of the principles of this modern model of civilization development. The initial rules were the ones for eco-development – typically eco-development sets of rules can be found, for example, in the Stockholm Declaration, World conservation strategy from 1980, or World Charter for Nature from 1982. Rights and obligations in the area of stable and sustainable development were comprehensively specified in Rio Declaration (hereinafter The Earth Charter) and Action Program – Agenda 21 from 1992. Initially, sustainable development focused on the protection of the natural environment, currently – the quality of human life is in the centre of attention.

Contemporary development challenges, megatrends and changing conditions for the functioning of societies and economies lead to a continuous evolution of the goals of this development. In 2000, during the UN Millennium Summit, Millennium Development Goals were defined for the years 2000–2015. They covered such areas as hunger and poverty, education, equality, health, environment, living conditions, and development partnership. In September 2015, during the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit 2015, the Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted, whose goals replaced the Millennium Development Goals. The new objectives are based on the conclusions from the analysis of the implementation of earlier objectives, in particular regarding the uneven progress in the implementation of actions between regions, countries, cities and rural areas, as well as deficiencies in many areas of socio-economic life. As opposed to the Millennium Goals, which were directed only to developing countries, the objectives of Agenda 2030 cover all countries. One example is the inclusion of sustainable production and consumption – a goal particularly important for highly developed countries (Central Statistical Office, 2016).

Despite years of discussion and interest in the concept expressed by various milieus, many of its aspects still remain unspecified, e.g. the definition of sustainable development, the translation of the term sustainable development into foreign languages, the approach to durability, the methodology of measurement to be adopted for this new development paradigm. The issue of whether sustainable development is an idea, a concept, or a theory is also disputable, also in scientific circles. Borys (2011, p. 76) indicates two approaches to the problem of concretizing the concept: the advocates of the first approach do not recognize sustainable development as a new paradigm, but rather a confused, non-specific, postulative, and unscientific concept (or in extreme cases – simply a scam); the representatives of the second approach recognize the concept as a well-described paradigm, a real alternative to pushing our civilization to barbaric positions, (...) of growing specificity at different levels of management, in various fields and disciplines. In the discipline of economics, linking the scientific base with the assumptions of the new paradigm is still difficult and open, although actions are being undertaken in this area. One example is the economics of sustainable development, that is an economic theory, based on transdisciplinary foundations, striving to determine the conditions of management, ensuring high economic, socio-cultural and ecological standards within the limits of environmental tolerance and consistent with the principle of intra-and intergenerational equity (Rogall, 2010).
Development policy based on innovation in Poland

The plans of implementing in Poland a development policy based on innovation were reflected in two documents presented by Prime Minister Morawiecki, namely the Plan for responsible development (2016) and the Strategy for responsible development by 2020 (2017). None of them, however, satisfactorily takes into account the conclusions of the ongoing debates about the problem of sustainable development, its environmental aspect in particular.

In the first document, among the diagnosed five development traps, no one is related to the management of the natural environment, and one of the five pillars of development is sustainable social and regional development. Emphasis is placed on including both urban agglomerations and rural areas in development processes, eliminating discrepancies in the inhabitants’ access to public services and the labor market, developing local markets, promoting entrepreneurship and multi-functionality of rural areas (Plan..., 2016, p. 3–8). Therefore, it can be concluded that the authors continue to yield to the pressure of the GDP growth, ignoring the problems of resource depletion, pollution, environmental degradation and accumulation of harmful waste.

A similar impression can be gathered in the case of the Strategy... (2017) – in many areas, insufficient emphasis is placed on the natural environment, both as a stimulator and beneficiary of development processes. Admittedly, responsible development has been defined as socio-economic development that integrates political, economic and social activities, while maintaining the natural balance (Strategy..., 2017, p. 35), but the natural environment (especially its improvement) is treated only superficially. An analysis of the document reveals that the individual dimensions of sustainable development are not treated equally, and such issues as entrepreneurship, income growth, reindustrialization, innovation or economic growth obscure environmental issues accompanying the implementation of projects in these areas.

It seems that at least in the main purpose of the Strategy, which is creating conditions for the growth of income of Polish citizens, while simultaneously increasing the cohesion in the social, economic, environmental and territorial dimension (Strategy..., 2017, p. 49), an emphasis should definitely be placed on the improvement of the natural environment. Income growth is important for improving the quality of life, but it is no less crucial to improve the living conditions, including the condition of the natural environment in which people live.

The insufficient emphasis on ecological issues in the Strategy was indicated by many institutions, associations, and entities participating in social consultations accompanying the preparation of the final version of the document (including the Institute for Renewable Energy, Foundation for Sustainable Energy, National Council of Agricultural Chambers, National Chamber of Commerce). The comments concerned, for example, the issue of greenhouse gas emissions or energy – an area that the specialists from the Institute of Renewable Energy (IEO, 2016) evaluated as one of the weakest parts of the Strategy. The arguments that Energy – one of the five “impact areas” listed in the Strategy, does not meet expectations include: 1) not supporting the objective of sustainable economic growth of the country and not serving territorially balanced development, 2) proposing innovations in the energy sector whose implementation is dubious, 3) excessive costs of some of the proposed actions. What was recognized as especially dangerous is inhibiting the development of dispersed renewable energy sources in favor of the excessive concentration of actions aimed at developing coal and nuclear power solutions (IEO, 2016).
Conclusions

The assumptions of the development policy based on innovation in Poland, presented in the Plan... (2016) and the Strategy... (2017), clearly underestimate various aspects of sustainable development, especially environmental and ecological issues. Given the importance of these issues in the majority of highly developed countries around the world, it will be difficult to avoid discussing them. It is certainly worth learning from both the achievements and errors of economics, conducting their critical analysis from the point of view of contemporary (and previously non-existent) determinants of development, the variability of the environment and the current conditions of human functioning.

The proposals contained in both documents fit into the perspective of mainstream economics, which is strongly criticized for pushing the primacy of GDP growth, ignoring its disastrous effects on the environment, and thus the quality of life and social well-being. In order to deepen the discussion on sustainable development, it would be much more conducive to reach for the achievements of other paradigms, schools or theoretical strands. The most obvious choice seems to be the economics of sustainable development (Rogall, 2010) or Ecological Economics (Daly, 1990, 1996; Söderbaum, 2000; Røpke, 2005). However, the former is only just being formed, while the latter clearly lacks solid macroeconomic foundations.

Theoretically advanced macroeconomic models integrating such issues as the limits of economic growth, the state of the ecosystem and even financial instability can be found in Post Keynesian Economics, which in recent years has produced a rich literature, attempting to combine Post Keynesian macroeconomics with the perspective of Ecological Economics, and especially with the issues of sustainable development (Holt, Pressman, Spash, 2009; Kronenberg, 2010; Spash, Ryan, 2012; Fontana, Sawyer, 2013, 2016; Rezai, Taylor, Mechler, 2013; Taylor, Rezai, Foley, 2016).

There is no doubt that both the diagnosis of the current socio-economic condition in Poland and the implementational aspect of the proposed development policy are not treated in a comprehensive and exhaustive manner in the said official documents. Therefore, it seems necessary to use macroeconomic models, which are certain to enable better efficiency of planning and implementation of various solutions within the framework of the country’s development policy.

References


REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMS 2014–2020 AS A FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT SUPPORTING LOW-CARBON ECONOMY IN POLAND ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE WEST POMERANIAN VOIVODESHIP

BARTOSZ PILECKI

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: bartosz.pilecki@wzieu.pl

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Keywords low-carbon economy, EU funds, sustainable development, regional policy

ABSTRACT The article consists of three parts preceded by an introduction and ending with conclusions. The first part presents a synthetic presentation of the structure of the EU regional policy financing system and a list of EU funds and links with EU programs. The second part concerns the low-emission economy and its special role in the concept of sustainable socio-economic development. The third part is the analysis of the financing structure of investments in the field of low-emission economy in regional operational programs in Poland, with particular reference to the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. It contained the structure of financing of low-emission economy within the framework of Regional Operational Programs in all voivodships of Poland. Further analyzes were carried out in relation to the Regional Operational Program for the West Pomeranian Voivodeship for 2014–2020. The whole is summarized in conclusions – which is the fifth part of the article.

The aim of the publication is to analyze the structure of financial support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the regional operational programs 2014–2020 (ROPs 2014–2020) in the aspect of low-emission economy. The author’s remark was addressed on the priority of the Low-Emission Economy with particular emphasis on the West Pomeranian Voivodeship.

Introduction

The issue of regional development is currently one of the most important research areas, combining many scientific fields. In addition to such areas as geography, political science, sociology or economics, this concept is also associated with finances. Regional operational programs in recent years have become one of the most
important instruments for financing infrastructural investments, contributing to the implementation of regional development policy objectives.

A low-carbon economy is characterized by economic growth while reducing greenhouse gas emissions, mainly due to the reduction of the use of fossil fuels. The low-emission economy is based primarily on energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy sources and the use of innovative technologies that reduce emissions.

The combination of these issues has a particular impact on the economy of the entire country. It should take into account the provision of economic, social and environmental benefits. What in turn, by increasing the competitiveness of regions, increases competitiveness on the EU market and allows for feeding the Community budget.

**Regional operational programs in the system of financing the regional policy of the European Union**

The essence of regional policy is the equalization of economic differences between EU regions and in effect also between member countries. The assumption is that, the financial contributions from the EU budget go to the less economically and socially developed regions. At the same time, this is not about slowing down the dynamics of development of richer regions, but about accelerating it in relation to less developed regions. Expenditure on Community regional policy is implemented primarily from structural funds and the Cohesion Fund. Integration processes take place not only at the interregional level but also at the level of EU Member States (Drożdż, Jaworski, 2016, p. 45).

In the 2014–2020 financial perspective, Poland is the largest beneficiary of funds – in total, EUR 104,921,390,185 was allocated to Poland, which is over 16% of the total amounting to EUR 645,495,799,335 for 29 countries (European Commission Portal).

**Table 1.** Value and structure of the available allocation for Poland under the EU funds 2014–2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)</td>
<td>47,506,283,280</td>
<td>45.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion Fund (CF)</td>
<td>27,303,516,527</td>
<td>26.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Social Fund (ESF)</td>
<td>15,203,795,654</td>
<td>14.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)</td>
<td>13,612,211,430</td>
<td>12.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)</td>
<td>710,509,513</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)</td>
<td>585,073,781</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>104,921,390,185</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study based on data from the European Commission Portal.

As the data presented in Table 1 shows, the largest pool comes from ERDF, it accounts for almost half of the allocation. Poland, also in the case of ERDF, is the largest beneficiary – from the available allocation dedicated to member countries. Amounting to EUR 279,776,401,248, there is 47,506,283,280 € for Poland, which is 17% (European Commission Portal). The allocation of financial resources from the ERDF takes place within thematic objectives also known as priority themes (Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013):

1. Strengthening research, technological development and innovation.
2. Increasing the accessibility, use and quality of ICT.
3. Strengthening the competitiveness of SMEs.
4. Supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy in all sectors.
5. Promoting adaptation to climate change, risk prevention and management.
6. Preservation and protection of the environment and promotion of effective resource management.
7. Promotion of sustainable transport and removing bandwidth shortages in the operation of the most important network infrastructure.
8. Promoting a high-quality employment and supporting employee mobility.
10. Investing in education, training and vocational training for the acquisition of skills and lifelong learning through the development of education and training infrastructure.
11. Strengthening by strengthening institutional capacity and efficiency of public administration and the efficiency of public services related to the implementation of ERDF, and supporting projects under the ESF to strengthen institutional capacity and efficiency of public administration.

The distribution of funds from the ERDF takes place through operational programs. Table 2 presents individual EU programs together with the value and structure of financing – available for Poland in the 2014–2020.

### Table 2. Value and structure of the available allocation for Poland under the EU programs 2014–2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Budget (€)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional (ROP)</td>
<td>ERDF/ESF</td>
<td>36,946,428,487</td>
<td>36.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure and Environment</td>
<td>ERDF/CF</td>
<td>32,266,939,058</td>
<td>31.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Rural Development – Poland</td>
<td>EAFRD</td>
<td>13,612,211,430</td>
<td>13.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart growth</td>
<td>ERDF</td>
<td>10,189,869,702</td>
<td>9.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Education Growth</td>
<td>ESF/YEI</td>
<td>5,451,980,109</td>
<td>5.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Poland</td>
<td>ERDF</td>
<td>2,566,836,160</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance</td>
<td>CF</td>
<td>823,674,547</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime and Fisheries – Poland</td>
<td>EMFF</td>
<td>710,509,513</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>102,568,449,006</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study based on data from the European Commission Portal.

As it results from the data presented in Table 2, the largest pool is assigned to regional operational programs, it constitutes over 36% of the available allocation. The main beneficiaries of ROPs 2014–2020 undertakings are mainly local self-government units and private entrepreneurs.

**Low-carbon economy and regional development experience**

Activities undertaken by regional and local authorities focus on creating conditions for sustainable socio-economic development. Forcing development strategies based on the cost criterion, however, does not create a stable basis for regional and local development. Such strategies do not work in the long run and significantly limit the dynamics of development of territorial systems. The implementation of a low-emission economy in all sectors is the basis for building sustainable development and energy governance (Pająk, 2013, p. 42).
In the perspective of financing 2014–2020, countries belonging to the EU for the first time were obliged to allocate part of the funds received from ERDF to implement projects related to low-emission economy. These activities are included in investment priorities within the fourth priority theme (Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013). Supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy in all sectors by:

1. Supporting the production and distribution of energy from renewable sources.
2. Promoting energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in enterprises.
3. Supporting energy efficiency, intelligent energy management and the use of renewable energy sources in public infrastructure, including public buildings, and in the housing sector.
4. Development and implementation of intelligent distribution systems operating at low and medium voltage levels.
5. Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including supporting sustainable multimodal urban mobility and adaptation measures with mitigation impact on climate change.
6. Promoting researches and innovations in low-carbon technologies and the introduction of these technologies.
7. Promoting the use of high-efficiency cogeneration of heat and electricity based on the demand for useful heat.

In addition, it is also visible to promote the introduction of low-carbon economic strategies in cities that include references to ecological forms of mobility and smart energy networks. The possibility of financing projects related to sustainable transport and mobility as well as intelligent systems of distribution, storage and transmission of energy implemented under the seventh theme of the priority is a confirmation of this direction of conducting EU regional policy (European Commission Portal).

Analysis of the structure of financing investments in the field of low-emission economy in regional operational programs in Poland, with particular emphasis on the West Pomeranian Voivodeship

The presented analysis allows to determine the diversity of financial support for activities related to low-carbon economy provided by voivodship self-governments by means of regional operational programs for 2014–2020. Another goal is to determine the structure of financing of investment priorities in this area in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. Differences between the allocation values dedicated to voivodships under ROP’s result from the application of the allocation of funds algorithm, taking into account three variables: population, GDP per capita and the level of unemployment. A key factor in the growth of RES is the scale of subsidies (Drożdż, 2013, p. 194).

Therefore, when analyzing the financing of investments related to the low-emission economy implemented under ROP 2014–2020 in individual voivodships, the share of financing of these investments in relation to the funds allocated for co-financing of projects in total should be taken into account, which was presented in Table 3.

As results from the data presented in Table 3, the co-financing structure of projects implemented under ROP 2014–2020 in the topic of the Low-carbon Economy priority, in relation to the value of co-financing of projects in individual voivodships, was on average diversified and ranged from 11.91% (Lubuskie Voivodship) to 22.92% (Śląskie Voivodship) – with a value determined for the whole country of 15.94%. The difference between the highest and the lowest value is 11 percentage points. These discrepancies result from socio-economic conditions specific to specific regions or adopted development strategies.
### Table 3. Share of the available allocation in the topic of Low-carbon Economy priority in Poland within individual ROP 2014–2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Operational Programme of Voivodeship</th>
<th>Budget of RPO (€)</th>
<th>Budget of Low Carbon Economy program (€)</th>
<th>Share of Low-carbon Economy in total budget in individual RPO’s (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower Silesia</td>
<td>2,650,054,815</td>
<td>461,584,763</td>
<td>17.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuyavia-Pomerania</td>
<td>2,239,459,167</td>
<td>332,030,086</td>
<td>14.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lublin Province</td>
<td>2,624,656,683</td>
<td>482,125,012</td>
<td>18.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuskie Province</td>
<td>1,066,976,116</td>
<td>127,065,012</td>
<td>11.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodzkie</td>
<td>2,654,175,435</td>
<td>374,876,986</td>
<td>14.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Poland</td>
<td>3,386,136,444</td>
<td>475,618,244</td>
<td>14.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazovia</td>
<td>2,612,300,177</td>
<td>405,448,942</td>
<td>15.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opole Province</td>
<td>1,111,726,819</td>
<td>145,294,118</td>
<td>13.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podlaskie Province</td>
<td>2,487,345,607</td>
<td>349,714,403</td>
<td>14.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomerania</td>
<td>2,193,896,122</td>
<td>370,533,798</td>
<td>17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silesia</td>
<td>4,090,514,281</td>
<td>937,384,653</td>
<td>22.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swietokrzyskie Province</td>
<td>1,605,345,410</td>
<td>226,495,037</td>
<td>14.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmia-Masuria</td>
<td>2,033,261,294</td>
<td>315,047,357</td>
<td>15.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Poland</td>
<td>2,882,595,789</td>
<td>415,853,150</td>
<td>14.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Pomerania</td>
<td>1,883,810,846</td>
<td>256,131,078</td>
<td>13.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>36,946,428,487</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,887,610,875</strong></td>
<td><strong>15.94</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study based on data from the European Commission Portal.

In the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, selected investment priorities are financed under the ROP 2014–2020 from ERDF. Table 4 presents the value and structure of the commitment for the implementation of the fourth subject of the ROP 2014–2020 priority, broken down into investment priorities including the sources of financing.

### Table 4. Value, structure and sources of financing of the fourth theme of the priority in ROP WZ 2014–2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PI</th>
<th>ERDF (€)</th>
<th>National public contribution – budgets of JST (€)</th>
<th>Private contribution (€)</th>
<th>Total (€)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>67,135,000</td>
<td>352,941</td>
<td>11,494,412</td>
<td>78,922,353</td>
<td>30.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c</td>
<td>40,576,416</td>
<td>4,410,625</td>
<td>2,749,919</td>
<td>47,736,960</td>
<td>18.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4e</td>
<td>100,000,000</td>
<td>17,647,059</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>117,647,059</td>
<td>45.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4g</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,764,706</td>
<td>11,764,706</td>
<td>4.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>217,711,416</td>
<td>22,410,625</td>
<td>16,009,037</td>
<td>256,131,078</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Referring to the data contained in Table 4, commitments for ROP WF 2014–2020 are spread between funds from ERDF – 85% and national public contribution and private contributions. The share of financing between the public contribution and the private contribution is comparable and amounts to 8.75% and 6.25% respectively.
The national public contribution includes funds from the state budget and local government budgets. However, in the case of the fourth priority theme, financing from the state budget does not occur.

Conclusions

The low-emission economy contributes to sustainable development, affecting not only the economic sphere, but also social and environmental. The socio-economic development of regions affects their competitiveness. Increasing competitiveness on the EU market, however, supports the supply of the Community budget. Despite the existence of ROPs in Poland, separated for each province, each of them is adapted to the socio-economic conditions of a specific region – the region. Therefore, the financing structure of individual support areas under ROP 2014–2020 differs from the structure of aggregate values for the whole country. Discrepancies in the financing prove a real decentralization of the process of creating regional policy, which better contributes to the identification and satisfaction of the needs of inhabitants of specific regions. Regional operational programs are therefore not only an instrument supporting the low-carbon economy but also a manifestation of the EU’s intraregional policy.

References


THE ROLE OF AGRITOURISM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOW-CARBON DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN RURAL AREAS

ARKADIUSZ PIWOWAR

Wrocław University of Economics, POLAND
e-mail: arkadiusz.piwowar@ue.wroc.pl

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agritourism, low emission economy, rural development, rural areas

Agritourism is an important kind of economic activity in rural areas in Poland. The degree of development of agritourist services market in Poland makes it worthwhile to pay special attention to the role and importance of agritourism in shaping a low carbon economy in rural areas. In this work, which is a theoretical and pragmatic study, potential areas of resource-efficient and low-carbon activities in the field of tourism were outlined. According to the author, agritourist farms may be a significant element in the prosumer energy model in rural areas and serve as a model of conduct for the rural population. The owners of agritourism farms, who are often informal leaders of rural communities, are able to take environmental challenges and adapt to new circumstances. This can create an incentive and cause imitation effect among other residents of rural areas.

Introduction

of rural tourism, is an important issue considered in the context of agribusiness in Poland. Rural tourism is defined as ‘the overall tourism economy taking place in rural areas’ (Wiatrak, 1996), while agritourism is a form of rural tourism closely related to the functioning of a farm (the use of residential buildings and/or farm buildings to provide accommodation services).

The concept of agritourism includes not only various forms of accommodation, catering and recreation services. An increasingly important element of the comprehensive service provided in the context of rural tourism is sport, and even healthcare and rehabilitation (Sznajder, Przebórska, 2006). From the point of view of economics, agritourism can be perceived in various areas, including:

- market, i.e. the entirety of exchange relations between individuals and institutions, sellers of goods and agritourist services (supply) and the people and institutions acquiring them (demand),
- a form of rural development and the development of rural areas,
- economic activity of the rural population, manifested in creating and finding new sources of income,
- tourist activity of a man, associated with satisfying economic, social and cognitive needs.¹

Tourism can play a significant role in addressing climate change (Yang, 2010). As it was indicated by J. Uglis and A. Jęczmyk (2015), agritourism is the area of economy, which at its basis is a stimulator of the sustainable development of the region, where economic, social and environmental aims are effectively realized. In this context, agritourism plays a crucial role, because in addition to accommodation, if offers a possibility of using numerous attractions associated with countryside and agriculture, for example, homemade meals using own products, mushroom picking, hunting, horse riding, etc. Currently, in the discussion of the scientific, political and economic life, growing importance of issues related to the reduction of CO₂ emissions, renewable energy and low-carbon economy is frequently noted. In particular, the latter term is of particular importance, also in the field of agriculture. Low-carbon economy is defined as realizing the long-term growth and the most efficient use of resources, as well as aiming to minimize emissions of pollutants and its negative impact on the environment (Piontek, 2011; He, Wang, Yin, 2014). Climat change is the greatest challenge facing the future sustainability of tourism destinations (Becken, Hay, 2007). In this case agritourism can open new horizons in rural sustainable development. Developing low-carbon eco-agricultural tourism is also a certain choice to achieve sustainable development of tourism industry (He, Wang, Yin, 2014). The essence of agritourism in the context of achieving the objectives of low-carbon economy has several dimensions, described in this article.

The aim of this study is to identify and characterised the areas of resource-efficient and low-carbon activities in the field of agritourism. Moreover, it outlined actions in these areas, enabling reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and improvement of the ability to absorb CO₂, which can be widely used in planning the development of farms engaged in tourist activities.

**Areas of resource-efficient and low-carbon activities in the field of agritourism**

The challenges faced by agritourism in implementing the principles of sustainable development, including the pursuit of a low carbon economy, require special attention in several areas (Figure 1).

¹ The planes of the economic analyses in the field of agritourism presented above do not cover all that can be traced in the rich subject literature.
Agritourism is a complex and multifaceted activity, it is associated with taking (especially during high demand period) significant costs associated with the consumption of electricity and water intake. Energy efficiency may involve, among others, using devices for solar energy conversion (e.g. solar micro-installations). It is important that the solar cells convert electrical energy without the production of secondary pollutants and noise. The lack of factors causing adverse effects in the environment due to photovoltaic installations creates great potential for their use in agritourism. Photovoltaic installations of larger sizes, forming a network (photovoltaic farms) may provide additional tourist attraction in rural areas. In case of agritourism facilities located far from the power grid (mountain chalets, forest cottages, etc.), photovoltaics can be a primary source of energy. Due to climatic conditions in the area of Poland solar systems in agritourism may be mainly used to heat water for utility purposes (in residential premises) and for agricultural purposes. Examples of the use of solar collectors in agritourism farms are described in the literature, including the works by A. Kowalczyk-Juśko, B. Kościk and J. Tenet (2016). According to the results of surveys conducted by other authors, tourist facilities should use eco-energy, and the service recipients would be even willing to pay more for the service that contributes to improving the environment (Sokół, 2012).
Also biomass can be used for energy purposes in agritourism farms (Piwowar, Dzikuć, Adamczyk, 2016). Biogas micro installation may serve as the security pillars of energy supply of agritourism farm. In Poland there are also geothermal sources, which can be used for space heating needs (construction of geothermal plants), and in the case of agritourism, also in balneology. As it was indicated by B. Dec and J. Krupa (2014), these may be medicinal baths useful in many diseases, including orthopaedic, nervous and circulatory diseases, neuroses and neuralgia.

In turn, the reduction of water consumption requires changes in habits (adjustments of water stream) and the use of appropriate tools. Tourists should be informed about the principles of environmental protection and educated in the scope of observance of ecological behaviour. With regard to the equipment, important elements may be mixing faucets with Eco function, thermostatic and non-contact ones. Reducing of water consumption is important not only in regard to potable water, but also in case of water for economic purposes. In the latter case, the basic elements of the equipment are rainwater tanks. In an assortment of many manufacturing and trading enterprises in Poland there are available rainwater underground tanks and decorative tanks (different shapes, colours, etc.), allowing you to match the right solution to explicit tasks and needs of the specific agritourism farm.

The priority in efforts to protect the climate and in the transition to a low carbon economy is to preserve (protect) forests. Forests provide many valuable raw materials for agribusiness (wood, fruit and mushrooms, herbal materials), they are also an essential element of agritourism service (Piwowar, 2015). According to J. Cichowska (2011), forest areas will play an increasingly important role in building “agritourism packages”. The author recognizes the positive role of the forest in the upbringing and education, which may have an impact on the evolution of environmentally friendly attitudes among guests staying at rest. Forests are often a place of specialized forms of activity within the agritourism services, such as, among others, walks, mushroom and berry picking, watching forest animals. In the opinion of T. Dziechciarz (2011), the development specialized agritourism in forest areas of eastern Poland promotes comprehensive protection of natural environment. In the literature, the impact of water basins on the attractiveness of agritourism service is also recognised (Bielak, 2007).

Another potential area of resource-efficient and low-carbon activities in the field of agritourism is the food economy, and within it mainly agriculture. Agritourism offer is often associated with a specific system of farming – organic (Piwowar, 2017). In the system of organic farming the system of recirculated substance within the farm is used as well as avoiding the use of synthetic chemicals (fertilizers, pesticides). This is management consistent with the natural processes occurring in environment, which does not disturb the ecological balance. In these farms, particular attention is paid to the conservation of biodiversity. In the course of agritourism business, it is often made possible to buy milk and products from the farm. Direct sales of agricultural products in agritourism farms are an important source of income for farmers and other rural residents. Organic and / or traditional food sold in short supply chains supports key elements of sustainable rural economy. The result is the relationship between local agriculture, tourism and the food sector. In addition, direct selling allows the customers to obtain information about the product and how it is obtained. Food prepared according to the natural, traditional recipe, is an important element in the development of local food markets.

The abovementioned elements of resource-efficient and low-carbon activities in the field of agritourism do not exhaust the subject. They form the basis for further research and discussion (in the field of waste management, thermal modernization, etc.).
Conclusions

The development of agritourism is related to the attractiveness of the area and the organization and management of resources available at the disposal of service providers. Agritourism essentially provides visitors the opportunity to temporarily stay in the uncontaminated area. The development of agritourism should be planned and sustainable in its nature, it must be made in harmony with the environment, which means the limitation of various types of emissions (direct and indirect). Potential areas of resource-efficient and low-carbon activities in the field of agritourism are: transport, electricity and water consumption, forestry and water tanks as well as food economy.

Theoretical and practical analysis lead to the conclusion that agritourism plays a significant role in shaping a low-carbon model of development in rural areas. The examined issue is associated with the transformation of the economic and energy-ecological Polish village in the direction to low-carbon economy. The development of such economy in rural areas requires the implementation of low-carbon technologies and practices as well as efficient energy solutions not only in the production field, but also in other activities in rural areas. The owners of agritourism farms, who are often informal leaders of rural communities, are able to take environmental challenges and adapt to new circumstances. This can create an incentive and cause imitation effect among other residents of rural areas. Due to the dynamic development of agritourism services in Poland, this market should be an important area of interest in shaping a low carbon economy in rural areas.

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References


MICROFINANCE AND MICROFINANCE INSTITUTIONS – DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIONS AND PROSPECTS

PRZEMYSŁAW PLUSKOTA

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: przemyslaw.pluskota@wzieu.pl

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ABSTRACT

In the EU terminology, microfinance is defined as a tool to provide impoverished people with a basic access to financial services in the form of loans, savings, money transfers and microinsurance. From the economic point of view, the idea of microfinance should not be any substantial problems with sourcing the capital to support the poorest people who are excluded from the society. If the capital market were ideally flexible, the poorest people should not suffer from lack of capital. The factor that contributes to the fact that capital is not invested in the poorest regions of the world is also the substantially higher cost related to investments made by the poor and unequal access to information (information asymmetry), which leads to negative selection, moral hazard and difficulties with monitoring.

In many EU countries, microfinance institutions have been functioning successfully, while the number as well as the value of granted microloans has been rising. Summing up the deliberations regarding the idea and operation scopes of microfinance institutions, it may be said that they are gaining importance not only on the financial market, but first and foremost in social and economic development of many countries and regions, in the developing countries as well as in Europe and in Poland. To enable further growth of microfinance, in view of the achievements made so far by the sector, it is possible to propose scenarios and directions of development with regard to the source of the loan capital. The solution appears to consist of the three scenarios of microfinance institutions development: commercial scenario, social scenario, mixed scenario. The scenarios may neglect some aspects of their operations. Still, they indicate the directions which microfinance institutions may follow and point to those that are the most desirable from both social and economic point of view, also taking into account the local development aspect.
Introduction

Microfinance tends to be perceived as financial services for impoverished and low-income people. It is often identified with loans that are granted without collaterals and on the principle of group liability, and when they are repaid as expected, they may open up a possibility of obtaining further, bigger loans (Gonzalez, Rosenberg, 2006). The concept of microfinance is very often equated to microcredit and many a time both terms are used interchangeably. In fact, however, the scope of microfinance is much broader, as it is not only microcredits (even though they constitute a major part of each product range of microfinance institutions), but also a wide assortment of other financial services, such as credit, deposit, insurance, and transfer services offered to the poor and to micro-enterprises, which provides them with a possibility of obtaining or increasing their income, and in many cases of improving the living standard of whole families (Adamek, 2010, p. 25).

In the EU terminology, microfinance is associated with M. Yunus and his Grameen Bank, and defined as a tool to provide impoverished people with a basic access to financial services in the form of loans, savings, money transfers and microinsurance. Like anybody else, people who live in poverty need access to a broad range of financial services in order to be able to run their business activity, accumulate their assets or actively and effectively manage their risks (Microcredit Networks..., 2010, p. 13). Over the years, operations of microfinance entities have evolved from the one relying on grants and subsidies from microcrediting institutions to the model that offers a wider scope of services – above all including deposit products. Apart from micro-crediting, EU microfinance institutions offer services to support business activity, trainings, and financial education programs, or they have business incubators incorporated into their structures (Bending, Unterberg, Sarpong, 2012, p. 37).

Over the recent years, development of the microfinance market and sustaining its stability have become a major challenge and an element of many activities, debates and various initiatives. This gained particular importance in the context of mitigating the financial crisis effects. The role and importance of microfinance institutions are confirmed by various examples of their activities, their impact on the financial market and the situation of individual business entities. Their significance is also proved by analyses and studies that indicate the increasing role and importance of microfinance in sustaining the financial system stability (Alińska, 2017, p. 26).

The aim of this article is to present the idea of microfinance, its significance and reasons for existence, as well as microfinance institutions functioning. The developments regarding the idea of providing help to the poorest and the ensuing effects have made it necessary to indicate new, optimum directions of development, first and foremost with respect to microfinance entities.

The reasons for microfinance existence

From the economic point of view, the idea of microfinance should not be hard to implement and there should not be any substantial problems with sourcing the capital to support the poorest people who are excluded from the society. If the capital market were ideally flexible, the poorest people should not suffer from lack of capital. This could be explained by means of the law of diminishing marginal returns of capital, according to which each subsequent unit of capital engaged in the production process will bring less and less return in the form of sales revenues. Therefore, entrepreneurs having lower amounts of capital are able to generate higher revenues, compared to those with capitals of higher value. This in turn means that the former are able to pay higher interest than the latter
due to the theoretical possibility of generating more revenues. Consequently, any entities that operate small-scale production should not be troubled by lack of capital.

Research studies regarding the reasons for insufficient capital flows to the poorest countries were taken up by, *inter alia*, P.J. Montiel and W. College (2006) who analysed the Lucas Paradox using the example of Africa. They divided the potential factors into two groups. The first group included the too small number of projects characterised by a satisfactory rate of return. The second group featured the structural factors that are very difficult to overcome in a short term, such as in particular human capital and public sector management quality, caused by the macroeconomic instability in those countries (Montiel, 2006, pp. 27–30). Also M. Schularick and T.M. Steger (2008) found that the key to increase the capital flow was improvement of public institutions management quality. Expanding the Lucas model, they also indicated the shortcomings of the capital market and the human capital quality (Schularick, Steger, 2008, pp. 10–11). Taking the model further, capital should also be flowing to the poorer borrowers. According to B. Armendariz de Aghion and J. Morduch (2009), money should be flowing from Wall Street to Harlem and then further to the poor rural communities in the Appalachian Mountains, and also from New Delhi to poverty-stricken villages in India. In their opinion, due to the law of diminishing marginal returns of capital, a shoe-maker working in the street or a woman selling flowers at a market stall should be able to offer their investors significantly higher returns from the capital invested in their businesses, compared to such global giants as General Motors, IBM, or Tata Group (Armendariz de Aghion, Morduch, 2009, p. 31).

If capital were ideally mobile, it should be invested in places characterised by a higher marginal productivity, i.e. from the rich to the poor. This means that the rich should be lending to the poor, or capital should be invested in enterprises in which the poorest will be employed. If this does not take place, we can say there is a certain paradox. According to A. Ashta (2007), there may be various reasons for this paradox, such as e.g. lack of certain additional elements, risks, market shortcomings or transaction costs. The missing elements also include the low level of education (including financial education) which affects the quality of human capital. Ashta (2007, p. 2) argues that it is the human capital and the education level that have an impact on the productivity. The differences in the levels of the human capital lead to differences in the labour efficiency of the rich and the poor. He distinguished the main reasons for the lack of capital flows to the poor: transaction costs, information asymmetry and other factors (Ashta, 2007, pp. 77–83), whereas B. Armendariz de Aghion and J. Morduch (2009, p. 76) described them as credit market imperfections, i.e. barriers in the flow of capital to the ones who need it the most.

The factor that contributes to the fact that capital is not invested in the poorest regions of the world is also the substantially higher cost related to investments made by the poor and unequal access to information (information asymmetry), which leads to negative selection, moral hazard and difficulties with monitoring. The problem is that the lender does not have sufficient knowledge of the project and its profitability (information asymmetry). The moral hazard issue occurs when the lender has no knowledge on the project implementation, its success and profitability (*ex-ante* moral hazard). Even if the project proves viable and pays off, there is a risk that the borrower will vanish with all the money (*ex-post* moral hazard). The above described problems may certainly be limited by regular monitoring. However, in the case of granting small loans to people from remote places, monitoring is costly and therefore it is not put in place by the lenders.
Operations of microfinance institutions

The microfinance revolution has brought numerous benefits, and the idea conceived by M. Yunus was quickly transplanted to other countries. Thousands of financial institutions came into being, offering similar services. Yet, after some time, the idea of “the banker for the poor” became to some extent bastardised and distorted. New players became interested in the market, who so far had not really dealt with financial services for the poor, and, taking advantage of the substantial demand, offered loans at usury rates, and the microloans, instead of financing some specified goals (starting a business, purchasing a machine or cattle etc.) were used for financing the consumption.

The microfinance market in Europe, which differs in terms of the level and scope of support offered in the form of microcredits1 and other microfinance products, especially in comparison to the poorest countries, also faces some challenges. Similarly as in other regions, microfinance is aimed at two goals. The first is economic enablement of the beneficiaries, making it possible for them to start activities that generate income, and the second is achievement of social objectives enabling social integration, also including financial integration of individuals. Despite the adverse events of 2010–2012, microfinance has brought and will be bringing many benefits in both short and long term, such as (Lorenzi, 2016, pp. 11–12):

- strengthening the citizens and making it possible for them to use the financial instruments applied in market economy,
- reduction of unemployment and creating benefits in the local economy,
- increasing the investment attractiveness via taking over some of the risk,
- helping the local financial intermediaries to increase the value of granted loans,
- integration of public support for social inclusion,
- decreasing the public spending on social services, ensuring financing to groups of people in an unfavourable situation.

In many EU countries, microfinance institutions have been functioning successfully, while the number as well as the value of granted microloans has been rising. The significance of this form of support was also acknowledged by the European Commission which addressed microfinance institutions in its programs aimed at enhancing their potential, not only in terms of capital, but also human and organisational resources. In the EU, the main product is a microloan to support micro-entrepreneurs and natural persons. However, services offered by microfinance entities also include other forms of support that supplement the main product (Figure 1).

Microfinance development in the EU has resulted not only in diversification of microfinance products, including also savings, microinsurance, but also in a significant diversity of operations. European microfinance institutions provide support not only in the form of debt financial instruments, but also run a wider range of operations comprising financial education (aimed mainly at preventing excessive indebtedness), trainings for entrepreneurs, also with regard to development of business operations, and business incubators. The microfinance sector in the EU is quite heterogeneous, which is manifested by the variety of institutions offering microfinance support. The sector

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1 In the European Union, microcredit is understood and defined in two ways. The first one is a microcredit for an entrepreneur amounting to less than EUR 25,000 and granted to support the development of self-employment and micro-enterprises. The second is a microcredit for a natural person amounting to less than EUR 25,000 granted to support consumption needs such as, inter alia, education or health.
is dominated by non-bank financial institutions (29.3%) and NGOs or foundations (22.7%), however, there are also community development financial institutions, religious institutions, and others (Figure 2).

![Figure 1. Financial products offered by microfinance institutions in the EU](source: Bending, Unterberg, Sarpong (2014), p. 35.)

![Figure 2. Kinds of microfinance institutions in the EU](source: Bending, Unterberg, Sarpong (2014), p. 28.)

The activities of microfinance institutions are a proof of their meaning and significance to economies, particularly on a local level. The popularity of the idea conceived by M. Yunus is marked by the variety of microfinance programs in Europe, also those financed with EU funds.

**Scenarios of microfinance and microfinance institutions development**

Summing up the deliberations regarding the idea and operation scopes of microfinance institutions, it may be said that they are gaining importance not only on the financial market, but first and foremost in social and economic development of many countries and regions, in the developing countries as well as in Europe and in Poland. However, in order to implement the mission and objectives of the movement initiated by M. Yunus, it is necessary to continually adjust to the current conditions, outline new challenges and react to ensuing social
changes, at the same time taking into account any developments taking place on local markets that are much more important to microfinance institutions.

The microfinance sector, which consists of many various institutions (private, public, commercial, non-profit, etc.), while becoming an integral and significant element of economic systems, simultaneously in many respects searches for new paths and objectives for their operations. The rapidly changing environment makes many entities look for new segments, markets and products so as to implement the idea of support to the fullest extent. The ensuing new tasks to be implemented and operating strategies have an impact on the development of microfinance entities in terms of organisation and product assortment, indicating the directions of development and implementation of the idea of microfinance. On the one hand, the market is quite difficult, for instance due to the significantly higher risk level and – as is often claimed – relatively low income in relation to that risk. On the other hand, the market is of strategic importance for regional and local development. Therefore, further and stable growth of the sector, corresponding to the market needs, is in the interest of all business entities.

Starting the commercialisation and then privatisation of microfinance institutions in the late 1980s and early 1990s marked the beginning of a new path for the microfinance movement – the path that left its mark on many microfinance entities all over the world. Management strategies started to be dominated by large-scale operations, losing the local, often unique character. Microfinance institutions became private entities focused on profit maximisation, thus killing the idea of getting the poor out of poverty. Moreover, many entities that so far had been microfinance-oriented turned into institutions focused on the financial market, striving to maximise the results of their operations. The most important goal of many microfinance institutions became increasing the stock value via maximisation of short-term results. According to M. Bateman, this way of understanding the idea of microfinance, based on full commercialisation, led to “the death of microfinance” (Bateman, 2010, pp. 123–124). The ensuing situation forced many entities to redefine their objectives and indicate new directions of microfinance development.

After a period of rapid growth followed by a decrease in profitability, the changed approach made it possible to understand the idea of microfinance and to combine commercial goals with social goals. To enable further growth of microfinance, in view of the achievements made so far by the sector, it is possible to propose scenarios and directions of development with regard to the source of the loan capital. The solution appears to consist of the three scenarios of microfinance institutions development:
- commercial scenario,
- social scenario,
- mixed scenario.

The first scenario – named commercial – is based on the assumption that the operations of microfinance institutions are financed with predominantly private capital and are aimed at achieving commercial goals (Figure 3). As a result of applying this scenario, microfinance institutions become profit-oriented and gain an optimum return on invested capital. In this model, the institutions may obtain capital from various sources, yet the dominating source is the financial market along with private financial institutions, operating on commercial principles. This does not exclude a possibility of obtaining funding from donators (sponsors) and public authorities, who will not strive to obtain the maximum possible rate of return at any cost. Nevertheless, the dominating place in the capital funding structure is held by private, commercial capital, which requires microfinance institutions to maximise their profits. This direction may bring adverse effects in the form of excessive indebtedness of households. Obviously, this solution should not be used in relation to the poorest. This scenario might be implemented for a target group
consisting of wealthier customers who are not affected by social and financial exclusion, and of “healthy” businesses with stable positions. Operations of this type may bring short-term benefits, however, in a long run, due to their nature, they will lead to unfavourable changes in the lives of the poor.

Figure 3. Commercial scenario of microfinance institutions development
Source: own work.

The second – the most desirable scenario from the point of view of customers – is the social scenario (Figure 4). It is characterised by predominance of public capital in financing the MFIs operations, and it is focused on implementation of social goals. Even though the institutions that develop in compliance with this scenario are not profit-oriented, they are supposed to be financially self-sufficient and they should increase their capital in order to expand their operations. No dividends are stipulated, and the profits should be used to increase the capital or establish special funds for unforeseeable events. Institutions operating in accordance with this model are expected to support, to the greatest extent possible, the people who need their support the most. Apart from the poorest people, attention should be focused also on women, young people, national minorities and immigrants. Another characteristic of the scenario is also a wide range of flexible microfinancial products, tailored to the needs of each group. As a result of focusing on the impact on the community, there is a risk of losing some of the capital, however, the need to strive to balance the operations and a secure lending policy, aided by other microfinancial products along with trainings and education, are expected to prevent the problem. This model does not exclude investing

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any private (commercial) capital in microfinance institutions, however, they may not lead to total commercialisation of the entity.

Figure 4. Social scenario of microfinance institutions development
Source: own work.

The third scenario constitutes a certain compromise between the two former ones, as it assumes co-implementation of social and commercial goals, where the former kind of goals is predominant, which is a condition of retaining the idea of microfinance (Figure 5). In the mixed model, the capital may be sourced from public funds and from donators, but also from the financial market or commercial microfinance institutions. However, the main source of capital is the funding provided by public institutions, and the objective of such an entity is providing help to the most poverty-stricken people. This may be the reason why commercial external investors do not show much interest in this model. There is a risk that any entities that intend to continue their microfinance operations will be striving toward commercialisation, which will lead to implementation of the commercial scenario. However, the possibility of social goals implementation, which helps establish and support a positive image, should incline the commercial sector to engage funds in entities of this type. This model appears to be the most viable in terms of implementation, as it is able to meet expectations of both the public sector and partially the private sector, and at the same time bring many benefits.

The described scenarios may neglect some aspects of their operations. Still, they indicate the directions which microfinance institutions may follow and point to those that are the most desirable from both social and economic point of view, also taking into account the local development aspect. In view of the nature of microfinance
operations it seems that it is the local and regional development that should be another objective of microfinance entities’ operations.

![Diagram](image.png)

**Figure 5.** Mixed scenario of microfinance institutions development  
Source: own work.

### Conclusions

Microfinance institutions are now present not only in the poorest countries, but also in developed countries, which is exemplified by their significant popularity in the European Union. Their significance and operation should be addressed in many detailed documents and strategies which would indicate the nature of their operations. The importance of microfinance is manifested not only by awarded prizes, but also by including microfinance institutions development in programmes and initiatives financed with EU funds. Another step should be addressing the issues in documents prepared at the national and then regional level. It is in the interest of each region to have an efficient and effective network of microfinance institutions to serve their economic and social goals. This refers not only to the existing loan funds and guarantee funds, but first and foremost to establishing efficient entities that will be supporting the poorest people who are subject to exclusion, who have an idea for starting up a business, and who may become clients of loan and guarantee institutions in the future. This is about helping people so that they do not have to use the services of the banking system that offers support, but on conditions which many a time contradict rationality of their decisions.
References


ECONOMIC FACTORS AND FORECAST OF APPLE PRODUCTION IN DEVELOPMENT BIOENERGY IN POLAND AND ITS USE IN AGRITOURISM

Michał Roman,¹ Kamil Roman²

¹ Warsaw University of Life Sciences, POLAND
e-mail: michal_roman@sggw.pl
² Institute of Technology and Life Sciences, POLAND
e-mail: k.roman@itp.edu.pl

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Keywords forecasting, economics, rural areas, apple production, bioenergy, agritourism

Abstract The aim of this article is to present the forecast of apples production in Poland in the development of bioenergy in rural areas. The work also drew attention to the use of apples in agricultural and agritourism. Data from the Central Statistical Office (CSO) in Poland were used in 2008–2015 and the forecast was calculated from 2016 to 2030. In addition, information from literature reviews was taken into account. Forecasting methods were calculated in Microsoft Excel.

Introduction

Biomass is a biodegradable waste material, that has been generated by production processes of agricultural or forestry industry (Dz.U. 2015, poz. 317). Biomass can have the liquid or solid physical state, that impact on calorific value. The agro-food industry is one of the basic sources of biomass supply, which can be easily processed to heating or energy purposes. The specific objectives of this paper were to investigate the potential of apples
production, which is directly linked with biodegradable postproduction waste material. That waste resources can cover the action plans of renewable energy usage. Therefore, the balance of development possibilities involves the apple pomace as a source of renewable energy.

**Objective, material and research methods**

The present article aims to present the forecast of production in Poland which is directly linked with bioenergy development in rural areas. The research also concerns the usefulness of agriculture and agritourism. Data from the Central Statistical Office in Poland since 2008 to 2015 were used, other data from 2016 to 2030 as a forecast was calculated. The information from literature reviews was also taken into account. During the calculations formula 1, 2 and 3 were used.

\[
Y_t = f(t, \epsilon_t) \quad \text{for} \quad t = 1, 2, \ldots, n \tag{1}
\]

or

\[
Y_t = f(t, Y_{t-1}, Y_{t-2}, \ldots, Y_{t-i}, \epsilon_t) \quad \text{for} \quad t = i + 1, i + 2, \ldots, n; \quad i = 1, \ldots, p < n \tag{2}
\]

where: \(\epsilon\) is a random component (of random fluctuations).

The forecast of an explanatory variable \(Y\) in period \(T > n\) is calculated following the formula:

\[
Y^*_{T} = f(T) \quad \text{or} \quad Y^*_{T} = f(T, Y_{T-1}, Y_{T-2}, \ldots, Y_{T_p}) \tag{3}
\]

**The apple production in Poland in particular years**

The statistical analysis was performed to estimate the existing biomass resources from apple processing. First part of the paper presents the areal of apple production. In the tables below the weight of apple production in the particular years was presented.

According to CSO data, in the year 2012, 71% of Polish cultivation area were covered by the apple trees. The apple pomace is a waste produced during the extraction of apple juice. The balance of apple production was based on the balancing of demand and resources. The input values includes the annual stocks, production and import of raw materials. The supply includes consumption, industrial consumption, losses and exports. The annual apples production with calculated forecast since year 2008 to 2030, were presented in Table 3.
Table 1. Divided into voivodships the area of apple production in Poland (thousand hectares)

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Source: authors’ own development based on the Central Statistical Office (CSO) data.
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Source: authors’ own development based on the Central Statistical Office (CSO) data.
Economic factors and forecast of apple production in development bioenergy in Poland and its use in agritourism

Table 3. The balance of apples production with calculated forecast since year 2008 to 2030 (thousand tons)

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<td>1,117.3</td>
<td>716.6</td>
<td>143.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2029</td>
<td>716.6</td>
<td>2,581.9</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3,378.5</td>
<td>687.2</td>
<td>900.3</td>
<td>168.9</td>
<td>1,059.1</td>
<td>563.0</td>
<td>112.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>563.0</td>
<td>2,583.2</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>3,211.2</td>
<td>560.3</td>
<td>933.9</td>
<td>160.6</td>
<td>900.9</td>
<td>655.5</td>
<td>131.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: authors’ own development based on the Central Statistical Office (CSO) data.

The energy value and physical properties of apple pomace

The apple pomace are the residues that came from apple pulp pressing process. The residues consist the squeezed seeds, fibers or apple peels. They are widely used in the animal feeds, fruit tea and pectin production or as a supplement to healthy food. Apple pomace are also produced during the wine, juice or apple concentrate production.

In the year 2004, (Kowalczyk, 2004, pp. 21–30) defined the apples rate consumption, calculated as an efficiency of the apple pulp pressing and apple pulp mass according to raw material mass. Indicator specified the consumption of apples per unit of juice concentrate (tonne). The study was conducted in a medium-sized manufacturing plant, fruit and vegetable industry. 35,000 tons of apples were converted. Along with higher summer temperature (July, August, September) the increases of the apple pressig performance was notice. Assuming that 20% of the apples pulp responds the one ton of apples, 7,000 tons of apple pomace can be obtained. In the year 2009 (Borycka, 2009, pp. 847–851) during the research, confirmed the usefulness of apple pomace for energy purposes. The gross energetic value from dry matter apple pomace content 17.7 MJ/kg. Currently, because of technical lack, the energetic resources of apple pomace is not used on a wide scale. Selected parameters of dry matter apple pomace was presented in Table 4.
Table 4. Selected parameters of dry matter apple pomace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moisture</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>8–10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ash</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crude fiber</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross energetic value</td>
<td>MJ/kg</td>
<td>12,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamins B1</td>
<td>mg/100g dried</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamins B2</td>
<td>mg/100g dried</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamins PP</td>
<td>mg/100g dried</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamins C</td>
<td>mg/100g dried</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.gieldarolna.pl.

The forecasts price for apples and apple pomace as an individual types of biomass

The price of apple pomace depends on the apples cultivation area. The type of apples are the main dependent of apples price, but not impact on the average apple wholesale price. Price differences are between the sale of dessert and industrial apples. The average price for dessert apples is 1.3 PLN/kg and for industrial apples 0.50 PLN/kg. The apple pomace in the dry matter form are also available on the same market. Mostly they are intended for feed purposes, that’s why their energetic purposes are limited. The apple pomace are the source of many vitamins. Preparing them for feed purposes needs dedicated processing and drying. On the total cost of apple pomace, besides the price of industrial apples also affects the bulk density. Table 5 presents the characteristics of the apples and apple pomace market price in the years 2008–2030.

Table 5. Price comparison of dessert and industrial apples and the dry matter of apple pomace in 2008–2030 (PLN/kg)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Dessert apples</th>
<th>Industrial apples</th>
<th>Apple pomace*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Economic factors and forecast of apple production in development bioenergy in Poland and its use in agritourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2024</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2025</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2026</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2027</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2028</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2029</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data of Horticulture Economics Department IERiGŻ-PIB.

The significant amount of biodegradable waste come from Polish food processing manufacturers. Depends of the biomass form, the residues can be managed on the different ways, for example as an biodegradable fuel. Therefore, biomass for energetic purpose can be obtained from the fruit and vegetable industry, eg apple pomace.

There are 1,363 companies operating in fruit and vegetable processing and 270 companies in the industrial scale. The production of apples is dispersed while the product is supplied by small industrialists. The apple pomace are produced in the food industry during the squeezing, after juice extraction. The squeeze matter can be also a good raw material for cattle feed or further processing, and competitiveness can be developed by the feed businesses.

The cost of producing apples and their seasonality

The production of apples in the early 1990s was quite profitable. In the 21st century despite the welfare season, the purchase price does not always coincide with the price of production. In the harvest that count three million tons, the cost of cultivating dessert apples is between 0.8–0.9 PLN/kg and in the case of industry apples is 0.3–0.35 PLN/kg. Production costs are mostly dependent on yield. The most profitable season for the apples cultivation was the breakthrough of year 2012 and 2013. In those years the welfare was noticed, which did not affect the price of the crop. In other Western European countries not very high harvest were the results. The cultivation of 40 tonnes apples per hectare costs is between 0.70 and 1.00 PLN/kg and over 60 tons is about 0.60 PLN/kg.

Seasonality has an impact on the buying apples price, eg the price for dessert apples delivered in autumn costs 1.0–1.4 PLN/kg and industrial apples about 0.40–0.45 PLN/kg. The coming years will bring the profitability for producers of apples with a yield over 40 tonnes apples per hectare, where apples characterizes good quality and exportable.

The cost of pressing and drying apple pomace should be added to the unit costs of production. Because the apple pomace are produced as a byproduct of juice production, unit sales of juices can be counted as a profit. At the current price of industrial apples (0.35 PLN/kg) the unit cost of producing 1 liter of juice does not exceed 4 PLN.

Agricultural and agritourism apples usage

In Poland, the fruits like apples have very wide use. For example the owners of organic farms provides direct sells of apples at their premises (Roman, 2015, pp. 136–137). In agriculture apple pomace are used in cattle feeds (eg as feed for calves or for further processing). In agritourism apples, plums and cherries are often used in jam production or used in desserts and cakes (eg, custom menu). The owners of agrotourism or agroecotourism in
Poland are also producers and sellers of cider. Besides, various educational institutions are conducting the programs with apples usage (eg, ecological workshops for primary and post-primary schools). These are mainly educational programs like “From apple to juice”, “Laboratory of taste”, “Hotel for insects”, “Food production”, “Agrobusiness for junior high school” or “Ecological programs”.

The innovative character of usage the apple symbol can be seen in thematic villages. In Poland, the thematic villages have an influence on the development of a given region, including the integration of the environment in rural areas. In Poland there are thematic villages, eg “Apple village – active village” in Jablonna in the Kuyavia-Pomerania voivodeship, as well as in the village of Stare Jablonki “Apple-flavored village” in Warmia-Masuria voivodship. In these villages are arranged special offers for tourists like: “Appeland Olympics”, “Tasting apple delicacies”, “Apple talks” (http://www.aktywnawies.pl).

Conclusions

Basing on the analysis and observations of authors, several conclusions and generalizations were proposed:

– the agro-food industry is one of the main sources of biomass that can easily be converted into heat or power,
– biomass for energy use can be obtained from the fruit and vegetable industry, such as apple pomace,
– there are 1363 companies operating in fruit and vegetable processing and 270 companies in the industrial scale. The production of apples is dispersed while the product is supplied by small industrialists. Apple pomace are produced in the food industry, after squeezing juice, that can be a good raw material for cattle feed or further processing,
– apple pomace can be widely used in agricultural and agro-tourism, for exemple in cattle feed, calf feed, for further processing, to tourists meals in agritourism or in cider production.

References


Data of Horticulture Economics Department IERIGŻ-PIB.

Development based on the Central Statistical Office (CSO) data.


http://www.gieldarolina.pl.


NARROW-GAUGE RAILWAYS IN POLAND AS AN ELEMENT OF REGIONAL TOURISM PRODUCTS

GRAŻYNA ROSA

The University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: grazyna.rosa@wzieu.pl

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Keywords narrow-gauge railway, tourism product, region

Abstract The article discusses the essence of regional tourism product and its elements. Among them, narrow-gauge railways have been distinguished, as they often constitute a tourist attraction, provide an interesting way of spending free time or learning about monuments and nature, as well as serve as means of transport and a mainstay of railroad's tradition and history.

The aim of the article is to indicate the importance and possibilities to develop passenger service of narrow-gauge railways in Poland as an element of regional tourism product. In order to achieve this, desk research method has been applied in respect to available literature and the results of secondary research conducted at the request of the Railway Transport Office and the Central Statistical Office. The analysis covers narrow-gauge railways in Poland for the period 2014-2016. The article is of research nature.

Introduction

Tourism has become a vital element of today's economy. Income generated by this industry is comparable to income achieved in the fuel and advanced technology industries. Tourism industry would not be possible without the worldwide tourism economy scale, involved capital, as well as the number of employees and the complexity of technical processes in transport and hotel management. A tourism product manufactured in this industry (http://
An area-related tourism product (Dziedzic, 1988, p. 9) is perceived as tangible and intangible elements that constitute the basis of the tourist’s ideas and expectations associated with staying at a given place. According to the concept by V.T.C. Middleton (Zdon-Korzeniowska, 2009, p. 13), a regional tourism product comprises the following factors related to destination: attractions and environment, infrastructure and services, availability, image, and price. In this respect, narrow-gauge railways are part of the area-related tourism product structure, as they are perceived as both an attraction and infrastructure of the destination.

The attractiveness of the narrow-gauge railway results from the fact that it constitutes an interesting form of spending free time and learning about monuments or nature, as well as plays a role of everyday means of transport, and, in many cases, a mainstay of tradition and history of the railroading. Very often, the narrow-gauge railway facilities conceal “rara avis” of railroading, such as historical vehicles and infrastructure. In most cases, it is the railway transport fans who take care of this heritage form and share their knowledge about the history, construction, and purpose of individual objects (Kolej wąskotorowa..., 2017, p. 16).

The aim of the article is to indicate the importance and possibilities to develop passenger service of narrow-gauge railways in Poland as an element of regional tourism product. In order to achieve this, desk research method has been applied in respect to available literature and the results of secondary research conducted at the request of the Railway Transport Office and the Central Statistical Office. The analysis covers narrow-gauge railways in Poland for the period 2014–2016. The article is of research nature.

**Regional tourism product**

Tourism product, being the subject of supply on the tourism market, has been the subject of analysis of many Polish authors (J. Altkorn, G. Gołembski, B. Meyer, A. Niezgoda, B. Marciszewska, A. Panasiuk, L. Mazurkiewicz, I. Jędrzejczyk, W. Middleton, J. Kaczmarek, A. Stasiak, B. Włodarczyk, M. Zdon-Korzeniowska, P. Zmyślony, W. Middleton) (Niezgoda, 2006, p. 65) has distinguished the general (total) tourism product, which constitutes an idea, expectation, or mental construction that exist in a tourist’s mind at the moment of making a travel decision, and which are also based on an idea of the expected time spent at the place of destination. The other product distinguished by Middleton, i.e. a specific product, should be understood as particular goods and services offered to tourists (cf. Meyer, 2015, 238–240). The differences between tourist products offered by entrepreneurs and regions were presented by L. Mazurkiewicz (Mazurkiewicz, 1999, p. 83), who analyses the tourist product on a micro and macro scale. A tourist product on a micro scale is defined as all services and tangible goods offered to a single tourist in the scope of tourist reception, whereas on a macro scale, a tourist product includes services and tangible goods offered to all tourists in the tourist reception scope (Meyer, 2015, p. 239). This product is most often defined as a bundle of tangible and intangible elements that enable accomplishment of a trip (Marciszewska, 2010, p. 42).

Tourism products may be divided into simple and complex products (Meyer, 2015, p. 239). The simple products are individual services (e.g. hotel, restaurant or guide services) or items (e.g. maps and tourist guides, tourist equipment), whereas complex products consist of a larger or smaller number of simple products that satisfy basic needs, which relate to the implementation of the trip, and needs that accompany the main need (the reason for the trip), which form a coherent whole (e.g. a tourist event or a tourist destinations) (Kaczmarek, Stasiak, Włodarczyk, 2010, p. 186). Although such package should contain at least transport and accommodation, it usually also includes
other services, such as transfer, tour leader assistance, car rental, travel and sightseeing services (Meyer, 2006, pp. 69–70). Tourism product is therefore a service in nature, which implies features such as complementarity, complexity, intangibility, production unity, exchange and consumption processes, no possibility to produce for stock, store, and seasonality (Golembski, 2009, p. 71).

It is a spatially determined product that includes an internally complex set of elements distinguished for its specific location in space (Meyer, 2004, pp. 180–181). These elements are of a diversified character, as they consist of different levels of tourist area product, which include (Kaczmarek, Stasiak, Włodarczyk, 2002, p. 103):

- heritage, including all elements created as a result of natural processes and human activities, such as the natural environment, culture and tradition, which form the basis for running various types of activities and the functioning of an area,
- infrastructure, including elements created as a result of human activity that is aimed at tourism development, such as tourist and paratourism accommodation or regional events,
- added value, including the attributes of the area that bring satisfaction to tourists, such as the idea or image,
- organization and management, that is, all elements that enable operation of single elements in the form of a coherent whole constituting the tourist area product.

Tourism product of the area of tourist reception (also described as an area's tourist product or tourist area product) arises on many levels and consists of various elements that ultimately should form a coherent whole that is attractive to tourists (Meyer, 2015, p. 239). According to this definition, narrow-gauge railways can be both the attraction of the area and an element of its infrastructure, as well as its added value.

**Narrow-gauge railways in Poland**

The origins of narrow-gauge railways in Poland date back to the 19th century. Narrow gauge railway had for a long time played an important complementary role to standard gauge railway. Even in the second half of the twentieth century, it was used both in the scheduled service of passenger traffic and in the transport of goods over short distances. Its advantages, such as the relatively low cost of construction and use of infrastructure, allowed it to be used, among others, in places where the use of standard-gauge infrastructure and rolling stock was unprofitable. Nowadays, narrow gauge railway is only occasionally used for goods transport. This is mainly due to the intensive development of individual and public road transport. Moreover, its purpose has changed, as it is now used as a tourist attraction that is a part of a given regional tourism product.

In the years 2014–2016, 23 narrow-gauge railways operated in twelve Polish voivodships. Its infrastructure varies significantly due to the historical background of every line. In the years 2014–2016, the total length of the railways amounted to 649 km, of which nearly 395 km were exploited in 2016. Significantly smaller length of railways used results most often from the poor technical condition of infrastructure that prevents the use of old routes. The largest number of narrow-gauge railways is located in Mazowieckie voivodship (over 105 km), with only 33 km of them exploited in 2016. In 2016, the longest active infrastructure (over 30 km) were in the possession of (Kolej wąskotorowa..., 2017, p. 10):

1. Przeworska Narrow-Gauge Railway – 46 km. The journey takes place among the landscapes of Rzeszowszczyzna with the route running, among others, through 602 meters of the only Polish tunnel for narrow-gauge railway in Szklary.
2. Żuławska Narrow-Gauge Railway – 36 km. The railways includes three fragments of routes, which run among the most beautiful tourist areas of Żuławy Wiślane and the Vistula Spit.

3. Bieszczadzka Forest Railway – 33 km. This route leads through picturesque terrains of Bieszczady.

As previously mentioned, the modern narrow-gauge railway most often constitutes a tourist attraction and cultural heritage that provides the opportunity to travel by exceptional historical rolling stock through places that present special natural and historical values. Statistical data confirms its importance in the Polish tourist landscape. Narrow-gauge railways, which possess a safety certificate issued by the President of the Office of Rail Transport, transport more and more people, mainly for tourist purposes. The number of passengers on these railways increased from 761 thousand in 2015, to almost 948 thousand in 2016 (Kolej wąskotorowa..., 2017, p. 2),

This means that tourists are beginning to appreciate the values of narrow-gauge railways, which often become an additional tourist attraction of a given region, and thus a part of its tourism product. The increasing popularity of narrow-gauge railways also brings additional benefits, as it allows obtaining funds for their maintenance and ensuring an adequate level of services. In many cases, the actions that guarantee compliance with the above standards require financial support for railway operations that come from public funds, as well as funding for the implementation of projects under the European Funds or the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Program.

Figure 1 shows the increase in the popularity of narrow-gauge railways in Poland, measured by the number of transported passengers per voivodships.

In 2016, the six biggest narrow-gauge railways transported almost 3/4 of passengers. Among popular railways can be found those, whose main advantage is natural conditions, namely Seaside Narrow-Gauge Railway (Rewal), Bieszczadzka Forest Railway, Żuławska Suburban Railway, as well as a narrow-gauge railway that constitutes a city attraction, i.e., the Park Railway Maltanka, Pleszewska Narrow-Gauge Railway that resumed its operation in 2015.
The largest number of trains were launched by railways in Wielkopolskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Śląskie and Podkarpackie voivodships. The number of trains in Wielkopolskie voivodship results from the operation of the Park Railway Maltanka, which is a city attraction dedicated to children, and regular connections offered every day by Pleszewska Narrow-Gauge Railway. In Podkarpackie and Zachodniopomorskie voivodships, the biggest number of trains are launched in the summer season, when the tourist traffic, and thus a large number of travellers, can be observed, as shown in Figure 2.

![Figure 2. The number of trains launched in the years 2014–2016 per voivodships](source)

A characteristic feature of narrow gauge railways is their considerable diversification, among others, in terms of route length. In 2016, the most exploited narrow-gauge railways were located in Wielkopolskie, Zachodniopomorskie and Podkarpackie voivodships. The ratio of the exploitation index to the number of trains running is important due to the costs incurred by the organizers of narrow-gauge railways when running longer routes. Railways that offer transport on longer routes run a relatively low number of trains compared to those that offer transport on routes up to several kilometres. This is noticeable, among others, when comparing Wielkopolskie and Podkarpackie voivodships. The costs of their operation are related to, inter alia, maintenance of narrow-gauge railway infrastructure, vehicles and technical facilities as well as employees’ remuneration.

**Conclusions**

The increased popularity of narrow-gauge railways among tourists corresponds with the general increase in popularity of railways among passengers, especially those travelling for tourist reasons. However, in many cases, the number of passengers using narrow-gauge railways is too small to guarantee funds for the proper maintenance of infrastructure and vehicles. The existence of narrow-gauge railways depends on the sources of additional
financing. Therefore, local associations and government authorities support the maintenance of tourist narrow-gauge railways. Most often, these funds simply allow them to function.

Therefore, the future of narrow-gauge railways still depends on small and irregular subsidies. On the other hand, the interest in railway heritage, including steam traction and old devices related to railway traffic, is growing. The rarer these objects become, the more interest they arouse.

On the basis of these considerations, it can be stated that narrow-gauge railway may be developed best when it complements and integrates the tourist offer while simultaneously satisfying the demand for transport services, which, in turn, makes it an integral element of the regional tourism product.

References


SIGNIFICANCE OF EDUCATION FOR THE ECONOMY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – TOWARD SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

BEATA SADOWSKA

University of Szczecin, Faculty of Management and Economics of Services, POLAND

E-mail: beata.sadowska@wzieu.pl

JEL classification
A20, Q01

Keywords
education, sustainable development, social responsibility, environment

Abstract
In Poland, children and teenagers are obligatorily subject to the process of mainstream education until a particular age, currently until lower secondary schools, which are being closed. Some children and teenagers continue their education in upper secondary schools and some study at universities. The mission of education is to achieve diverse knowledge of life and the surrounding world. One of the elements of primary and further education is promoting knowledge of the natural environment, natural resources, plants, animals and the role of ecosystems in the life of every human being and economic entity. The objective of the study is to determine the role and significance of education and to indicate effects of education on sustainable development in the context of creating individual social responsibility for the natural environment.

A fundamental hypothesis is as follows: "Long-term educational programmes executed as part of the education system and activities of enterprises, organizations, foundations or associations considerably contribute to the development of a high level of natural and ecological awareness of the young generation". The following methods and exploration techniques were used in the research process: desk research, critical analysis of national and foreign literature on the subject, structured interview (standardized). The research was conducted among students of Finance and Accounting of the University of Szczecin and will be finished on 10 October 2017. The research findings will enable formulating conclusions and recommendations.

Introduction

One of the elements of primary and further education is promoting knowledge of the natural environment, natural resources, plants, animals and the role of ecosystems in the life of every human being and economic entity.

The objective of the study is to determine the role and significance of education and to indicate effects of education on sustainable development in the context of creating individual social responsibility for the natural environment.
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Sustainable development — precursors, definitions, objectives

In the second half of the 20th century, the concept of sustainable development influenced perceiving mutual relations between economy, society and natural resources. Sustainable development is long-term development carried out by society and business entities. The term sustainable development was used for the first time at the Conference in Stockholm in 1972 when tasks and goals of global environmental protection were discussed.¹ The transfer of this concept to international documents took place at the 2nd Conference of the United Nations on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. One of important documents is Agenda 21. Sustainable development is not an univocal term. Authors interpret it variously, however, a common feature of these definitions is some kind of a desirable condition which is economically justified and economically and socially acceptable. Views of researchers and thinkers who have had an influence on the codification of the concept of sustainable development are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Precursors of the concept of sustainable development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Specification Description</th>
<th>Specification Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Physiocrats, 18th century</td>
<td>– they assumed that the only source of all wealth was land,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Quesnay</td>
<td>– natural resources are necessary factors of production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>T. Maltus, 1766–1834</td>
<td>– sustainable development is not possible without limiting population growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>J.S. Mill, 1806–1873</td>
<td>– competitive economy based on responsibility for the common good,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– biodiversity is important,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– steady-state economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>K. Marx, 1818–1883</td>
<td>– analyses of social development conditions with regard to economic development,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– risk connected with human exploitation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– economic development versus individual interests of economic actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>E. Haeckel, 1834–1919</td>
<td>– he used the word ecology for the first time in 1866,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– ecology is economics of nature,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– the discipline of ecology derived from biology and ethology and at the beginning it became a field of economics dealing with non-human part of nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>A. Pigou, 1877–1957</td>
<td>– conclusion on the optimal division of goods by the market,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– the market is unreliable,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– producers and consumers transfer a part of social costs in the form of external effects onto third parties (e.g. society),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– the internalization of external effects through fees, taxes – economic instruments of environmental protection,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– natural resources – the public good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I. Sasch defines sustainable development as “development aiming at harmonising (reasonable management) various goals: economic, social and ecological ones”. Whereas Hopfer indicates that “sustainable development is conducting business activity in harmony with the natural environment in such a way that no irreversible changes are caused” (Pionek, 2002). Sustainable development is “development aiming at harmonising various goals: economic, social, ecological, political and cultural ones”. It is “conducting business activity in harmony with the natural environment in such a way that no irreversible changes are caused” (Sadowska, 2016). One should agree with Rogall (2010) that sustainable development is development which satisfies current needs of citizens without risk that future generations will not be able to satisfy their needs. Sustainable development ensures that all humans have high ecological, economic and sociocultural standards.

An important achievement of current activities for sustainable development is the acknowledgement of the significance of the environmental dimension for ensuring the growth of potential in the world and creating proper living conditions for present and future generations. Effective management of natural resources involves mainly environmental activities guaranteeing sustainable development. Key objectives of sustainable development include:

1. Eliminating poverty in all its forms around the world, eliminating hunger, achieving food security and better nutrition standards as well as promoting sustainable farming.
2. Guaranteeing all people at every age a healthy lifestyle and promoting prosperity as well as ensuring high-quality education and promoting life-long learning.
3. Ensuring that all people have access to water and sanitation through sustainable management of water resources, developing stable infrastructure, promoting sustainable industrialisation and supporting innovation.
4. Protecting, restoring and promoting sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainable forest management, preventing and reversing the process of soil degradation.

It should be highlighted that sustainable development is not substitution development, i.e. improving one part of the natural environment at the cost of damaging the other part. It is the development of all parts of economy in a way which does not threaten environmental goods, and the key task of education is to propagate knowledge about goals, functions and effects of activities for sustainable development.

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Objectives, tasks and fields of the implementation of education for the economy of sustainable development — theoretical aspects

Every human is personally accountable for implementing sustainable development. One should agree with M. Wójcik-Jurkiewicz (2016) that responsibility of business entities concerns identifying and acknowledging the combination of connections of all values and standards creating a business institution in the social and natural environment in which it operates and without which it could not operate. Through their everyday activities, people and organizations directly and indirectly contribute to the implementation of, or failure to implement, the concept of sustainable development. Since the earliest years, a human is provided with knowledge of the role and significance of the natural environment.

Nowadays, knowledge is considered to be the most valuable asset and improving education for sustainable development becomes more and more important. According to the author, education for sustainable development should:

- raise social awareness in terms of the protection of natural resources and biodiversity as well as guarantee full access to information on using the natural environment,
- enable each society member to acquire knowledge, qualifications, competence and skills necessary to improve the condition of the natural environment,
- create new attitudes and models of consumer behaviour which will take account of care of the quality of the natural environment, non-renewable resources and will result in consumers’ and producers’ conscious decisions.

One should agree with T. Borys (2010) that an important document concerning education for sustainable development is the United Nations Strategy adopted at a high-level meeting of representatives of the Ministries of the Environment and Education (Vilnius, 17–18 March 2005). This Strategy indicates the need to extend knowledge and educate society taking account of the complexity of problems regarding environmental management, and postulates:

- pursuing balance between the social and economic good, culture, ecology, tradition, policy and respect for biodiversity,
- raising awareness of the value of equality, justice, social harmony and mutual respect,
- ensuring that each individual has the possibility of social education, and during the process of education instilling values without which sustainable development in terms of social and ecological dimensions would not be possible.

As E. Lorek and A. Sobol (2010) point out, in terms of teaching techniques, education for sustainable development is most often connected with ecological education. Among other things, it is visible in a government document, the National Strategy for Ecological Education – through education to sustainable development, in which such terms as ecological education, environmental education and education for sustainable development are used interchangeably.

Objectives that education for sustainable development should execute, in accordance with the provisions of the National Strategy for Ecological Education, are presented in Figure 1.
Significance of Education for the Economy of Sustainable Development — Toward Social Responsibility

Figure 1. Objectives of education for sustainable development
Source: own work on the basis of: National Strategy... (2001).

Organization of ecological education in the official education system in Poland is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Organization of ecological education in the official education system in Poland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Specification</th>
<th>Execution of objectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Preschool education</td>
<td>The goal of preschool education in terms of raising ecological awareness is:</td>
<td>– ensuring access to attractive teaching resources and toys, – increasing the number of radio and television programmes that include ecological content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Stimulating willingness and developing skills to observe the natural environment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Developing sensitivity to both the beauty and destruction of the environment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Teaching respect for other beings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Influencing parents’ lifestyle and ecological awareness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Building pro-ecological habits and behaviours in one’s everyday life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Primary and secondary schools</td>
<td>1. Shaping a person aware of their unity with the natural and sociocultural environment.</td>
<td>– initiating and attending national and international environmental education programmes, – constantly undertaking and expanding activities for environmental protection in schools and their surroundings, – highlighting a positive role of children in environmental education of adults, – carrying out environmental education in the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Developing skills to observe the environment and collect information about it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Building respect for life and health of both one’s own and all other beings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Implementing active forms of education in the field, e.g. nature schools.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Establishing cooperation between teachers in order to create an atmosphere good for the execution of fundamental objectives of ecological education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Higher education</td>
<td>1. Preparing specialists for professional work regarding environmental protection.</td>
<td>Universities should be places where postgraduate studies and courses for teachers, administrative officers or journalists are organized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Organizing postgraduate studies which supplement knowledge of environmental protection.</td>
<td>Universities should publish and promote textbooks and scripts dealing with the issue of environmental protection in a broad sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Giving unofficial environmental education by organizing open universities and lectures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


It can be observed that in the recent years there has been a growing interest among adults in acquiring ecological knowledge as part of the official and unofficial education system. The role of open universities, postgraduate studies, courses, training as well as attractive forms of promoting knowledge such as competitions, promotions, exhibitions or workshops is increasing. A significant part in developing environmental education among adults should be played by local authority structures.
Education for sustainable development aims at educating society. In terms of that, activities of entities providing education services (schools, organizations, entrepreneurs, associations) should mainly develop attitudes and behaviours of society, promote historical values and tradition, and emphasise the significance of interpersonal cooperation. They should also promote nature, the beauty of landscapes and communing with nature as well as highlight an important role of corporate social responsibility\(^4\) which is the answer to the concept of sustainable development.

Apart from giving knowledge and creating values, education for sustainable development should teach ethics, good practices and, above all, present the hierarchy of values which includes the concept of sustainable development.

**Method**

The following exploration methods and techniques were used in the research process: desk research analysis, critical analysis of national and foreign literature on the subject, questionnaire interview (standardized). The research was conducted among students of the University of Szczecin studying Finance and Accounting. The results of the research allowed to formulate conclusions and recommendations. Students of the following programmes took part in the research:

1. Full-time BA programme.
2. Full-time MA programme.

In total, there are 150 students of Finance and Accounting in the academic year 2017/2018 at the University of Szczecin. Whereas 94 students, that is 63% of all students, participated in the research titled “Sustainable development – students’ ecological awareness”. The research was conducted in October 2017.

**Results**

Education on sustainable development is understood as a process shaping the full scope of relations between a human, society and the natural environment. Its task is to change individuals’ attitudes towards the environment. In accordance with international and Polish programme documents, it should be present during the whole education process and include all social groups. The effect of ecological education is the acquired knowledge. The final goal of ecological education is to increase ecological awareness and responsibility for the environment as well as undertake activities contributing to minimizing the negative impact on the natural environment.

The research findings are as follows:

1. Only 35.17% of respondents know a correct definition of sustainable development.
2. 20% of respondents indicated that the majority of problems connected with pollution and degradation of the environment in their places of living concern poor waste management and destruction of valuable natural areas (e.g. through development, deforestation, changes in the water system).
3. According to 90% of respondents, an average citizen is responsible for the condition of the natural environment.

\(^4\) The idea of corporate social responsibility is a view on social and environmental issues which is still optional, but exceeds the applicable legal requirements that business entities take account of more: Ignatowski, Wójcik-Jurkiewicz (2016), p. 127.
4. Local authorities, commune's residents and local entrepreneurs were deemed by respondents most important entities which should undertake activities that would improve the condition of the environment.

5. 41% of respondents were not rather ready to pay an additional, voluntary tax in order to protect the environment.

6. As many as 23% of the research participants have not recently tried to reduce energy, water and gas consumption.

7. 67% of respondents confirm that in their households there is municipal waste sorting.

8. As many as 60% of students participating in the research use reusable bags while shopping.

9. 10% of the research participants never voluntarily resign from using cars in order to use public transport.

10. Main motives for undertaking activities contributing to the protection of the natural environment by students are respect for nature and economic reasons.

11. 70% of respondents have never participated in promotional, educational or training activities aimed at providing knowledge of sustainable development.

12. When assessing the effectiveness of activities of local authorities concerning environmental protection, students taking part in the research claimed that activities of a commune are unsatisfactory (37% of respondents) and in terms of activities of a district as many as 41% of respondents are not able to assess them.

13. 53.19% of respondents think that public sector entities such as: Housing Management Department, Water and Sewage Company, Bus Services Company, Forest District, do not undertake any activities for sustainable development.

14. Only 35% of the students participated in the past in promotional, educational or training activities aimed at providing knowledge of sustainable development, mainly in terms of forest education.

Conclusions

1. Education for sustainable environment is an element of a human life and plays a significant role in it.

2. Humans have always been connected with the environment – nature has given them everything they have needed to survive and, at the beginning, education was more of a tale, a fable or a story.

3. The society often gets education for sustainable development for free.

4. All citizens can take advantage of ecological education if they want, no potential user is excluded from access to education and citizens do not pay for education directly.

5. Environmental (ecological) education contributes to creating attitudes of young generations and to a better understanding of sustainable management.

6. The objective of education for sustainable development is to teach the society – create attitudes and social behaviours, promote historical values and traditions as well as emphasise the significance of cooperation between people. Education aims at promoting nature, the beauty of landscapes, communing with nature and highlighting an important role of corporate social responsibility.

7. The level of knowledge of the students of Finance and Accounting is not satisfactory.

8. Students do not often participate in the organized classes and despite awareness of the significance of sustainable development they would not be always willing to support such development (voluntary taxes).
9. As a result of the conducted research, it can be claimed that the formulated hypothesis: “Long-term educational programmes executed as part of the education system and activities of enterprises, organizations, foundations or associations considerably contribute to developing a high level of natural and ecological awareness of the young generation” has not been positively verified, which means that public organizations, schools, business entities as well as the society itself still have to do a lot in order to promote knowledge of the role and significance of natural resources.

References


MANAGEMENT OF SENIOR CITIZENS LEISURE TIME AS THE CHALLENGE OF MODERN CITIES ILLUSTRATED BY THE EXAMPLE OF SZCZECIN

AGNIESZKA SAWIŃSKA

University of Szczecin, Faculty of Management and Economics of Services, POLAND
e-mail: agnieszka.sawinska@wzieu.pl

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ABSTRACT
Improving the quality of life of residents is one of the priority objectives of the policy pursued in cities. An important role in this area is played by the recreational function of cities, especially by the creation of suitable conditions for recreation by residents. The article assumes that in the face of demographic and the lifestyle changes taking place in the society, the undertakings of cities aimed at leisure time management of residents should, in particular, focus on the needs of the elderly. The theoretical part of the article presents the reasons for treating seniors as important participants of recreation. The practical part is based on the results of surveys conducted among seniors - city dwellers and on the analysis of activities undertaken by the city of Szczecin in the field of activation of seniors’ recreation. The considerations taken up in the article focus on issues concerning recreation in public space.

Introduction
Cities simultaneously perform multiple functions such as economic, social, administrative, housing and cultural, which determine the development of land planning in a city. Other factors, relevant in the light of city’s development, are recreational functions that are combined with the tourist function, as cities constitute an important area of tourist and recreational activities for both residents and tourists. A challenge faced by today’s cities comes
down to meeting the changing needs of an increasingly growing group of residents, i.e. the elderly. Senior citizens are more and more often becoming the recipients of a recreational product, and therefore should no longer be stereotypically perceived as people who are not very active and uninterested in active forms of leisure activities. Moreover, an important task faced by cities is the improvement of the residents’ life quality, which is undoubtedly influenced by forms of leisure activities.

The thesis adopted in the article stipulates that cities constitute an important area of recreational activities for the elderly.

The article consists of two parts. The first part presents theoretical issues regarding recreational functions of cities in the light of changes in demography and the lifestyle of the society. The second part presents selected research results concerning recreational activity of senior citizens in cities, indicating the main forms of recreation chosen by them and the motives for undertaking such activities. Examples of the activities adopted by the city of Szczecin, which support recreational activity of senior citizens, were also presented.

A city as a recreational activity area for the seniors

When identifying urban areas as important places of recreational activities for residents and tourists, as well as indicating the main premises for considering the elderly important recipients of recreation facility development of the city, in the first place attention should be given to demographic processes and changes in the lifestyle of contemporary senior citizens.

Demographic projections for Europe indicate a more advanced aging process of society than for other continents. People aged over 65 constituted 17.6% of Europe’s population in 2016, and in 2050 their number is to increase by 10 percentage points, i.e., to 27.6%. On the other hand, in 2016, people over 65 constituted 16% of the population of Poland, and by 2030 this number is to increase to 23%, whereas by 2050 it is to reach about 33% (Gierańczyk, 2016). The pace of the aging process will differ in terms of both sex and place of residence. By 2020, the median will increase by 2.8 years (2.9 for men and 2.7 for women). At the end of the forecast period, every other man who lives in the city will be over 51 years old, while every other woman will be over 56 years old (median value of 56.6). The age of people living in rural areas will be a couple years younger – every other man will reach the age of 49, and woman 52.6 (GUS, 2014). Narrowing the considerations to the age structure of inhabitants of large Polish cities, in 2016, people aged over 65 constituted as much as 26% of the total population of these cities. The aging process of city dwellers is diversified, and despite the fact that Szczecin’s residents do not age as fast as inhabitants in other big Polish cities, this trend is increasing. In 2010, people aged over 65 constituted 15% of Szczecin’s residents, and in 2016 that number reached 19% (GUS, 2017; Local Data Bank).

In this context, it is worth mentioning that senior citizens may perform various forms of leisure activities by actively participating in professional, social, cultural, educational, recreational and other events in accordance with the activity theory, or being excluded from them, which is referred to in the literature as the disengagement theory. This theory, also known as theory of exclusion, assumes that the elderly have decreased interaction with the world around them due to reduced body abilities, the loss of a life partner and friends, or retirement. The concept contradicting the disengagement theory is the activity theory, which assumes the correlation between the degree of activity and satisfaction with life. Being active is supposed to result in a more positive self-image and better adaptation abilities. According to the activity theory, the elderly exhibit the same social needs as middle-aged people, and therefore social withdrawal in old age is contrary to the individual needs. It is presumed that social
isolation or the impossibility to perform previously played roles may result in a loss of identity and well-being, low self-esteem, sense of shame or isolation (Zgliczyński, 2012; Pędziwiatr, 2015).

Both theories may be juxtaposed with the problem of leisure and tourism activities performed by the elderly. On the one hand, the determinants of senior citizens’ behaviour in the tourism market (in particular those regarding economy and health) indicate barriers/problems faced by the elderly, which exclude them from participation in tourism and recreation activities, whereas determinants related to lifestyle change, growing awareness of the importance of recreational activity to improve the quality of life, and the increase availability of free time resources make senior citizens an important group of recipients of recreational services. The necessity to change the stereotypical perception of the elderly and treat them as important segments of the tourism (recreational) market has also been noticed by other authors (Bombol, Słaby 2011; Kociszewski, 2014; Niezgoda, Jerzyk, 2013).

Another argument for inclusion of programmes that support the development of infrastructure, and recreational services which are addressed to senior citizens, in the city’s policy is the positive impact of tourist and recreational activities on health and quality of life, which has been noticed and proven by scientist. It has been proven that regular physical activity improves general well-being, physical and mental health; helps to lead an independent life and perform basic life activities independently; helps control specific conditions and diseases (e.g. stress, obesity, diabetes); minimizes the effects of certain disabilities; helps during the treatment of pain; allows to spend large amounts of free time in a valuable and enjoyable way. Recreation is therefore a factor that prevents aging through physical activity (Posłuszny, Lapina, 2011). Moreover, it may be supported by appropriate provisions, which set directions of urban development, included in strategic documents of cities, as well as regulations concerning recreational and tourist activities of senior citizens presented in senior policy. Unfortunately, the Polish senior policy does not directly refer to seniors’ recreational and tourist activities. The main aim of senior policy in the sphere of educational, social and cultural activates, is supporting the idea of senior citizen education and activating them to civic and social activities. Development of the educational offer for the elderly includes the three most common educational areas: pro-health, civic and new technology education. Furthermore, development and support of social activity of the elderly aims at increasing the involvement of older people in the life of local communities and internal affairs of the country; increasing the role of senior citizens in solving social problems; as well as managing the valuable potential of older people – their knowledge, skills, professional and life experience and willingness to work for others (volunteering). Senior policy also recognizes the need to increase the participation of older people in culture, both as its recipients and creators (Długofalowa polityka..., 2013).

The answer to the problems concerning the aging of society and the changing needs of senior citizens in terms of leisure activity management may be the development of cities in regards to recreational and tourist space, which will be supported by properly conducted policy of local authorities. While the recommendations regarding activation of senior citizens concern primarily the educational, professional and health spheres, with tourism and recreation being marginal matters, there can be observed activities carried out by cities that indirectly favour recreational activation of senior citizens.

As indicated by P. Zmyślony, the tourist function, which is connected with the recreational function, is currently treated as one of the basic functions of cities (Zmyślony, 2015). In addition, it should be noted that the recreational function of the city is endogenous and regards satisfying the recreational needs of residents, which, at the same time, can also be realized by tourists based on the same attributes (Panasiuk, 2011). Cities provide recreational services that allow residents to rejuvenate physical and mental strength. Furthermore, urban areas possess useful
intangible properties, which meet the recreational needs of residents. Some elements of recreation infrastructure, which are enjoyed by the residents, also constitute a part of the tourism product of the city, which, in turn, is used by tourists. It is therefore difficult to separate tourist activity from the forms and ways the facilities and space are used by the residents. Tourists and residents of the city meet in one, yet diverse, space, where they make use of many common equipment and services. (Meyer, Gardzińska, Sawińska, 2016).

Recreational activities of the elderly in a city

Recreational activities of senior citizens may be divided into two basic and generally accepted categories, i.e., passive and active recreation. Passive recreation is characterised by undertakings that do not require the participants to act consciously, e.g. listening to the radio. Whereas, active recreation is characterized by activities that are aimed at achieving goals, and require a specific mental and physical effort, such as playing chess, solving crosswords, playing board games, and performing physical exercises such as running, swimming, fitness, etc.

As already mentioned, cities are areas where recreational and tourist activities may be performed simultaneously. The infrastructure and services provided in the field of recreation are of key importance for the implementation of recreational activity – apart from the conditioning resulting from the resources of the natural environment. Infrastructure, first and foremost, consists of specialized elements dedicated to a specific form of recreation\(^1\) which include, among others:

- elements of physical recreation infrastructure, including: stadiums, playing fields, sports halls, gyms, recreational areas with equipment for physical recreation (e.g. “open gyms”), rope courses, swimming pools, bathing beaches, tennis courts, harbours and marinas, marinas for kayaks, artificial ice rinks, shooting ranges, sports circuits, skate parks, sports airports, bowling alleys, artificial climbing walls, health paths, water, walking and cycling trails, walking routes;
- elements of natural environment landscape feature development and display, including forests, parks, green areas, and zoological gardens;
- elements of cultural infrastructure, including: cinemas, theatres, concert halls, art galleries and rooms;
- elements of cultural and historical infrastructure, including museums, historical objects and architectural complexes, cultural heritage objects (sculptures and memorial monuments);
- elements of entertainment infrastructure, including amusement parks, funfairs (statutory 2013).

Services related to physical activity include, among others (Panasiuk, 2011):

- services provided by gyms and fitness clubs (yoga, aerobics, Nordic walking, etc.),
- services provided by other sports facilities (swimming pools, bathing beaches, aqua parks, cable cars, ice rinks, tourist trails, stadiums, etc.),
- services provided by dance schools,
- services provided by rentals of recreational equipment,
- services provided by SPA facilities,
- services provided by entities dealing with the organization of recreational events, such as survival courses, kayaking trips, rallies, camps, etc.

\(^1\) A part of the infrastructure is non-specialized objects and equipment of general infrastructure of a given area with separate places for music, art, and reading rooms, fitness clubs and gyms.
Although recreational infrastructure is often universal and addresses a wide range of recipients, it is possible to distinguish elements that are of particular interest to older people. For example, the research carried out in 2014 on a representative sample of the residents of Szczecin (390 people) showed the differences between forms of activity occurring between different age groups. The most popular places associated with sports or active recreation of Szczecin’s residents aged over 50 are city trails and cycle routes, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Locations chosen as part of activities related to sport or active recreation of Szczecin’s residents by age groups (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Up to 18 years old</th>
<th>18–25 years old</th>
<th>26–30 years old</th>
<th>31–40 years old</th>
<th>41–50 years old</th>
<th>50+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tennis courts</td>
<td>22.22</td>
<td>66.67</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-karts</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>54.17</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing fields</td>
<td>13.79</td>
<td>51.72</td>
<td>27.59</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadiums</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>49.02</td>
<td>21.57</td>
<td>9.80</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>14.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice rinks</td>
<td>10.34</td>
<td>48.28</td>
<td>20.69</td>
<td>17.24</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skate parks</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>53.85</td>
<td>23.08</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rope courses</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>44.44</td>
<td>22.22</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational glades</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>41.03</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>20.51</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>14.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City trails</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>12.90</td>
<td>19.35</td>
<td>13.98</td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle routes</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>40.74</td>
<td>12.35</td>
<td>18.52</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>25.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridle paths</td>
<td>21.43</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>21.43</td>
<td>7.14</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling alleys</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>53.49</td>
<td>11.63</td>
<td>18.60</td>
<td>6.98</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spa/Wellness</td>
<td>10.71</td>
<td>28.57</td>
<td>21.43</td>
<td>28.57</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values do not add up to 100% due to the possibility of multiple choice in the question.
Source: Sawińska (2016).

In case of people aged over 50 years, only 60% use facilities intended for sports and recreation, whereas the remaining 40% respondents do not use any. Among the reasons for not using the services of sports and recreation facilities, respondents aged 50+ mentioned the lack of free time, excessive prices, lack of facilities in the area of residence and health reasons. However, it should be noted that the percentage of responses regarding lack of free time was lower compared to responses of younger surveyees, and in turn the percentage of responses related to health and lack of facilities in the area of residence was higher than in case of responses made by people under 50 (Table 2).

Moreover, the above-mentioned research indicated that among the main motives of using sports and recreation facilities chosen by people in the 50+ group were health (over 80%), leisure (almost 43%) and relaxation (over 38%) followed by appearance (over 32%) and sports (approx. 33%).

Despite the fact that the group of senior respondents was not big, the results of the study are consistent with other studies conducted in 2015 among senior residents and residents of Rzeszów (Rzepko, Drozd, Drozd, Bajorek, Kunysz, 2017). The research carried out among the senior citizens of Rzeszów showed that the most common reasons for practicing in physical recreation are relaxation close to nature (40%), health (39%), experience of joy and relief, peace (36%) active leisure activities (34%), regeneration of psychophysical strength (25%), socializing

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2 Research “The city as an area of tourist and recreational activity, on the example of Szczecin” carried out by the Tourism Economy and Spa Management Department of the Department of Tourism Management.
(22%), escape from everyday life (21%), interests and hobbies (18%), doing sports, improving physical condition (17%), experiencing an adventure (16%), overcoming own weaknesses (14%), shaping a slim body (13%), developing discipline and willpower (12%), strengthening self-esteem (12%), showing own inventiveness and courage (10%), participation in sports events (3%). Furthermore, the senior citizens indicated physical activities which are performed by them often, namely outdoor camping, picnic, mushroom picking, berry harvest (53%), walking (52%), work in the garden or on the plot (28%), hiking (25%), exercising at home or club (21%), cycling (20%), dancing (14%).

Table 2. The main reasons for dismissing sports and recreation facilities (by age) (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>18–25 years old</th>
<th>26–30 years old</th>
<th>31–40 years old</th>
<th>41–50 years old</th>
<th>50+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No interesting offer</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>8.86</td>
<td>6.92</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No facility in the area of residence</td>
<td>9.84</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>11.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No free time</td>
<td>32.79</td>
<td>49.37</td>
<td>45.38</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health problems</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>11.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconvenient access</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive prices</td>
<td>37.70</td>
<td>27.85</td>
<td>29.23</td>
<td>37.50</td>
<td>31.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sawińska (2016).

This leads to the conclusion that leisure time management of senior citizens in a city should be based on a widely accessible recreational infrastructure. Therefore, an important role in this respect will be played by city authorities, who may implement investments favouring the objectives set out in the city’s strategic documents.

The city’s vision 2025 presented in the Strategy for the City of Szczecin 2025, i.e., “Szczecin – a city with considerable resources of greenery and water, safe, friendly and attractive to residents, investors and tourists, offering rich cultural and quality living and recreation”, refers to the key aspects of recreation activities of its citizens. Moreover, Szczecin 2020 programme indicates that, apart from job and education, every inhabitant highly values the area in which their live. The area may be improved by provision of a wide access to various types of goods, services and facilities that create better conditions and improve the quality of life. Quality of life is also related to the use of natural assets of Szczecin and the continuous improvement of the quality of public space, so that the city would be a good place to live.

An analysis of undertakings carried out by the authorities of Szczecin in the scope of tourism and recreational management development 2012–2017, together with the investment plans for 2018–2023, lead to a conclusion that the city has been accomplishing the goals set out in the planning documents, and its recreational function has been important for the authorities. Nevertheless, it could be observed that most investments are universal or also aimed at families with children. An example of activities addressed to senior citizens is the “Revitalization of Brodowski Pond” project implemented within the framework of Szczecin Civic Budget for 2014–2015. The scope of investments covered, among others, works in the scope of landscaping for green areas, creation of a new fountain, reconstruction of alleys and park paths, creation of a playground for children and a senior citizen zone. Furthermore, physical activity areas for senior citizens, where the scope of investment comes down to the creation of sets of outdoor exercise equipment, i.e., the so-called “gyms in the open-air”, are created in Szczecin. In 2015 alone, as many as 10 such gyms were created. The goal of an outdoor gym is to allow the elderly access to
Management of senior citizens leisure time as the challenge of modern cities illustrated by the example of Szczecin

A very effective form of outdoor physical activity, regardless of their fitness and skills. Creating this type of publicly available and easy to use sets of equipment allows the elderly to undertake physical exercises and motivates them to lead a healthier lifestyle. The use of outdoor gym equipment positively affects health and the cardiovascular system, as well as strengthens physical condition and motor coordination. Gyms are free and generally available, and thus popular among residents (Szczecin..., 2016).

Senior citizens may also make use of bicycle paths as a part of active recreational activities. Their length in the city has increased significantly in recent years. According to the Central Statistical Office data, the length of bicycle paths in Szczecin in 2011 amounted to 83 km, whereas in 2016 it was already 120 km. Having in mind recreational cycling, it is necessary to mention the city’s activities in the area of constructing unattended city bike rental service. Bike_S System – Szczecin City Bike was launched in August 2014, also as a part of Szczecin Civic Budget. In the first year of operation, over 23 thousand users registered in the system, while in 2017 the number already amounted to around 30,000. Initially, Bike_S had 32 base stations, and in 2017 this number increased to 84. There are further plans to build additional stations (Stępień-Słodkowska, Ustianowski, Krajewska-Pędzik, 2017).

Furthermore, forest areas of Szczecin offer recreational glades, which are popular among senior citizens. These places very often include covered picnic areas, benches and designated outdoor bonfire sites, and sometimes infrastructure for active recreation: playing fields, chess board tables, table tennis and parking spaces. There are 15 recreational glades in Szczecin forests, where it is possible to have a bonfire.

When presenting undertakings aimed at mobilizing the elderly by stimulating their recreational activity, one must mention “Szczecin Senior Citizen Card”, implemented by the City of Szczecin, that entitles its inhabitants to use the system of discounts and reductions in many public institutions, non-governmental organizations and private partners (among them can be found fitness clubs, bicycle shops, restaurants, museums and the Arkonka Recreation Complex). It should be noted that the number of partners of the city of Szczecin who provide recreational, cultural and sport services is increasing. Worth noting is also the fact that the city, in order to increase the availability of senior citizens’ cards, has concluded a contract with a photographic company operating in the city of Szczecin, thanks to which senior citizens can obtain a photo required for this card for PLN 1. The new undertaking proposed by the city is also granting to entrepreneurs and institutions the “A place friendly to senior citizens” certificate. Until April 2018, such certificates have been granted to 12 entities, 9 of which are entities providing recreational services.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it should be noted that although the policy regarding senior citizens, which is an important reference point for activities carried out by local government units, focuses on spheres of senior citizens’ activity other than recreation (i.e., professional, social and cultural) in order to mobilize the elderly, it may indirectly include activities favouring recreational activation of senior citizens. For example, provisions regarding pro-health education may refer to promoting active ways of spending free time as attitudes conducive to improving health. The senior citizens’ societal engagement may take the form of participation in Community Councils or the City Council of Senior Citizens, which, in turn, may affect the initiatives for the development of the city’s recreational offer while taking into account the needs of senior citizens. Moreover, participation in recreational activities strengthens social bonds and improves the quality of senior citizens’ lives, which is in line with the goals of Poland’s senior policy, and furthermore, helps shape a positive image of cities.
The universal character of most undertakings regarding recreation carried out in Szczecin may be, on the one hand, the result of the necessity to take into account the interests of a diverse group of residents and, on the other, indicative of the still inadequate perception of senior citizens as recipients of a recreational product of the city. Nevertheless, the presented examples point to the anticipation of problems related to the aging of city residents, while changing the lifestyle of modern senior citizens.

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SHAPING A POSITIVE IMAGE OF A HOTEL FACILITY – CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY APPROACH

MARTA SIDORKIEWICZ

University of Szczecin, POLAND
email: marta.sidorkiewicz@wzieu.pl

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KEYWORDS image, hotel industry, corporate social responsibility

ABSTRACT The aim of this article is to identify activities undertaken by hotel facilities in order to shape a positive image, especially in the area of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The article consists of three content-related parts, as well as introduction and summary. The first and second part of the article, which are of theoretical character, discuss the essence of shaping the image of a hotel facility and the theoretical aspects of corporate social responsibility. The third part, which is of empirical character, presents examples of activities undertaken by hotel facilities in the area of corporate social responsibility.

Introduction

In times of intense competition and searching for creative solutions in the area of creation of company image and products, it is a great challenge to achieve recognition in a specific environment. For this reason, modern enterprises are more and more often participating in various activities in the area of corporate social responsibility.
(CSR), which is based on a voluntary act of taking into account ecological and social issues in the company’s business activities and relations with their stakeholders.

The aim of this article is to identify activities conducted by hotel facilities in order to shape a positive image, especially in the area of corporate social responsibility (CSR). For the purpose of this article, there was adopted a thesis stating that activities in the scope of corporate social responsibility are an element of shaping a positive image of a hotel facility.

The study employed, in the theoretical part of the article, desk research method, that constitutes a critical analysis of the literature on the subject regarding marketing, hospitality and corporate social responsibility, as well as the analysis of industry reports, available on the Internet (including websites of hotel facilities and their counterparts in social media), in the empirical part of the article.

The essence of shaping an image of a hotel facility

Today, competition between various companies with the usage of marketing tools, such as a product structure or price, is becoming insufficient due to, among others, financial resources. Therefore, companies such as hotel facilities, which are understood as buildings, complexes of buildings or field devices, whose main aim is to satisfy the basic needs of people living temporarily outside the place of permanent residence, and meeting the requirements for a given type of facility covered by legal provisions, create marketing strategies whose main goal is to create the desired image in the environment. The image reflects the perception of the organization by particular groups from its environment, and thus it is not objective, but a subjective image – a different perception of individual groups operating in the environment (Ćwiklińska, 2012, p. 34).

The elements that build an image include, among others: (Tkaczyk, Rachwalska, 1997, p. 6) name (domain name, trade mark, colouring, etc.), traditions, age, size and scope of action (local, national, international), financial strength and prospects for future development, development mission, product offer, management philosophy, promotion policy, appearance and behaviour of employees, or market conduct. The image is directly related to such factors as identity and reputation, which are sometimes considered equivalent to image. Identity must come before image, which means that the environment must perceive it before the image of the given entity is created (Dziadkiewicz-Iłkowska, 2010, p. 77).

Image as a marketing category is characterized by performed functions, which are beneficial from the point of view of the supply and demand sides of the market (Altkorn, 2002, p. 5):

- allows effective competition on the market, where entities which have strong and positive image are in particular associated with maximized benefits from the acquirer’s point of view,
- positions the entity in the minds of the target audience,
- allows conducting aggressive activities by an entity and achieving desired results,
- lowers promotion costs of new products,
- allows lowering business costs (cooperation),
- provides relatively greater operational stability and less risk.

Due to its complexity, image covers a wide scope of functions (Percy, 2008, p. 62) (also including some benefits), and therefore it might be difficult to include them in their entirety. Image understood as a way of communicating with the environment facilitates the relationship between the parties, as well as makes public opinion loyal to the brand and the entity. Another important factor is that it removes anonymity and allows the creation of a favourable attitude
towards the entity (e.g. hotel facility). On the other hand, acceptance is an important factor for both the entity and the acquirer, who by acquiring the product satisfy their own need for acceptance (Orfin, Sidorkiewicz, 2016, p. 303).

Therefore, the image of a hotel facility is understood as the way it is perceived by the guests (potential and real), based on the possessed knowledge, information and stimuli. The indicated information and impulses may, to some extent, be controlled by a hotel facility that broadcasts a promotion message to a market (e.g. a country). There are also independent stimuli that are created outside a hotel facility (e.g., opinions of guests and residents, stereotypes) which, in the opinion of the author, may be affected to some extent by an entity coordinating promotional policy of a facility. However, it is a long-term process, which often requires significant changes in a given area.

In the context of searching for a synthetic expression of a hotel facility’s image, it can be assumed that the process of building and strengthening image includes such elements as, among others:

– facility localization,
– creativity and innovation in the approach to the offer,
– the culture of handling the process of providing hotel services,
– relationships with guests (clients),
– flexibility in contact with guests,
– quality policy for hotel products.

The proper use of the indicated components constitutes the basis for the creation of a positive image of a given hotel facility.

Theoretical aspects of corporate social responsibility

The author of the first definition of corporate social responsibility (CSR) is H. Bowen, who defined it in an article from 1953, called “Social Responsibilities of the Businessman”, as the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society (Bowen, 1953, p. 6).

In economic terms, corporate social responsibility is defined as an element of company’s strategy leading to optimal use of resources based on good relations with the environment and allowing creation of customer loyalty in relation to the company’s brand (brands) (Nakonieczna, 2008, p. 20). In 2001, the European Commission defined CSR as “concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis”. Corporate social responsibility concerns actions by companies over and above their legal obligations towards society and the environment, i.e. also “additional” investment in human capital, environment protection and relationships with the stakeholders. Stakeholders are all persons and institutions interested in successfully achieving the objectives of a specific enterprise. They can be divided into internal stakeholders, such as owners and employees, and external ones that include customers, suppliers, creditors, local community, trade associations, governments of different levels, courts, schools, universities, etc. (Rybak, 2004, pp. 43–50). In 2011, the European Commission added that CSR is “the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society”. The concept of CSR may be treated as a part of the concept of sustainable development, which underlines the need to properly shape the balance between economic, social and environmental governance. CSR covers actions for sustainable development that the company should undertake (Zielinski, 2014).
As presented above, there are many definitions of corporate social responsibility in the literature on the subject. Worth mentioning is the fact that these definitions include both economic, legal, sociological as well as ecological and ethical aspects. This undoubtedly demonstrates the complexity of the CSR concept (Leoński, 2014), which is related to the local culture and the degree of development of the country and the industry in which the enterprise operates.

The CSR concept is an important instrument of shaping the future of a company (Wolska, 2014, p. 533) which is related to the benefits that result from the activities carried out by the company in this area (Table 1).

Table 1. The benefits for companies and stakeholders resulting from activities in the area of corporate social responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits for companies</th>
<th>Benefits for stakeholders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>– builds a positive image,</td>
<td>– helps solve social and environmental problems caused by the company’s activity,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– provides additional advertising (presence in media without incurring advertising costs),</td>
<td>– helps companies to be responsible for their actions,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– facilitates functioning in the local community,</td>
<td>– allows dialogue and partnership with stakeholders,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– allows maintaining a high level of loyalty of current customers and obtaining new ones,</td>
<td>– CSR programs encourage the company to see wider business perspectives,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– reinforces the credibility of the mission,</td>
<td>– encourages other companies to use CSR,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– boosts the effectiveness of activities,</td>
<td>– affects social justice,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– generates competition on international markets,</td>
<td>– helps government and private programs support pro-social and pro-environmental activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– generates an increase in investor interest,</td>
<td>– - strengthens credibility, visibility and reputation in the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– allows implementation of tax deductions (cash and donations in kind, help offered by local and central agencies by providing tax reliefs) which reduces the costs,</td>
<td>– helps solve social and environmental problems caused by the company’s activity,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– increases employees’ satisfaction,</td>
<td>– helps companies to be responsible for their actions,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– increases identification of employees with the company,</td>
<td>– allows dialogue and partnership with stakeholders,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– affects the positive perception of the company by potential job candidates,</td>
<td>– CSR programs encourage the company to see wider business perspectives,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– positively affects the organization’s culture,</td>
<td>– encourages other companies to use CSR,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– affects social justice,</td>
<td>– helps government and private programs support pro-social and pro-environmental activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


When summarizing the concept of CSR, it should be noted that it generates both benefits and costs, as implementation of some activities requires financial as well as human and material capitals. However, taking into account the list of benefits presented, it seems that they exceed the costs associated with its implementation.

Activities in the area of corporate social responsibility undertaken by hotel facilities — empirical approach

For the purpose of this study, an analysis of selected websites concerning the hotel industry and websites belonging to hotel facilities was performed.¹ The collected material allowed the division of activities in the CSR area undertaken by hotel facilities into two groups, i.e. actions for the benefit of ecology and society. Table 2 presents the results of the analysis.

¹ The selection of sites is the result of the search on the Internet the following slogans: “hospitality + CSR” and “Hotel + CSR”.
Table 2. Practical examples of activities undertaken by hotel facilities in the area of corporate social responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of activities in the area of CSR</th>
<th>Practical examples of undertaken activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Environmental measures                | – reducing energy consumption in the aspect of facility lighting by means of multi-stage brightening and darkening solutions, together with sensor systems, and access to daylight in conference rooms,  
– application of heat recovery ventilation system from air-conditioning, which heats pools and tap water (the so-called heat recovery),  
– installation of air-conditioning equipped with a sensor system that takes into account internal and external conditions of heat and moisture emission, while automatically controlled heating allows adjusting the temperature to one’s individual needs,  
– collection of rainwater, which is used for irrigation of vegetation around the facility,  
– reduction of water consumption by installing tap aerators in hotels, which increases the stream of water through significant aeration,  
– use of ecological interior design in the form of, among others, ecological carpeting (the material is biodegradable and renewable) and furniture made of natural materials (e.g. wood),  
– provision of cosmetic services using products that are organic, contain no preservatives and are not tested on animals,  
– use of fresh food supplied from local producers and farmers in the hotel gastronomy,  
– removal of dishes containing endangered fish species from the restaurant’s menu,  
– waste recycling,  
– use of renewable energy sources,  
– customers are asked to re-use the same towels in order to reduce water and electricity consumption,  
– savings obtained from reducing energy consumption are allocated to tree planting |
| Pro-social measures                   | – participation in charity actions aimed at helping children (for example, putting up a tourist voucher for an auction),  
– active support for local nursing homes, orphanages and animal shelters (blankets, bed sheets, towels, bathrobes and dishes are given away, and feed and small donations are collected for shelters),  
– helping the local community that lost property as a result of a disaster (for example, funding a week’s stay for the victims),  
– financial support for sporting events (for example, funding a prize in the form of a stay in the facility for the winner of local run),  
– financial support for sport representatives (e.g. sponsoring a sports team),  
– financial and promotional support for local talented artists (e.g. financial support for a cultural centre or organization of exhibitions on the premises),  
– financial support for cultural events (e.g., "Nowe Horyzonty" festival, "Wratslavia Cantans", "Międzynarodowy Festiwal Kryminału")  
– accepting the “Large Family Card” (granting a rebate for a family stay),  
– - fight against sexual abuse of children, involving the mobilization of hotel staff and clients to combat this problem |

*The Polish “Large Family Card” is a system of discounts for multi-children families. Its holders have the opportunity to use the offer of cultural institutions, recreation centres or transport all over the country.


In order for the activates in the area of CSR, presented in table 2, to constitute factors affecting the positive image of a hotel facility, they have to be popularized. The informative content resulting from the implemented measures is distributed mainly by performing activities in the public relations (PR) area, which is understood as building relations between a given entity and its environment. The essence of PR is striving for good relations with the environment (buyers, shareholders, supervisory boards, suppliers, banks, journalists, social organizations, government agencies) and understanding its activities (Michalski, 2007, p. 370). Therefore, information on activities carried out by a hotel facility for the environment and community are presented in “news” section on the hotel websites and their corresponding social media profiles, speeches, interviews presented in media or industry press.
Conclusions

Creating a positive image of a hotel facility in the environment and highlighting its products through activities in the area of CSR may become important factors affecting the growth of competitiveness on the hotel services market. It is worth noting, however, that image creation is a process covering many years, while the effects of undertaken actions are often visible only after a certain period of time.

Although the benefits resulting from involvement in CSR activities are significant, they also generate costs. Therefore, hotel facilities should first and foremost focus on their economic efficiency, which later may be used for the purpose of ecological and social undertakings, as it conditions its financing. Focusing on actions in the area of CSR at the expense of economic efficiency in extreme cases may lead to the decommissioning of a hotel facility. Considering this aspect, hotel facilities should in the first place undertake actions that may prove beneficial (for example, in order to further perform projects with a higher level risk of non-repayment).

References


TRAINING AND ADVISORY SERVICES: PREFERENCES OF LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS AND RECEIVERS

ELŻBIETA SKĄPSKA

Białystok University of Technology, POLAND
e-mail: e.skapska@pb.edu.pl

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KEYWORDS services, preferences, consumers, enterprises, local market

ABSTRACT The fact there is good accessibility to modern service-product offers has imposed greater requirements on managers who make market decisions concerning the survival and development of local enterprises. Observation of current consumer behavior and a quick response as for meeting clients’ expectations and needs with a quality product have become a necessity. The article uses entrepreneurs from Białystok as examples of training providers and their service receivers. The scientific aims, that have been reached by the Delphi method, included: firstly, establishing the degree of preference accordance of local enterprise service providers and their receivers; secondly, indicating the list of recommendations with reference to actions that could provide entrepreneurs with a better adjustment of their offers, thus a better answer to their customers’ needs. As a result, the transformed information is used in realization of tasks and acquisition of competitive advantage while making a profit and ascending to a higher level of business entity development.

Introduction

Large business managers are often concerned with training of their personnel and reach for advisory services in the field of professional services such as legal counseling, accounting or medical counseling. It does not only regard knowledge-oriented enterprises, i.e. running mainly service business. The range of training subjects is very broad and, in terms of development, it allows a company to successfully use the knowledge. The article takes into
account market conditions (a local perspective) for the training service development and presents preferences of service providers and service receivers as for the training service. Possibilities of additional training produce beneficial solutions for receivers of the service, who then are able to balance and adjust their preferences as for work and life of their workers, and a company itself, as it can obtain greater innovative potential which is necessary to attract and maintain employees (Malhotra, Smets, Morris, 2016). In services, unlike in material-good business, there is a high level of proximity between the front personnel and consumers. Due to this feature, social factors such as demography, social-economic status, education, preferences of consumers have an enormous influence on effective relations (Subranomy, 2017). Managing and organizing relations means creating, developing, maintaining and optimizing a long-term business strategy. Client’s satisfaction is necessary in order to facilitate repeated purchases and lower the costs of acquisition (Njuguma, Mirugi, 2017). The success requires, among the other, proper selection of the offer. For instance, business receivers are mostly engaged in subjects such as general business, executive-level development, education, engineering, project management, technology, healthcare. What fields do those receivers come from? Major clients or industries served in 2015 include: biotech construction, defense, education, finance, local government authorities, healthcare, manufacturing, technology, telecommunication (Education, 2017).

Local market of training-advisory services from the general perspective

In Podlaskie province, most training companies operate in major cities of the region: in Białystok, Łomża and Suwałki. In Białystok, there are 4 times more of them than in other cities. According to the training institution register (RIS in Polish), in the period of 1.01.2016–31.12.2016, the numbers of those institutions for respective cities were: 198, 35, 46. Public institutions constituted 6.5% and nonpublic institutions 3.5%. For the most researched companies the local market is not sufficient as for the access to the preferred trainings or their availability, mainly specialized trainings, which is also confirmed by the research results of the article. In managers’ opinions, employees do not search for the stabilization that is connected with a single job position. They value the prospect of changing a job more than a job with a progressive post. Over-than-average profitability of introducing new services is the main reason for managers to introduce services of added value (Skąpska, 2017). According to the province employment agency in Białystok, the most frequently designated subjects of trainings cover: transportation, personality and job career development, information technology and use of computers, healthcare, technology and trading technical goods, sales, marketing, public relations, real estate trade.

Training-advisory services. Research methodology

The main research into training-advisory services was performed in October and November of 2017 and it covered 20 enterprises that had been chosen from among the group of service providers and receivers. The key criteria of selection of companies was their popularity and prestige on the local market – Białystok and its vicinity. The study was carried out by a means of an in-depth direct interview with decision makers which was supported and delivered by electronic means. In case of the training companies, training managers were interviewed, and in case of companies that use the training, the interview included the staff like presidents and human resource managers.

The service providers group included 10 well-known and recognized training companies:
- T-Matic Grupa Computer Plus (IT services),
- Centrum Kształcenia Ustawicznego CKU (in-service training).
Training and advisory services: Preferences of local service providers and receivers

- Rada FSNT NOT (construction expertise) in Białystok,
- Ośrodek Kształcenia Zawodowego ZDZ (in-service training) in Białystok,
- EkoExpert Doradztwo Ekologiczne i Gospodarcze Sp. Z o. o. (Ecological-economic advisory),
- Stowarzyszenie Księgowych (an association of accountants) in Poland – Local branch in Białystok,
- other entities providing training in the scope of accounting, tax and economic law, soft skill trainers who teach for the internal purposes of a company, trainings in OHS and energetics.

The group of service receivers constituted 10 selected entrepreneurs who delegate their personnel for training. There were many recognized innovative companies of Podlasie region such as:

- PLUM (intelligent technology solutions) in Ignatki,
- from production-trade branch – PRONAR Sp. z o.o. (producer of, among others, farming machines) in Narew
- other businesses from IT and RTV trades, companies of energy sector – liquid gas distributors, metal hardware manufacturers, trade market companies or producers from the industrial automation field.

Preferences with regard to service offer – research results

Offer priorities has been changing depending on the current internal demands of companies and according to the constantly changing market conditions. The list of preferences that emerged from training service companies included: knowledge, quality, utility, a price, capital, training for companies as well as individual training (Figure 1).

In the first place, service providers mentioned quality that was expressed by a proper selection of trainers and a price. The following items concerned knowledge, training utility, company-directed trainings. Less attention was paid to training for an individual receiver and to modern real capital.

![Figure 1. Preferences of service providers](image)

Source: own elaboration based on the research.

The factors or criteria mentioned and valued by service receivers covered the following groups of categories: contact with employers, a price, obtained occupational powers, a training subject, a practical application of the knowledge, opinions, a competent trainer, e-learning, high functionality and utility of trainings, timeliness, a workshop form of trainings, needs.
The service receivers’ preferences differ from the preferences of the providers. The providers favor the quality whereas the receivers concentrate on the price as their first choice. A reliable and competent trainer as a service quality creator in the ranking of service receivers takes a lower place than the price. Thus, the common features that link both preferences of the providers and the receivers are a price and utility.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 2.** Preferences of service receivers as for training service features
Source: own elaboration based on the research.

The training receivers indicated the following items as priority factors: a price, a competent trainer, a training subject. A significant kind of training for clients of training companies (Figure 3) is a group training.

![Bar Chart](image)

**Figure 3.** Preferences as for kinds and forms of training (the more economic the more wanted)
Source: own elaboration based on the research.

A convenient and popular form of training is an online training which, most of all, lets one save time. The trainees are also willing to use the training that concerns the acquisition of soft skills (dealing with stress, time management, interpersonal communication).
Delegating employees for training — motives

Depending on most representatives of the researched companies, sending workers for trainings are a means of motivating that allows to achieve better efficiency at work. The participation in trainings affects the increase of commitment as employees understand it as an investment in their development. After obtaining new knowledge their new task is to pass it to their fellow colleagues. All the acquired knowledge may contribute to the improvement of the sales quality which translates into sales results and consequently into the salary amount. Improving vocational qualifications, by means of trainings, conditions functioning and development of company’s activity in a competitive environment.

Enterprise usually use 12 to 17 trainings annually. Obviously there are companies, like Plum in Ignatki, whose number of trainings exceeds 20 per year. There are a few companies whose numbers go from 1 to 5 and 6 to 11.

Making a decision on purchasing the training, for the respondents, means being influenced by the following factors:

– training subject,
– possibility to use acquired knowledge in practice,
– high functionality of service and its potential to satisfy utility needs,
– timeliness,
– training substantive level,
– workshop form,
– trainers’ qualifications and affordable price,
– other/previous trainees’ opinions on the training company.

Some trainings concerned soft skill acquisition with regard to assertiveness, creativity, coping with stress or trainings that complement knowledge. Training service receivers approve of the workshops that are run, most of all, by people with professional knowledge. It does not matter whether they are young or old as long as they are experienced. It is also important that trainers are communicative, however, it is a secondary trait (Figure 5).
According to receivers, the local market (Bialystok) is not so developed yet. The offers are, in most cases, produced in way, with regard to their number and training quality, that they only suffice for the local market. However, some receivers are forced to search for offers on other markets like a regional, national, or an international market. It results from the built structure of a company and the headquarters of a training department which often has its seat in the capital city. Thus, all training activity of such company is performed nation-wide. Other reason is the fact that the local market, for instance the IT market, is too small, and competition of the market is very varied. Another reason of looking for different markets is the desire to participate in specialized trainings. Using mainly local services is limited and disadvantaged by a small distance between Bialystok and Warsaw where, obviously, there is a broader access to specialized trainings.

Furthermore, after decreasing the European union endowment, the training market has considerably shrunk as for its offer of subjects. There are companies that have their own training departments and run trainings in its particular departments of a given territory with regard to workers being client advisors (subjects like the range of sales techniques) and managers (subjects cover soft skill competence such as communication, building a team, problem solving, planning, creating coaching culture). Companies also often prefer trainings that are carried out by external companies, as for the product knowledge. They take place, for instance, monthly and are dedicated to store employees who are taught about the sold products.

Companies, that delegate their employees for trainings, suggest that the training companies perform the following tasks in order to satisfy their clients’ needs better:
- introduction of new ways of recruiting and new working conditions,
- presenting the newest knowledge at the world level,
- using the leading international companies’ experience.

Many training service receivers notice that expenditure on trainings is not the cost or burden. It is rather an investment and an improvement on company’s potential. This expenditure is a conscious choice and a proof of leading a proper training policy within the national network and it is in accordance with the business character.

**Training effectiveness in view of service providers and receivers**

Establishing preferences is tightly connected with the vision of reaching effectiveness (Figure 6) by means of a proper service offer. There are sources of information on trainings such as: development databases, websites of training companies, online invitations, participants’ opinions, trade contacts. An interesting fact that arises from the research is that companies from both sides record the equality of training effects and expenditure – few
companies reach the advantage of effects over the expenditure which means that the level of cost-effectiveness of business is not satisfactory (below expectations). From the point of view of trainees it may be seen as a norm, i.e. in accordance with expectations as the input, especially financial one, is adequate to the outcome.

![Figure 6: Effectiveness of trainings according to representatives of companies that delegate workers for training](source)

**Figure 6.** Effectiveness of trainings according to representatives of companies that delegate workers for training

Source: own elaboration based on the performed research.

![Figure 7: Training effectiveness according to managers of training companies](source)

**Figure 7.** Training effectiveness according to managers of training companies

Source: own elaboration based on the performed research.

Observing the outcome of the research, as for the effectiveness from the standpoint of the training companies, few experts have indicated the distinct advantage of expenditure over the effects, i.e. labor, expenditure on tangible assets and financial capital.

**Conclusions**

The outcome of the performed study may be formed as a list of recommendations and advice for training companies. These recommendations are as follows:

- increase the number of specialized trainings for residents of the region,
- allocate a larger budget for the purposes of advisory-training offers for companies and institutions,
- raise the level of competitiveness and innovativeness of service providers through presenting the newest knowledge at the highest level,
- care for coaching culture as the preferences of training service receivers still concentrate around the group training and training workshops which should be noticed by training providers.
References


RISK IDENTIFICATION AS A BASIC STAGE OF THE PROJECT RISK MANAGEMENT

HANNA SOROKA-POTRZEBNA

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: hanna.soroka@wzieu.pl

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risk, project, management, risk identification

ABSTRACT
The decision-making during realization of the project is connected with a relatively high risk. In practice, the risk is defined as the product of the probability of occurrence an event and the effects of its impact on the processes in the organization. Risk management is the essence of the functioning of every project. The exact risk identification is crucial for the implementation of the project. Thanks to identification, organization can adopt an appropriate strategy to avoid the risk, minimize it, intensify its effects or simply eliminate it. In the literature, there are many definitions of risk in project, as well as descriptions of the stages of project risk management. This article show the analysis of the literature on the subject to emphasize the importance of the risk identification as a basic stage of the project risk management. It also helps answer the question are enterprises are making a risk identification before implementation of their projects, and what type of risks they encounter.

Introduction
Risk management and risk identification play an important role in many areas of business activity of enterprises, especially during project implementation, which is due to several reasons. First of all, each project is unique, which means that it involve a significantly higher level of risk compared to other areas of the company’s operations (Roszkowski, 2014, p. 155). Secondly, the lack of full knowledge of future periods is characteristic for projects,
which is closely related to uncertainty and risk (Wyrożębski, 2014, p. 104). Thirdly, the implementation of projects usually requires significant investment costs. Consequences of making incorrect decisions resulting from the lack of risk identification in the project can be very harmful for the enterprise.

The aim of the article is to emphasize the importance of the risk identification process. To achieve this goal, the risk definitions were indicated with particular emphasis on the project risk, and also risk identification was presented as one of the stages of the risk management process. The empirical part of the article is the presentation of the results of the research on risk identification in projects implemented by entrepreneurs from the Western Pomerania.

**Literature review**

In the literature there are many definitions of risk. T.H. Bednarczyk defines it as the possibility of occurrence of negative socio-economic phenomena (Bednarczyk, 2000). T.T. Kaczmarek defines it as the possibility of failure, and in particular the occurrence of events beyond the control of the acting subject, which he can not accurately predict and which can not fully prevent, and which – by reducing the useful results and/or by increasing expenditures – receive action entirely or partly attribute effectiveness and economic viability (Kaczmarek, 2005). Other definitions define risk as:

- a combination of the probability of an event and its effects (ISO IEC Guide 73:2002),
- a probability, a mathematical quantity that can be measured, calculated or estimated (Hall, 2002),
- either a condition of, or a multi-dimensional measure of, exposure to unpredictable loss or losses (Yellman, 2000),
- an undesirable situation or circumstance that has both a likelihood of occurring and a potential negative consequence on the project (Space Project Management, 2000).

The concept of risk is also widespread in the field of project management. From the point of view of the risk occurring in projects, it is worth recalling the risk definition proposed in the standards of Project Management Institute (PMI). According to this institution, the risk is an uncertain event or circumstance which, if it occurs, may have a positive or negative impact on at least one of the project’s objectives, such as scope, time, cost or quality (PMI, 2013, p. 309). Project risk is also defined as the probability of occurrence of a phenomenon or activity that may have positive or negative effects on the course of the whole project and/or its individual parts (Project Cycle Management Guidelines, 2004, p. 145).

In the article, project risk is understood negatively, that is, as a potential event or circumstance that may contribute to project delay, increase costs of its implementation or cause other unfavorable changes in the project (Tkaczyński, Świstak, Sztorc, 2011, p. 363).

Risk management is a process of undertaking risk-related activities by organization and achieving an acceptable level of that risk (Jajuga, 2007, p. 15). According to other definition, risk management mean identifying, measuring and controlling risks in order to limit as much as possible and protect against its consequences (Baker, 2000, p. 23).

In the literature in the field of project management, risk management involves identifying specific threats to the project system and determining actions aimed to eliminate these risks or minimize the impact of them on the project (Zaskórski, Woźniak, Szwarc, Tomaszewski, 2013, p. 271). This activities should be implemented at all stages of the project life cycle: during the preparation of the project, its implementation and formal closure. The risk
management process consists four basic stages: risk identification, risk analysis, risk control and risk monitoring. The risk management process does not end after the completion of all consecutive stages, but it should be carried out continuously and improved, using the knowledge and experience gained at earlier stages (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Process of the project risk management
Source: Szczepaniak (2013).

Four basic stages related to risk management are:

1. Risk identification – defining the risk to which the project is exposed as well as relations occurring between individual risks. It should be performed repeatedly during planning and during the implementation of the project.

2. Risk analysis qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative analysis of the risk management process based on estimating the probability and the effects of the occurrence of previously identified risks. At this stage of the process risk manager should prepare hierarchies of identified dangers according to their potential impact on the process of project implementation. The obtained results are used for further planning the reactions on unfavorable event. The quantitative analysis of the risk management process is aimed at determining quantifiable values of the probability value and the effects of unfavorable events both for individual project activities and for the entire undertaking. Quantitative risk analysis is often preceded by qualitative research (Skorupska, Kuchta, Górski, 2012, p. 61).

3. Risk control – planning activities aimed at minimizing the identified risk. In the process of planning risk responses are commonly used several strategies. For each of the risks, a plan of action should be selected so that the actions taken are as effective as possible. The most popular strategies include:
   - avoiding the risk – modification of project implementation plans to eliminate a risk or a favorable change in the conditions related to it,
   - risk transfer – transferring the effects of a risk to another entity,
– risk mitigation – the most common of all risk response strategies, based on taking specific actions to reduce the likelihood or impact of risk,
– risk acceptance – accepting and bearing all consequences resulting from the possible occurrence of an unfavorable event,
– emergency plan – is built only for identified risks that may arise during the implementation of the project.


The stage of risk identification is a very important, if not the most important stage of the risk management process. At this stage, there are recognition of as many uncertain events as possible that may affect the achievement of the intended goal of the project (Klinowski, 2014, p. 228). Based on the work carried out on the risk identification, a list of potential events with a description of the characteristics and warning signals about their occurrence is prepared (Roszkowski, 2013, p. 161).

The key issue during the recognizing of the risk is to gather information about risk factors. These are the causes (sources) of threats that can lead to negative consequences during the implementation of the project (Rytel, 2010, p. 161). The sources of the project threats are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Sources of the project threats
Anyone who contributes to the process of risk identification in a positive way can participate in it, for example: representatives of stakeholders, financial experts, representatives of beneficiaries. The main result of identification of project risks is the so-called risk log or risk register, an example of which is given in Figure 2. It is a document that is supplemented and expanded at every stage of risk management.

During the risk identification, it is very important that risks are formulated in a way that allows for further analysis and planning. According to the British risk management standard, three elements should be indicated for each risk (Trocki, 2012, p. 300):

1. Reason – the objective possibility of occurrence of events, example: because the investment was located near the river and on low ground.
2. Risk – an event that may occur with an estimated probability, example: there is a risk that the construction site will be flooded during spring thaw.
3. Effect – the effect of the actual occurrence of the above-mentioned damage, that may have a positive or negative impact on the objectives of the project, example: what will affect the suspension of work for three weeks.

Only a correct and comprehensive description of the risks gives the opportunity to continue the risk management process in the project. That is why the risk identification is a key stage in the risk management process.

Method

The research were conducted using the CAWI method (Computer-Assisted Web Interview) among the one hundred and eighty six small and medium enterprises in Western Pomerania. Entrepreneurs were asked three questions closed. Answers to the questions allow to point out are enterprises are making an identification of risk before their projects, and what type of risks they identify. In the research took part small and medium enterprises that implemented project in last three years. Most of the enterprises (78%) realized project that were financing from UE budget.

Results

Supplementing the theoretical considerations on risk identification is the presentation of the results of an online survey carried out in the period from August to December 2017 on a sample of one hundred and eighty six small and medium enterprises that implemented the project in the last three years.

Among the objectives of the study, it was indicated to answer the following questions:

1. Did You identify risks before the project was implemented?
2. Which risks did you encounter during the implementation of the project?
3. Did the risks identified before and encountered in the course coincide?

On the first question, concerning the risk identification before the implementation of the project, all responders answered that they identify the risks. None of the study subjects did not reply that its project is risk-free.

On the second question about the risks that encountered during the project, the following answers where get:

– additional costs not included in the project budget (36%),
– ineligible expenditure (27%),
– problems with the contact with the supplier or contractor (21%),
Most of the entrepreneurs admitted that they didn’t include all costs that the project needed, and that they had problems with ineligible expenditure. Such a large share of these two answers certainly resulted from the specificity of the implemented projects, which were in a large percentage projects implemented under the EU programs.

The most answers on the last question, were that the risks coincide. 64% of the responders answers that they identify the risks that encountered and even more, that didn’t. The rest of the responders admitted that they didn’t identify all the risk that encountered. The reason why so many of the surveyed entrepreneurs did not identify the risks that encountered was most likely the result of too little importance attached to the risk identification.

The research results show that the risk identification is needed and that project risk managers are using it. It also shows that it is still necessary to emphasize the importance of the risk identification, thanks to which that stage of the project risk management will be more effective and thereby the right strategies to deal with it will be used.

**Limitations**

The survey was conducted among companies in Western Pomerania, so the test results may or may not necessarily represent the views of entrepreneurs throughout the country.

**Conclusions**

Nowadays, the need to manage risk is noticeable not only in the industry in which the core business is implemented through projects (such as construction, IT, R & D), but also among other entities, that thanks to the projects are able to get additional funds for the development of their business.

Therefore, in order for the risk management process to fulfill its role, it is necessary for the project managers and unit managers to understand its relevance to the project’s objectives and the potential benefits that can be obtained after its effective implementation into the project.

The article presents the results of the research on risk identification in the risk management process in various enterprises operating in the Western Pomerania. Interesting from the point of view of theoretical and practical considerations, it may be a further examination of the risk catalog, which are analyzed by entrepreneurs in their activities.

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Risk identification as a basic stage of the project risk management


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THREATS TO HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK WHEN COMPLETING A WAREHOUSE PROCESS

MARIUSZ SOWA

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: mariusz.sowa@wzieu.pl

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KEYWORDS warehouse process, work safety, sources of work safety hazards

ABSTRACT Article aims to identify the types and sources of threats to safety during of the warehouse process. This paper will focus on the on selected sections of the risks that may constitute, among others, technological equipment of the warehouse, including storage devices and means of warehouse transport or fire risk. In addition to technical security threats, the article also presents an organizational aspect that also has a significant impact on work safety in the warehouse.

Introduction

Identification of threats in warehouse processes is crucial to prepare appropriate procedures and plans to ensure healths and safety at work. One of the method applied as basic research techniques in social sciences is observation. In the context of preapred article the observation was applied to identify the phenomena, behaviors, events that causes risks in the warehouse processes.
A warehouse process is a set of warehouse operations put in a chronological order, completed in places which are appropriately adapted to it and in particular subject to organizational and technological conditions. This process is divided into four basic phases: receiving, storing, completing and shipping (Niemczyk, 2010, p. 10). Warehouse activities, which consist in lifting, moving, repacking, weighing, completing or stacking up are performed by warehouse people who can have either direct (when the activities are performed manually) or indirect (when the abovementioned activities are performed mechanically) contact with the load. All operations which make up the warehouse process are done with the use of stock, machines and storage facilities thanks to which they are moved and stored, stockroom and staff. However, when it comes to protection against hazards, the most important element of this process is warehouse staff who is responsible for managing and completion of warehouse operations in accordance with the specified procedures (Dudziński, Kizyn, 2002, p. 507). For the warehouse process to be completed efficiently and safely, all elements that constitute it should meet specified requirements which have been presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The elements of the warehouse process and conditions they need to met in order to ensure a safe completion of the process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of the warehouse process</th>
<th>Security requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stock</strong></td>
<td>– suitably packed,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– suitably labelled,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– secured for transport,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– secured for storage,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– ensuring appropriate storing conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Machines and storage facilities</strong></td>
<td>– adapted to performer activities,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– adapted to stock they are used to deal with,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– holding a certificate, regularly reviewed,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– in a working order,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– having information on permissible load of floor, ceiling and storage facilities,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– of adequate strength and stable construction,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– storage facilities which have protection against falling,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– the clearance between racks for means of transport (fork lift maneuvering area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stockroom</strong></td>
<td>– of adequate shape,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– suitable construction,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– suitable strength and technical condition,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– right measurements (e.g. in a warehouse with the right parameters each worker should be provided with 13m&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt; of free space and at least 2 m&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt; of floor which is not crammed with any machines or facilities),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– non-slip and dust-free floor,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– outlined landfill sites,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– designated cubic volume,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– designated manoeuvering lanes,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– designated transport corridors,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– marking rooms with evacuation signs,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– adequately equipped (e.g. a room for battery storage should be an adequately adapted and equipped accumulator plant whose walls and floor ought to be lined with acid-proof material, have gravity ventilation in the ceiling and safe explosion protected lighting. The door of such a room should open outwards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Warehouse staff</strong></td>
<td>– have knowledge and skills essential to perform warehouse activities,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– have qualifications to operate machines and devices,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– equipped with adequate personal protective equipment,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– the state of physical and mental health enables them to perform activities in a safe way,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– take care of an adequate working order of machines, devices and tools,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– make sure that their workplace is tidy,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– adhere to health and safety at work regulations,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– adhere to orders and decisions included in the warehouse instruction,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– participate in health and safety at work training and first aid courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Failure to meet any legal and regulatory requirement of the warehouse process results in a health and life hazard for staff, surrounding, as well as the risk of the load, facilities or stockroom being damaged or destroyed (Dudziński, Kizyn, 2002, p. 508).

Storage facilities and lift trucks hazards

Storage facilities and lift trucks hazards Shelving units are the most common among storage facilities. These are facilities whose construction solutions allow to pile supplies directly on elements or by means of additional devices (Niemczyk, 2010, p. 82). One faces the issue of security at the time of these units are selected (decision about a manufacturer – consulting, project, shipment, assembly), but also when they are used (periodical evaluation of technical condition, maintenance, operational culture).

Warehouse shelving units enable to use warehouse storage area more efficiently, increase the safety of workers, and facilitate the operations of the warehouse process, but only when requirements specified in the following regulations are met:
- the Act of the Minister of Labour and Social Polity of 26 September 1997 on health and safety at work regulations (Journal of Regulations No. 129, heading 844),
- PN-88/M-78321 – Freestanding shelving units – requirements and research,
- PN-91/M-78323 – Gravitational shelving units – requirements and research,
- PN-88/M-78325 - Warehouse storage facilities. Vertical sheet racks.

Storage facilities pose occupational risk when:
- unit loads which are stored on them are not of the right size, shape or weight (e.g. the weight of the load cannot exceed the permissible loads of a shelving unit),
- they do not have a stable and durable construction and elements which prevent it from turning over (the construction does not ensure stability of position),
- they are not equipped with elements protecting unit loads which are exposed to mechanical damage caused by the means of transport,
- are used in rooms polluted by steam or gases of corrosive substances that affect the construction of the storage facility and weaken connectors and bearing elements,
- the clearance between storage facilities does not enable to move safely and to operate the means of transport,
- hazardous and chemical substances are stored at top shelves of shelving units,
- additional elements which protect unit load against turning over or falling down the shelving unit (with account being taken in particular to objects whose shape and weight decide about individual way of storage) (Dudzinski, Kizyn, 2008, pp. 343–344).

In order to increase safety during the completion of operations in the warehouse process by means of shelving units, it is recommended to chose a professional manufacturer of shelving units who provides comprehensive service, from consulting service, design, delivery to fitting and training warehouse staff in usage and safe operation. It is also important to reinforce the construction of shelving units, which is especially important in warehouse where the traffic of forklift trucks is increased and/or culture of driving a forklift truck is low. There is also a possibility to increase the safety of shelving units by means of purchasing additional equipment, such as dock bumper installed.
on the shelving's pole, dock bumpers installed on the shelving's frame or pallet stops. Unfortunately, these solutions are rarely used in practice because of bearing additional costs of their purchase.

Infrastructure of internal transport consists of moving work equipment and additional equipment which enable to transfer products in storage processes efficiently and effectively, starting from unloading of external transport, moving inside the warehouse, to stacking in the storing process, order compilation and unloading (Wojciechowski, Kosmatka, 2009, p. 113; Dudziński, 2003, p. 85). The devices which pose the highest risk to occupational safety include warehouse means of transport such as forklift trucks, overhead cranes, stacker cranes, conveyors and lifts (Dudziński, Kizyn, 2002, p. 510). They constitute an inherent element of almost every warehouse. They are used to move cargo in the warehouse as well as in reloading and storing processes. They are essential in the completion of numerous tasks. In order to ensure occupational safety when transport facilities are used, it is necessary to adhere to norms which apply to the parameters of transit routes they use. An example includes the required width of a transit routes, specified in the Polish Norm, which has been presented in Table 2.

### Table 2. Minimum width of transit routes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item number</th>
<th>Designation of a route</th>
<th>Minimum (cm)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>non-motorized means of transport</td>
<td>motorized means of transport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unidirectional traffic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Only for means of transport</td>
<td>$B = a + 60$</td>
<td>$B = a + 60$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For means of transport and pedestrian traffic</td>
<td>$B = a + 90$</td>
<td>$B = a + 100$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bidirectional traffic</td>
<td>$B = 2a + 90$</td>
<td>$B = 2a + 90$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Only for means of transport</td>
<td>$B = 2a + 180$</td>
<td>$B = 2a + 200$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For means of transport and pedestrian traffic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where: $a$ is the width of the means of transport; $b$ is the width of the transit route.


Safe technological transport facilities are facilities which have an actual CE mark which confirms that they comply with EU standards. According to EU law, only a manufacturer or authorized marketers have the right to grant CE marks. Nevertheless, it needs to be remembered that occupational safety and reliability of means of transport is directly linked to skills and experience of people who operate them. Hence the directive of the Minister of Economic Affairs of 10 May 2002 on industrial safety when using motorized lift trucks (Journal of Regulations no. 70, heading 650 with further amendments), which specifies the requirements to be met by a lift truck operator. Completing a lift truck operator course is not enough to ensure efficient and safe work. Special attention needs to be also paid to maintenance of fork trucks, such as cleaning them or checking their working order before starting to use them. Unfortunately, employers often ignore this duty and do not enforce fulfillment of these duties by their employees. Not only does this increase the risk of accidents, but also the operating costs and subsequent maintenance service costs. Lift truck manufacturers offer devices which have an increasingly better technical performance and which have numerous functions of both the propulsion system and chassis (Trochymiak, 2018, http://www.pracujwlogistyce.pl/20-poradnik-eksperta/222-podczas-wakacji-zadbaj-o-bezpieczne-mielsca-pracy-w-magazynie?tmpl=compone nt&print=1&page=). Working on such a technologically advanced device forces its operator to have a specialist training thanks to which potential problems with its operation are avoided. However, before an electric fork lift truck is authorized for use in a warehouse, it needs to be reported to the Office of Technical Inspection. There is not any such obligation in case of live skids which does not mean that they can be defective or that it is possible for them not
to have name templates, safe working load templates or operation and maintenance documentation (Malczewski, 2010, http://www.utrzymanieruchu.pl/menu-gorne/artykul/article/bezpieczny-magazyn-to-czysty-zysk/part/3). As in the case of storing facilities, it is the duty of the employer to maintain lift trucks in good order and to have them periodically reviewed. Factors which influence occupational safety when forklift trucks are used include:

- appropriately prepared forklift truck operator training courses,
- having a forklift truck license,
- an operator’s good visibility of the surroundings,
- an operator of the forklift truck has to maintain the appropriate center of gravity of their load,
- batteries of forklift trucks have to be charged in designated points and by designated workers,
- using personal protective equipment,
- not working under time pressure and concentrating when completing one’s tasks,
- monitoring the implementation of work rules.

The most common cause of accidents in a warehouse involving forklift trucks is inappropriate organization of work and human error (excessive speed, overload, transporting third parties). They often lead to loss of health or life, damage to property, high repair expenses or interruption to the continuity of work.

**Warehousing fire hazards**

The term fire hazard refers to the a group of factors and circumstances which create conditions for the occurrence and spread of fire, as well as the development of toxic gases and smoke which pose risk to human life. On the basis of fire hazard, materials can be divided into two main groups: flammable and non-flammable. The first group includes:

- highly flammable materials are substances that initiate fire (self-ignition) – straw, flax and substances which when come into contact with the source of heat catch fire and keep burning without the need of secondary initiation,
- flame-retardant substances – they are substances which burn only when there is stable source of ignition or heat and die down as a result of its lack.

Non-flammable substances are substances which do not burn when subjected to fire or temperature (Niemczyk, 2012, p. 215).

There are three factors that have to occur at the same time to start and maintain fire: heat (energy), oxygen and fuel. The size of fire is mainly dependent on the availability of oxygen and fuel. Lack of any of the abovementioned elements causes the fire to die down (Bogdan, Chudzińska, 2008, p. 2). The most common causes of fire in a warehouse include above all:

- defects and default mode of installation and electric appliances (incorrect workmanship, overloads caused by connecting a lot of loading points to a single electrical circuit),
- using open fire and smoking cigarettes in places where it is forbidden, storing flammable materials in conditions in which critical temperature is exceeded,
- electrical circuit overload, crushed electric insulation, damage to electric insulation or loose electric connection,
- using inadequate transport equipment,
- inadequate storage or usage of flammable materials,
– workers’ insufficient knowledge of hazards related to storage facilities, warehouse transport equipment and measuring and control equipment.

In general supplies stored in warehouses are of flammable character (such as due to their card packaging). The kind of (flammable) materials stored in a warehouse and its number stored in a warehouse constitute the so-called fire load. Fire load \( Q_d \) is heat that is released when flammable materials found in the warehouse fire zone are burnt and which is equivalent to burnt wood in kg with net caloric value of 4,400 kcal/kg (18.4 MJ/kg) per 1 m\(^2\) of warehouse plan level (PN-70/B-02852, Marysiuk, 2011).

Fire load \( Q_d \) can be determined by the following relation (Dudziński, Kizyn, 2002, p. 529):

\[
Q_d = Q_c \times \frac{G}{F} \text{ (MJ/m}^2\text{)},
\]

where:

- \( Q_c \) – is the caloric value of the material (MJ/kg),
- \( G \) – a mass of the material (kg),
- \( F \) – the surface of warehouse plan level (m\(^2\)).

The fire resistance class of a building is determined on the basis of the calculated value of fire load \( Q_d \), which has been presented in Table 3. Five classes of fire resistance, designated by the following letters: A, B, C, D and E, ordered from the highest to the lowest resistance, have been determined.

### Table 3. Warehouse fire resistance classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fire resistance class</th>
<th>Maximum fire load density ( Q_d ) of a fire zone in a building (MJ/m(^2))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>buildings with a fire zone having fire load ( Q_d &gt; 4,000 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>buildings with a fire zone having fire load ( Q_d &gt; 2,000 ) do ( Q_d = 4,000 ), high buildings with a fire zone having fire load ( Q_d \leq 2,000 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>buildings with a fire zone having fire load ( Q_d &gt; 1,000 ) do ( Q_d = 2,000 ), medium-height buildings with a fire zone having fire load ( Q_d \leq 1,000 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>buildings with a fire zone having fire load ( Q_d &gt; 500 ) do ( Q_d = 1,000 ), multi-storey low buildings with fire zones having fire load ( Q_d \leq 500 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>single storey buildings with a fire zone having fire load ( Q_d \leq 500 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The fire resistance of a building results from the fire resistance of its constructional elements as well as materials they are made of. Each building that functions as a warehouse should be designed in a way that its elements retain its mechanical strength, fire integrity and thermoinsulating power.

### Conclusions

The process by means of which health and safety standards are risen should become an element of the strategy of an organizational and functional unit allotted to store tangible material goods temporary excluded from logistic channel (supplies). There are several factors that influence safety in a warehouse: from the construction of the warehouse, the kind and number of stored supplies, the selection and usage of technological and installation
and construction equipment to employing qualified warehouse staff who adhere to legal regulations. In order to increase safety during the completion of operations in the warehouse process, it is essential to ensure not only the adequate level of employees’ professional qualifications, match facilities to the specificity of a warehouse and the kind of performed activities, but also control adherence to work rules. One of the most important factors contributing to improvements in the safety and health in a warehouse is undoubtedly the right organization of work which ensures not only efficiency of the storage process, but above all a safe workplace.

References
PN-70/B-02852 Ochrona przeciwpożarowa w budownictwie. Obliczanie obciążenia ogniowego oraz względnego czasu trwania pożaru.

THE SCOPE OF APPLICATION OF MARKETING INNOVATIONS AND MARKETING OF INNOVATION IN SERVICE ENTERPRISES OF SME SECTOR

MONIKA SPYCHALSKA-WOJTKIEWICZ

University of Szczecin, Faculty of Management and Economics of Services, POLAND
e-mail: monika.wojtkiewicz@wzieu.pl

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KEYWORDS marketing, innovation, SME sector, marketing innovation, service enterprises

ABSTRACT Marketing support of innovative process is inscribed into the stream of researches over the economical knowledge transformation, in a form of implementing the results of research to practical application. Marketing innovation is often misguidedly identified with marketing of innovation. Article raises the question of marketing innovations, the goal is to describe the scope of application of marketing innovations and marketing of innovations in service SME sector. The desk research analysis has been used.

Introduction

Marketing innovations and marketing of innovation are quite similar terms for example for entrepreneurs but they are not the same. It is very important to have in mind those differences to maintain innovation process in more effective way. During decades major changes took place in nature of marketing, and marketing itself became philosophy of action penetrating all cells of organisation in enterprises. Article raises the question of marketing
innovations, the goal is to describe the scope of application of marketing innovations and marketing of innovations in service SME sector. The desk research analysis has been used to define various forms of marketing innovation and marketing of innovation.

**Area of marketing innovation**

Changes happening on the market, the pressure of arising competition was throwing down new challenges, thus the need of marketing thinking and acting became stronger and stronger. Similarly the knowledge about innovation was developing and systematizing. Nonetheless progressive development of economy caused rapid obsolescence of earned theories in favour of completely new trends. Nowadays we can observe strong growth of complexity of the knowledge and technology, meanwhile the parallel phenomenon occurs and gains significance especially in economies of highly developed countries – it is a growth of innovations which are not connected with technology. This phenomenon alludes primarily to the sector of the services, where the trend found a reflection of non-technological innovations.

Together with an appearance of Oslo Manual (Oslo Manual, 2005), also marketing innovations were included to the cluster of innovations, understood as application of a new marketing method in the action of an enterprise, which was not applied in the company before and which results from a new marketing strategy differing essentially from the previous one. Entities, on which marketing innovation is based, are shown on the drawing below (Forin et al., 2010). Entities, on which marketing innovation is based, are shown on the figure below, they are the same for technologically oriented and service companies (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Marketing innovations according to Oslo Manual](source: Oslo Manual (2005)).

In practice, the cases of innovation can appear and be regarded both as product innovations and marketing innovations. The situation occurs when companies introduce changes in already existing products. These changes are followed with major changes in functions or application of product as well as significant changes in form and appearance or wrapping of the product, which all constitute the element of new marketing concept (Oslo Manual, 2005). In case of service companies author also suggest to add personnel to a consideration. Particular components of innovation may, similarly as in marketing, constitute the close-coupled bunch or appear individually, nonetheless their penetration can be perceived as inevitable.
A broader concept of marketing innovations

The preparations for study on marketing innovations should be connected with creation and implementation of conception in at least one of four types of marketing instrument. Their number depends on examination of marketing theory. Relying on the classic marketing – the mix of the 4P examines the bunch in a way to the prepare the implementation of new marketing methods in construction, project or wrapping, in the methods of establishing prices, in product distribution and in its promotion (Oslo Manual, 2005). Nonetheless, the development of marketing theory led to expansion of this concept thus it constitutes a cornerstone for examination of the grounds for creation of marketing innovations, as well as broader notions e.g in the scope of human resources (5P – people, personnel). The table below (1) exhibits the chosen possibilities of creating innovations within the human resources.

Table 1. Possibilities of creating marketing innovations within the human resources – mix: 5P people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People (5P)</th>
<th>Possibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>Implementation of innovative benefits, awards for supporting the creativity of the workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Implementation of innovative methods connected with the culture of supplying the services, organisational culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer service</td>
<td>Implementation of innovative marketing relation conception, innovative way of supplying the service by customer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: self elaboration.

According to the author it is well – founded to include to marketing innovation also the area of human resources, particularly in the context of marketing innovation created by the service companies, where human factor is extremely important.

The aim of marketing innovation is common marketing endeavor to satisfy the client needs better, open new trade areas or newer positioning of product on the market for incensement of sale (Oslo Manual, 2005). Marketing support pertains to the whole innovation process, as of the stage of forming the idea to its implementation and commercialization. Such a marketing support can be called the marketing of innovation (European Commission, 2012). This notion has to be distinguished from the term of marketing innovation occurring in Oslo Manual, which means application of new forms and marketing techniques unused until now in the action of enterprises. Thereby, marketing of innovation and marketing innovations become same when the realization of new marketing ideas causes the activation of innovation process (Białoń, 2010). Thus marketing innovations can be subsumed into three main dimensions presented in Figure 2.

The significant feature of modern organisations is innovativeness of marketing operations conducted. It is connected with creative problem solution and application of new technologies. The source of this kind of process is flexibility of reaction for signals coming from surrounding in order to adjust to them and provide the competitive superiority for the company (Nowacki, 2010).

The preparation to implementation of marketing innovations embrace actions connected with creating and implementing new marketing methods, not applied by the company before. These actions alluding to marketing innovations embrace only this, which is connected with creating and implementing new marketing methods, but do not embrace the expenditures for application of these methods in everyday activity. The expenditures for advertisements are precluded, same to promotion actions (events), marketing actions or sponsoring during the application of new marketing method (Chesbrough, 2003). Similarly, according to new Oslo methodology
of operation in the scope of marketing innovations, they do not include: secondarily connected with them, acquisition of new external knowledge, machines, devices, capital items or training the staff.

**Distinct form of innovation**
Directly influences on the productiveness of the company
Companies focusing the attention on the marketing operations can increase the ability to respond to the customers needs, thus can elevate the level of customer satisfaction more effectively than other companies.

**Marketing of innovation**
Empowering of the innovation ('amplifier' of other forms of innovation)
especially the products and services
technological and non-technological
innovations can be positively
promoted by marketing innovations
which constitute the supplement of
the proper innovation

**The source for knowledge accumulation**
implementation of marketing innovation requires the deep insight into the specifics of market needs, requirements, attitudes, features, norms and client values, it constitutes the source of generating the process of inner knowledge and company learning

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**Figure 2** The dimension of marketing innovation

In the areas of marketing and innovation more and more issues covering this subject occur and cause additional strong merging of the series of notions connected with this current. The complexity of technology increases the role of connections and cooperation between the companies and other entities, comprising the institutions of business, as the way to gain specialized knowledge and build enduring relations with contractors. This trend found an estuary in the uprising of open innovation.

**Consumer role**

The high competitiveness of economy led to the necessity of focusing on the consumer. Nowadays the consumers are ones who dictate the conditions on the market. While knowledge administration as well as possession of bargaining power, the consumer sets himself in co-creation and promotion of his favorite brand products, remaining at the same time its purchaser which provides him the rank of prosument (Domańska, 2009). This trend is reflected in additional designation of innovation based on customer' needs (user-driven innovation).

It should be noticed that innovations quit with being used only in the context of economical notions or benefit understood only in aforementioned categories. The re-orientation occurs on a behalf of embracing the innovation as the way to continuous improvement of working conditions, participation in the private life of the personnel also after working hours, as well as facing the needs of local community. This trend found reflection in uprising of social innovations.

New tendencies in marketing innovations give the entrepreneurs the broad area of possibilities in practice and do not require high financial means, long term of return of undertook investments or too high risk. Marketing always was a driving force, creative strength of enterprise, stimulating the company with delivery of new ideas and information coming from the workers as well as from the market. Its idea has a lot in common with the idea of innovativeness. The significant role in the modern economy play not only the technical innovations (widely used both in theory and practice) but also non-technological innovations, including the marketing ones.
Innovations require the readiness for searching the changes as the way of more effective operation. Aspect of introduction of marketing innovation can pertain particularly to the creative enterprises, either micro, small or medium, which dynamically react for market changes. The limit in its application can be only the lack of interesting concepts among entrepreneurs. It is not advisable to downgrade the meaning of marketing innovations, thus ignore them in economical practice in enterprises of SME sector. The scope of innovation broadens, fitting to the economical reality as well as facing the notions of organisational innovations as well as marketing innovations, already successfully used in many economies worldwide.

Conclusions

The areas which pertain to marketing innovations, are so close and easy to define for entrepreneurs, that can be an effective tool in rising the competitiveness, regardless of the size of the company, generated incomes, the scope or the sector of the marketing operation of the company. Notion of marketing innovations and marketing of innovation should not be used interchangeably because both of the concepts are supported with different actions of the organizational and managerial character.

References


ASSESSMENT OF BLENDED LEARNING MECHANISMS AND MODELS

ADAM STECYK

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: adam.stecyk@wzieu.pl

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Abstract The aim of the article is to present the latest approach to blended learning, also known as hybrid teaching. The first part of the article presents four basic blended learning models such as rotation, flex, a la carte and enriched virtual model. The second part of the article presents the latest research carried out at the Faculty of Management and Economics of Services at the University of Szczecin on the subject of a functioning blended learning model and its assessment by students (The research was conducted among students in January 2018). In addition, some mechanisms occurring in hybrid teaching using a specific e-learning platform were also analyzed. Because blended learning is currently the most popular form of teaching, there is a need for constant monitoring of emerging new solutions that can be used in higher education.

Introduction

The teaching and learning environment is embracing a number of innovations and some of these involve the use of blended learning teaching model. In other words, the blended learning model changes the traditional classroom by delivering educational content through e-learning system in addition to/instead of participating in didactic process personally. Learning requirements and preferences of each student seem to be different.
Universities must use a blend of learning strategies in their way to get the suitable content in the applicable format to the main participants (students and lecturers) at the right time. Blended learning combines multiple delivery media that are designed to complement each other and promote learning and application-learned behavior. In terms of Bloom’s revised taxonomy (Figure 1), this means that students are doing the lower levels of cognitive work such as, gaining knowledge and comprehension out of the campus, and they are focused on the higher forms of cognitive work such as application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation at the university, where they have the support of their tutor (Scott, 2003).

**Blended learning models in higher education**

So what is blended learning in particular? It can be summarized that blended learning in higher education is a formal education program in which a student learns, at least in part, through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path, and pace and at least in part at a supervised university location away from student’s home. In other words blended learning mode combines on-line training and brick-and-mortar traditional learning model. (blended learning is defined as learning that takes place partially over the Internet. This definition excludes purely print-based correspondence education, broadcast television or radio, and stand-alone educational software programs that do not have a significant Internet-based instructional component) (Alonso, 2005).

![Figure 1. Bloom's taxonomy (revised)](image)

For most lecturers the reason to offer blended learning will be to improve the level of teaching quality and the teaching results. It is also a big concern to university leaders who will be looking at the financial side of blended learning models which can offer a big savings on the educational services market. It is also important for students to get personalized learning experience which will allow them to find a suitable job in the future. In fact, according to a 2010 study from the U.S. Department of Education, blended learning classes produce statistically better results than their face-to-face, non-hybrid equivalents (US Department of Education, 2010).
One of the greatest advantages offered by blended learning model is its ability to help lecturers with differentiation ways of teaching. The combination of face-to-face instruction and online learning opportunities allows for individualization, flexibility, and greater chance for future success. There are several models of blended learning from which to choose (Picciano, 2014), so that they can implement a high level of quality in higher education:

1. Rotation model.
2. Flex model.
3. A La Carte model (formerly Self-Blended model).
4. Enriched Virtual model.

The rotation model allows students to rotate through stations on a fixed schedule, where at least one of the stations is an online learning station. In other words, in this form of blended learning, students rotate between different stations on a fixed schedule – either working online or spending face-to-face time with the teacher. There are several types of rotation model:

- station (rotating through on-line stations, face-to-face meetings and collaborative activities),
- lab (online learning occurs in a dedicated computer lab, e.g. a math laboratory),
- individual (rotating through stations, but on individual schedules set by a teacher or software algorithm).

Flipped classroom (learning at home via online coursework and lectures; face-to-face class time is used for teacher-guided practice or project).

Despite the fact that this model is most often used in primary education, it can also be successfully used in blended learning mode in higher education.

Another blended learning model is called flex model and it heavily relies on online instructional delivery, with teachers acting as tutors rather than as primary deliverers of instruction. In other words, in flex model the in which the online learning is the backbone of student learning, even if it directs students to offline activities from time to time. This gives the main course participants more flexibility and more control over the time they use: tutors have time individual work with students because they are generally no longer delivering knowledge in front of a class, and students can move through the lessons and lectures at their own pace. This model can give students a high degree of control over their learning.

The next blended learning model is model A La Carte, known also as a Self-Blended model. This hybrid is an education framework in which students take one or more courses entirely online (at home or at the campus) with an online teacher of record and at the same time continue to have brick-and-mortar educational experiences. It gives students the opportunity to take courses beyond what is already offered at their university. While these individuals will attend a traditional uni environment, they also get some new knowledge through online courses offered remotely. This model is a very good tool to increase the level of teaching and learning quality for highly motivated and fully independent students.
The last model to be described is the Enriched Virtual model. It is an alternative to full-time, online courses that allows students to complete the majority of coursework online, at home or outside the campus, but attend university for required face-to-face learning sessions with a tutor. The Enriched Virtual model differs from the Flipped Classroom model because in its programs, students seldom attend the brick-and-mortar campus every day. It also differs from the A La Carte model because it is a whole-university experience, not a course-by-course teaching mode. Figure 2 shows all four described blended learning models.

**Blended learning mechanisms evaluation**

The first blended learning project at the Faculty of Management and Economics of Services (University of Szczecin, Poland) has its beginning in 2006, when the contact with E-learning Institute MELCOE of Macquarie Innovative University was established. Since then, blended learning tools have undergone evolution and there have been carried out many studies on the e-learning and blended learning models and their impact on the quality level of teaching processes at the faculty. The latest report from January 2018 has been presented below. This study is based on an experiment in which students participated during their study using face-to-face sessions and an on-line courses of a blended learning design in Information Technology subject.

The main issue of blended learning solutions in teaching process was to identify the best quality, friendly-in-use modes, tools and activities. According to the adopted research procedure, an essential step in the verification...
of the proposed concept was to conduct a proper survey\(^1\). The research was conducted on a sample of 78 students in 3 groups at the Faculty of Management and Economics of Services (University of Szczecin, Poland) in the academic year 2017/2018 (winter semester 2017). The students answered questions about teaching in blended learning mode, and pointed out the pros and cons of educational paths in evaluated subject. The collected empirical data related to the quality issues, allowed the use of statistical analysis to aggregate information and calculate the average value of the results for the specified areas and factors. The results of the study were finally grouped into three ranges:

- the factors determining the satisfactory level of quality (4.1–5.0);
- the factors determining the acceptable level of quality (3.0–4.0);
- the factors determining the unsatisfactory level of quality (less than 3.0).

\[\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{Learner autonomy} & 4.9 \\
\text{Course structure and interface} & 3.9 \\
\text{Time management} & 4.7 \\
\text{Goal setting} & 4.2
\end{array}\]

\[\text{Average} \quad \text{Group 1} \quad \text{Group 2} \quad \text{Group 3}\]

**Figure 3.** Attitudes towards blended learning model survey

Source: own elaboration.

The first dimension of test and analysis was the attitudes towards used blended learning model. The highest rated factor was learner autonomy (4.9) which which shows that being independent of place and time in learning is a big advantage for students. Students also highly rated time management factor (4.7), what indicates more time efficiency in the blended learning model compared to the traditional teaching model. On the next places were two factors: goal setting (4.2) and course structure (3.9). While the first factor requires re-evaluation of course objectives and is possible to be performed by the teacher, the second factor is dependent on the e-learning system used at the University.

\[\text{\(^1\) The applied research model used SERVPERF method and Likert scale: 1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – neutral, 4 – agree 5 – strongly agree (Cronin, Taylor, 1994; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, Berry, 1994).}\]
The highest estimated factor was usability (average 4.7), which means that the proposed teaching blended learning mode is highly regarded by the participants. In the second place was the usefulness (4.5) while the next two: navigation and content, were estimated at the level of 4.0 and 3.2. Despite the fact that all the factors was admitted to a group of factors determining the satisfactory or acceptable level of quality, it should be noted that one of them (content) slightly exceeded the limit of 3.0. This means that one needs to pay attention to methodical aspects in the future, and to modifications of the blended learning tools responsible for the teaching model and the content. The last two determinants that were qualified to the group of factors describing the acceptable level of quality (navigation and content). That indicates that there is a need for discussion about the selected e-learning system and about the tools and software used to create presentation and verification activities.
The third survey was conducted about what is important in collaborative teaching, on interactions. Two factors can be described as acceptable (student-student 3.1 and student-content 3.6) while student-tutor interaction was qualified to the group of factors describing the acceptable level of quality (4.1). Nevertheless, it is clearly visible that the ratios slightly exceeded the set limits, which means that one should think about the evaluation of selected interaction mechanisms and their modification for subsequent blended learning courses.

The presented research results are a part of a broader analysis and monitoring of blended learning solutions at the Faculty of Management and Economics of Services. In comparison to previous years, the results indicate an upward trend, i.e. an increase level of interest in hybrid teaching, both among teachers and students, as well as an increase in the quality of offered courses, didactic paths and activities.

Conclusions

The tests carried out together with other analyzes are aimed at improving the quality of building educational programs implemented in the blended learning mode. In addition, they serve to monitor students’ opinions on the use of modern ICT technologies in teaching at the academic level. The following issues should therefore be considered:

- defining a methodical approach to blended learning issues and choosing an existing teaching model or developing an original approach,
- defining the stages of building blended learning courses, with particular emphasis on the proportion between traditional teaching and on-line teaching,
- paying attention to the selection and construction of presentation, verification and communication activities, in the context of mutual interactions,
- defining the role of teacher and student in the didactic process, with particular emphasis on the goal setting and the evaluation of individual tasks and the entire course.

References


THE COMBINATION OF CHEESE DAIRY AND AGRI-TOURISM AS A WAY OF DOING BUSINESS IN RURAL AREAS – CASE STUDY

Monika Sczygiol, Vesna Mrdalj, Dragan Brković

1 Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences, POLAND
e-mail: monikasczygiol@gmail.com
2 University of Banja Luka, BOSNA AND HERZEGOVINA
e-mail: vesna.mrdalj@agro.unibl.org
3 University of Banja Luka, BOSNA AND HERZEGOVINA
e-mail: dragan.brkovic@agro.unibl.org

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KEYWORDS artisan cheese manufacturing, agro-tourism, non-agricultural activities, farm

ABSTRACT The main aim of this paper was to describe the activity of the artisan cheese dairy and agri-tourism on the example of the farm “Wańczykówka”, which is located in the village of Krzeszów in the south Lower Silesia. The original source of information was used in the study, which was obtained by direct interview with the owner of the analyzed object. The farm is located in attractive tourist areas and has a good chance of developing non-agricultural activities as an additional source of income. The paper presents the motives for starting a business and characteristics of the farm profile. In addition, it was discussed the sourcing of raw materials and characterized the product variety, as well as the offer of agri-tourism services. The described artisan cheese dairy combined with agri-tourism is an excellent example of pursuing an interesting form of entrepreneurship in the countryside as well as promoting of local quality food.

Introduction

From the beginning of the 90s, the transformation of the Polish countryside based on exclusive agricultural production towards multifunctional villages has become visible. It gives the opportunity for the development of non-agricultural activity. The effect of these changes is the visible improvement of the economic situation of families living in rural areas (Firlej, 2000). The development of rural enterprise is determined by many factors, including
natural values of the area, the share of economy and agriculture in the region, level of infrastructure, demographic situation, unemployment level and activity of local government (Kutkowska, 2003; Klepacka-Dunajko, Niewęgłowski, Kałuża, 2016). For a farms with a small area of agricultural land and a small share and turnover in the market, to use the chance to start non-agricultural activities become more important. In the last decade, there are changes in the agricultural structure which lead to the decline in the number of small farms for large-scale farms. Moreover, in recent years, the importance of non-agricultural income has increased in the household’s total income (Błąd, 2011). On the basis of the General Agricultural Census of 2010, in Poland 36% of farmers declare non-agricultural activity (Central Statistical Office of Poland, 2010). The Examples of business in the country may include: food processing or activities in the area of agri-tourism (Kutkowska, 2003). Multifunctional rural development is a important component of agriculture and rural development policy. Its main idea is to improve living and working conditions in the countryside and increase the share of non-agricultural employment. The realization of the above aims is to contribute to the perception of the village as an attractive place to live and work (Balińska, Zawadka, 2013).

Materials and methods

The aim of this paper is to present an idea for multidirectional economic activity in rural areas combining farm with artisan cheese dairy and agri-tourism services. The object of study was the “Wańczykówka” farm which is an example of the multidirectional form of enterprise in the countryside as well as the promotion of local quality food. The analyzed object is located in Krzeszów (Lower Silesian Voivodeship, south-western Poland). The study based on original source of information, which was obtained by direct interview with the owners of the analyzed object. In the interview was used a questionnaire with open-ended research questions. Besides the primary data, study based also on the secondary sources which are derived from available statistic and specialist literature. A case study was used as the main research method, furthermore it was used a study of the literature of the subject and descriptive method.

Agri-tourism in Lower Silesia

The trends in the field of agri-tourism farm has significant grew from 1996 to 2009, but their number in 2010 decreased. Since then, the popularization of agri-tourism business has been increased. On the figure 1 has shown the number of agri-tourism in Poland and in Lower Silesia (Maltegiewicz, 2015).

Lower Silesia is largely diversified in terms of agricultural conditions. Apart from the regions with high agricultural potential, this region is consisted of farms with unfavorable conditions such as the mountainous region of the Sudeten. Because of the nonhomogeneous conditions, Lower Silesia is divided into 5 regions (Marshal Office of the Lower Silesian Voivodship, 2001):

– Region I of intensive agriculture,
– Region II of agriculturally recreational,
– Region III of industrially, recreationally and touristic,
– Region IV of agriculturally industrial,
– Region V of agriculturally industrially and recreational.

Krzeszów belongs to the county of Kamienna Góra, which qualifies as industrially, recreationally and touristic subregion (Region III) (Witek, 1993). This area is characterized by medium development conditions, due to the low productivity of agricultural production (the share of farms in relation to the voivodeship average 15%). The advantage
The combination of cheese dairy and agri-tourism as a way of doing business in rural areas — case study

of the region is the value of the natural environment, that is why it has great potential in providing agri-tourism services. This area creates conditions for extensive or specialized agriculture based on cereals, potatoes and animal production, mainly for cattle or sheep (Marshal Office of the Lower Silesian Voivodship, 2001). Krzeszów is well known for its Cistercian Abbey, consisting of a cloister, two churches, including the baroque Basilica and the mausoleum. It is an ideal place for religious tourism. Among the beauties of the fields and forests are straggled stations of the cross, which are named Kalwaria Krzeszowska (National Heritage Institute, 2017).

The combination of cheese dairy and agri-tourism — case study

It is often observed that owners of small and medium-sized farms have a desire to make direct sales (Motowidlak, 2009). On the other hand since the end of the 20th century the union consumers have come back to the consumption of regional foods offered in direct sales. (Nowak, Tańska-Hus, Minta, 2011) It was similarly in the case of Lucyna and Sylvester Wańczyk, who started their business with direct sales of eggs, pork and milk obtained from their own cow. A large mobilization for owners has been the growing demand for their products among the inhabitants of Wroclaw, the capital of the voivodship. There was no indication that the owners would be willing to take activity in term of agri-tourism. The key factor that changed the attitudes of owners was the appearance of a cow in farm and the problem of milk processing, which proved to be too large for the needs of a five-person family. The owner’s culinary passion solved the problem of the large amount of milk that was used to make homemade cheeses for the family. Confirmation of the rightness of the start of cheese making was a visit in 2007 to the “Polagra” food fair in Poznań during which one of the exhibitors presented cheeses which enjoyed great interest among visitors. A visit to the fair has become an incentive to start producing their own cheeses.

The problem of milk processing touched many farms. The crisis in the dairy market, and then the decline in the profitability of farms holding a few cattle, has given idea for a new direction in the field of cheese production. Polish farmed cheese is a young product on the market. Their name was given and popularized by Eugeniusz Mientkiewicz, a prominent cheese maker. At present, the value of farms cheese are fully appreciated and popularized at special fairs and periodic events (Wieczorek, 2012). Currently the importance of regional products is growing as an alternative to mass-produced products. This trend can be defined as regionalism (Minta, 2015).
Direct sales and cheese production could not go together in the “Wańczykowski” farm. Due to the potential of cross-contamination, the Veterinary Inspection has imposed on owners the obligation to focus on one profile of their business and therefore they left the direct sales for artisan cheese dairy and agro-tourism.

**Farm**

The size of the farm is 40 hectares, of which 30 hectares are leased. On arable land is allocated 17 hectares, while on grassland 23 hectares. The soils are rated for class IV and V. Cattle breeding of red-and-white as well as jersey in amount of 14 are aimed at the production of organic milk used for the production of yoghurts. In addition, there are 35 goats on the farm. Milk for cheese and yoghurt production is obtained from selectively chosen 3 local farms. Milk comes from own production (in the season from 6 milk cows is produced 160 l milk). The milk of own production (kept separately) is certified by the AgroBiotest’s organic milk.

**Production: employment, equipment**

On the “Wańczykowski” farm, there are 6 salaried employees (4 production workers, 1 office worker, 1 distribution worker). For the production purposes there are used 500 l of milk a day, which amounts to 3,500 l per week. Most cheeses are made from unpasteurized milk, so high microbial quality milk is important for their production. Pasteurization influences the deterioration of the organoleptic characteristics of the milk, so in order to preserve the taste values, the pasteurization process has been abandoned. In the artisan cheese dairy are specify facilities, like social room, production room, milk storage, fresh products storage, (a point of sale with the possibility of packaging products) and 2 maturating cellars. The proper conditions must be provided in the maturating cellars: humidity: 82% for Gouda cheese, 85–90% for blue cheese, temperature: 12–14°C. Cheese dairy has the following equipment: cheese boilers with capacity of 20 l, 300 l and 1,000 l, press, pre-dripping bath, dosing pump, incubation cabinet, chiller, buttermilk, milk centrifuge and dishwashing machine. In the manufactory is strictly compliance with GMP/GHP requirements and there are taken some controls test like: pH, pasteurization temperature and humidity.

**Products**

In the cheese manufacture are produced: bio-quality yoghurts (produced from organic bio-milk with bio-certificated food additives, which production will be increase in the future), cottage cheese, rennet cheese, blue cheeses and semi ripened and ripened cheeses. For production are used milk from cows, goats and in the future also from sheeps.

**Distribution**

The product is delivered from Krzeszów to 27 points in Lower Silesia, mainly to Wroclaw. In addition, the products are directed into 5 restaurants. This product is available in select delicatessen and health food stores. Due to the high quality of the products and the high work input (craft production) these products reach a rather narrow recipient who want to pay more for the product in exchange for the distinctive organoleptic qualities.

**Agroturism**

The house of the Wańczyk family, which used to be a forester’s lodge, is located nearby the forest. The location of the farm and the natural values made the farm an attractive place for rest. “Wańczykówka” offers its guests
The combination of cheese dairy and agri-tourism as a way of doing business in rural areas — case study

contact with animals (cows, goats), playground, area for building campfire. At the beginning of the activity from the agri-tourist its offer was mainly used by friends from Poznań and guests coming to New Year’s Eve. The agri-tourist services benefited families with children who suffered from excessive anxiety. Contact with animals and nature, as well as accompanying the residents during their daily duties, had a therapeutic effect.

Due to the growing demand for cheeses and yoghurts, owners seek to obtain approval of their activity, left the form of the marginal, local and limited activity. The Ordinance of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of 8 June 2010 defines when an activity may be called marginal, local and limited (Journal of Laws from 2010, No. 113 item 753). This activity include the scope and area of production. For example the limit of dairy products, amount to 300 kg per week. According to the new regulations, the limits on sales at the place of production were abolished. The Regulation also specifies the scope of the distribution area, which is limited to the voivodship in which the production takes place or to neighboring voivodships (Ditrich, n.d.). Marginal, local, limited sales simplify the small farmers to enter the market. Moreover it abbreviate the issues related to the approval of activities (related to technological design) and documentation or official controls. The owners are required to observe the Good Hygiene Practice (GHP) and Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) without having to implement the HACCP system (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) (Winawer, 2013).

The artisan cheese manufacturing is currently build up and growing its production. In the near plans it will be set up in the “Wańczykówka” Farmer’s Cheese Academy, as a response to the growing demand for artisanal cheese production.

Conclusions

Since the end of the 90s of the last century to the present day Poland agriculture is going through a transition, where the small scale farms diversify into other non-agricultural activities. This is confirmed by 36% of farms in Poland engaged in non-agricultural activities according to Agricultural census.

Multifunctional agriculture promoted through the EU Common Agricultural Policy has provided different role of agriculture, not only as an activity focused primarily on food production and ensuring of self-sufficiency, but also the creation of so-called non-market externalities in terms of the application of good agricultural practices and the integration of agriculture with other branches. The main objective of these activities is to improve the working and living conditions on farms in rural areas.

Objective of research in this paper showed that the Polish rural areas in particular in Lower Silesia are possible to generate income from other sources not only through the agricultural production but also tourism. This statement is confirmed by the case study farm “Wańczykówka” that is example of multidirectional form of enterprise in the countryside.

The idea for the establishment of such farm has resulted from the fact that the milk market had a crisis and reduced the profitability of small farms induced by low amount of animals. For this reason, in order to maintain their farm they reoriented towards a new production direction in the field of cheese production.

Through a wide variety of farm products “Wańczykówka” has managed to achieve a higher market share and increase in production. Also traffic channel for this farm are a local points in the Lower Silesia who are willing to pay more for these high-quality products.

Countryside of the Lower Silesia and the location of the farm “Wańczykówka” made it possible to farm develops in the direction of agro-tourism.
The farm is planning to expand into other non-agricultural activities, such as the launch of “Wańczykówka” Farmer’s Cheese Academy as a response to the growing demand for artisanal cheese production. Farm “Wańczykówka” is an example of good practice in terms of linking agriculture and tourism on small farms in Lower Silesia. This case can be used as a model for future transformation of small scale dairy farms in Poland which contribute to the increased quality of life and revitalization of economic activities in rural areas.

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THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN FINANCIAL LITERACY OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Beata Świecka

University of Szczecin, POLAND
email: beata.swiecka@wzieu.pl

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Abstract
This article presents an overview of the financial literacy of the 15 years old students. The aim of the article is to present conceptualization of financial literacy and the results of own research on the financial literacy of young people in Poland on the background of secondary research. For the purposes of the article, was formulated a thesis: parents play a large role in increasing financial literacy of young people. Data obtained as part of the primary survey was carried out as part of a grant from the Polish-German Foundation for Science “Education and financial literacy in Germany and in Poland. Transfer of knowledge, analysis and recommendations” (No. 2017-03), implemented by the University of Szczecin (project leader), Society for Promotion of Financial Education in Gdynia and social science research institute GP Forschungsgruppe – Institut für Grundlagen und Programmforshung from Berlin. Own Survey they were done in the fourth quarter of 2017 on a nationwide representative sample of 2070 respondents, aged 15. The research was carried out using the PAPI method.

Introduction

The European Parliament has recognized that the increase of consumers' financial literacy improves the functioning of financial mechanisms on the market. In line with the European Parliament’s guidelines, raising the level of consumer financial literacy should be a priority for decision-makers at both Member State and European level, not only for the benefit of individuals but also for the benefit of society and the economy. Particular attention
has been a focus on the educational needs of young consumers who must make decisions affecting their economy. (European Union, 2008). These statements show the importance of financial literacy and financial education in the microscale from the point of view of an individual, as well as a mezzo or a financial institution, as well as macro, i.e. the economy on a national and international scale. Considering the significance of financial literacy, which is important at the global level as well as the individual level, an attempt was made to analyze financial literacy issues. It is not without reason that an analysis has been made of a specific group of subjects – young people who if they will master in personal finances will have greater financial skills as adults. The aim of the article is a conceptualization of financial literacy and presentation of the results of a primary survey on the financial literacy of young people in Poland, on the background secondary survey. For the article, was formulated a thesis, that parents play a large role in increasing financial literacy of young people.

To achieve the goal was used the method of desk research and the results of primary research and the background secondary research. Data obtained as part of the primary survey was carried out as part of a grant from the Polish-German Foundation for Science “Education and financial literacy in Germany and in Poland. Transfer of knowledge, analysis and recommendations” (No. 2017-03), implemented by the University of Szczecin (project leader), Society for Promotion of Financial Education in Gdynia and social science research institute GP Forschungsgruppe – Institut für Grundlagen und Programmforschung from Berlin. The primary survey was carried out in the fourth quarter of 2017 on a nationwide representative sample of 2070 respondents. The research was carried out using the PAPI method.

Conceptualization of financial literacy literature review

Financial literacy is a significant problem studied both in Poland and abroad. The definition of this concept was taken largely by the OECD, which introduced the concept of financial literacy as one of the first. According to OECD (INFE) “financial literacy is a combination of awareness, knowledge, skills, attitude, and behavior necessary to make sound financial decisions and ultimately achieve individual wellbeing (Atkinson, Messy, 2012). This definition is now globally acknowledged and was also endorsed by G20 leaders in 2012 (G20, 2012). The definition clear that financial literacy is more than knowledge, it also includes attitudes, behavior, and skills. It stresses the importance of decision making – applying knowledge and skills to real-life process – and indicates that the impact should be improved financial wellbeing”(Atkinson, Messy, 2012). According the PISA (2017) “financial literacy is knowledge and understanding of financial concepts and risk, and the skills, motivation, and confidence to apply such knowledge and understanding in order effective decisions across a range of financial contexts, to improve the financial well-being of individual and society, and to enable participation in economic life. The definition, like other of PISA domains, has two parts. The first refers to the kinds of thinking and behavior the characteristic the domain. The second part refers to the importance of developing the particular literacy. In PISA “literacy” refers not only to the capacity of 15-years-old students to apply knowledge and skills in a key subject but also to students’ ability to analyze, reason and communicate as they pose, solve and interpret problem in a variety of situations (PISA, 2017).

The largest international survey of young people (15-years old students) conducted in the world as well as in Poland is the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment). It is implemented by an international consortium overseen by OECD and representatives of member countries. It is the largest international financial literacy study of 15-years old students in the world. It has been implemented every 3 years since 2000 in all OECD countries, as well as in dozens of partner countries, however, the financial literacy research was carried out for the first time in
The role of parents in financial literacy of young people

2012. Poland has participated in the PISA survey from the beginning, that is from 2000. The financial literacy study implemented in 2012 was conducted among 29,000 15-year-olds from 13 OECD countries (Table 1). The aim of the study was to check whether 15-year-olds (in many countries in this age are completing compulsory education) have the knowledge and skills to continue to live in their lives. Details on the financial literacy research made in 2012 and 2015, as well as planned in 2018, are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Financial literacy in PISA Survey (the biggest international research)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of OECD Courtiers involve in PISA Survey</th>
<th>PISA 2012</th>
<th>PISA 2015</th>
<th>PISA 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OECD Courtiers involve in PISA Survey</td>
<td>Australia, Belgia, Czechy, Estonia, Francja, Izrael, Wlochy, Nowa Zelandia, Polska, Słowacja, Słownia, Hiszpania, USA</td>
<td>Australia, Belgium (Flemish), Canadian Province, Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Chile, Slovak Republic, Poland, United States</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of partner countries involved in PISA Survey</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>In March 2017, the pilot study PISA 2018 was carried out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner countries</td>
<td>Columbia, Croatia, Latvia, Russia, China (Shanghai)</td>
<td>China (Beijing-Shanghai-Jiangsu-Guangdong), Russia, Lithuania, Peru, Brazil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>15-years-old students, którzy w roku poprzedzającym badanie ukończyli lat 15</td>
<td>15-years-old students uczniowie, którzy w roku poprzedzającym badanie ukończyli lat 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey area</td>
<td>proficiency in math, proficiency in reading, proficiency in science, proficiency in financial literacy, proficiency in Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS)</td>
<td>proficiency in math, proficiency in reading, proficiency in science, proficiency in financial literacy, proficiency in Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of students involved in PISA survey</td>
<td>29,000</td>
<td>48,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data of Survey</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data of report publications</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PISA Survey was started in 2000 but didn’t include proficiency in financial literacy, which first time was taken into consideration in 2012

Before PISA Survey Jump$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy in 1997 inaugural study Jump$tart Survey of Financial Literacy Among High School Students

PISA Survey is the biggest research about financial literacy, but every country has a national, sometimes international and also local study on financial literacy


In Poland national range studies are conducted (NBP, Kronenberg, SKEF, ING Barometer, etc.). The biggest weakness of the conducting survey is the incomparability of their results. This makes it impossible to apply for completed surveys for more sophisticated projects. There are also international studies that are not conducted on such a large scale as the PISA survey and are usually not carried out cyclically. Due to the size of the study (48,000 respondents), as well as the cyclicality (two studies for the time being and the third study planned for 2018) is present the PISA survey.
According to PISA 2015 (PISA, 2017) Polish 15-year-olds scored significantly fewer points than in the previous study carried out in 2012 (published in 2015). According to PISA 2015 (PISA, 2017), Polish 15-year-olds scored 485 points (in PISA 2012 – 510 points) and this time they were below the OECD average, which in the PISA 2015 survey was 489 points. Not much under the line, but still below average. In 2015, the Chinese scored the most points – 566 points (in 2012 – 603 points), and Belgians – 541, both in 2015 and in 2012. In 2012, lower results than Poland had: USA, Russia, France, Slovenia, Spain, Croatia, Israel, Slovakia, Italy, and Colombia (PISA, 2014, p. 32). At the next survey, in 2015 most of these countries, which had lower results, were ahead of Poland, including Russia (512 points) and the USA (587 points). The following countries had lower results than Poland: Italy, Spain, Lithuania, Slovak Republic, Chile, Peru, Brazil (PISA, 2017).

The PISA is a study of 15-year-old – students who completed the age of 15 in the year preceding the survey. In 2012, they were pupils from the year 1996, and the study in 2015 covered people born in 1999. In each edition of PISA, they have checked three skills: reading and interpretation, solving mathematical problems and reasoning in natural sciences. Since 2012, the PISA survey has been extended to include an additional component – financial literacy. The inclusion of the financial literacy component in the PISA survey was the result of previous work that lasted since 2005 when the OECD published a report highlighting the serious lack of financial knowledge in many countries around the world (PISA, 2017, 2014). In 2008, the OECD created the International Network on Financial Education (INFE) to reach out-of-OECD countries in information sharing and data collection in key areas of financial education. Due to the lack of data on OECD financial knowledge and skills, INFE took into consideration the financial literacy measurements in the PISA study (Lusardi 2015, p. 640). In PISA (2014), research on financial literacy was presented for the first time. These were studies carried out in 2012. Subsequent PISA surveys (2017) were published in 2017 and implemented in 2015. The PISA (2017, p. 15) financial literacy rating provides a picture of 15-year olds’ ability to apply their accumulated financial knowledge and skills to real-life situation issuing a financial issue and decisions. PISA (2014) was implemented in 2012 in 13 OECD countries and PISA (2017) in 2015 in 15 OECD countries. OECD countries, 22% of 15-years old students – or more than 1.2 million of them have a baseline level of proficiency in financial literacy (level 2). Students of this level can recognize the difference between the needs and wants, such as an invoice. Some of the 12% of young people score at level 5 – the highest level of proficiency. These teens make complex financial decisions. They can describe the potential financial landscape, such as income tax.

Financial literacy in primary (own) research

The supplements of PISA survey is primary research carried out as part of the grant from the Polish-German Foundation for Science “Education and financial literacy in Germany and in Poland. Transfer of knowledge, analysis and recommendations” (No. 2017-03), implemented by the University of Szczecin (project leader), Society for Promotion of Financial Education in Gdynia and social science research institute GP Forschungsgruppe – Institut für Grundlagen und Programmforschung from Berlin. The survey was done in the fourth quarter of 2017 on a nationwide representative sample of 2070 respondents, aged 15 (age – accordance with the PISA methodology). The study was conducted using the PAPI method.

The structure analysis in primary (own) survey shows that young people mostly (75%) learn about financial matters from their parents. School plays a much smaller role than the internet. More than half of them (56%) regularly receive money from their parents. It is interesting that 11.1% are already earning their money. It is not
a large percentage, but for such a young age, it is not too little. It would be helpful to have specific questions that would refer to the regularity of the taken on intentions, type of activity, intentionality. One of the financial decisions is indebtedness. It would seem that young people do not have or should not have any debt at 15 age. The own study shows that almost 15% have debt. This result is worrying. The survey shows that 9.5% are indebted to friends, 4.7% to parents, and 0.5% are in default for telephone charges. In the case of an indebtedness to friends and family, we can also ask additional questions: is it indebted unilaterally or is it notorious? Undoubtedly, the exploration of these question would be helpful in answering the questions of how the situation in the sphere of debt of young people really looks like. Having a young people financial problems, they rely mainly on their parents and family. It’s up to them with financial problems but also learns financial management from them. In finance education, the school plays a small and even marginal role. From the school young people expect practical knowledge, a large number of examples, interesting form of knowledge transfer. The own survey shows that young people they want to know how to keep expenses low, about the rules of the household budget, and also interested in saving opportunities. They have known how to withdraw cash from an ATM, how to pay with a card, but a little knowledge how to open a bank account on the internet. In terms of consumption decisions, in the first place, the money is spent on clothing and sweets. In terms of saving decisions, they largely store money in cash at home, giving as a reason convenience. The money they spend is mainly spent on pleasure, but they also think about being financially independent, having funds for unforeseen expenses, when parents do not want to pay it. In the operational activity associated with the opening account, parents play a large role. They are the first to inform children about this possibility. At the age of 15-years old student got a money from family, especially from parents (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Where do you find information about financial matters? (%)](Image)

Source: own study.

Data on the figure show that parents have a leading role in financial matters (Figure 1). Young people have information about finance from parents, who are the first who give advice when children have a problem in financial area (Figure 2), and also parents are the main donors of money (Figure 3). The role of parents in the field of finance for young people is indispensable. At the age of 15, young people who do not have much opportunity to learn about finance at school are looking for information from their parents. In particular, they are interested in how to earn money, where it is possible find a job, how many years they have must, if they what to start working, how many hours they can work, what they need to start work, and other. Figure 4 shows that over 40% (43.1%) of respondents would like to know where and how to set up an account, which means that such a large percentage does not know it yet.
Assuming that an open account is the first level of financial inclusion. If they do not have an account yet, they do not know about payment cards, electronic banking, mobile payments, etc. So they do not have knowledge of finances that enable current functioning. Lack of this knowledge also points to deficiencies in saving and debt opportunities.

![Bar chart](chart.png)

**Figure 2.** Whom would you ask for advice if you had financial problems? (%)
Source: own study.

![Bar chart](chart2.png)

**Figure 3.** Are you getting regularly (pocket) money? (%)
Source: own study.

![Bar chart](chart3.png)

**Figure 4.** Which kind of information do students in your age need most? (%)
Source: own study.
The role of parents in financial literacy of young people

Conclusions

The low level of financial literacy 15-years old students are a result in the inability to obtain financial knowledge at school, which received a small piece of finance in the elementary school (on the lecture Knowledge about Society). Young people receive more detailed knowledge in the first year of secondary school on the lecture “Basics of entrepreneurship” and “Economics in practice”, which according to the new program was cancel from the schools. The knowledge acquired by the students at school is poor, therefore the parents are the main source of information about financial aspects: financial management, bank accounts, payment cards, earning opportunities and banking services. Primary research shows that a large role in increasing financial literacy and financial education for 15 years old students have parents. Parents are the main source of financial knowledge, parents mainly give children money, and they come to parents when they have financial problems. School at 15 years of students plays a secondary role. Importance role of a parent was confirmed by research. However, the knowledge of parents is often not satisfied, and children need a school as a medium in the transfer of practical knowledge of finance, which should be an obligatory and not only optional. At this stage, the question arises: who should play a greater role in the financial education of young people: school or parents? To what extent does the school and in which parents? In which areas should be complemented, and in which to strengthen. These are questions that need to be explored for complementary action to increase the financial literacy of young people.

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EVALUATION AND VERIFICATION OF SYNCHRONIZATION OF BUSINESS CYCLES OF CONSUMER PRICE INDEX OF ENERGY BETWEEN POLAND AND OECD-EUROPE OR EU-28

ELŻBIETA SZARUGA

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: elzbieta.szaruga@usz.edu.pl

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KEYWORDS consumer price index of energy, business cycles, spectral analysis, synchronization

ABSTRACT

The article presents the problem of business cycles of consumer price index of energy between Poland and two grouping of states (OECD-Europe and EU-28). The aim of the article is to assess the level of synchronization of business cycles of consumer price index of energy in Poland and OECD-Europe or EU-28. The main hypothesis was formulated: business cycles of consumer price index of energy in OECD-Europe or the EU-28 have a significant impact on the formation of business cycles of consumer price index of energy in Poland, which results from their strong synchronization. In the paper used spectral and cross-spectral methods, as well as the TRAMO/SEATS method and the Hodrick-Prescott filter for business cycles estimation. The research was conducted on the example of Poland, OECD-Europe and EU-28 on the basis of secondary data of consumer price index of energy from the OECD.Stats (2018) database. Monthly time series from January 1996 to December 2017 were used. Two dominant cycles were identified in all surveyed units (66-months and 33-months). As a result of the conducted research, coherence between 79–97% between business cycles of consumer price index of energy in Poland and EU-28 and 52–83% between those cycles in Poland and OECD-Europe was obtained. In both cases the amplitude of the business cycles of consumer price index of energy in Poland was lower than in those groups. Longer cycles (50/52–66) of country groups were overtake of similar business cycles in Poland, while for shorter cycles (33–50/52) there was a reverse relation.

Introduction

The article concerns an extremely important issue of synchronization of business cycles between Poland and OECD-Europe and EU-28. On the one hand, synchronization demonstrates the level of economic integration with these groupings, but on the other hand it is the determinant of making decisions and creating long-term forecasts.
The aim of the article is to assess the level of synchronization of business cycles of consumer price index of energy in Poland and OECD-Europe or EU-28.

For the purposes of the article, the main hypothesis was formulated: business cycles of consumer price index of energy in OECD-Europe or the EU-28 have a significant impact on the formation of business cycles of consumer price index of energy in Poland, which results from their strong synchronization. In the paper used spectral and cross-spectral methods, as well as the TRAMO/SEATS method and the Hodrick-Prescott filter for business cycle estimation. The article consists of 3 parts: literature review, methodology and results of empirical research.

**Literature review**

Synchronization of business cycles is important, especially in the light of economic integration processes or from the point of view of common and optimal areas of economic cooperation (Sethapramote, 2015). Business cycles affect in many directions, but there are three main reasons causing the synchronization cycles (Mejía-Reyes, Rendón-Rojas, Vergara-González, Aroca, 2018, p. 2; Canova, Dells, 1993):

- combined disturbances or shocks, including: oil distress, global stagnation, recessions or revivals, economic and political discordance (even clashes) could affect the orientation of business cycles,
- in the case of a similar structure of production of various areas, sectoral shocks may affect shifts of individual phases of business cycles,
- international shocks may be shifted from outside (especially small open economies integrated with bigger economies may be particularly vulnerable), which affects the synchronization of business cycles.

The most interesting papers in which these surfaces have recently been touched include the paper by, among others: Ahlborn and Wortmann (2018), Gong and Kim (2018), Juvenal and Monteiro (2017), Karadimitroupou (2018), Li (2017), Lukmanova and Tondl (2017), Miles (2017), Szaruga (2017). The methodological workshop of these researchers is diverse. Due to the purpose of the article, attention has been paid only to spectral methods.

On the problems of synchronization of business cycles using spectral methods wrote Chionis and Leon (2009). They examined the synchronization of Polish and European economic cycles of GDP, finding the dominant one with the frequency of 0.045 cycles (equivalent to 5.5 years). Ductor and Leiva-Leon (2016) also used spectral methods to evaluate business cycle synchronization. Their research conducted at the world’s major economies in the post-Great Moderation. An in-depth study on the synchronization of business cycles in the euro area was conducted by Skrzypczyński (2006). In empirical research, he also used spectral and cross-spectral analysis, as well as the object estimating business cycles, proving that the euro zone cycles are strengthened and deepened by member states.

For the purpose of this article, spectral methods have also been used, but the assessment and verification of business cycles synchronization has been carried out on the example of Poland, OECD-Europe and UE-28. The approach presented is the closest to Skrzypczyński (2006) and Chionis and Leon (2009). However, the presented research in the further part of the article can be freely extended by further research and methodical threads.

**Methods and data**

The research was conducted on the example of Poland, OECD-Europe and EU-28 on the basis of secondary data of consumer price index of energy from the OECD.Stats (2018) database. Monthly time series from January
1996 to December 2017 were used. The choice of time and subject range is intentional because of the assumptions and limitations of the methods used and the substantive premises.

The data has been cleared of seasonal fluctuations and decomposed using the TRAMO/SEATS method. During the estimation, a trend-cycle component was obtained (so-called Henderson’s trend-cycle component), which was then subjected to filtration. Henderson’s trend-cycle component has been decomposed separately for the trend and cycle by the Hodrick-Prescott filter (frequency response \( \lambda = 14,400 \)). The resulting cycle component was examined for stationarity using the Augmented Dickey-Fuller test.

Subsequently, cross-correlation was examined between the cycles with the maximum delay of 12 months. The investigation was extended by spectral analysis of cycles, analyzing the longest amplitude for the periodogram values. Based on them, dominant cycles were isolated and then the cycle synchronization was verified based on cross-spectral analysis, examining coherence, gains and phase spectrum. The results of the conducted examination are presented below.

**Results**

Figure 1 presents business cycles of consumer index price of energy (after decomposition with Hodrick-Prescott filter).

![Figure 1](image)

NBER recessions were marked by shaded fields.

**Figure 1.** Cycles of consumer price index of energy on the example of Poland, EU-28 and OECD-Europe from January 1996 to December 2017


From Figure 1 it can be concluded that the amplitudes of business cycles for OECD-Europe and EU-28 are more similar than those in Poland. However, after 2015, the Polish business cycles began to adapt to the OECD-Europe and EU-28 cycles.
In order to determine whether decomposed cycles have stationary properties, it was necessary to examine with Augmented Dickey-Fuller test (ADF).

**Table 1.** ADF test results for cycles of consumer price index of energy in Poland, OECD-Europe and EU-28 from January 1996 to December 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>ADF</th>
<th>Optimal number of lag</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PL_cycle</td>
<td>-0.0758***</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I(0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD_cycle</td>
<td>-0.0638***</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I(0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU_cycle</td>
<td>-0.0611***</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I(0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*, **, *** reject the null hypothesis I(1) at the significance level of 10%, 5%, 1% respectively.
Maximum number of lag = 12. The modified AIC criterion was applied.


Based on the results of the ADF test, one could refute the null hypothesis about the lack of stationarity in favor of the hypothesis assuming the stationarity of the business cycles studied. The optimal number of lag was 8 months. In next step, evaluated cross correlation coefficients between the analyzed business cycles in Poland and OECD-Europe or EU-28 (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Cross-correlation coefficients between the cycles of consumer price index of energy in Poland and the cycle of consumer price index of energy in OECD-Europe or EU-28 from January 1996 to December 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>t – 10</th>
<th>t – 9</th>
<th>t – 8</th>
<th>t – 7</th>
<th>t – 6</th>
<th>t – 5</th>
<th>t – 4</th>
<th>t – 3</th>
<th>t – 2</th>
<th>t – 1</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>t + 1</th>
<th>t + 2</th>
<th>t + 3</th>
<th>t + 4</th>
<th>t + 5</th>
<th>t + 6</th>
<th>t + 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table contains cross-correlation coefficients statistically different from zero, assuming p-value < 0.05.


As can be seen from the Table 2, the correlation coefficients were statistically significant from the 7-month delay to the 10-month overtake. However, the highest correlation coefficient was recorded when the delay/overtake was 0.

Figure 2–5 (periodograms) show the spectrum of business cycles of consumer price index of energy, respectively for Poland, OECD-Europe and EU-28 in all analyzed time range (from January 1996 to December 2017).
Evaluation and verification of synchronization of business cycles of consumer price index of energy between Poland and OECD-Europe or EU-28

Figure 2. Spectrum of cycles of consumer price index of energy in Poland (1996:01-2017:12)

Figure 3. Spectrum of cycles of consumer price index of energy in OECD-Europe (1996:01-2017:12)

Figure 4. Spectrum of cycles of consumer price index of energy in EU-28 (1996:01-2017:12)
On the basis of periodograms (the highest amplitudes of periodogram values) one could determine two dominant cycles in Poland, OECD-Europe and EU-28: 66 months long (5.5 years) and 33 months (2.75 years) long. In Poland, an additional dominant cycle of 13.89 months was recorded. Due to the purpose of the study, only the 66-month and 33-month business cycles were examined.

Figure 5 presents a cross-spectral analysis between business cycles for Poland and OECD-Europe, and Figure 6 – between business cycles for Poland and EU-28. Dependent variable was business cycle of Poland, and independent variables was in first case – business cycle of OECD-Europe, in second case – business cycle of EU-28.

![Figure 5](image_url)

**Figure 5.** Measures of cross-spectral analysis between the cycle of consumer price index of energy in Poland and OECD-Europe


Figure 5 shows that there was a high coherence between the cycle in OECD-Europe and Poland at the level of approx. 52% to over 83%. Greater coherence was for longer cycles. Amplitudes of fluctuations were higher in OECD-Europe than in Poland. Poland rather adapted to the cycles at OECD-Europe. However, phase shifts indicate that longer cycles (50–66 months) in OECD-Europe (negative values) were ahead of similar cycles in Poland. Cycles (33–50 months) were delayed in the OECD towards Poland.
Evaluation and verification of synchronization of business cycles of consumer price index of energy between Poland and OECD-Europe or EU-28

Figure 6. Measures of cross-spectral analysis between the cycle of consumer price index of energy in Poland and EU-28


Figure 6 shows that there was very high coherence between the cycle in the EU-28 and Poland at the level of about 79% to about 97%. Greater coherence was for longer cycles than shorter ones. It is an extremely high coherence in the entire frequency range of business cycles. It is much higher than between Poland and OECD-Europe. Amplitudes of fluctuations were higher EU-28 than in Poland. Poland rather adapted to the cycles in EU-28. However, phase shifts indicate that longer cycles (52–66 months) in EU-28 (negative values) were ahead of similar cycles in Poland. Cycles (33–52 months) were delayed in the EU-28 in relation to Poland, as in the case of OECD-Europe and Poland.

Conclusions

Summing up, the cycles in Poland are strongly synchronized with the OECD-Europe and EU-28 cycles, but more strongly with the EU-28 than the OECD-Europe. In addition, longer cycles are more synchronized than shorter ones. On the basis of the results, one can say with full conviction that business cycles are synchronized with the EU-28 and OECD-Europe cycles. However, delays and anticipations also play a role. It was found that the maximum delay is 7 months and the advance is 10 months. Applying this to the observation that there are two dominant 66-month and 33-month cycles, one can assume the appropriate moment for synchronization is the period of ±17 months. It seems that the purpose of the article has been achieved and the hypothesis verified.
References


THE ROLE OF AGROTOURISM IN A COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT WITH REGARD TO WOLIN COMMUNITY

EWA SZCZEPANOWSKA,1 MAŁGORZATA ZABIELSKA2

1 University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: ewa.szczepanowska@univ.szczecin.pl
2 e-mail: lichowskaligatorza@wp.pl

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KEYWORDS agrotourism, Wolin community, determinants of country development

ABSTRACT The aim of work is to determine agrotourism role in a country development in regard to Wolin community and to indicate agrotourism development determinants with connections between them. The number of 20 agrotouristic household owners at the age 30–69 y.o. is studied. The bulk of households (65%) is carried on by women at the age 50–59 y.o. The method of diagnostic poll and the Pearson’s χ² test to data analysis are used. In opinion of the majority of contractors (75%) the agrotourism development advantageously influences on the country development. The only significant dependence (p = 0.09520*) between the period of the activity management and the evaluation of agrotourism development possibilities in Wolin community is noticed. One can conclude that longer period of the agrotourism activity management causes more positive note of economic and social development of the country. In opinion of agrotourism household owners, Wolin community is characterized by many natural and cultural attractions, as a basis for the agrotourism development and a stimulus for potential tourists. Respondents notice also the activity of local government engagement in the agrotourism development and seek in this phenomenon a chance to a further development.

Introduction

Agrotourism from the beginning of 1990s underlies a very intensive quantitate and qualitative development. This phenomenon is a result both of government policy and an increasing demand for this kind of services. Since many years there is a very popular form of spending holidays in Western Europe. Its adaptation in Poland, rich
tradition connected with “holidays under pear”, and also economic needs of farmers cause a very favorable situation to the further development (Knecht, 2009, pp. 162–164).

The relation of local government to agrotourism determines the intensity of supporting this form of activity but very often the limited possibilities of tourism financing by local government are the reason of state assistance in agrotourism development (Szostak, 2006, p. 174). Invaluable the assistance from touristic organizations or foundations is, as well. The whole idea requires future thinking; it means a strategy to create tourism development at the state and regional level. Country tourism besides resting and recreational tourism is distinguished as a one from the branded touristic product of the region (rsi.org.pl/dane/download/strategia_2015.pdf, p. 31).

As the basic determinants of agrotourism development it can be recognized natural and landscape attractions due to their appropriable and esthetic functions. Anthropogenic attractions, infrastructure, communication availability, temper and hospitality of local population and householders are likewise important (Przezbórska, 2007, pp. 114–115). The care of natural and socio-cultural environment with a key role here of an adequate preservation and management of natural resources can be added on the top (Gołembski, 2009, p. 360).

A leading function of Wolin community is food economy because of a relatively high percentage of utilized agricultural area. There is 43.7% of its area, and forests and forest lands – 22.7%. Small households to 15ha outweigh. The half of Wolin community territory, with Wolin National Park (WNP) as a neighbor, is located at the Wolin Island. It is split up from the land by Dziwna River sound (bip.wolin.pl, 12.03.2017). Tourists visiting the community can use valuable and unique attractions and virtues (e.g. two nature reserves: Łuniewo and Wiejkowski Forest). The season lasts to 180 days because it is the sunniest region of Polish seaside in summer months (Pieczyński, 2004, pp. 149–150).

Immensity of anthropogenic attractions of Wolin community owes a very long and turbulent history of this area. There are many heirlooms from the far-distant past of this area at this territory. The settlement development is dated to the VIII–X century. In the XIX century geological layer of chalk are discovered at this area. Natural chalk causes the concrete industry development. The souvenir of a chalk mining excavation, very popular among tourists, is Turkusowe Lake in Wapnica village. Commencement of tourism development at this area is estimated for the half of XIX century with the recognition of seaside climate possibilities and richness of natural and anthropogenic attractions (Grzegorczyk, Lewicki, 2004, pp. 9–10).

The aim of work is to determine agrotourism role in a country development in regard to Wolin community and to indicate agrotourism development determinants with connections between them.

Method

The number of 20 agrotouristic household owners (women – W and men – M) at the age 30–69 y.o. is studied (Table 1). The bulk of households (65%) is carried on by W at the age 50–59 y.o. Respondents have the high (40%), secondary (40%) and professional (20%) level of education.
The role of agrotourism in a country development with regard to Wolin community

Table 1. Respondents’ gender, age and an education level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>30–49 y.o.</th>
<th>50–59 y.o.</th>
<th>60–69 y.o.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W (n = 13)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M (n = 7)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of education</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W (n = 13)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M (n = 7)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own elaboration.

The method of diagnostic poll with the tool of a questionnaire and the Pearson’s $\chi^2$ test to data analysis are used.

Results

The bulk of agrotouristic households are in villages near the border of WNP, in the central part of Wolin Island. Among respondents the greatest group (80%) of households is active above 5 years (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. The period of agrotouristic activity management](image)

The main motives of undertaking the agrotouristic activity management by populace of Wolin community economic determinants are (52%) (Figure 2), then a will to master the second profession (29%), also this kind of reason as bailout from the SAPARD program, contact with other people and broadening of contacts or passion and pleasure with the management of this activity (13%).
Ewa Szczepanowska, Małgorzata Zabielska

Figure 2. Reasons of undertaking the agrotouristic activity management
Source: own elaboration.

The evaluations of conditions and possibilities of agrotourism development in Wolin community are advantageously distributed, distinctly at the good notes (55%) and very good notes side (10%) (Figure 3).

Figure 3. The evaluation of conditions and possibilities of agrotourism development in Wolin community
Source: own elaboration.

Agrotouristic households in Wolin community in majority (80%) have over 9 accommodation places; there are big objects (Figure 4).

Figure 4. The number of accommodation places in agrotouristic objects
Source: own elaboration.
Among households 60% is active the whole year (Figure 5). It is due to many attractions and services offered by households, and also anthropogenic and natural attractions interesting beside the season, as well. From May to September 30% of studied households are open.

![Bar chart showing the period of agrotouristic objects availability in Wolin community.](image)

*Figure 5. The period of agrotouristic objects availability in Wolin community*

Source: own elaboration.

In 95% of objects tourists stay one week and they do not decided to stay shorter, or for weekend and longer stays, embracing time to month or longer.

The offered accommodation basis in studied objects is much differentiated (Table 2). There are mainly rooms in a residential building of household owners (40%), static caravans (26%), also rooms in a separate building (17%) and tent fields (17%).

*Table 2. The form of the accommodation basis offer*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation Form</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rooms in residential building of household owner</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rooms in a separate building</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Static caravans</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tent fields</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own elaboration.

To 51% of households mainly families with children come, and 45% of households is visited by individual tourists (Figure 6). Only 14% of households receive organized groups.
The main attractions offered by 85% of households are feasts (Figure 7). At the area of WNP there is a prohibition of mushrooming but the half of household owners have in their offer mushrooming in forest concentrations besides WNP. Many lakes enable fishing being attraction of 50% agrotouristic objects; in 20% of them are stables, and 30% – horse riding. It can show the collaboration of particular household owner or using in an offer the same horse riding object by a few households. Only 5% among respondents offer surrounding sightseeing with guide; there is not amid them a requirement for this kind of services because touristic trails and objects are good labelled and described, and tourists prefer individual sightseeing. The participation in household works should be a flagship attraction of each agrotouristic household; there is not only in 15% of objects’ offer in Wolin community.

In opinion of 27% respondents the main determinant encouraging tourists to benefit from an offer is a household localization (Figure 8). Objects are located along WNP, and an important trump is also the nearness of Baltic Sea and communication availability. Determinant whipping up an interest of potential clients are surrounding attractions (24%), only 14% of respondents recognize household’s attractions as the most important element activating tourists. It can show on underinvestment in objects infrastructure. For 17% of respondents the determinant attracting tourists to their household is a marketable price and a high service level (16%), as well.
Mainly, a success of agrotouristic household is dependent on a good promotion and marketing. The majority (74%) of household owners use a promotion in internet (Figure 9). The compensating form of advertisement used by household owners are folders, touristic catalogs, a collaboration with a travel office or press information, 5% of households take an active part in tourist fairs, and only for 5% of respondents guests’ recommendations are essential.

The majority (75%) of respondents recognize an agrotouristic activity management as a determinant positively influencing on the development of their place of residence (Table 3), and for 20% there is a lack of an influence. Respondents bracket additional incomes for agrotouristic household owners and inhabitants (20%) to positive elements of agrotourism development through encouraging a demand of goods and services, also of not quite
touristic character. A tourists’ inflow impose from household owners, local government and the rest of inhabitants the increase of the locality esthetics care (15%). Among respondents 5% pay attention on the transformation of countryside role from agricultural to touristic (Table 3).

Table 3. The influence of agrotourism on the village development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The lack of an agrotourism development influence on the locality development</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomes for inhabitants</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The increase of the locality esthetics care</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The village advertisement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The locality infrastructure development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The promotion and locality development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The excitement of demand for goods and not quite touristic services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The transformation of countryside role from agricultural to touristic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The good influence of agrotourism development on the locality development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own elaboration.

The household owners evaluation of the surrounding touristic infrastructure hesitates from very good (16%), through average (13%), to weak (16%) (Table 4). In opinion of respondents 24% show on negative sides of the surrounding touristic infrastructure (Table 4), for 9% of respondents internal roads are in a bad condition, and 6% of household owners show the lack of bike routes or the lack of trails, in general (3%), despite many indicated bike and pedestrian trails at the Wolin community area. However, respondents show also on engagement of the local government in improvement of the infrastructure and the locality esthetics care (13%), good roads (3%) and an improvement of communication infrastructure (6%) (Table 4).

Table 4. The household owners evaluation of the surrounding touristic and paratouristic infrastructure status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad status of the village internal roads</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lack of trails</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lack of bike trails</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lack of refuse dumps</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lack of benches</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community investments in infrastructure, community care of the locality esthetics</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good roads</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The improvement of communal infrastructure</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own elaboration.
In accordance to $\chi^2$ Pearson test results (Table 5), despite many examined determinants, there is the significant dependence only between the period of the activity management and the evaluation of agrotourism development possibilities in Wolin community ($p = 0.09520^*$). It is connected most likely with the brand recognition at agrotouristic objects and their household owners.

**Table 5.** The significance of $\chi^2$ test calculation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Determinant</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender/range</td>
<td>0.53333</td>
<td>0.76593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender/education level</td>
<td>5.34799</td>
<td>0.25342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender/availability to agrotouristic objects</td>
<td>2.42347</td>
<td>0.11953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender/period of agrotourism activity management</td>
<td>0.21978</td>
<td>0.63921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender/groups the most often using services (families)</td>
<td>0.56680</td>
<td>0.45153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of agrotouristic objects/evaluation of agrotourism development possibilities</td>
<td>4.66158</td>
<td>0.19832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of agrotouristic objects/number of accommodation places</td>
<td>2.07813</td>
<td>0.35379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of accommodation places/evaluation of agrotourism development possibilities</td>
<td>3.15657</td>
<td>0.78896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of activity management/availability of agrotouristic objects</td>
<td>0.30536</td>
<td>0.58054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of activity management/evaluation of agrotourism development possibilities</td>
<td>6.36364</td>
<td>0.09520*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A level of statistical significance *$p \leq 0.1$.

Source: own elaboration.

**Discussion**

The Wolin community is a very attractive area to agrotourism development in regard to richness of natural and cultural virtues and the nearness of Germany, as well. In particular agrotourism can decide on a development of little households, located at the area rich in natural and cultural virtues, with limited possibilities of development and competition in the market (Krupińska, 2003, pp. 161–162; Bórawski, 2010, p. 25; turystyka.pb.edu.pl, 9.03.2017).

The increasing interest of undertaking agrotourism management is caused not only by the growth of touristic services but also the looking for new ways of development, possibilities of activating poorly develop territory and threatened by hidden unemployment in agriculture (Kozak, 2009, p. 9). In this work motives of undertaking agrotourism activity management are mainly economic (Figure 2, Table 5).

Different conditions of agrotourism development arise from the place of agriculture in development of this area, demographic structure, situation at the labor market, local government and populace activity, and from local population skills and tradition, as well (Sikorska-Wolak, 2004, p. 13). They are exposed at the Wolin community area and can be result of differences in existing infrastructure status, and also rate and frequency of modernizations in particular localities. Among respondents 20% do not see the agrotourism influence on the community development, and so 75% of them introduce the positive opinion (Table 5). The discrepancy of opinions can be a result of provided till now investments at the Wolin community area. Villages, like Kolczewo or Wiselka can display the rich touristic and paratouristic infrastructure, whereas in Warnowo or Jagienki there is even a lack of asphalt roads.

Amid conditions of agrotourism development natural and anthropogenic virtues take immeasurably important place. Undertaking agrotouristic activity management household owners are than obligated to broaden their knowledge, not only in management and marketing of the firm but also attractions and history of their own region.
to make potential tourists interested in the community (turystyka.pb.edu.pl, 9.03.2017). Knowledge of particular agrotouristic household owners is much differentiated (Table 4), 6% from them do not know there are bike routs in Wolin community, and 3% – consider that there are no trails at all. It is false because Wolin community abounds in bike and pedestrian trails (Pieczyński, 2004, pp. 149–150).

The best advertisement for agrotourism household is the opinion of satisfied guests visiting a given household and can inform about its trumps further guests (insightmarketing.eu/publikacje/promocja-i-dystrybucja-uslug-agroturystycznych-w-wojewodztwie-podlaskim, 12.03.2017). Unfortunately, this way of household promotion is unappreciated by household owners in Wolin community because only 5% of respondents consider that guests recommendations have an essential meaning in the object promotion (Figure 9). It accentuates also the aspect connected with impediments for single households because the promotion requires adequate qualifications and knowledge, also financial means and help from agrotourism associations or agricultural consultancy centers. Unfortunately, in Wolin community only 5% of households belong to agrotouristic association and have a category given by Polish Federation of Country Tourism “Gospodarstwo Gościnne” “Hospitable Household” (Drag, 2003, pp. 129–131; agroturystyka.info.pl, 26.12.2017). It can be caused by a fear of difficulties in managing to impose category requirements or from ignorance of agrotouristic household owners about profits from membership in this kind of association. The low interest of respondents to touristic fairs (4.0%) corresponds with household owners belongingness to agrotouristic associations.

In opinion of 5% of agrotouristic household owners in Wolin community agrotourism causes the change of role till played by localities, a wit a transition from the agricultural to touristic function (Table 5). This phenomenon goes by the change of residential to resting-recreational space, and as the years go by the touristic role dominates on agricultural production (Wojciechowska, 2009, pp. 18–22). This aspect is noticed by 15% of respondents. Agrotourism influences also on the range of material and non-material social advantages, as the village infrastructure modernization, the implementation of new touristic investments, with the contribution to modernization of agrotouristic households, the village and the community (turystyka.pb.edu.pl, 9.03.2017). For 5% of respondents this aspect is important. They consider that agrotourism development in their locality contributes towards the village infrastructure expansion (Table 3).

Possibilities of agrotourism development are related mostly to the period of the activity management (Table 5). It is connected with the brand building and recognizability of a given household. It contributes at the end to the development of the surrounding area and increases life level of its localities. It is a great chance of better future for the village inhabitants. It brings a range of positive advantages, and an adequate planning and adjusting its development to natural and cultural environment needs allow neutralizing possible negative effects. Important is also help from the side of local government and organizations as agrotouristic associations for the dynamic development of agrotouristic households because for single household owners it is very difficult to run single-handedly at the very challenging market.

Conclusions

The longer period of the agrotourism activity management causes the significant dependence between the period of the activity management and the evaluation of agrotourism development possibilities in Wolin community. In opinion of agrotourism household owners Wolin community is characterized by many natural and cultural values as a basis for the agrotourism development and a stimulus for potential tourists. Respondents notice
also the local government engagement in the agrotourism development and seek in this phenomenon a chance to a further development.

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FACTORS DETERMINING THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC E-ADMINISTRATION

AGNIESZKA AGATA TOMASZEWICZ

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: agnieszka.tomaszewicz@wzieu.pl

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ABSTRACT
In recent years, the role of public administration has been constantly changing. The requirements concerning the improvement of the business successive to the administration are increasing. The transformation of the economic system forces the processes of institutional, functional and instrumental improvement of public administration. The reason for this state of affairs is the growing expectations of citizens about the quality of public services and their simultaneous opposition to raising taxes. As indicated in the article, the administration’s action is to support effective and effective e-government.

It has been specified that the basis of the development of effective e-administration lies in the human factor, which should contribute to increasing demand (through education) and supply (by building content) to the e-services it provides. It follows that successful implementation of the desired e-services depends on the level of e-skills of all entities involved in the planned project.

It was concluded that in order to be able to achieve a higher level of e-administration development, we need an efficient, effective, transparent and open model of its development, which will contribute to the increase of accessibility and the level of advancement of public services over the Internet. This model must take into account the needs, expectations and preferences of both citizens and the offices themselves.

Introduction
There is a perception that a traditional, procedure-oriented public administration model should be replaced with result-oriented administration. The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) is an activity that significantly improves the functioning of government administration. Thanks to their development and the constantly growing access to them, the importance of electronic administration (e-government) is systematically growing.
Literature review

Electronic public administration (e-administration) is treated as a ‘mechanism that ensures cooperation between officials of public administration units in order to fulfill collective needs of clients’ (Minkowski, Motek, Perdał, 2009, p. 8). This term is also often referred to as the use of information and telecommunications technologies in public administration, in conjunction with organizational changes and acquiring new skills to improve the quality of public services, strengthen citizens’ involvement in democratic processes and support for state policy’ (Eurostat, 2007; Grodzka, 2009, p. 58).

It is often remarked that a new approach to e-administration means that management instruments should also be effectively used in the public sector. The concept of new public management also means taking control of bureaucracy and passing it on to local communities and integrating activities of all sectors (public, private and social sector). This result in improved government actions and increased interest in the issues of improving operational efficiency, measured by the ‘ratio of material inputs to the achieved effect’ (Leoński, 2004, p. 62), and the reduction of administration costs (Grycuk, 2011, p. 1).

Effective public e-government is therefore one that is managed through objectives and draws attention to the quality of the office’s policy, creates a clear division of competences and responsibilities among employees, defines proper administrative procedures, creates the right communication between individual organizational units. Among these tools, there should also be clear criteria for striving to achieve the adopted goals, and include, among others, availability, information, competence, speed and reliability as well as the main principles of operation, such as legality, expediency and effectiveness of administrative activities.

In the new paradigm of functioning of e-administration, it is important to assess to what extent a public institution fulfills its tasks in a way (Noga, Bogucki, Paluszyński, 2011):
- effective - means using well-justified, low expenditures,
- efficient- compatible with social demand.

These elements are also the basis for the development and provision of public e-services.

The premise for improving the efficiency of e-administration is to increase efficiency in acting as a whole and to achieve the intended results in the sphere of public tasks. It is also worth noting that the lack of sufficient information system efficiency is defined as one of the factors determining the efficiency of the organization’s operation, including the public institution and requires a comprehensive understanding of the barriers to effectiveness (Niedźwiedziński, 2004, p. 115).

The effectiveness of e-administration depends primarily on the human factor that determines it by influencing the level of competence and motivation of the staff employed in public administration. The level of competence determines the efficiency of management systems, and the rationality of decisions is influenced by staff with the right skills. Therefore, an important factor translating into the approach and increase in the use of e-public administration is the implementation of employee training to improve their IT skills. The incentive system in administration should therefore be structured in such a way as to result in identifying individual employee goals with the goals of the local community.

In turn, the determinant of the efficiency of the ICT system in e-administration is the level of satisfaction and fulfillment of the user's needs (Zakrzewski, Stroińska, 2007, p. 114). Through the use of electronic data exchange and documents of the government and self-government administration units, efforts should strive to increase the efficiency of their functioning. Efficiency, as well as the speed of document processing by offices and the efficiency...
of information exchange between administration units and the public through the use of ICT tools, are expected to become decisive factors for an efficient office, and should translate into economic development of the country. Programs created under e-administration, thanks to unlimited time (24 hours / day) availability of some functions translate into effective use of time. They concern both office employees and potential clients (Laskowski, 2005, pp. 79–80).

Among the decisive factors in the effectiveness of e-administration, among others, are savings, reorganization and back-office integration, interoperability, skills and knowledge, data exchange and re-use, as well as a change in the world view of citizens (Podręcznik..., 2007, p. 15).

The effectiveness of e-administration depends on the integration process and should be focused around social dialogue and increasing public value along with engaging in public services (Podręcznik..., 2007, p. 27). According to the World Economic Forum, in the future it will be the main condition for the creation of administration, and means that it should be FAST, that is flatter, agile, streamlined and Tech-enabled. The following factors stand out among the factors that are decisive for the effectiveness of e-administration: simplification of administrative procedures, increase of front-office points, transparency of its functioning, and currently important citizens’ participation in content creation and involvement in services (Noga, Bogucki, Paluszyński, 2011). These and other factors are presented in Table 1.

<table>
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<th>Table 1. Factors of effective e-administration</th>
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<td>E-government effectiveness factors include</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simplifying procedures/reducing the administrative burden</td>
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<td>Front-office reorganization on demand (increase)</td>
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<td>Transparency, credibility, responding to needs</td>
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<td>An increase in public value</td>
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<td>Multi-channel approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integration and involvement in services</td>
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<td>Social dialogue (user involvement)</td>
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Source: Podręcznik... (2007), p. 29.

However, the basis for effectiveness in the process of creating good administration is to achieve a state consistent with the intended goal, taking into account the optimization of side effects and procedures for responding to unpredictable effects (Diagnoza, 2008, p. 29). In the face of these data, efficiency, effectiveness and democracy form the basic foundations of creation and the framework for measuring well-functioning e-government.

In the case of measures of the effectiveness of the office’s functioning, there is a level of efficiency of service for the clients, measured, among others, the level of their satisfaction with the service.

Among the further factors that allow creating conditions for the development of e-administration is the complementarity of e-services. In this context, it is important to strengthen the citizens’ ability to engage online. The wider and less diverse the access of citizens to the Internet and the greater the possibility of engaging them online, the easier it is to take advantage of the potential of new public e-services.

Taking into account the essence of e-administration, it is assumed that for the proper implementation of e-administration, in addition to the already mentioned elements, it is first and foremost (based on: Polska 2030. Trzecia..., 2012, pp. 101–103; Boni, 2009):
– support investments in broadband infrastructure to ensure universal, high-quality Internet access,
– to build digital competences, implement universal digital education and create a modern network infrastructure,
– to develop open standards for the provision of public information, taking into account legal, technical and financial issues, in order to ensure, among others, the possibilities of digital information processing,
– introduce a repository system that will make information resources available to public administration in an open, optimal and standardized manner,
– reduce regulatory barriers hindering the sale of goods and provision of services by electronic means,
– conduct systematic digitization of resources created and collected in non-electronic form.

In the era of growing public awareness and the development of new public management, the role of the state and local governments must be revised, incorporating the shaping of strategies, mechanisms of development and standardization in a new form (http://archiwum-ukie.polskawue.gov.pl). The application of standards creates the possibility of comparing the parameters of services provided with the applicable standards, and their lack prevents control of local government budgets on the basis of the effectiveness criterion (Kulesza, 2005, p. 35). Therefore, standardization is defined as one of the key factors responsible for the proper development of e-government administration.

The increase in the use of public e-administration, in addition to the factors already described, is also determined by the number of Internet users and the development of social tools that often allow citizens to consult decisions, participate at every decision-making stage or even codecision through the involvement of citizens.

More precisely, it can be said that the efficient development of e-administration also requires actions to:
– consolidation and ensuring cooperation between individual public administration bodies,
– ensuring adequate standards of public administration systems and their cross-border nature,
– strengthening the management and coordination of information systems,
– effective use of structural funds that will support the construction of e-government,
– cooperation with particular levels of public administration units in order to facilitate the flow of information, achieve synergy of action, avoid duplication of errors and even out the development of electronic administration,
– cooperation of the public and private sectors with the scientific community in order to create a national program for research and development of the information society.

The development of e-administration is still limited by barriers that slow down the promotion of electronic services. Among them is the lack of appropriate organizational regulations, lack of infrastructure or lack of education in the use of ICT and the preparation of the community to use the possibilities of e-administration. What also matters here is the skeptical attitude and often the reluctance of office staff to technological changes, their accustom to the paper flow of documents and the procedures used so far (Kasprzyk, 2011, p. 347; Oddziaływanie, 2007, p. 41).

The lack of fast growth of Internet users is still a significant obstacle to the implementation of e-administration. This is often conditioned by low skills, lack of motivation and the need to use it, and the availability of infrastructure.

The constant lack of effective system mechanisms for creating digital competences and the low level of availability of relevant content and public services corresponding to the needs of users, including potential users, result in a low interest of citizens in the e-government offer. These users, as mentioned above, simply do not see the reasons to use these services (Polska 2030. Trzecia..., 2012, p. 100).
The process of computerization of public administration through its specificity according to B. Grabowa will be slower than in private institutions. The reasons for such a state are mainly due to: the universality of administration activities, a wide group of recipients, multiplicity and the complex, often individual nature of the products and services provided. The barrier of e-administration is high implementation costs, which e-business accounts for in the prices of products (goods, services), while e-administration has to calculate in budgets, often spreading them over several years (Grabow, 2002, p. 3; Kaczmarek, 2005, p. 335).

Building public e-administration requires the existence of appropriate legal, economic or infrastructural conditions that will enable easier implementation of public administration tasks. Solutions used in e-administration should be consistent with each other and provide a common system of public information and services made available to the public.

The above means that the development of electronic public administration requires the implementation of interoperable, standardized, effective and effective, oriented to the priorities of the local community organizational solutions supported by information and communication technologies.

The development of public e-administration through continuous improvement of it should be easier to adapt to new IT solutions, because it depends on them. It should also ensure the openness of the administration, which allows to ensure the openness of the stakeholders' service, through the openness of teleinformation services. These activities, conditioning the efficiency of the model should be supported:

- creating open standards that will enable interoperability to be applied in the process of handling stakeholders and providing services/e-services to solutions and related systems;
- ensuring the usability and transparency of the stakeholder service process;
- efficiency of the process of handling the stakeholders and implementation of e-services through completeness and accuracy achieved at individual levels, as well as in the entire model;
- effectiveness of e-administration, which is related to the implementation by users of the objectives set in the model, depending on the process of interoperability.

**Conclusions**

Proper use of e-government solutions introduced in offices should improve the service for both citizens and the offices themselves, including in particular:

- improving the quality of services provided,
- shortening the time of customer service,
- improving the punctuality of the official matter being dealt with,
- improving the image of the office,
- whether the complexity of meeting their needs is particularly demanded by clients.

In Poland, the process of integrating electronic administration systems is just underway. Offices provide their services with the help of several different websites, which is associated with their inefficiency and thus low efficiency in servicing local communities.

In order to achieve a higher level of e-administration development, it is necessary to create an efficient, effective, transparent and open model of its development, which will contribute to the increase of accessibility and the level of advancement of public services over the Internet. This model must take into account the needs, expectations and preferences of both local communities and the offices themselves.
The construction and continuous improvement of the local government e-government development model and the implementation of specific activities recommended for this purpose will contribute to improving the service of local communities, which in turn will improve the quality of their lives.

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RISK IN BUSINESS MODEL OPERATION OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Monika Tomczyk

University of Szczecin, POLAND
e-mail: monika.tomczyk@wzieu.pl

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Keywords creative industries, business model, risk

Abstract The theme of this articles refers to the creative industries and the operation of relevant business models (BM) in creative industries. What we today call the Creative Industry (CI) is, in fact, a combination of discrete, highly varied group of activities of quite distinct character. These activities have existed for a long time, but it was only at the end of the XXth century, that they began to be categorized into one set. It was a consequence of, among other things, transformations in the economy and the emergence of a new form called cognitive-cultural capitalism.

Introduction

Today's economies are developing on the foundation of the knowledge and creativity of people. The growth of the creative sector and its importance for the economics of cities and regions are more than ten years in interest of biggest research institutes. Moreover, the European Commission’s strategy “Europe 2020” indicated the need to
develop structural policies aimed at developing creative and incorporate it into the strategy of the Member States, including at the level of NUTS-3.

**CREATIVE INDUSTRIES** are becoming increasingly key sectors of the economy. Especially now, when, more than technological resources, it is imagination, that causes the difference between entrepreneurs (Hammel, 2000). It was claimed that the “new economy” has creativity as a core, and that the creative industries are at the center of this (Towney, 2009). Flagship initiative “Innovation Union” of the Europe 2020 Growth Strategy and Green Paper – Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries, said that the full potential of creativity and design has to be exploited and the link between design, innovation and competitiveness defined. The European Design Innovation Initiative (EDII) was launched for this purpose. The aims of the initiative are in compliance with the identified needs: raise awareness of design and creativity as a driver for innovation; identify and enhance the role of design as a key discipline in realizing ideas and transforming them to user (citizen) friendly products, processes or services by organizations, enterprises or public services. The term **BUSINESS MODEL** was first coined in the late 80s (Timmers, 1988) and is a relatively new concept in the management literature as a product of the dotcom era. (Keen, 2006) The business model concept is about shaping the relationships between an organizational strategy and internet-based systems. (Hedman, Kalling, 2003) In e-business and e-commerce, a web-based business model is the method of doing business online through which a company generates revenue (Rappa, 2002).

**Literature review**

The technological revolution has changed the life of modern people in almost every aspect. Thus, a significant percentage of the time spent at work and on leisure has been shifted from the real world to the virtual world, shortening the geographical distance, the time to reach information, as well as the availability of products or services and the way of their distribution from producer to consumer. Undoubtedly, the technological revolution has changed our world and cultural behavior faster than Gutenberg’s invention. Analogue letter-based recording is increasingly being replaced by digital (binary) recording, which enables the information to be sent quickly and efficiently. This also changed the culture of communication, writing, reading, as well as the distribution and archiving of creative industry products. The portrait of the consumers of creative industries in the 21st century is shaped by: virtual reality and the world of social media, e-text, online games, file sharing and online shopping (Gołębiewski, 2012). Thanks to the Internet in a short period of time you can view selected offers, check availability, compare prices and monitor the progress of the order.

As a result, the creative sector has been undergoing dynamic changes in the way value is created and delivered to customers in recent years. These transformations are connected not only with the mentioned changes in customer behavior or fashion and market trends, but above all, the transformation of entities is caused by technological and IT developments. The consequence of this process is the increasing availability of creative products.

**Method**

The ecosystem in which the creative industries operate, together with mega trends – such as the mentioned digitization and serverization, put pressure on entities to constantly change their business model (Linz, Muller-Stewns, Zimmermann, 2017). Just as digitalization opens up new technological possibilities for companies and changes the way in which they develop, produce and deliver their offer to customers, so serverization causes a radical shift in value creation by introducing factors such as co-creation and individualization. Constant changes
in business practices are leading to the devaluation of business models. Therefore, it is appropriate to define the author, who says that the business model is a way of operating an organization in a specific business environment in order to achieve a defined business benefit. The business model should bring established flints throughout the life of the organization, and if it is no longer relevant it should be changed or rejected (Tomczyk, 2014). Changes in the business model are associated with the risk and resistance of the organization to the change.

Results

When changing business models or creating innovative business models, the risk element should be highlighted. Many entities have achieved their success thanks to innovations in the business model – in the way they offer existing products and services, which meet the current needs of their customers using the existing technologies. However, it is noticeable that in the literature of the subject one of the factors determining the value of innovation, i.e. risk, is very often not mentioned. More specifically, location of risks in the value chain associated with the creation, provision and use of products and services. When creating value chains, operators tend to focus on three of its components:

- revenues (price, market size and additional sales),
- the cost structure (direct and indirect costs, economies of scale and scope),
- the speed of resource usage (the rate at which used resources create value, which usually depends on the length of the order processing cycle, processing capacity, the length of the inventory trading cycle and the efficiency of asset use).

When designing a new model or modifying an existing one, the main sources of risk associated with this model should be explored and the extent to which the model is risk resistant. The non-exclusive list of the approach and use of risk in the business model consists of two approaches (Girota, Netessine, 2014). The first is to reduce the risks associated with the business model by means of:

1. Delaying production obligations by dynamising the production process. This often means acting against the trend of relocating production to cheaper countries in terms of labour costs and locating production in a place with higher costs. However, the benefits of reducing uncertainty about demand compensate for additional costs. This is the approach behind some very unusual innovations.
2. Renegotiation of agreements. Another way of mitigating the risk is to transfer it to another operator. As a rule, this requires changes in contracts with other stakeholders in the value chain: employees, suppliers and customers. Last but not least.
3. Acquisition of better data. Sometimes it is not possible either to radically shorten the production process or to change relations with stakeholders in the value chain. In this case, there is still room for improvement in the quality of the information on which the company bases its production commitments.

At the second pole of opportunity to maximize the potential for value creation is increasing risk – only if the entity has the right competence to manage it properly. According to economist R. Merton, it can be argued that companies create value also because they manage risk better than their competitors.

Conclusions

Risk-based innovation has one major advantage over other types of innovation: it is much cheaper. The implementation of product and technological innovations is based on a long-term process: generating multiple
ideas, reducing their number, prototyping, comprehensive feedback from customers and repeated experiments. In the meantime, however, risk-driven innovation can be implemented in a systematic way with little effort and the benefits and costs of such innovation can be easily and reliably estimated. Therefore, the use of trends while accepting and using risk can translate into market success and a highly efficient business model.

References


REGIONAL USE OF EUROPEAN FUNDS IN MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT IN POLAND

AGNIESZKA ULFIK

The Jerzy Kukuczka Academy of Physical Education in Katowice, POLAND
e-mail: aulfik@gmail.com

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Keywords municipal waste, European projects, European funds, regional development, sustainable development

Abstract The level of management of municipal waste management has a very real impact on life. Consequently, this can be associated with high risks both locally and globally. Thanks to the use of modern solutions for the management of municipal waste, the level of impact of municipal waste on the environment can be significantly reduced. However, modern solutions are associated with the high cost of building the plant and the whole system for managing the management of municipal waste. In addition to costs, the level of awareness of the people, their habits, traditions and education, is vital for improving the situation. Article aims to explore and familiarize use of European funds in the management of municipal waste in Poland. Will examine the distribution channels of these measures. The article will present three projects co-financed from European funds implemented by one of the Regional Installation of Municipal Waste Treatment.

Introduction

Municipal waste management is very important both for the natural environment and its proper protection, as well as for the comfort of life of the inhabitants. The hazards of improper waste management can be local, regional and even global. In the European Union there are effective solutions obliging Member States to adhere to very high standards and at a certain time of their performance.
In accordance with Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain directives, the hierarchy of waste management, in particular municipal waste, has been introduced in European Union countries (Directive…, 2008). Its aim is to reduce the amount of waste generated and manage it to reduce its negative impact on the environment. Legislation and management of municipal waste management should be consistent with the following hierarchy: prevention, preparing for re-use, recycling, other recovery, e.g. energy recovery; and disposal (Antosiewicz et al., 2017).

High limitations were introduced in the amount of waste deposited in relation to the quantity of generated waste (Council Directive…, 1999; Directive…, 2006). They caused the necessity to adapt the existing municipal waste management systems, especially in the case of countries with considerable arrears in this area. One of such countries was Poland, which has made significant progress in recent years. It was necessary to carry out significant investments for this purpose. Currently, some regions in Poland can boast of using modern solutions in this area. Many of them were created thanks to co-financing from European funds. All the time, however, there is a need for further development of installations for waste management and infrastructure for this service. Continuous investment in regional development and striving for sustainable development are consistent with development strategies adopted at both national and provincial levels. It is also necessary to educate the society in the field of ecology, including the reduction of waste generation, their segregation and recycling (Wysocki, 2016).

The European cohesion policy and the special role of EU funds have been reflected in the financing of the regional economy also in the municipal waste management. Investments that were made possible thanks to the support of EU funds allowed for the equalization of differences in individual regions in Poland in the field of municipal waste management. They also allowed Poland to get closer to the restrictive requirements imposed by Council Directive 1999/31/EC of 26 April 1999 on the landfill of waste and further requirements.

In recent years, many enterprises dealing with municipal waste management have received financial support from European funds. Thanks to this, waste installations have been equipped with modern solutions for sorting, composting and thermal waste treatment, among others (Staszewska, Pawłowska, 2011). In this study, will be presented investments co–financed from European funds of one of these enterprises in the Silesia province – Częstochowskie Przedsiębiorstwo Komunalne Sp. z o. o. in Sobuczyna (CzPK). Currently, the company has a large area of 128 hectares for waste management activities and has the status of the Regional Municipal Waste Treatment Plant (RIPOK).

Construction of the Waste Management Plant

Project “Construction of a Waste Management Plant at Częstochowskie Przedsiębiorstwo Komunalne Sp. z o.o. in Sobuczyna”, issue number 701200-147, was implemented as part of the Integrated Regional Operational Program 2004–2006 (IROP).

This investment was co–financed from EU funds in the amount of PLN 14,243,925 net, while the entire construction cost amounted to PLN 19,984,569.75 net (http://www.czpk.czestochowa.um.gov.pl). The funds obtained for co-financing this investment allowed the owner to build a modern installation. The investment lasted from April 20, 2006 to November 21, 2008 (http://www.fe.czestochowa.pl).

The IROP’s strategic goal was to provide equal opportunities and create conditions for increasing the competitiveness of regions. By counteracting marginalization of particular areas of activity, subsidies favored the
long-term economic development of the country, with particular emphasis on the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the European Union.

Construction of the plant has allowed the realization of investments, which are now a necessity forced by these directives. As part of the construction was established a modern sorting plant for municipal waste with a capacity of 30,000 Mg per year for one shift with the possibility of three-shift operation. This sorting plant is partially automated and during construction it was one of the most modern installations of this type in the country. In addition, an open waste composting plant with a capacity of 20,000 Mg per year was established.

In addition, two stations were built on the site:
- demolition station for large-size waste with a capacity of 10,000 Mg for a year,
- construction debris crushing station with a capacity of 15,000 Mg per year.

In addition to the aforementioned objects there was also created municipal hazardous waste collection point. It had a capacity of 1,000 Mg per year.

The construction of the Waste Management Plant was an investment that could be carried out only thanks to the support of the European Regional Development Fund under the Integrated Regional Operational Program 2004–2006.

Ultimately, the facility served sub region of Czestochowa – Czestochowa city and districts of Częstochowa and Myszków, which accounted for about 400,000 inhabitants. Before the establishment of the plant, almost the entire municipal waste stream went to the landfill without prior treatment, which was inconsistent with the ideas of sustainable development (Wysokińska, Witkowska, 2016).

The exception was the waste collected separately by residents and collected by a specialized company. As a result, the construction of the Plant improved the condition of the natural environment, especially in the immediate vicinity of the landfill (Lorek, 2015). The change in the method of waste management also extended the operation of the landfill by reducing the waste stream going there. There was also a visible revival of entrepreneurs in the field of waste management, thus creating new jobs. In total, thanks to investment, the quality of life of residents improved, and the way waste was managed was in line with EU directives.

**Expansion of the Waste Management Plant**

Project “Expansion of the Waste Management Plant for the Northern Sub-region of the Silesian Voivodship” with the number POIS.02.01.00-00-002/08 is another project co-financed by the European Union. It obtained support from the Cohesion Fund under the Operational Program Infrastructure and Environment.

The investment commenced on November 9, 2010, signing the contract for co-financing from the Cohesion Fund.

Thanks to the co-financing received in the amount of PLN 17,840,788.26, CzPK realized the investment of PLN 54,468,722.07 net. The plant with the status of a Regional Municipal Waste Treatment Facility could thanks to this investment adjust the way it functions to the growing European requirements. European funds deposited in CzPK allowed for solving many ecological problems in the northern region of the Silesian Voivodship. In addition, on May 29, 2013, an agreement was signed with the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management for co-financing of this project in the form of a preferential loan for PLN 20,025,580 net (http://www.czpk.pois.czestochowa.pl).

The entire investment consisted of three tasks.
The first task was the technical closure of the first component quarters. This plot has been in operation since 1987, has an area of 16.8 hectares and about 3 million Mg of waste has been accumulated there. Thanks to this investment, the natural environment was secured by making and sealing the housing cover. This action has provided protection against the negative effects of rainwater and the effluent formed after the water has filtered through the waste. Such an investment is always necessary when the capacity of the quarter ends and the waste deposited on it must be properly secured in order to reduce the negative impact on the environment.

The second investment was the construction of quarter number two (the first stage). The result of this task is a new storage unit with a usable area of 2.6 hectares. It was made in accordance with applicable regulations and has, among others, drainage and synthetic seal. The technologies used in the construction of the headquarters meet all applicable standards. This ensures that full environmental safety will be maintained during the operation of the quarter. The estimated period of exploitation of the newly created quarter is about 17 years – depending on the size of the waste stream and the solutions applied for sorting and recovery of secondary materials from the stream of mixed municipal waste.

The third task was to build a composting plant in closed technology. This investment allowed full adaptation of the regional installation to the European Union standards. At the compost plant, the waste will undergo intensive aerobic composting under hermetic and controlled conditions in reinforced concrete bioreactors. Thanks to the use of closed technology, the odor character of the landfill will be significantly reduced by eliminating odor from the composting process. Gases produced as a result of fermentation in bioreactors are cleaned, and if necessary, they are automatically burned. The composting plant ensures 100% air protection against possible pollution, and for residents of the nearest to the landfill – it will improve the quality of life (Kowalak, 2014).

The investment for the extension of the Waste Management Plant, consisting of three tasks: the closure of the first quarters, the construction of the second quarters and the construction of a composting plant in closed technology was possible thanks to subsidies from European funds. Almost a third of the total investment costs were covered by the subsidy. It made CzPK adapt its infrastructure to the requirements of the European Union and still met the requirements of installations with a regional status. The implemented solutions result in a positive ecological effect. The sealing of the first quarters led to a significant reduction in the amount of leachate formed. The other unit, which will be used for at least a dozen or so years, meets much higher standards, among others due to its tightness and lack of leakage of the leachate to the ground. The transition to the use of the second quarters resulted in a significant reduction of the environmental impact throughout the entire landfill. The creation of a modern composting plant contributed primarily to the improvement of air protection by closing the fermentation of waste in closed bioreactors. The whole project thanks to the use of BAT (the best available technique) will ensure the safety of the waste management system. All natural and landscape values have been secured in the region, and the negative impact of the landfill on the natural environment has been minimized.

**A system of selective waste collection**

The third project discussed in this paper is „A system of selective waste collection in the Northern Sub-region – the City of Częstochowa” with the number UDA-RPSL.05.02.00-00-042/09-00. The project was co-financed by the European Union from the European Regional Development Fund under the Regional Operational Program of the Silesian Voivodship for the years 2007–2013. The project began on August 26, 2010 by signing the contract for the
implementation of the project with the Marshal’s Office at the Regional Development Department in Katowice. The value of the entire project was PLN 5,843,425.22 net, while the value of EU funding was PLN 3,454,158.76 net.

The whole project consisted of three tasks:
- 200 local points (sockets) for selective municipal waste collection were created, each containing three containers for paper, glass, and plastic and metal in total,
- five hook containers were purchased for biodegradable waste, placed in various districts of the city of Częstochowa, for the free collection of green waste,
- SPSZOK was built – Stationary Point of Selective Municipal Waste Collection in Sobuczyna.

SPSZOK is a comprehensively equipped facility, which is adapted to collect and temporarily store municipal, hazardous and large-scale waste. Every resident of the city of Częstochowa can deliver segregated waste on its own. The scope of this waste includes: renovation waste, metals, glass, green waste (biodegradable), bulky waste, plastics, used tires, car windscreens, used electrical and electronic equipment, hazardous waste, foil and waste paper.

The project was also carried out a promotional campaign and education in the field of selective waste collection (http://www.edu.czpk.czest.pl). Both of these actions were aimed at making the public aware of the importance of correctly conducted separate collection of municipal waste and what benefits it brings to the natural environment. An important element was also to pay attention to hazardous waste (such as batteries, medicines, bulbs, etc.) and not to put them in the stream of mixed municipal waste.

The effects of this project are the most noticeable for the residents, because its effects are closest to the residents. Thanks to these investments co-financed from European funds, the residents’ access to the infrastructure enabling separate waste collection has significantly improved. Thanks to the installation of 200 sockets for selective waste collection for three containers in each (for paper, glass, plastic and metal in total), it is easier for residents to hand in selectively collected waste, because the waste disposal points are closer to their place of residence. An additional possibility of giving free quantity of sorted waste free reduces the number of wild dumps. All activities gives positive results for the environment and improves the comfort of living.

Conclusions

Handled correctly, municipal waste management, can significantly affect the improvement of quality of life. As part of the activities related to the European cohesion policy, particular attention is paid to the appropriate regional development and reduction of differences between individual regions. To this end, subsidies have been used over the years, which primarily support the construction or modernization of infrastructure or conducting educational campaigns.

In the European Union, waste management is strictly regulated by the directives and all Member States have the duty to adapt their legislation and thus also waste management systems and achieve an appropriate level of recycling at a specific time (Grabas, 2015; Nowak, Ulfik, 2017). In Poland, these changes were initiated in 2011 by the introduction of legal regulations that changed the current approach to waste issues. From 1 January 2012, regulations introduced by the Act of 1 July 2011 amending the act on maintaining cleanliness and order in municipalities and certain other acts became effective. The most important change concerned the approach to ownership of waste. They have become the property of municipalities, and residents are required to pay the appropriate fee (Ulfik, 2016).
Since then, all residents stopped individually enter into agreements with companies receiving waste. They were also forced to adapt to the system adopted in the municipality in which they live. In subsequent years, further legislative changes were introduced, aimed at adapting the waste management system to the requirements of the European Union. All these changes required a wide-ranging educational campaign and numerous investments in infrastructure.

The investments co-financed by European Union funds, contributed to a significant improvement of the situation of waste management in the area served by a regional installation in CzPK.

References


CULINARY TRAILS AS AN EXAMPLE OF INNOVATIVE TOURIST PRODUCTS

MONIKA WOJCIESZAK,¹ MICHał GAZDECKI²

Poznań University of Life Sciences, POLAND
¹ e-mail: mwoj@up.poznan.pl
² e-mail: migaz@up.poznan.pl

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ABSTRACT
Culinary trails have developed in response to the increasingly common trend of eating out due to changing lifestyles in communities. Travelling inspired by cooking is an interesting phenomenon in Polish tourism. Healthy food and exploration of new culinary regions is increasingly often becoming an important reason for travelling. The aim of the article is to present the definition of culinary tourism in the light of scientific literature and to indicate examples of products of this tourism in Poland. Another aim of the article is to present the essence of culinary tourist trails and show selected examples based on our own study. The second part of the article includes an analysis of the results of our study based on a questionnaire survey conducted on a group of 300 respondents. The summary includes conclusions from the study.

Introduction

Culinary tourism has developed in response to the increasingly common trend of eating out due to changing lifestyles in communities (López, Gómez, Martín, 2005). Travelling inspired by cooking is becoming a new, innovative form of tourism practised by people who find it important to try and consume foods and drinks in their free time (Mika, 2007). Apart from sightseeing, tourists want to try and consume characteristic specialities of a town or region.
We can see that Polish tourism in the 21st century is characterised by people’s increasing interest in cooking. Woźniczko (2016) stresses the fact that cooking has become a value added in tourist trips. Thanks to cooking a trip may be even more interesting, because when planning a holiday, people are increasingly often motivated by the wish to experience the native cuisine. Culinary tourism is an opportunity to learn about other cultures through cooking. The trend is becoming increasingly popular among travellers all over the world, including Poland.

Literature review

Culinary tourism in literature

The dynamic development of culinary tourism is reflected by reports in the media, i.e. on the Internet, television and in the press as well as in scientific elaborations (e.g. Kosmaczewska, 2008; Kowalczyk, 2008; Dominik, 2010; Plebańczyk, 2013; Klein-Wrońska, 2014). According to Woźniczko and Orłowski (2010) and Kowalczyk (2005), the term ‘culinary tourism’ was introduced in reference publications by L. Long in 1998. As she wrote, culinary tourism is an element of culture tourism and cooking is an expression of local culture. It is not necessary to travel to distant countries to be a culinary tourist. According to Long, engagement in culinary tourism is an important aspect, because there may be different degrees of its intensity experienced by tourists. Apart from that, culinary tourism offers a wide range of tourist products. In this context, food products should be attractive enough to encourage tourists to consumption. The spectrum of the definition of culinary tourism is constantly increasing. As Durydiwka (2013) stressed, one of the first definitions of culinary tourism was proposed by Wolf (2004). According to him, culinary tourism consists in travelling to taste ready-made foods and drinks. According to this author, culinary tourism is an undertaking of tourist nature, where making use of the culinary offers of a foreign country or region is an important part of the programme or a decisive motive to make a trip. Culinary tourism requires that high quality food should be offered. It should be made from ingredients and with methods based on the culinary traditions of the target region. Meals should be consumed in an adequate environment. Balińska, Sieczko, Zawadka (2013) note that in culinary tourism foods, drinks and everything that is related with their preparation are attractions of the trip. Culinary tourism encompasses trips made to experience traditional, regional or national dishes, culinary novelties, consumption of local, regional and national drinks as well as products protected by the EU regulations (protection of the name of origin, geographical mark and guaranteed traditional speciality). Orłowski, Woźniczko (2015, p. 124) emphasise that this type of tourism gives satisfaction to participants because they can personally enjoy the experience of new flavours and aromas. They take part in culinary events, follow culinary routes, visit restaurants and museums. Similarly, Majewski (2008) notes that culinary tourism involves learning about, evaluating and consuming local food products, participating in the food production process and gaining outstanding culinary experience. In this sense culinary tourism can be interpreted as any tourist experience where one can evaluate and consume the foods and drinks which reflect local, regional and national cuisines as well as the culture and heritage of a particular place. There are different definitions of culinary tourism in literature, e.g. gastronomic tourism, whose aim is to reach a particular place or source offering unique and wanted food, e.g. a restaurant (Kivela, Crotts, 2006). Culinary tourism involves learning about the local cuisine, recipes and tools as well as participation in the preparation of food (Plebańczyk, 2013). Generally, culinary tourism consists in acquiring knowledge about the dishes and culinary products of a particular region, which may be combined with sightseeing, learning about the culture and nature. Local culinary patriotism is more and more noticeable in Poland. It is manifested by culinary trails, culinary incubators (local food processing incubators), culinary events, e.g. Potato Day, Pumpkin Day, fair.
events, e.g. Regional Tastes, culinary festivals, museums, agritourist farms and rural tourist facilities promoting culinary heritage. Sala (2016) indicated that the development of culinary tourism is affected by numerous factors, such as the promotion of different cuisines in the media, decreasing popularity of fast food outlets, the development of restaurants offering ethnic and folk food, the development of a large group of multicultural tourists, individualised behaviours of food and tourist market travellers and increasing importance of traditional.

**Culinary trail as product innovation**

J. Tomczak (2013) notes that it is necessary to start considerations about culinary trails by answering the question whether the culinary trail is a theme or tourist trail. The literature provides numerous definitions of the tourist trail. The Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society defines the tourist trail as a route for making trips, which is marked with standard signs and equipped with information devices which guarantee that a tourist with any skills and experience can walk along the route safely and undisturbed at any time of the year, regardless of the weather conditions. As far as the theme trail is concerned, it is necessary to stress the fact that it mainly refers to the main idea and the theme it presents. According to Tomczak (2013), the culinary trail should be considered through the prism of the theme trail. The author thinks that the theme trail that includes elements of interest to culinary tourists should be regarded as a culinary theme trail. Apart from that, the theme trail concentrates numerous elements, such as the selection of facilities, trail authenticity, field layout and the route marking method, means of promotion, addressees, additional tourist attractions related with the trail and most importantly, the trail theme. According to publications, there are more than twenty theme trails in Poland (Table 1). These are the undertakings of the owners of restaurants, agritourist farms and facilities offering places to sleep.

**Table 1. Selected culinary trails in Poland**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of trail</th>
<th>Main theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Culinary Stops of the Suwałki and Masuria Regions</td>
<td>‘The Culinary Stops’ trail was developed by the Suwałki Chamber of Agriculture and Tourism, a member of the Tourist Brands Cluster of Eastern Poland, as part of the EGO SA (Ełk, Goldap, Olecko, Suwałki, Augustów) cooperation platform – the project joining Eastern Masuria and the Suwałki Region. Local cooks and housewives offer tourists dishes such as: cepelinai, potato pies and sausages, lentil bread, dumplings, kininai, cenakai, praskuc, karmuszka, ślizyk. Many inns, restaurants and homes along the trail offer bread baked with calamus, tree cake and anthill cake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goose Culinary Trail</td>
<td>The Goose Culinary Trail was established to keep the old Polish tradition of goose meat consumption in Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship. This is one of the most important goose-breeding areas in Poland, where white geese, highly appreciated by gourmets, are bred. The trail project is implemented by the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Tourist Organisation under the project ‘I like eating in Kuyavia-Pomerania’. At present there are 17 restaurants along the trail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plum Trail</td>
<td>It is located in Lesser Poland. It offers tourist events, such as Prune Festival, Let’s Meet on the Prune Trail (summer), Plum, Honey and Cheese Festival, From Grain to Country Speciality. Tourist visitors can see and explore the Noble Plum Village. Apart from ‘Suski sechlońskie’ (local product) tourists can taste home-made kompot, plum butter and yeast cake baked by housewives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbal Aromas of Lesser Poland Countryside</td>
<td>There are 19 attractively located agritourist facilities along the trail. They were carefully selected from numerous agritourist farms in Lesser Poland. They specialise in the growing and wide use of herbs. The owners of herbal gardens grow lovage, tarragon, mint, oregano, thyme, rosemary, sage, marjoram, melissa and others. Many farms also offer herbal baths, massage and aroma therapy. The trail was established by the Sącz Tourist Organisation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the authors.

The product innovation of culinary trails is complex. It combines a few elements, i.e. tourists, farm and restaurant owners and food producers. First of all, the aim of culinary trails is to increase the awareness of agritourist farm and restaurant owners about the significance of the local brand for the development of entrepreneurship in the
local market. Second of all, the creation of culinary specialities and promotion of local products build the portfolio of a region. The education of farm and restaurant owners to improve the quality of food and services is another important element of product innovation. It is essential for local producers, farmers and food processing enterprises to cooperate in order to build a culinary trail. The engagement of individual elements in the chain is crucial to the success and popularity of a particular culinary trail. The creation of a strong, local brand as well as increasing producers and consumers’ awareness of ecological, cultural and social values of local products offered along the trail are important elements of a tourist trail.

**Products of culinary tourism — our study**

The awareness of the concept of culinary tourism depends on practising this form of tourism and it may determine interest in it. As results from the questionnaire survey, the index referring to the awareness of the concept of culinary tourism amounts to 57%. Apart from that, the respondents correctly identified the concept and were able to describe it. They associated culinary tourism with culinary trips (32%), regional food (27%), cooking (22%) and healthy diet (19%).

**Table 2.** The most popular products of culinary tourism in three periods of time (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past / Present / Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional food [tasting]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culinary trips, e.g. harvest festivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy diet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist trips to vineyards, culinary incubators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the authors.

As results from the research (Table 2), in the past the respondents mostly tasted regional food, made culinary trips and cooked dishes. At present the respondents taste regional food during trips, buy food products from agricultural or agritourist farms and participate in culinary events. In the future the respondents would like to visit vineyards, participate in culinary events and acquire knowledge based on culinary tourism. The respondents showed their interest in culinary trails – 13% would like to make a trip along a culinary trail in the nearest future. According to 36% of the respondents (men – 22%, women – 78%), regional restaurants and inns are the biggest attraction of culinary tourism (Figure 1).
Culinary Trails as an Example of Innovative Tourist Products

Figure 1. The hierarchy of culinary tourist products and their popularity among men and women

Source: compiled by the authors.

According to the men (64%), culinary programmes are the most attractive form of culinary tourism. The women’s opinion was different. They think that culinary festivals and events, regional inns and restaurants as well as culinary fair events are the most interesting attractions of culinary tourism. When asked about trends in the development of culinary tourism, the respondents indicated that it is necessary to provide more information about it (Figure 2).

Figure 2. The trend of development of culinary tourism

Source: compiled by the authors.

The respondents declared that it was necessary to promote regional products and organic food. More than 40% of the respondents could not indicate any trend of development of culinary tourism. It was interesting to ask the respondents about culinary trails. More than 64% declared that they had heard of this product of culinary tourism, but only 21% were able to list the themes of culinary trails. Only 9% of the respondents were able to name one culinary trail. As results from the analyses, tourists have minimal awareness of the existence of some culinary trails.
For example, only 12% of them knew the following culinary trails: the Herbal Aromas of Lesser Poland Countryside and the Tradition and Taste Trail.

Table 3. The respondents’ awareness of selected culinary trails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of trail</th>
<th>Respondents’ awareness (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oscypek Cheese Trail</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tastes of the Tatra Foothills</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culinary Poznań</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goose Culinary Trail</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gdynia Centre Culinary Trail</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masovian Noble Bowl</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandomierz Wine Trail</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culinary Stops of the Suwałki and Masuria Regions</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gdańsk-Pomeranian Culinary Prestige</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Białystok Culinary Trail</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plum Trail</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradition and Taste Trail</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbal Aromas of Lesser Poland Countryside</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the authors.

The Oscypek Cheese Trail, the Tastes of the Tatra Foothills and the Culinary Poznań were known to more than 50% of the respondents. The high awareness of these trails may have resulted from good information and promotion. Apart from that, tourists travelling in the mountains often choose the restaurants and inns that offer traditional regional products. The Goose Culinary Trail, the Gdynia Centre Culinary Trail, the Masovian Noble Bowl and the Sandomierz Wine Trail are not only interesting and abundant in the beauty of nature but they also offer healthy, organic food. A wide group of tourists is invited not only to visit interesting places in the city and admire nature but also to enjoy culinary attractions. The respondents were also asked about the source of information about tourist trails. More than 30% of the respondents received this information from the websites of tourist organisations, 26% – from the websites of individual trails, 17% – from leaflets and posters, 14% – from travel agencies (tourist information offices) in the towns they visited. It was interesting to find out how much money tourists were ready
to spend on culinary tourism. As 67% of the respondents declared, they were ready to spend 350–500 PLN. 27% were ready to spend less than 350 PLN. Only 5% were ready to spend more than 500 PLN. The relation between the development phase of the respondents’ households and their interest in culinary tourism was also investigated.

As results from the analysis of the development phase of the respondents’ households, married couples aged 40–60 years, whose children were about to grow up and become independent, were the most regular users of culinary tourist products. They were followed by married couples aged 35–40 years with preschool and schoolchildren as well as elderly married couples whose children are independent and live on their own. Culinary tourist products were the least popular among young married couples without children, people living alone and young married couples with children under the age of 3.

Conclusions

Culinary tourism is developing in Poland. It could be the main reason for travelling or it may be the basis for supplementary tourist products. The research showed minimal awareness of the concept of culinary tourism, but the respondents who knew it, described it correctly. The respondents’ declarations indicate that in the future the interest in this type of tourism may grow. In consequence, there may be positive economic results for the tourist sector. We can expect the demand for new tourist products, the development of catering facilities, new jobs, lower unemployment, higher income in local budgets, etc. The existence and development of culinary trails may help to promote regions and the cultural heritage of Poland.

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