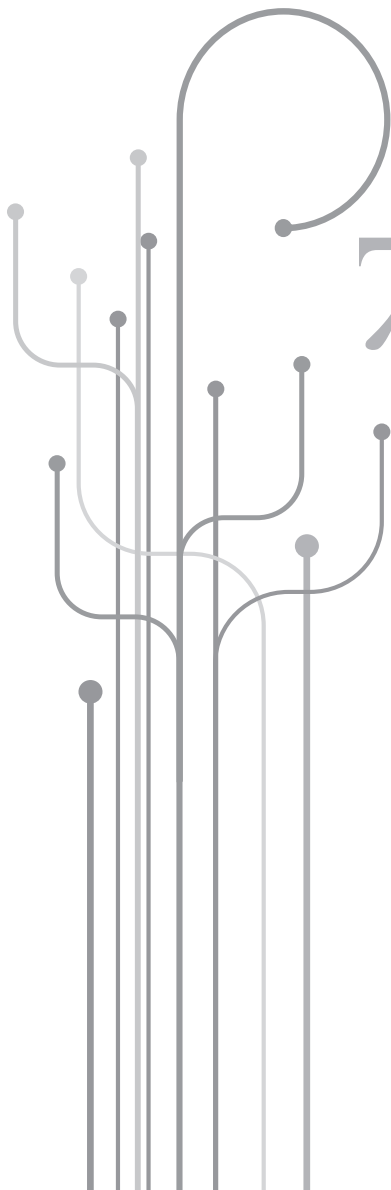


Teaching 7th Crossroads Erasmus Week

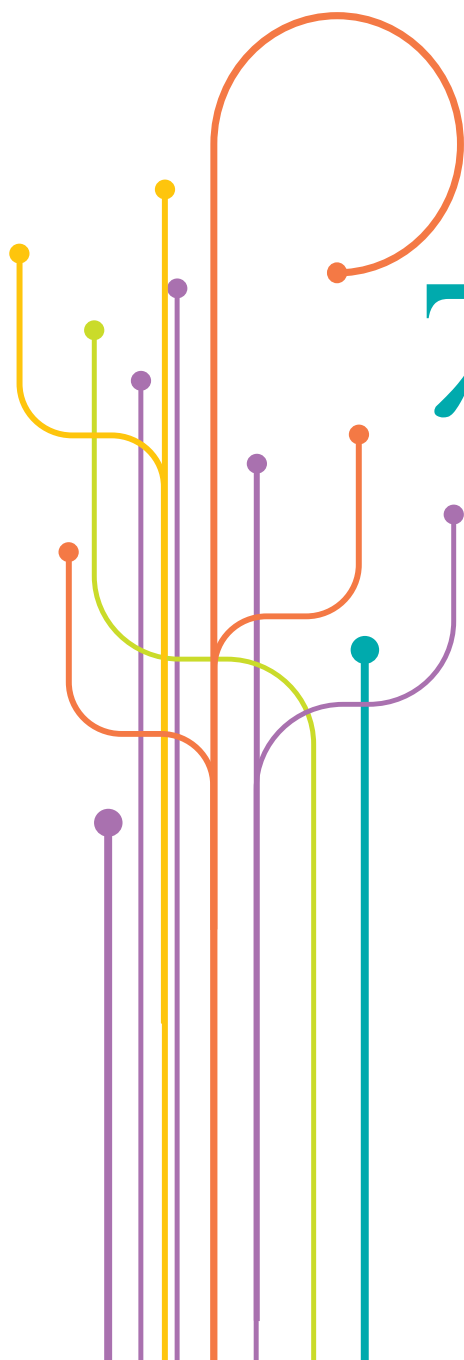
Elisabete Silva, Clarisse Pais, Luís S. Pais

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Teaching
7th Crossroads
Erasmus
Week

Elisabete Silva, Clarisse Pais, Luís S. Pais



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Preface

Luís S. Pais

Vice-President of IPB for Academic Affairs and International Relations

The Polytechnic Institute of Bragança (IPB) has participated in the Erasmus mobility programme for more than twelve years, becoming thus one of the Portuguese institutions that promotes students and teaching mobility the most. In the last decade, the IPB supported the mobility of 2900 students and more than 600 teachers and staff within this programme. These mobility numbers also place the IPB on a high level in the current international scene. The IPB is on the Top 100 of the European HEIs with the highest reception rates of teachers in Erasmus mobility.

Since 2005, the IPB has organized an Erasmus Week for a more efficient collaboration with our European partners and to allow their teachers and staff to become familiar with the IPB campus, its Schools, the city and the region. During the IPB Erasmus Week, the IPB organizes teaching and staff training (STT) and the seminars prepared under Staff Teaching Assignment (STA) are scheduled and introduced in the regular timetable of Bachelors and Masters' degrees classes. We believe that this represents an important opportunity to our students to learn from teachers all over Europe and to complement their education and training.

Because our Erasmus Week is becoming a growing success, we proposed a new initiative to enhance the dissemination of the competences learned in the seminars delivered by our guest teachers. We challenged them to join our first edition of *Teaching Crossroads*, a result of the seminars/lectures/workshops provided during the 7th IPB Erasmus Week, held from 2nd to 6th May 2011.

I wish to thank all the teachers who joined our initiative and hope that their visit to the IPB will, in this way, remain in time and in our memory. I also wish to express my gratitude to the excellent job performed by Elisabete Silva and Clarisse Pais who made this project come true.

And see you again next May 2012, for the 8th IPB Erasmus Week and the second edition of these *Teaching Crossroads* at the IPB!



Agricultural
Sciences and
Natural
Resources

Propuesta de plantación y mantenimiento conjunta de árboles, en cumplimiento de las normas de condicionalidad de la Política Agraria Comunitaria

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Abstract

This study raises an alternative to individual obligation to plant one tree per hectare of farmers who benefit from the aid of the Common Agricultural Policy. Being subject to this rule is for individually commissioned farmers uncomfortable and inefficient. Grouping all the trees in a territory where only one person is responsible for organizing the planting allows to organize the plantation and to achieve new goals. Goals that are social, such as creating new recreational areas, roads, etc., and economic as it promotes hunting use and increases the production of forest products, such as pine nut. That mechanism is based on giving the responsibility of planting and maintenance of the plantation to the "Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo". So using Community lands receives ownership of trees planted and the benefits they can get to build, and a small payment to farmers.

Keywords: PAC; GIS; Joint forest plantation

A lo largo de los siglos la agricultura ha contribuido a la “creación” y “preservación” de muchos y valiosos hábitats seminaturales, que dominan gran parte de los paisajes de la Europa Occidental. Un claro ejemplo en la Comarca “Tierra de Pinares” de Valladolid en Castilla y León son las estepas cerealistas y las dehesas cultivadas, en las que el hombre ha ido modificando la proporción de las especies vegetales presentes. Eliminando unas e introduciendo otras nuevas.



Figura 1 – Estepa cerealista

El paisaje típico de la estepa cerealista se halla dominado por los cultivos de secano como cebada, trigo, avena, girasol... que son los más comunes en esta zona. A este tipo de vegetación hay que sumar la que sale espontáneamente junto a linderas, cunetas y barbechos, donde las flores amarillas de las mostazas alternan con las rojas amapolas.

La abundancia de semillas, tanto silvestres como de cultivos hacen que numerosos grupos de vertebrados dispongan de un gran almacén de alimento.

Viven en este hábitat pequeños mamíferos, sobre todo roedores como ratones, musarañas o topillo campesino, cuya población se dispara de forma cíclica, provocando auténticas plagas que provocan graves daños en las explotaciones agrícolas. Aunque sin duda el mamífero más representativo de las estepas castellanas es la liebre ibérica, adaptando su ciclo biológico a las labores agrícolas propias de estos cultivos. En el siguiente escalón de la cadena trófica nos encontramos a los predadores como el zorro.

La reina sin duda de la estepa cerealista es la avutarda, el ave voladora más pesada del mundo. Esta especie se ha adaptado a la perfección a los campos cerealistas en los que se alimenta y reproduce. Son gregarias, por lo que normalmente las vamos a encontrar formando bandos más o menos numerosos. También son típicas de estas zonas las perdices y codornices, que alegran los campos con sus peculiares cantos. Y conviviendo con ellas nos encontramos golondrinas, vencejos, palomas, y la cigüeña.



Figura 2 – Dehesa cultivada

En España se llaman dehesas a superficies amplias de pastizales seminaturales creadas por el hombre al arrebatar tierras al bosque primitivo y destinarlas a pastizal. El paisaje que nos encontramos consta, fundamentalmente, de un arbolado de encina y de una superficie de pastizal. Otras veces, ese arbolado se encuentra disperso entre cultivos de cereal, normalmente de secano. Estas últimas combinaciones de cultivo herbáceo con vegetación leñosa, las denominamos “sistemas agroforestales” o “dehesas cultivadas”.

El sistema de dehesas por su carácter acotado y su dedicación ganadera ha contribuido a la conservación del paisaje natural gracias a lo cual todavía puede contemplarse algunas especies típicas del bosque mediterráneo. Sobre todo, en zonas de matorral, podemos ver ejemplos de coscoja, cornicabra, tomillo, romero o espino. Entre los mamíferos encontramos jabalí, zorro, tejón. Aves rapaces como águila real, ratonero común, aguilucho lagunero o el búho real, y otras aves como grullas, cigüeñas o garcillas.

El equilibrio alcanzado en estos hábitats se ha producido gracias a que se ha conciliado la necesaria producción de alimentos y el desarrollo de las nuevas formas de flora y fauna presentes. Dicho equilibrio es necesario mantenerlo mientras sea necesario sacar esos beneficios del territorio. Para mantenerlo es imprescindible la colaboración de la actividad agrícola, ya que no siempre lo garantiza (*contaminación del suelo, del agua, la fragmentación de los hábitats y la desaparición de especies de vida silvestre*).

La Política Agraria Comunitaria cada vez más se orienta a combatir los riesgos de la degradación del medio ambiente, incitando a los agricultores a que continúen en su acción positiva de preservación de lo natural y del medio ambiente a través de medidas específicas de desarrollo rural y que al tiempo garanticen la rentabilidad de la agricultura.

Una de esas medidas es la exigencia de plantar árboles a aquellos agricultores que se beneficien de las ayudas PAC. Exigencia que se convierte en un motivo de extorsión, ya que les entretiene de sus labores, al tiempo que disminuye su superficie de cultivo. Por lo que los agricultores se someten a la disciplina que les exige esa norma, pero como una obligación, sin querer entender la utilidad de la medida.

En muy contadas ocasiones asumen ese compromiso, buscando una utilidad medioambiental, dedicando el menor esfuerzo posible y utilizando las parcelas menos productivas, y por tanto menos idóneas para la plantación arbórea.

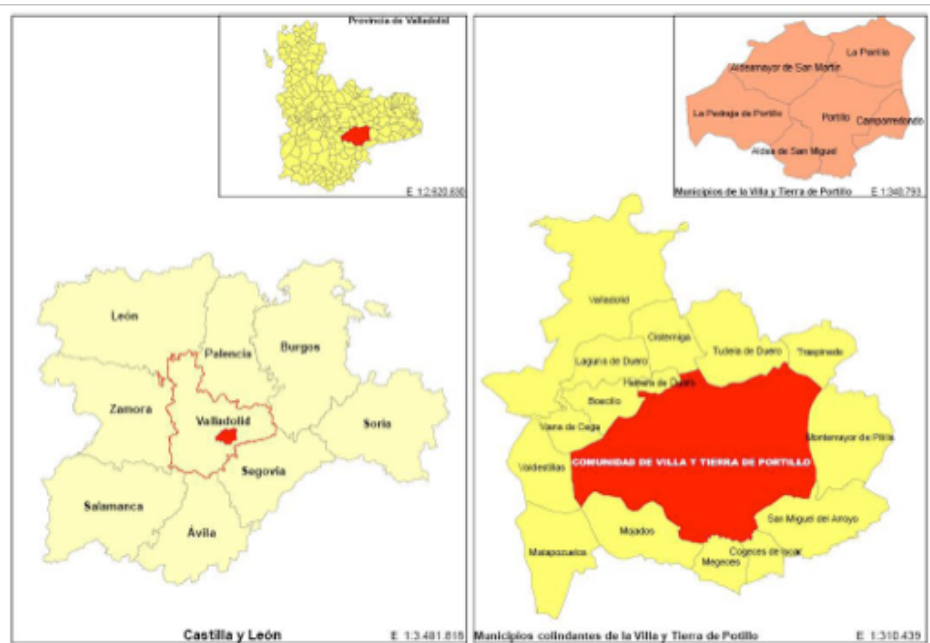
Además, esta medida acarrea al agricultor un nuevo inconveniente, que es el derivado de ser sometido a inspección. Aunque el porcentaje de inspecciones por esta causa en principio es reducido (el 1% de la totalidad de los agricultores que presenten solicitudes), en el caso de que en la inspección se observen incumplimientos de la condicionalidad le provocaría una reducción de la ayuda desde un 5% hasta llegar al 100%, en el caso de que el incumplimiento fuera reiterado o intencionado.

Desde la máxima de que una plantación realizada con desanimo no augura una buena plantación, en este estudio se ofrece una solución que concilie el cumplimiento de esa norma PAC con la eficacia de la plantación. Que consiste en agrupar todos los árboles de un amplio territorio, de modo que sus agricultores desplacen su responsabilidad a una Institución que busque la eficiencia de esa plantación conjunta. Como contraprestación, los agricultores compensan económicamente parte del gasto de la plantación y de su mantenimiento.

La Institución realiza la plantación en sus parcelas, evitando disminuir la superficie arable de los agricultores, y reciben la propiedad de los árboles plantados y con ellos el fruto que de ellos puedan llegar a percibir. De esta manera se compensa la parte del costo de la plantación y de su mantenimiento que los agricultores no llegan a cubrir

La Institución obtiene el beneficio de prestar un servicio a su comunidad, contribuir en la ordenación forestal de su territorio en tanto que de manera racional y conjunta emplea la planta comprometida, buscando al menos dos beneficios añadidos, crea a lo largo de su territorio rutas que recorren y conectan las agrupaciones forestales que sirven de alivio y descanso a los paseantes, y amplía el número de árboles productores piñones.

El territorio elegido en este ensayo es la zona de Portillo, y que la entidad Promotora su “Comunidad de Villa y Tierra”. Está constituida por los seis términos municipales de la provincia de Valladolid, cuya localización y relación de municipios que la constituyen se presenta en el cuadro siguiente.



Localización de la Comunidad de villa y Tierra de Portillo

Tiene un origen sumamente remoto ya que se conocen detalles de su añeja existencia por una serie de Concordias Reales que ponen fin a pleitos promovidos por los pueblos comuneros contra el de Portillo, como consecuencia de las dificultades y dudas surgidas entre ellos.

De manera más concreta y documentada existe una Sentencia del Tribunal Supremo de fecha 27 de noviembre de 1923, que puso fin a una serie de disputas y rencillas seculares. Posteriormente el 29 de febrero de 1960 se redactó y aprobó el Reglamento, que integraba los acuerdos y costumbres por las que venía rigiéndose dicha entidad.

Para la elaboración de este trabajo nos interesa destacar de entre sus fines, los siguientes:

- De orden económico: conducentes a la administración, explotación industrialización y comercialización, en todas sus formas y fases, de los productos de su patrimonio.
- De orden vario: abarcarán todos aquellos fines y cometidos que la legislación atribuye a la competencia de las entidades municipales y no puedan ser cumplidos por cada Municipio comunero de por sí.

Para conocer la postura de los agricultores se realizó una encuesta entre aquellos agricultores de los municipios cercanos que ya habían cumplido o iniciado el procedimiento para cumplir con esta exigencia, y que dependen del mismo centro de reparto de la planta donada por la administración.

Atendiendo a las conclusiones obtenidas de las entrevistas, y con carácter general la medida no se acepta de muy buen gana, en general. De manera concreta cumplirán con la norma por el componente sancionador de la medida, y por ello dedicarán el menor esfuerzo posible. Ya que no están muy dispuestos a considerar el esfuerzo económico que suponen las tareas derivadas de su cumplimiento.

Por otro lado advierten que supone una reducción de su superficie agraria, por lo que es probable que dedique las esquinas de difícil laboreo, y de entre ellas las más improductivas.

Por lo que respecta al planteamiento de ceder su planta para que una organización se encargue de la plantación, en principio no ven claro que deban asumir parte del gasto que supone que un tercero se encargue de la plantación, pues como acabamos de decir no contabiliza el trabajo que esto supone. Sin embargo, cuando advierte que cede la responsabilidad de realizar la plantación, y de mantenerla, que no ve reducida su superficie agraria, que es en la que se basa la ayuda PAC de las próximas campañas, se muestra más abierto a participar, siempre dependiente del coste que le suponga.

La “Comunidad Villa y Tierra de Portillo” está interesada en la medida por que en principio realiza una tarea útil para sus agricultores, cumpliendo así unos de sus objetivos fundacionales. Y puede ordenar medioambientalmente su territorio al diseñar la plantación conjunta de sus agricultores, obteniendo nuevos beneficios, como es el crear rutas, paseos más atractivos, incrementando la presencia de aves, y obteniendo el rendimiento de la venta de los productos de los árboles, como es el caso de los piñones. Cumpliendo así con el otro de los objetivos fundacionales antes mencionado.

Para la administración la medida supone que el objetivo medioambiental de la medida se cumplirá con mayor éxito, por el beneficio añadido que genera la plantación conjunta.

Superficie total de los seis municipios que conforman la Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo es de 25683 ha. Dedicada principalmente al uso agrícola, en ocasiones con presencia de algún árbol aislado o formado pequeños grupos (dehesas cultivadas). Se trata de un cultivo en su mayor parte de cereal de secano, existiendo también algún regadío de pozos en los arenales de la zona.

Por otro lado, el uso forestal lo constituyen prácticamente en su totalidad los “bosques de coníferas de hojas aciculares”, en definitiva pinares de pino piñonero o de pino negral, asociados o no a bosques de encina, o mixtos de encina y quejigo con presencia de sabinas.

Los agricultores han solicitado en la última campaña “ayudas PAC” para un total de 6222 ha. Por lo que deben recibir y comprometerse a repoblar un total de 6222 arboles.

Dado que entre los condicionantes legales imprescindibles se indica que no se puede concentrar más de 250 árboles en una única parcela, que debe respetarse

una superficie de cinco metros cuadrados por árbol plantado, y que en el caso de que la parcela sea cedida por un tercero debe respetarse al menos 200 metros de distancia entre plantaciones. Se deduce que la superficie sobre la que se debe actuar es de 7,8 ha, distribuidas en 26 recintos.

Para ordenar la cesión de responsabilidades se hace necesario firmar un contrato administrativo entre cada agricultor cedente y la Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo en el que figure que:

- Ante la Administración, en este caso la Consejería de Medio Ambiente de la Junta de Castilla y León, la responsabilidad de plantar y mantener durante 5 años los árboles concedidos recae única y exclusivamente sobre los agricultores, solicitantes de las Ayudas Directas de la P. A. C., sin posibilidad de que esta responsabilidad sea traspasada.
- La Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo (en adelante la Comunidad) se compromete con los agricultores a plantar y mantener los árboles que les sean concedidos a éstos, durante 5 años, conforme a la normativa (Condicionalidad de la P. A. C.) asociada a dicho requisito, haciéndolo en terrenos propiedad de los Ayuntamientos que integran dicha Comunidad.
- El contrato administrativo debe establecer, entre otras disposiciones y acuerdos, que la Comunidad deberá indemnizar a los agricultores que participen en este proyecto, en caso de no cumplir satisfactoriamente las directrices de la Consejería de Medio Ambiente.

La financiación del presupuesto del proyecto o la asunción de los costes del mismo vincula tanto a la Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo (Promotor) como a los agricultores de los municipios integrados en ésta, que deseen poner los árboles que les sean concedidos al servicio de lo establecido en este proyecto. Por tanto, hay que distribuir la carga del presupuesto entre ambas partes de la manera más justa y equitativa posible, para lo cual se han tenido en cuenta las siguientes consideraciones:

- Los agricultores quedan liberados de realizar las labores de plantación y mantenimiento de los árboles concedidos, que pasarían a ser ejecutadas por la Comunidad durante el periodo de 5 años establecido en las disposiciones legales de Medio Ambiente.
- La Comunidad, por la ejecución de dichos trabajos, debe percibir de los agricultores una contraprestación económica que le permita costear dichas labores en su mayor parte.
- La contraprestación económica será una cantidad equivalente al *Presupuesto de Ejecución Material (PEM)*, ya que la plantación a cargo del agricultor no requeriría, por ejemplo, de la elaboración de un Estudio de Seguridad y Salud, ni la contratación de un gabinete de ingeniería, los cuales junto al *PEM* constituyen partidas del *Presupuesto General (final)* de este proyecto.

- Los agricultores no ven afectada la superficie de sus explotaciones porque los terrenos en los que se plantan los árboles pertenecen a la Comunidad.
- Estimando que los costes de inversión en el cultivo son aproximadamente iguales a los beneficios por venta de la producción y por ayudas o subvenciones, se determina que el coste que hubiera tenido para los agricultores la utilización de terrenos de su propiedad equivaldría a la pérdida de la **Renta de la tierra** correspondiente a la superficie ocupada.
- La Renta de la tierra se estima a partir de los **cánones de arrendamiento** para la provincia de Valladolid consultados en la web de la Junta de Castilla y León. Según he podido constatar, los agricultores realizan estas plantaciones de los árboles concedidos, en terrenos de secano, puesto que los de regadío les reportan mayores beneficios económicos.
- La Comunidad, al realizar la plantación de árboles en terrenos propiedad de los Ayuntamientos que la integran, obtiene la titularidad de los derechos de gestión y explotación de dichas plantaciones, de manera que si se obtuviera una producción y un beneficio económico en el futuro, éste sería íntegro para la Comunidad, y no para el agricultor.
- La financiación del proyecto se realizará abonando cada agricultor a la Comunidad una cantidad económica por cada árbol a plantar, que será abonada en el momento de la recepción de los árboles, es decir, al inicio de la puesta en marcha del proyecto, y ello, para que la Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo disponga de presupuesto para ir abonando las certificaciones correspondientes al término de cada operación.

Siendo:

- **PEM** (*Presupuesto de Ejecución Material*) = 46755,16 € (IVA incluido)
- **PPG** (*Presupuesto General*) = 60212,25 € (IVA incluido)
- Cánones de arrendamientos rústicos (2008), provincia de Valladolid:
- Tierras de labor en secano: 134 €/ha
- Tierras de labor en regadío: 320 €/ha
- **S** (superficie mínima de tierras de secano necesaria para la plantación de todos los árboles) = 6222 árboles · 5 m²/árbol (**1***) = 3,111 ha (**1***) 5 m²/árbol es la superficie mínima que se debe respetar alrededor de cada árbol según el requisito de Medio Ambiente. Véase en los condicionantes expuestos en el punto 5.1 de la presente Memoria
- C_{Ag.}: Carga presupuestaria para el agricultor
- C_{Com.}: Carga presupuestaria para la Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo

Se estima que la carga del presupuesto del proyecto se distribuirá de la siguiente manera:

$$C_{Ag.} = \frac{[PEM + (134 \cdot S)]}{PPG} \cdot 100 = 78,3 \% \approx 78,5\%$$

$$C_{Com} = 100 \% - 78,5 \% = 21,7 \% \approx 21,5\%$$

Por tanto, se establecen las siguientes cantidades a abonar por cada parte:

- **Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo (21,5%) = 12945,63 €**
- **Agricultores (78,5%) = 47266,62 €/ 6222 árboles = 7,60 €/árbol**

Planificado y proyectado el proyecto de plantación conjunta se llega a la conclusión de que si intervienen todos los agricultores de la Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo se logra incrementar la superficie de pino piñonero, se incrementa la superficie arbolada de esparcimiento, utilizando terreno de la Comunidad. Logrando que la responsabilidad de la plantación y mantenimiento de la plantación recaiga en la Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo, evitando que los agricultores realicen esas tareas, al tiempo que no pierden superficie de cultivo, y eso se logra con un gasto por agricultor de 7,60 €/árbol, y un gasto de 12945,63 € para la Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Portillo que debe recuperar con la venta de los piñones y el beneficio social de ordenar forestales y paisajísticamente su territorio.

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Incendios relacionados con las infraestructuras eléctricas y ferroviarias. Análisis del entorno medioambiental

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Centro Tecnológico Agrario y Agroalimentario ITAGRA.CT

España

Abstract

The Vulcano Project intends to obtain a better knowledge about what starts the fires related to power lines and railways, as well as the variables that influence them, in order to take the necessary preventive measures. In this Project, ITAGRA.CT and the work group of the Cartoteca Digital la Yutera are the responsible for the detailed analysis of the environment around a great number of registered fires, using as tool the Geographical Information Systems.

Keywords: *Risk assessment models; Fire; Powerline and railway network; Vulcano Project; Environment*

1. Antecedentes

Los gestores de las redes de infraestructuras ferroviarias y eléctricas de España han detectado que a pesar de la aplicación de la profusa normativa existente en la materia, se producen gran número de incidentes susceptibles de provocar incendios en el entorno de sus líneas, con el perjuicio medioambiental, a las personas, y a su propia economía, que ello conlleva.

Por ello, se puso en marcha el **Proyecto Vulcano**, el cual tiene el enorme interés de proporcionar un mejor conocimiento sobre las causas que originan los incendios relacionados con las líneas eléctricas y ferroviarias, así como las variables que influyen en su desarrollo y propagación. El objetivo final es, partiendo de ese conocimiento, desarrollar una metodología de evaluación y gestión de riesgos de incendio en el entorno de las líneas eléctricas y ferroviarias así como establecer un protocolo de prevención y permitir evaluar la eficacia de nuevos métodos y equipos. Puede consultarse más información acerca de este Proyecto en su página web: <http://www.proyectovulcano.es/>

Los socios principales e impulsores de este Proyecto son los indicados en la siguiente tabla:



PROYECTO VULCANO		
		
IBERDROLA S.A.		Generación, distribución y comercialización de electricidad y gas natural.
Administrador De Infraestructuras Ferroviarias (ADIF)		Mantenimiento de infraestructuras ferroviarias.
Red Eléctrica De España (REE)		Transporte de energía eléctrica.
INECO		Empresa pública de ingeniería y economía del transporte.

Tabla 1 – Socios del Proyecto Vulcano.

Además de los socios citados en la tabla anterior, también participan en el Proyecto una serie de entidades colaboradoras entre las que está el **Centro Tecnológico Agrario y Agroalimentario** ITAGRA.CT (www.itagra.com/). Esta entidad sin ánimo de lucro situada en el Campus de la Yutera de la Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingenierías Agrarias de Palencia (E.T.S.I.I.A.A.), tiene entre sus fines la realización de Proyectos de I+D+i, ensayos de laboratorio agrario y de campo, así como llevar a cabo tareas de formación y asesoramiento técnico. En su participación en el Proyecto Vulcano, ITAGRA.CT formó un grupo de trabajo junto a la **Cartoteca Digital la Yutera**, servicio de la E.T.S.I.I.A.A. encargado del asesoramiento en materias de cartografía y Sistemas de Información Geográfica, el suministro de información cartográfica cedida por diferentes instituciones (Ej.:

SITCYL) y la realización de proyectos de investigación, informes topográficos y la formación.

2. Objetivo

La participación de la Cartoteca Digital La Yutera e ITAGRA.CT tiene como uno de sus objetivos o funciones dentro del Proyecto Vulcano, entre otras, la realización de un análisis detallado (a escala 1:50.000 o 1:10.000) del entorno medioambiental en el que se producen los sucesos sobre los que socios implicados en el Proyecto estuviesen más interesados. Esta investigación detallada de los incidentes producidos en el entorno de las líneas eléctricas y ferroviarias debe servir de fuente alimentación de datos para el **Modelo de Riesgo** que se pretende obtener como resultado del Proyecto.

3. Metodología

3.1 Planteamiento inicial

El planteamiento del citado Modelo de Riesgo consiste en obtener el riesgo de incendio, valorado en unidades monetarias (euros €) aplicando la siguiente fórmula genérica:

$$\text{Riesgo} = \text{Probabilidad de ocurrencia} * \text{vulnerabilidad}$$

Probabilidad de ignición * Probabilidad de propagación

A su vez, la Probabilidad de ocurrencia (conjunto de probabilidades de ignición y propagación) se basa en modelos estadísticos que constan de tres grupos de datos diferenciados:

- **Ámbito técnico:** variables técnicas de las infraestructuras.
- **Ámbito temporal:** clima y tiempos.
- **Ámbito espacial: variables del entorno.**

Mientras que la **Vulnerabilidad** consiste en la valoración del entorno potencialmente afectado, en unidades monetarias.

Es precisamente en estos último ámbitos donde se da la participación conjunta de la Cartoteca Digital La Yutera e ITAGRA.CT; en el caso de este artículo, se hará referencia solamente a la *primera de estas tareas*.

Así, el análisis detallado del **ámbito espacial** se realiza estudiando las variables del entorno físico y natural que rodea a las redes eléctricas y ferroviarias y que pudiesen ser fuente de conflictos y riesgos entre las infraestructuras y su entorno natural. A fin de conseguir investigar este entorno debe diseñarse una metodología destinada al estudio de detalle basado en el empleo de cartografía digital de alta resolución y dirigido a:

- Observar *evidencias de incendios* registrados y sus causas, relacionando el suceso con el entorno medioambiental donde se produce el suceso.
- Intentar deducir, con las limitaciones inherentes a la complejidad del origen de los incendios y del desconocimiento directo del terreno, las variables que intervinieron en la aparición de los focos del incendio o/y favorecieron su propagación, así como intentar comprender el entorno ambiental del desarrollo de los incidentes.

3.2 Zona de Estudio

La zona de estudio para el análisis de detalle consiste en una nube compuesta por 366 puntos de interés para los socios implicados en el Proyecto, distribuidos por la España peninsular, y de los cuales se dispone de los siguientes datos:

- Coordenadas en el sistema European Datum 1950 UTM 30 N.
- Fecha y hora.
- Superficie estimada.
- Causa registrada.
- Infraestructura eléctrica o férrea.

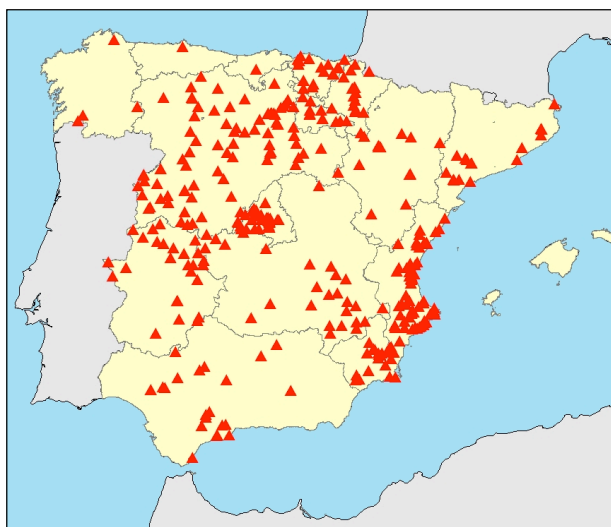


Figura 1 – Localización de los incidentes a analizar en el estudio detallado.

Partimos del hecho de que dados los diferentes orígenes de los sucesos recogidos en estas bases de datos y la falta de un diseño de muestreo adecuado, hace probable que se den incoherencias, falta de rigor en la toma de datos para la elaboración de las mismas, definiciones de causas no suficientemente justificadas en base a un criterio claro, etc... Así, estas deficiencias en cuanto a los sucesos informados por los socios pueden hacer peligrar la fiabilidad de los resultados obtenidos. **En consecuencia e independientemente de los resultados, apuntar**

desde un principio la necesidad de una buena toma de datos para la elaboración de los modelos de riesgo.

3.3 Estudio Piloto

Una vez establecidos los **incidentes** a analizar, se indagó sobre las posibilidades que podían ser aportadas al Proyecto en relación con la puesta en marcha de un estudio detallado del entorno de cada suceso. Dada la cantidad de incidentes a analizar, se estimó conveniente realizar un **estudio piloto** que ayudase a marcar las pautas del trabajo posterior, seleccionando para ello 20 sucesos. Con este estudio se pretende:

- **Ofrecer una metodología** de análisis de eventos cumplimentando además una base de datos sobre su entorno detallado capaz de recoger sistemática y eficazmente los parámetros del ambiente donde se produce el evento. Así, se dedujo que se podría definir para cada incidente:
 - El ambiente donde se produce el incendio.
 - El uso del suelo.
 - Las distancias desde el incidente a las infraestructuras afectadas, redes viarias, edificaciones y al arbolado.
 - Posibilidades de acceso a la zona.
 - Datos derivados del relieve: altitud, pendiente, orientación.
 - Indicios de actividad humana en la zona.
 - Observación o no de restos del incendio (áreas afectadas)
- **Ensayar la utilización de diferente cartografía de detalle** recibida y disponible en las distintas Infraestructuras de Datos Espaciales (IDE) regionales. Se observó que la eficacia de este análisis depende en gran medida de la documentación cartográfica de la que se pueda disponer. Así, por ejemplo en no todos los lugares no se podrán usar ortofotografías en un número y en fecha acorde con los incidentes registrados, o el Modelo Digital del Terreno (MDT) correspondiente, ni podrán visores 3D o estereoscópicos en todas las Comunidades Autónomas, dadas las desiguales características de la producción cartográfica.

3.4 Base de Datos de Estudio Detallado

Tras asignar un identificador único a cada suceso registrado, durante varios meses se fue desarrollando y cumplimentando una Base de Datos para Estudio Detallado donde se recogían los datos obtenidos. Éstos se organizan mediante una serie de *campos* agrupados en bloques en base a su temática y contenido, siendo los siguientes:

- **BLOQUE 1 Identificación:** se compone de un identificador y la fuente o socio que aporta el suceso.
- **BLOQUE 2 Tiempo:** fecha y hora en la que se produjo el evento.

- **BLOQUE 3 Localización:** se compone del registro de las coordenadas X e Y, municipio, provincia y comunidad autónoma donde se ubica, en distintos formatos, así como de los códigos de las hojas en las que se distribuye el Mapa Topográfico Nacional y su situación (aislado, agrupado o alineado) respecto a otros incidentes.
- **BLOQUE 4 Causa y superficie registradas** por los socios.
- **BLOQUE 5 Cartografía consultada:** se anota la cartografía de detalle empleada, su procedencia y resolución, para todos los tipos utilizados (topográfica, ortofotografías, de usos de suelo, visores 3D...).
- **BLOQUE 6 Datos observados:** se recogen bajo este epígrafe todos los datos obtenidos de la observación del área donde se produce el incidente y entre los que se encuentran la distancia a áreas protegidas por la Red Natura 2000, uso de suelo observado en el lugar del incidente y en su entorno próximo, descripción del entorno, distancias a infraestructuras, a accesos (en base a su tipo), a edificios y al arbolado, otros datos, actividad humana en el entorno...
- **BLOQUE 7 Datos del MDT y del relieve:** agrupa los datos derivados del MDT (cota, pendientes y orientaciones) así como el relieve de la zona, categorizado en función de su orografía.
- **BLOQUE 8 Datos observados sobre el incendio:** si se observa o no el incendio, superficie afectada en su caso, distancia hasta las coordenadas registradas y coherencias y comentarios sobre la causa del incidente.
- **BLOQUE 9 Estudio de campo:** contiene la posibilidad de realizar un estudio de campo sobre algunos casos concretos y su justificación.

3.5 Cartografía Empleada

Para la realización de este estudio se parte de la premisa de que para obtener unos buenos resultados es fundamental tener unos buenos datos de partida; por ello, se trata de emplear la mejor cartografía disponible a la mayor resolución posible. Todo este volumen de cartografía es gestionado y tratado empleando software de Sistemas de Información Geográfica.

Así, la cartografía empleada es la siguiente:

- **Cartografía básica:** capa de incidentes (puntos), redes de infraestructuras, cuadrículas hojas Mapa Topográfico Nacional, cartografía medioambiental del Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Medio Rural y Marino, WMS con la capa base de la cartografía 1 : 25.000, límites de comunidades autónomas, provincias y municipios procedentes del Instituto Geográfico Nacional.
- **Cartografía de detalle:** cartografía a gran escala de cada una de las C.C.A.A. españolas salvo las insulares y Ceuta y Melilla. El proceso de organización de todos los datos supone una ardua tarea dada la gran disparidad encontrada. Así cada una de las fuentes cartográficas provee la información en distintos

formatos de distribución (*.shp, *.dwg, *.ecw, servidores WMS...), con diferentes métodos de generación de cartografía y por consiguiente con dispares escalas, precisiones, colores RGB, contenidos de las capas, etc... Otras diferencias radican en la producción de los metadatos, las fechas de realización, la disponibilidad (descarga desde web / ftp con registro y sin registro, servidor WMS, envío gratuito, envío previo pago...). Entre toda esta cartografía destacan:

- **Ortofotografía aérea (píxel 25 cm – 50 cm):** en su mayoría proveniente del Plan Nacional de Ortofotografía Aérea (PNOA).



Figura 2 – Ejemplo de ortofotografía de tamaño de píxel 25 cm.

- **Cartografía topográfica 1:10.000 – 1:5.000**

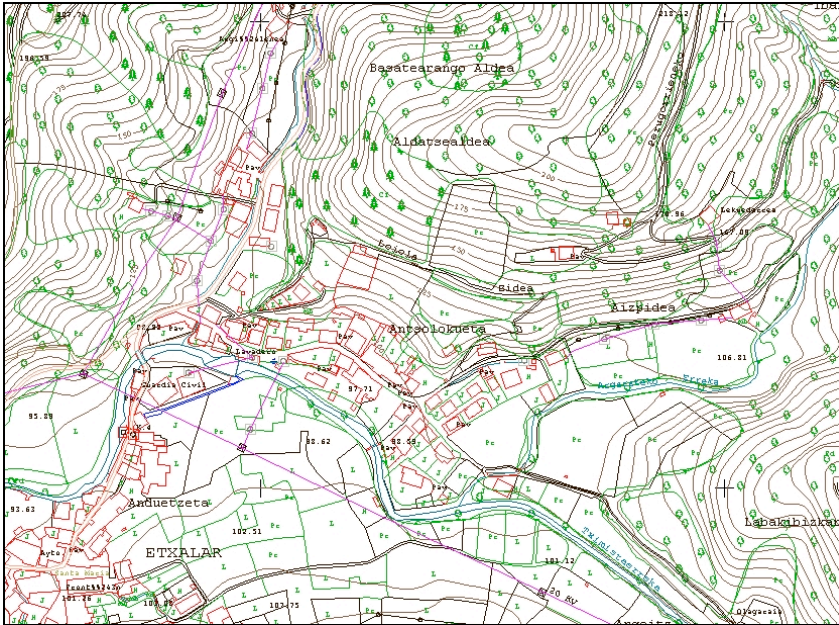


Figura 3 – Ejemplo de mapa topográfico 1:5.000.

- **Modelo Digital del Terreno (MDT) 5 x 5 m ó 10 x 10 m**

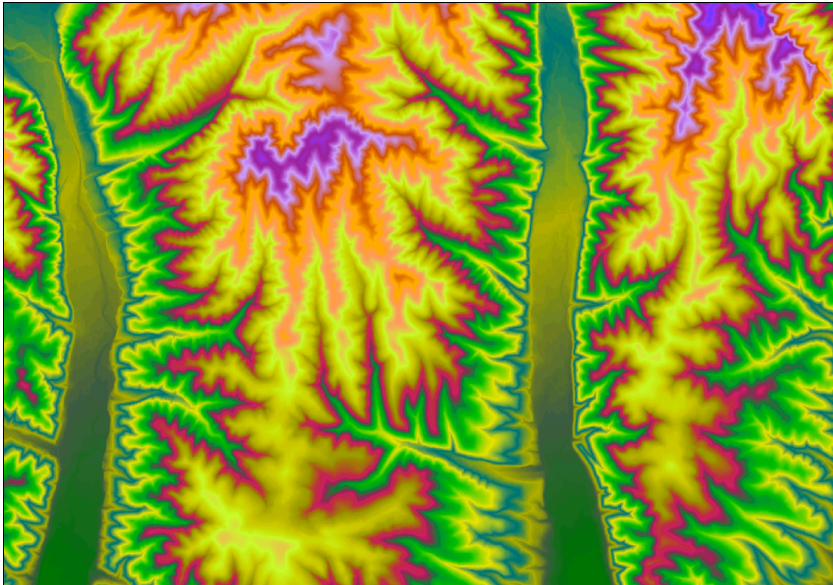


Figura 4 – Ejemplo de MDT resolución 5x5m.

- **StereoWebMap (visor estereoscópico 3D):** consiste en un servidor de vuelos fotogramétricos a través de internet que proporciona pares estereoscópicos sobre los que poder realizar la visualización del terreno, superponer capas y tomar datos en las tres dimensiones (XYZ) mediante posado estereoscópico. La visualización 3D puede realizarse en modo anaglifo o en modo estéreo real. Estas capacidades conceden a StereoWebMap multitud de aplicaciones en diversos campos: ordenación del territorio, análisis de riesgos ambientales, análisis geológicos, telecomunicaciones, agricultura y medio ambiente e incluso en el ámbito del turismo. Puede consultarse más información sobre esta herramienta en las páginas web:

<http://www.stereowebmap.com/es/index.php>

<http://www.sigrid.es/es/index.php>



Figura 5 – Ejemplo del empleo de StereoWebMap (imagen anaglifo).

- **Cartografía temática:** normalmente procedente de servidores WMS como el SIGPAC, Catastro, Mapa Forestal de España, Mapa de Usos y Aprovechamientos... En este caso cabe reseñar que se descartó el uso del Corine Land Cover ya que dada la baja resolución a la que fue realizado lo hace poco aconsejable para los estudios de detalle como el que se pretende, estando más enfocado a análisis desarrollados con pequeñas escalas.
- **Cartografía de ámbito nacional:** algunas zonas y datos geográficos concretos (p.ej. MDE de alta resolución 5 x 5 m, cartografía vectorial, ortofotos PNOA) fue necesario obtenerlos desde el Instituto Geográfico Nacional y la Infraestructura de Datos Espaciales de España al no ser

factible conseguirlos a través de las diferentes instituciones cartográficas autonómicas.


3.6 Recogida de Datos y Cumplimentación de la Base de Datos de Estudio Detallado

El procedimiento desarrollado fue una tarea laboriosa, rutinaria y no exenta totalmente de subjetividad, consistente en observar el entorno medioambiental de todos y cada uno de los 366 incidentes registrados, a partir de las ortofotografías y cartografía de detalle anteriormente descritas. Así, para cada uno de los sucesos se llevo a cabo un método de análisis consistente en realizar las siguientes operaciones con software SIG:

- A. Agrupar los sucesos por Comunidad Autónoma.
- B. Registrar automáticamente los datos de los campos en que esta tarea sea posible, mediante las herramientas de Intersección del SIG utilizado, empleando por un lado los incidentes y por otro, la cartografía que contiene la información relativa a dichos campos. Los datos derivados de los distintos MDT también pueden extraerse automatizando el funcionamiento de las herramientas SIG de programación a fin de facilitar el trabajo y reducir los tiempos de tratamiento del gran volumen de datos y el elevado número de repeticiones que conlleva este análisis.
- C. Poner en pantalla las capas de información geográfica a utilizar en el mismo sistema de proyección y anotar los datos relativos a la cartografía empleada.
- D. Observar el punto del incidente y su ambiente cercano (200 - 300 m entorno a él).
- E. Cumplimentar manualmente el resto de campos de la base de datos (bloques 6, 8, 9 y campo relieve). En caso de observarse el área incendiada digitalizar con las herramientas SIG el área o áreas incendiadas, calculando su superficie.

Durante la realización de esta tarea se apreció una rápida adquisición de entrenamiento en la toma de datos detallados, lo que supuso una mayor eficiencia en este procedimiento una vez comenzado. Por otra parte, es recomendable que la tarea la realice un solo operario para evitar cambios de criterio en los aspectos más subjetivos.

3.7 Ejemplos



DIST. ZEPA	18618.06 - Sabinars del Arlanza
DIST. LIC	14403.41- Ribetas del río Dueto y afluentes
USO SUELO CERCANO	211
USO SUELO ENTORNO	243
ENTORNO	Terreno agrícola con frondosos linderos
DIST. INFRAESTRUCTURA	4.58
DIST. ACCESO	107.77
TIPO ACCESO	1
DIST. EDIFICIO	1284.85
DIST. ARBOLADO	2.00
ACTIVIDAD	TAREAS AGRÍCOLAS
COTA	871.46
PENDIENTE	3.51
PENDIENTE ENTORNO	3.50
ORIENTACIÓN	59.60
ORIENTACIÓN ENTORNO	167.60
RELIEVE	LLANO
INCENDIO	0
SUPERFICIE	0.00
COHERENCIA CAUSA	2
COMENTARIO CAUSA	Posible contacto ramas o tareas agrícolas

Figura 6 – Ejemplo 1: suceso sin observación de incendio.



DIST. ZEPA	2543.41- Encinares de los ríos Adaja y Voltoya
DIST. LIC	2479.90- Encinares de los ríos Adaja y Voltoya
USO SUELO CERCANO	231
USO SUELO ENTORNO	231
ENTORNO	En un erial junto a las vías, rodeado de terrenos agrícolas
DIST. INFRAESTRUCTURA	12.55
DIST. ACCESO	316.44
TIPO ACCESO	5
DIST. EDIFICIO	803.11
DIST. ARBOLADO	73.40
OTROS	Se observa el área incendiada en la ortofoto de 2006, que parece comenzar en el punto de coordenadas y abarcar un área delimitada por caminos y cortafuegos
ACTIVIDAD	TAREAS AGRÍCOLAS, QUEMA PARA PASTOS
COTA	934.47
PENDIENTE	3.18
PENDIENTE ENTORNO	5.72
ORIENTACIÓN	24.15
ORIENTACIÓN ENTORNO	205.60
RELIEVE	LLANO
INCENDIO	1
SUPERFICIE	18.91
COHERENCIA CAUSA	2
COMENTARIO CAUSA	Posible frenada en entrada a curva en sentido Madrid, posibles taras agrícolas

Figura 7 – Ejemplo 2: suceso con observación de incendio.

4. Resultados

Como complemento a la recogida de datos en la Base de Datos de Estudio Detallado se realizó un **análisis estadístico descriptivo** basado en las siguientes premisas:

- Los parámetros estudiados son los propios de la estadística descriptiva (media, varianza, etc...) y la Normalidad de la muestra, diferenciando

entre los sucesos producidos en las líneas eléctricas y los ocurridos en la red ferroviaria.

- Los resultados están afectados por:
 - Pequeño tamaño de la muestra.
 - Falta de uniformidad en la toma de datos, en cuanto a la calidad de los mismos, ausencia de diseño de muestreo, etc...
- El análisis estadístico se ha realizado mediante el software gratuito de análisis estadístico “R”, empleando como variables los campos de la base de datos generada. Puede consultarse más información sobre esta herramienta en la página web del Proyecto R: <http://www.r-project.org/>

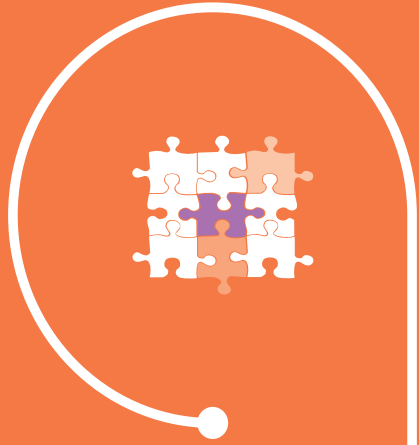
Temática Del dato	Variable Analizada	Resultados		
		Sucesos		
		Líneas eléctricas		Adif
Ubicación	Situación	Agrupados		Alineados
Datos derivados del MDE	Cota	Amplios rangos	497,5 M	453,2 M
	Pendiente		Baja (12%)	Baja (9-10%)
	Orientación		Distribución normal	
Orografía	Relieve	Llano		
Accesos	Tipo de acceso	Calle		Camino
	Distancia al acceso	25,8 M		43,5 M
Distancias	A edificios	Amplios rangos	201,7 M	295,4 M
	A infraestructuras		9,4 M	9,8 M
	A arbolado		33,10 M	50,9 M
	A lic		3,998 M	3,967 M
	A zepa		7,801 M	8,368 M
Uso del suelo	Cercano	Urbano e industrial Agrícola de secano Prados		Infraestructuras y asociados
	Entorno	Urbano e industrial Mosaicos agrícolas		Mosaicos agrícolas Agrícola de regadío Urbano discontinuo
Actividad Antrópica en el entorno	Actividad	Tareas agrícolas		Tareas agrícolas
Datos de los incendios observados	Superficie (Mediana)	0,31 Ha		0,17 Ha
		Algunos incendios de mayor envergadura (máximo = 5.775 Ha)		Algunos incendios de mayor envergadura (máximo 23,3 ha)
	Distancia evento	26 M		204,3 M
	Causa	Coherente con la causa Registrada		No evaluable

Tabla 2 – resultados del análisis estadístico.

5. Conclusiones

A raíz del análisis detallado realizado, pueden extraerse las siguientes conclusiones:

- El procedimiento desarrollado permite recopilar una base de datos de precisión para análisis realizados a gran escala (todas las C.C.A.A. peninsulares).
- La metodología diseñada, basada en la observación cercana de cada incidente, permite definir el ambiente en el que discurre el evento, lo cual puede ayudar a intuir los condicionantes del incendio.
- La automatización de geoprocursos mediante S.I.G. permite agilizar la extracción de datos que conlleven gran número de repeticiones (extracción de datos del MDE, cálculo de distancias) pero gran parte del trabajo consiste en fotointerpretación por parte del operario.
- Se ha evaluado la utilización de nuevas herramientas como la visión estereoscópica con StereoWebMap que resulta útil para definir el ambiente y el relieve del evento (apoyo a la fotointerpretación) y la determinación de distancias en las tres coordenadas X, Y, Z.
- Problemas del método desarrollado:
 - Falta de la frecuencia necesaria de realización de los vuelos para ortofotografía.
 - Desigual producción cartográfica en las distintas comunidades autónomas de España.
 - El procedimiento realizado con esta metodología es lento y laborioso, aunque el entrenamiento del operador agiliza la toma de datos.
 - El análisis no está exento de subjetividad.
- La información y los resultados obtenidos a raíz del análisis del entorno medioambiental han permitido a ITAGRA.CT desarrollar otras de sus tareas en el marco del Proyecto Vulcano, como son:
 - La generación de un modelo de **Toma de Datos de Incidentes** para los sucesos causantes de incendios en infraestructuras férreas y eléctricas.
 - El desarrollo de una metodología de **Análisis de la Vulnerabilidad** de los elementos expuestos a los posibles incendios en las infraestructuras férreas y eléctricas, basada en una valoración en € del territorio.
 - El desarrollo de una propuesta de **Medidas Preventivas** enfocadas a actuar para prevenir los incendios en aquellos puntos de las redes de infraestructuras donde se reproduzcan los parámetros de riesgo obtenidos como consecuencia del análisis los datos recogidos.



Business Sciences and Law

Poland in the European Union: the priorities of Polish presidency: opportunities and threats

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Abstract

In the article the author tries to define the position of Poland, one of the new members, among other 26 states belonging to the European Union. In the second part of 2011, from July to December, this country will direct the works of the Council of the European Union and will be responsible for coordination of operation of many European institutions. The author concentrates on presenting those problems, which are the most important – from the Polish point of view – for the whole EU and which Poland wants to solve in the presidency time. It will not be easy because of the financial crisis in the Eurozone and different businesses of other European Union countries, particularly the biggest states. The author tries to point out the opportunities and threats in achieving these objectives.

Keywords: *Presidency; Council of European Union; The single market; The Eastern partnership; Eurozone; Energy security; European Union*

A couple of months ago, I started to think of the topic that could be discussed here. I decided that because of our countries' (Poland and Portugal) peripheral geographical location in the EU, it is worth giving some thought to how we perceive this organization, what objectives and tasks we set it. During those couple of months

it turned out that the World's economic crisis caused some serious problems in the so-called Eurozone, which Poland wanted to join. Because of serious financial problems of Greece, Ireland, and currently Portugal, the necessity arouses to create joint and effective crisis mechanisms. At the same time, some countries, especially those that are on the highest level of economic development, started to support their national enterprises, which is considered as breaking of the rules of solidarity.

Some opinions which occurred suggest that this year can be groundbreaking for the survival of the economic-monetary European Union. I don't think so, but it's true – this time is very important to the survival of the EU. Nonetheless, I'm going to present my opinions and reflections about political and economic situation of Poland in the European Union, because from July to December 2011 Poland is going to direct the works of the Council of the European Union and will be responsible for the most significant issues for all EU countries. The main aim of these works will be to overcome the economic crisis in the Eurozone and the whole EU. I would like to share my knowledge and present opinions concerning opportunities and threats in achieving these objectives.

When Polish government started to make preparations for taking over the leadership in the works of the Council of the European Union, the most significant problems seemed to be as follow:

- deepening of single market (for instance by harmonization of tax policies)
- working out an agreement on new budget for years 2014-2020
- working out principles of European energy security
- extending the European Union by joining Balkan countries (Croatia, Macedonia)
- strengthening cooperation with the Eastern countries, especially with Ukraine (this problem is very significant for Poland) (What is the Program of Preparations for the Presidency, 2010; Dokument Rady Ministrów, 2010).

The events of the last couple of months made me change the priorities a little bit.

Before I move to the analysis of current principles of Polish presidency, I am going to explain what presidency is. Presidency means that for six months a certain country directs the works of the Council of the European Union. The Council of the European Union is the main decision-making authority, whose basic objective is to pass acts of law that bind all countries belonging to the EU. This is done with the cooperation of the European Commission and the European Parliament. Another objective of the Council of the European Union is to coordinate economic and social policies of the member countries and to determine the trends of development of Common Foreign and Security Policy on the basis of European Council's guidelines. The Council of the European Union represents members of the European Union towards the European Parliament and the European Commission.

Also, this institution cooperates with the High Commissioner for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and with the President of the European Council on the European Union's Foreign Policy. It means that on the diplomatic and organizational abilities of the country that holds presidency depend the course of legislative negotiations inside the community and the effectiveness in searching for agreement among the member states, especially when the raised issues are controversial (for example: should agriculture be supported by European funds, as France demands, or rather to put cohesion policy first, as Poland calls for; or on what conditions and in which direction the European Union should be enlarged). Since the day when Treaty of Lisbon came into life, the presidency's competence in the scope of representing the business of the European Union outside has been limited.

To be effective in actions, successive countries that hold presidency set and try to accomplish the priorities that arise from current and prospective plans of the European Union. Frequently, they also try to accomplish a lot in their own political business. When, in 2007, Portugal was holding the presidency in the Council for the third time in history, it set itself a target which was to pass a new union treaty (after France and the Netherlands turned down the constitutional treaty of 2004). The Portuguese focused also on relations with the countries from the Mediterranean region, which later France developed into the program of The Union for the Mediterranean. The obvious aim of the politicians of the country that holds presidency is to create a positive image and to strengthen that country's position among the other 26 countries.

Poland will be the fourth (after Slovenia, Czech Republic and Hungary) out of the so called "new" UE countries that will be holding presidency. It is a very big challenge for us, especially because the Czech's presidency was commonly recognized as unsuccessful. The Hungarian presidency was not a good one either, as they started it by introducing new regulations in the field of media, which were incompatible with the European democratic standards. The limitation of freedom and the growing Hungarian interference is visible in all fields of life, starting with economy, through politics and media, culture, art, and finally ending with limitation of freedom of speech.

Poland, who will take over the presidency from Hungary on the first of July 2011, will start the leadership in an extremely difficult economic and political situation of the European Union.

Now, I would like to say a couple of words about Poland. Poland was one of the biggest among the 10 countries that joined the UE in May 2004. Currently, its population equals 38 million, which makes it the sixth most populated country among the member states. Poland was the only country of the EU which noted economic growth of 1,7 % GDP (gross domestic product), despite the world's economic crisis. That was the pretext for the Polish government to present our country as a green island. However, in 2009 Poland's GDP per inhabitant equaled

18,8 thousand dollars (it was still 39 percent below the EU-27 average in 2009), while Portugal's GDP equaled 23,1 thousand dollars (it was 20 percent below the EU-27 average) (**GDP per capita, consumption per capita and comparative price levels, 2010**). Since 2007, Poland is a member of the Schengen Zone, but it does not belong to the Eurozone. However, in contrary to Czech Republic, Poland's current government declares the willingness to join the Eurozone in the nearest future.

Holding presidency is always a continuation of Union's former actions. The leadership has to take into account the fact that the situation inside, as well as outside its borders, changes constantly. At the same time, holding presidency is a great opportunity for the country to present and accomplish its own objectives and ideas. Taking into consideration all the three elements, it should be recognized, that, from the Polish point of view, the most important challenges European Union is going to face during the six approaching months are as follow:

1. Stabilization of the economic situation and strengthening the common currency- Euro, and also strengthening the Single market;
2. Stabilization of the situation outside the borders of the EU, especially in Libya and Syria which is in the interest of EU's inner security; also, solving the problem of illegal emigration is of utmost importance;
3. Development of The Eastern Partnership program, that is, working out closer cooperation with the countries that came into existence after the Collapse of the Soviet Union (Dokument Rady Ministrów, 2011).

After Greece and Ireland, another country of the Eurozone – Portugal – appealed for financial support from the UE and the International Monetary Fund. Unfortunately, nowadays it is very hard to predict whether or not the support will prove to be sufficient, or whether only those three countries will need it. Spain is also on the edge of solvency. The economic crisis is likely to have far-reaching effects. That means that Polish presidency in the EU will have to face the following problems:

A) We will have to establish stable mechanisms of financial support for the endangered economies, however, a problem occurs here – the most affluent economies are rather unwilling to support those that are in trouble. The poor countries, on the other hand, have problems with their own residents, who oppose drastic cutbacks in the public sector (a good example here is a situation when Portuguese opposition did not give permission to the country to apply for foreign aid). In March, this year, “A Pact for the Euro Stronger Economic Policy Coordination for Competitiveness and Convergence” was passed by European Council. Its aim is not only to strengthen the economic cohesion and competitiveness of the countries belonging to the Eurozone, but also to tighten control over the public debt. The countries that are members of the EU, but remain outside the Eurozone, were determined to avoid a situation in which countries that want to join the Eurozone in the nearest future would be excluded from talks. In the interests of those countries is also not to let

the three richest members of the EU, which are France, Great Britain and Germany, be the only ones that will decide about different Union's activities. However, as far as this problem is concerned, a solution has already been found. The solution is that every member state will decide on its own, whether or not, they want to join the Pact of Stability or not.

B) Because of lower incomes that are results of the crisis, and also because of the fact that member states did not agree to increase the amount of payments to the UE budget, the cuts of expenses seem to be necessary. The problem that arises here, in the context of new financial perspective for the years 2014- 2020, is where these cuts should be done. It is in the interest of new countries to develop cohesion policy and to support these regions, whose GDP per inhabitant is lower than 75% of EU-27 average (these are not only all Poland's regions, but also some regions in the Southern part of Portugal or Spain). France and Italy, in which only some of the regions are embraced by cohesion policy, count on maintaining current level of support in the scope of Common Agricultural Policy. Polish government, on the other hand, indicates the necessity to modernize agricultural policy and it seeks for the support of Great Britain's prime-minister, David Cameron, in this matter.

It seems that the most important target the Polish government set itself for the time of presidency is to develop the program of The Eastern Partnership which was initiated by Poland and Sweden in 2009. The program assumes tightening of cooperation with Belarus, Ukraine, Moldavia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. However, Belarus did not agree to sign the Pact after all. The Eastern Partnership is about introducing trade preferences (free trade zones), visa facilitation and also aid programs. On April's meeting with Ukraine's prime minister, Azarow, Donald Tusk declared: "We want Polish presidency to be this moment in European and in both our nations' history, when the enlargement of the European Union will reach another, higher level" (Premier popiera unijnę aspiracje Ukrainy, 2011). This sentence refers to signing of the association agreement between EU and Ukraine, which is likely to happen in December 2011.

Some serious threats in realization of this priority are as follow:

A. Cool attitude of Russia, who does not want to support by the European Union these countries, which Russia considers its sphere of influence. The president of Russia, Dimitrij Miedwiediew, recognized that The Eastern Partnership is directed against the Russian Federation. In April, this year, we faced a peculiar Russian and union offensive in Kiev. The capital of Ukraine was in turns visited by the most important politicians from Moscow, who proposed to join the customs union, which, besides Ukraine, would be joined by Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan. Ukraine was also visited by the representatives of EU's and Poland's interests – Polish prime minister, Donald Tusk, and the president of Poland Bronisław Komorowski. The EU is tempting Ukraine with the common free trade zone. Today it is hard to say

which path Ukraine will take, however it seems that in its interest is to balance between the Eastern and Western direction.

B. Another obstacle in the realization of The Eastern Partnership, could possibly be the Union for the Mediterranean, which was appointed on the initiative of France in 2008. This union includes not only the EU member states, but also North African countries (besides Libya) and the countries of the Near East. The cooperation should include the fulfillment of certain projects, such as fighting sea pollution. It should also deal with political and security issues, with economy and, finally, with social, cultural and humanitarian matters. Of course, both projects could be carried out at the same time, but because of a decreased Union's budget, it will be unavoidable to split the financial means. The unstable situation in the countries of North Africa and the Near East is of benefit to the Union for the Mediterranean. In this situation, Poland, during its presidency, will have to deal with this problem, all the more so because the leaders of the Council of European Union on a meeting that took place on the eleventh of March decided that it is necessary to deepen the political and economic cooperation with the South. Such declaration was submitted by Polish Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, who recognized that "equal treatment of European policies, both, Southern and Eastern, is a great challenge for Polish presidency".

The problem of illegal migrations was many times the main subject of discussion in the forum of The Council of European Union, and, as it turns out, the EU did not manage to establish effective mechanism to prevent this phenomenon. Let me recall here a situation, when some migrants from North Africa, reached Malta and Italy, and then equipped with temporary documents which entitled them to travel in the Schengen Zone, tried to get to France. Surely, Poland will have to find solution to this problem as well. Cecilia Malmström, European Commissioner for Home Affairs, demanded that the Parliament and the Council accept the union resettlement program. This program says that the refugees from the first asylum countries, which are usually a bit less developed or are unable to take such a high number of refugees (like in the case of Lampedusa), could settle in countries with better economic situation. Refugees that are settled in new countries must be guaranteed safety, only then the countries that took them can count on getting union financial support (Będkowska, 2011).

The above list is a set of basic, however not single, aims of Poland's presidency. Another important issue of Polish presidency should be solving energetic problems, and ensuring Europe's security in this matter. Because of the growing petroleum and gas shortages, it is also crucial to seek these materials in such World's regions as Arctic or Equatorial Africa. It is worth noticing that, out of 200 sovereign existing countries, there are only 12 to 15 countries that are self-sufficient with regard to petroleum and gas resources. The other ones are, to smaller or larger extent, dependent on supplies from the outside. Poland is one of such countries. Because

of the fact that the USA, China and India are big competitors, it should be in the interest of the UE to strengthen common energy policy and to develop production of energy out of renewable sources such as the sun, water and wind.

The Secretary-General of NATO, on the other hand, is hoping that during Poland's presidency, we will manage to improve the relationship between the Alliance and the EU. Currently, the formal cooperation between NATO and the EU is hindered by the conflict between Cyprus and Turkey. Cyprus, being the member state of the EU in 2004, and Turkey, being the member of NATO, are constantly blocking formal meetings. Cyprus, along with Poland and Denmark, as a part of Trio, will take over the leadership in the Council of the European Union in July 2012, that is why the wish to improve NATO-EU relations is justified. It has to be pointed out that regulating NATO-EU relations has a special meaning as NATO's air forces are engaged in Libya, and the UE could be the one to get engaged in humanitarian operations, after the military actions are ended (PAP, 2011).

Aside from what has already been discussed, in the program of Poland's presidency are issues concerning agriculture, transport, telecommunication, the judiciary, inner issues, employment, education and the youth. The Polish government announces that the full program will be passed on the twenty-third of May, and it will be presented in Brussels in the middle of June.

The biggest threat for Polish presidency in the EU could be the internal situation in our country. It so happened that during our leadership in the Council of European Union there will be parliamentary election in our country. So far, it happened only three times that parliamentary election took place during the country's presidency (it was in France, Denmark, and Czech Republic). The political situation in Poland is already very tight, because of the Smoleńsk of the tenth of April 2010. In this tragedy the president of Poland, Lech Kaczyński and many other important politicians died, but it has not been classified yet. Due to the fact that there are a couple of visions of Poland and its place among other European countries, Poland failed to work out a joint and coherent program of our presidency. What is more, we did not even manage to work out a plan that would be satisfactory for the parliament, government or Euro-skeptical opposition at the same time (Dowgielewicz, 2011). One can fear that the election campaign will not only radicalize voters' moods, but also can cause that politicians will focus on the inner battle, which in turn can affect Polish government's organizational and negotiating efficiency. All the more so that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Radosław Sikorski, is the one who is responsible for preparing the election program for The Civic Platform, the party in power. A similar situation took place in the first half of 2009, when the Czech Republic took over the presidency. The elections and the change of government resulted in failing the European integration exam. Also, the Hungarian presidency does not seem to be too successful. This is because of the fact that currently in Hungary the ruling party is a nationalist party Fidesz, whose leader – Victor Orban – has been

accused of nationalistic and non-democratic inclinations. I truly hope that in the interests of Union and for our own good image, Poland will not follow its southern neighbors' example.

It can turn out that another threat to Polish presidency could be the position of our country which is too weak, in comparison with the leader countries of the "old EU". The fears are all the more justified, as when in spring this year the riots broke out in Northern Africa, especially in Libya, it wasn't Hungary (which at that time was holding the presidency), but France, who initiated the activities later undertaken by the EU. Also on the initiative of this country, with the support of Italy, the EU brought up for discussion the changes of the functioning of the Schengen Zone. Anyhow, talks in these matters will certainly be held during Polish presidency in the Council of European Union.

To sum up, it should be noticed that in the approaching half year, there are most certainly more opportunities than threats that lie ahead of Poland. Poland will be able to make good use of these opportunities and to realize the abovementioned priorities on the conditions that it will manage to create a strong coalition of countries and groups of interest which will support our presidency and that it will establish close cooperation with EU's institutions. This, however, requires not only efficient realization of Government's policy, but also reaching all-party agreement on European issues. This task will not be easy, but only the success of Polish presidency can break the stereotype that presidencies of the new EU member states are time-wasting for the whole EU.

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International culture centre activity on region economy

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Abstract

In the crisis, economic situation in Latvia has gone worse. Traditional branches work with losses. Money for the culture and education is cut strictly. Culture needs to earn some means therefore the researches in culture economics are topical. They prove the positive financial influence that comes from culture to economics.

There exists a stereotype that culture can only spend, not earn money, however, the experience nowadays proclaims the opposite. The social benefits of the arts on individual and community development had been argued since the 1960's ties.

The aim of this work is the analysis of economic assessment of event centre activity based on the importance of the centre in development of state economics. The projected tasks is to assess the development of event centre in the context of culture and economic sectors, to inquire the ruling factors of culture and economic impact, to get acquainted with research performed in Latvia and in the world and to analyse the activity of one event centre.

Most studies of arts and culture in urban and regional development thus apply the simple measures of economic growth such as income and employment, but the linkage effects or customers effects have not been assessed in common impact analysis. This research includes the analysis of short-run spending effects – the direct effects, the induced effects and the indirect effects. The research subject is Dzintari concert hall, event centre of international significance in Jurmala, Latvia.

Keywords: *Event centre activity impact; Direct; Induced and indirect effects of event centre*

Theoretical Framework

UNESCO/Economic Commission for Europe Working Group on Cultural Statistics decided main considerations should govern the designing of a framework for cultural statistics and first of all, it should be integrated as a whole, including both the social and economic aspects of cultural phenomenon, e.g., production, distribution, consumption of and demand for cultural goods and services. (5)

Seaman (2004) noted that there are three broad categories of the economic impact of a cultural asset. First, there is the consumption value, including the value received by both users and non-users. Second, there are long-run increases in productivity and economic development linked to the cultural asset. While these types of longer-run effects are linked to the consumption value of the assets, they can generate potentially measure economic impacts on real economy in the form of expanded population and economic growth. Finally, there are short-run net increases in economic activity related to the net injections of new spending into the region as a direct consequence of the cultural asset. (1)

The term “economic impact study” is most commonly reserved for the conventional approach that focuses on the third type of impact – the short run effects of spending generated by the cultural asset. The intellectual foundations for economic impact models can be traced back to the work done in the 1930s by Wassily Leontief and John Maynard Keynes. Leontief’s inter-industry analysis generated input-output tables designed to reflect the relationships among the various sectors of the economy (4). Keynes’ emphasis on income and expenditure flows as key determinants of at least short-run real output variations also popularized the concept of multiplier analysis and the search for demand-based sources of economic vitality, which is fundamental to the export base orientation of the economic impact models approach. (1)

Economic Impact Analysis

In the United States, the popularity of applying conventional economic impact techniques to the arts is commonly attributed to the technically sophisticated 1977 Baltimore study done by David Cwi and Catherine Lyall, where total impact is measured by using multiplier, direct, induced and indirect effects. (1)

Myerscough (1988) demonstrated, through the use of a multiplier, that direct spending on the arts led to spending in other sectors of the economy, which in turn enhanced wealth and job creation, and made cities appear more attractive to citizens and companies. The study had a far-reaching impact on the cultural sector

and strengthened its argument for the economic impact of the arts as a powerful justification for continued public funding. (3)

Matarasso (1999) proposed such measurement of economic impact: “it is the sum of the outputs and outcomes, an overall analysis of its results: unlike the outcomes, the impact of project may change over time as subsequent events unfold.” (6)

Most studies of arts and culture in urban and regional development thus apply the simple measures of economic growth such as income and employment, but the linkage effects or customer effects have not been calculated in common impact analysis.

What is the relationship between economic and cultural development at the urban or regional level? How does culture change in the course of economic development at these levels and conversely what contribution can culture make to overall development? These are important questions not only for urban, regional and cultural economics but also for cultural policy-makers and urban planners, given that culture has become an integral part of regional development strategies. Urban planning has increasingly become intertwined with cultural planning, and cultural programming is used as part of strategies to revitalize inner cities and old industrial areas.

We distinguish three definitions of culture:

- Culture as aspect, i.e. the community of ideas, values, norms and habits that a society has
- Culture as sector, i.e. if culture is defined by a series of genres like painting, sculpture, theatre, dance, music, literature, poetry, film, video, architecture, etc., the cultural sector consists of those institutions, firms, organizations and individuals who work with these genres; in total the cultural sector so defined comprises a wide spectrum from commercial businesses on the one hand to subsidized cultural institutions and idealistic organizations on the other
- Culture as art, where the word “art” includes an implicit quality valuation; for instance, not all paintings would be classified as art according to some quality criteria

This article’s point of departure is the definition of culture as a sector. Thus, there are no underlying quality valuations regarding the definition, but only a specification of genre.

For our purposes the cultural sector contains both the wide commercial culture and the narrower traditional culture, comprising artistic modes of expression like theatre, music, visual art, architecture, design, arts and crafts, media, film/video, multimedia, literature and cultural heritage: it could also include fashion, advertising, computer software, games and toys, amusement parks, etc. Researchers in this field refer to arts and culture as an economic activity. How do we define economic development?

First and foremost, economic development implies economic growth, i.e. an increase in goods and services produced by a (regional) economy in a given period of time. This typically goes in tandem with increased employment and enhanced standards of living. Economic growth is thus the motor for economic development in broader sense: it typically increases life expectancy at birth, quality of health care, reduces infant mortality and allows for shorter working hours including a reduction in child labour. It frees more time and resources for cultural consumption and, through increased market demand, mobilizes more resources for its production. In fact many cultural products, including items of regional or national heritage, are not sold and bought freely on the market. Yet in the creation of arts and culture significant flows of financial resources are involved.

We disregard leisure time cultural activities which are (almost) free such as unsponsored neighbourhood, or community cultural activities, music groups that play for fun only, and so on. This is clearly an omission as these activities are an integral part of regional culture. Presumably, the extent and structure of these activities will change in the course of economic development and thus will change regional and local culture. However they have not been subject to extensive economic research and therefore will be disregarded in what follows.

The concept of economic growth is of course simpler to apply in empirical studies. The concepts of economic development and cultural sustainability become more and more complex – and less operational. Most studies of arts and culture in urban and regional development thus apply the simple measures of economic growth such as income and employment.

The short-run spending impacts are due to the fact that the arts and culture can attract visitors – local and non local consumers – who spend money on culture, but sometimes also on related goods or services like food, beverages, accommodation, shopping, etc. If there are visitors who have come to a city or a region because of the cultural activities on offer, their consumption constitutes an increase in aggregate demand that can be attributed to the arts. These kind of short-run spending impacts are mainly based on cultural tourism, but can also be due to the possibility that the region's own population spends less elsewhere.

Economic impact studies in the cultural sector have been conducted at different levels:

- A single cultural event, e.g., a festival, or individual permanent cultural institutions
- The entire cultural life of a town, municipality or a region
- The cultural life of an entire state or nation

For our present purposes, analyses of the cultural life of an entire state or nation are not very relevant, and so we concentrate on the following two sections on presenting several examples of studies in the other two categories.

Research Aim

The primary aim is to analyse economic assessment of event centre activity based on the importance of centre in development of state economics.

To analyse an economic assessment of activity of event centre and to compare the methods, models and the ways of analysis, the best technique for estimating sector impact on event centre and the most frequently applied method to study the short-run spending effects of the culture is economic impact analysis by David Cwi and Chaterine Lyall. In economic impact studies, the short-term spending impact of culture on consumption, income and employment is measured, normally differentiating between direct, induced and indirect effects:

- The direct effects are the employment and income generated in a locality by the arts activities themselves.
- The induced effect (or linkage effects) – the customer effects – are spending of visitors of cultural events or institutions on transport, food and drink and perhaps accommodation (2)
- The indirect effects are multiplier effects, which are associated with both the direct and the induced effects.(6)

The Total Impact Calculated as:

Total Impact = Direct Effects + Induced Effects + Indirect Effects,
where

Indirect Effects = (Direct Effects + Induced Effects) x Multiplier. (2)

Long-Run Effects

Location choice

In addition to the short-run effects that can be measured in economic impact studies, cultural activities may have more indirect and longer-term effects. In particular a lively cultural atmosphere may attract people and firms to particular regions. For example, because people enjoy arts and culture (as they enjoy a beautiful environment) and are willing to forgo some of their income compared to other locations in exchange for better access to cultural institutions. Such a positive externality will make this location more attractive to firms which can save on their payroll costs. Moreover, they may find more creative people in these areas which enhances their possibilities to hire qualified workforce.

Research Results

Research on Customer Effects

- In 2009 the research has been done by Latvia Culture Academy, with the aim to measure economic impact from culture organization's activities in

Latvia and measure the spending of visitors of cultural events on related services and goods - transport, food, drink and perhaps accommodation.

- There were 650 questionnaires from respondents of cities in Latvia as Ventspils, Madona, Kuldīga, Bauska, Jurmala and the capital city Riga.

The research has proved that spending money on culture means also spending on related goods and services like food, beverages, accommodation, shopping, etc.

At first, the person is paying for transport to get to the event, then the person is going to dinner before or after the event, during the event the person buys at least coffee, ice cream or beer. If counting the price of accommodation, gifts for family, salary for baby (or animal) sitter, total expenditure is large enough to be significant economic activity.

Due to the economic crisis, consumers are buying the cheapest tickets to attend culture event. 63% of respondents purchase tickets not higher than LVL 6,00 (Latvian currency - EUR 1 = LVL 0.7098), 18% take from LVL 7,00 – LVL 14,00, and quite large percentage 19% of respondents look for tickets up to LVL 15,00.

At the same time more than half of respondents use related services – 70% are going to restaurant or cafeteria before or after culture event. 43% of them are ready to pay not more than LVL 5,00, approximately the same percentage – 41% taking catering service between LVL 6,00 – 15,00 and just 2% are going to have real meal and paying up LVL 31,00. Figure Nr.1 illustrates the situation.

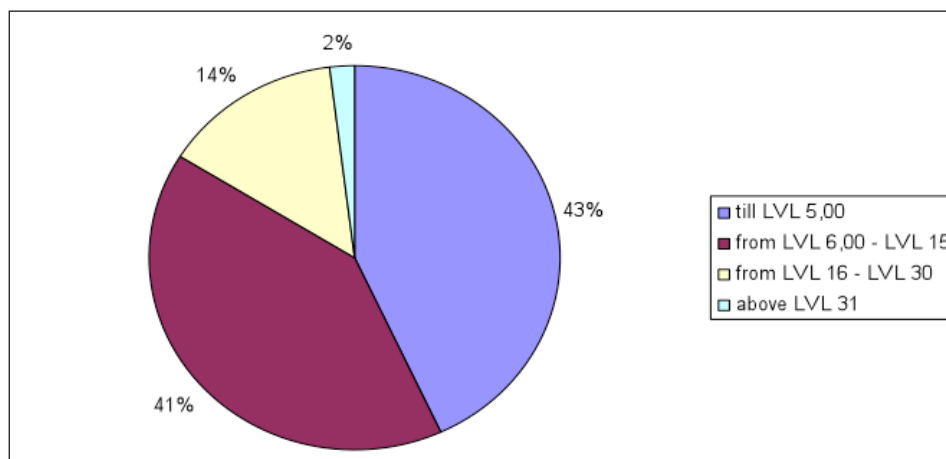


Figure 1 – Expenditures on catering

The distance from home to culture activities' place is not the main reason for choosing to come or not. Just 10% of consumers are not paying for transport; close 40% are using public transport to get themselves to activity, almost 50% are counting on payment for parking and fuel. 53% of respondents are spending amount of LVL 5, 00 and 25% of culture consumers have in their budget from LVL 6,00 till LVL 20,00 for transport services.

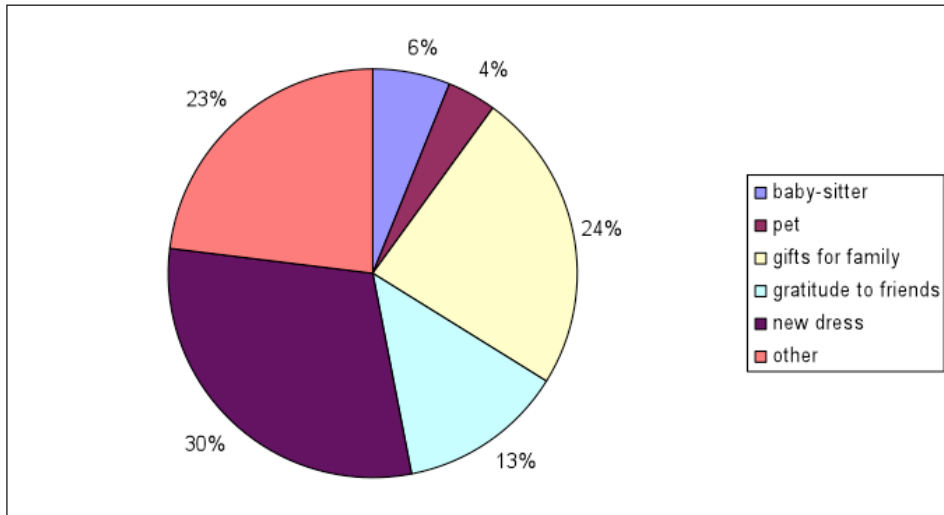


Figure 2 – Expenditures on related goods and services

As may be seen in Figure Nr.2, spending on related services has trended gradually higher as an amount of ticket. Most audience of culture event is looking for the cheapest ticket (till LVL 6, 00), but at the same time not counting money on related goods. Interesting that one third of consumers purchase new dress and almost 25% are looking for some small gifts to family members waiting at home.

72% of consumers proved that they had expenditures during culture event. There are more expenses on tea, coffee, snacks, ice cream, etc. Almost 30% of visitors don't have any expense at all, but as we can see in figure Nr.3, quite enough of respondents are paying for alcoholic beverage and souvenirs, flowers for artists and merchandise.

Due to economic impact analyses, first of all, calculations have been done of the **direct effects** of Dzintari concert hall, including the employment and income generated in a locality by events at Dzintari concert hall. According to the results of the study of European Association of Event Centres, 75% of event centres are limited companies responsible not only for profitable results, but also for providing surplus value of culture at city, region or state.

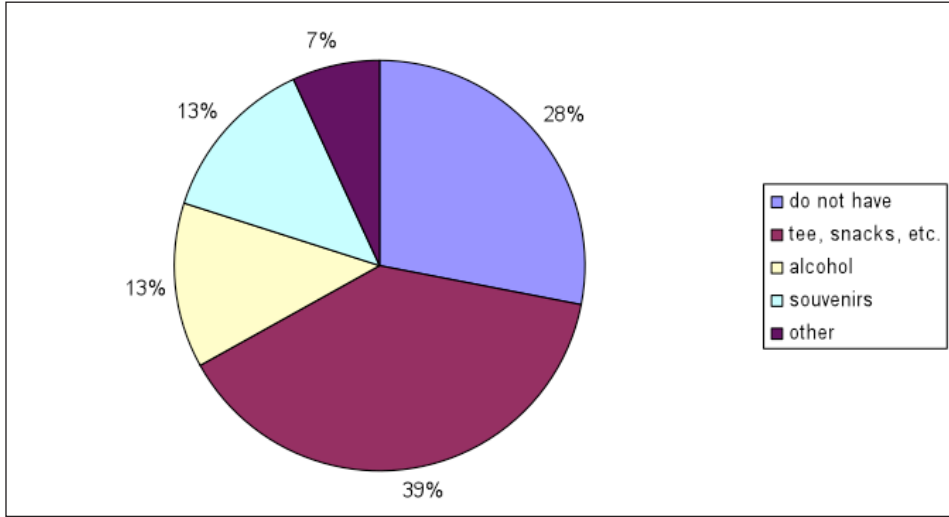


Figure 3 - Expenditures during culture event

Dzintari concert hall has proved that becoming limited company in year 2004 it started to attract more customers. The main aim of Dzintari concert hall is to become the centre of summer symphony music and to find and educate new audience. Since there are many pop and rock bands, concert hall supports youth.

The concert hall acts as real culture entrepreneur, profit of the rent of the hall goes to stimulation of culture growth and promotion of surplus value.

Dzintari concert hall has 71 employees working at every event, 40 of them have been paid by Ltd Dzintari concert hall and 31 have been paid by related companies (public catering, merchandising, flower shop, CD and DVD market, etc.)

The formulae for calculations of the direct effects of Dzintari concert hall are showed in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1 - The calculations of employment payment per event

$$\begin{aligned}
 X = \text{total payment for employees working for one event at Dzintari concert hall (gross wage)} = & \\
 & \text{wage of employees of Ltd. Dzintari concert hall per one event} + \\
 & \text{Wage of employees working in Dzintari concert hall at public catering per one event} + \\
 & \text{Wage of employees working in Dzintari concert hall at merchandise per one event} + \\
 & \text{Wage of security persons per one event} = \\
 & \text{LVL } 1578.00 + \text{LVL } 239.00 + \text{LVL } 114.10 + \text{LVL } 10.00 + \text{LVL } 45.00 = \\
 & \text{LVL } 1986.10
 \end{aligned}$$

Table2 – The calculation of income per event

<p>X = The income of one event at Dzintari concert hall =</p> <p>Average sum of rent of the hall per event +</p> <p>Average sum of the advertisement places at Dzintari concert hall per event +</p> <p>Average sum of the work of ticket office per event +</p> <p>Average sum of the percentage of public catering in Dzintari concert hall +</p> <p>Average sum of the percentage of merchandise in Dzintari concert hall =</p> <p>LVL 3444 + LVL 445.00 + LVL 84.90 + LVL 206.50 + LVL 26 =</p> <p>LVL 4206.40</p>
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The real income and total payment for employees are:
 LVL1986.10 + LVL 4206.40 = LVL 6192.50

Customer's Effects

The study proved that 76% of Dzintari concert hall audience spends on related goods and services more than LVL 30 per event. Only 24% buy the cheapest tickets, go to the event, buy coffee or beer, and go home to dinner. See table 3.

Table 3 – The expenses of Dzintari concert hall customers

Sum per event	Percentage of customers	The total expenses of the group of customers
LVL 10-16	24%	LVL 5940.00
LVL 30.00	30%	LVL 24300.00
LVL 40.00	15%	LVL 12000.00
LVL 60.00	15%	LVL 18300.00
Up to LVL 100.00	6%	LVL 13600.00
	100%	LVL 74140.00

The sum of induced effect per event at Dzintari concert hall is LVL74 140.00. According to statistics in 2009 there were 90 events at Dzintari concert hall, so the average total induced effect is calculated LVL 74140.00 x 90 = LVL 6 672 600.00.

Despite short event season, customers of Dzintari concert hall have spent more than 6,5 million Lats (Latvian currency EUR 1 = LVL 0.7098) or approximately 9,16 million Euros.

Indirect Effects

The indirect effect can be calculated = direct effect (LVL 6192.50) + 10% from induced effect (LVL 8021.45) = LVL 14 123.95.

The Total Impact

Table 4 – The total impact of Dzintari concert hall per event

$\begin{aligned} \text{Total impact} &= \text{Direct effects} + \text{Induced effects} + \text{Indirect effects} = \\ &= \text{LVL } 6192.50 + \text{LVL } 74140.00 + \text{LVL } 14123.95 = \\ &= \text{LVL } 94\,456.45 \end{aligned}$
--

The total impact of Dzintari concert hall per season of 2009 can be calculated as: the total impact of Dzintari concert hall per event to multiply by the number of the events in season, $\text{LVL } 94\,456.45 \times 90 = \text{LVL } 8\,501\,080.50$ or EUR 11 976 726. The investment in Dzintari concert hall since year 2006 has been approximately LVL 1.5 million, which is four times less than the turnovers for one season due to economic impact analysis.

Conclusions

1. Economic impact study has become an important tool for planning, and to inform about economic development and regeneration strategies of local authority of Dzintari concert hall. Research has also been used effectively to advocate for greater investment in event centre to demonstrate its value to founders and stakeholders.
2. The interest of economic impact models can be traced back to the works done in the 1930s including both the social and economic aspects of cultural phenomenon. However, the linkage effects or customer effects have not been calculated in common impact analysis.
3. The short-run spending impacts are mainly based on cultural tourism; events centres such as Dzintari concert hall attracts visitors, who spend money on related goods and services. More than 75% of Dzintari concert hall audiences have spent approximately LVL 30.00 per event.
4. The economic impact analysis of Dzintari concert hall confirms that events centre generates more than LVL 8.5 million turnovers per season, production competes with other sectors in input and output markets. The more consumers that can be attracted by events centre activity, the higher the economic impact.
5. The achieved results form the fundamentals for further investigating and analyzing the sectors of event centre allowed the continuation of economic activity assessment for the significance of each event centre, considering it in the context of Latvian economics and comparing with event centres in Europe. It is sufficiently urgent to justify an economic usefulness and an important contribution to the state economics.

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Implementing Kaizen philosophy in enterprise

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Abstract

The article discusses the following:

1. Presenting the concepts of implementing the innovation in enterprise: Japanese approach to management (Kaizen System) and Western European approach (Top-Down System).
2. The different understanding of innovation and change, logically determines completely diverse principles of management of innovations.
3. Implementing the Kaizen principles in FAMAK Machinery and Equipment Company is a good way to gain higher quality, higher level of economic development and competitiveness.

Keywords: *Quality; Management; Kaize; Innovation*

This article presents Kaizen philosophy as a modern concept which could be a good way for developing new management strategy, which enables achieving significant competitive advantage on the changing market. Today everything is moving, the world is changing. Both the internal and external environment of companies changes as well. If a company wants to succeed on the market, reach its business targets, it must inevitably adjust its strategies reflecting these changes.

The innovations represent the main tool for building and maintaining a long-term company success in the contemporary turbulent environment.

The terms Kaizen is a Japanese word and consists of two parts: kai which means "change" and zen which means "good" (fig. 1).



Figure 1 - Meaning terms Kaizen

Kaizen logic was first presented in Masaaki Imai’s book ‘Kaizen – The Key To Japan’s Competitive Success.’ Masaaki Imai defines: “Kaizen is perfection. It also means continuous improvement on personal and social levels. In company Kaizen is continuous improvement of altogether: managers and employees” (Imai, 2006: 38).

The understanding of innovation and change is, however, entirely different in the Western Europe and Japanese approaches to management, which logically determines completely different meaning of innovations and quite different principles of management of innovations.

On the general level, it is possible to show the fundamental contrast in the value systems of the Japanese and Western societies if we compare it to the different understanding and approach to the management of changes. The Western European society has always been oriented towards the outcome. Outcome and target have always been preferred to the pathway.

The Eastern civilizations were more preoccupied by the pathway which they saw as more important than its fulfillment. We can still trace these antagonistic views, perhaps even more than before, in the recent years despite all the globalization trends.

Japanese Approach: Kaizen System

Japanese Kaizen is a philosophy or practice that focuses on continuous improvement of processes and systems. This conception can be generally explained as change for improvement. It is improvement by small increments over a longer period of time.

Kaizen can be understood both as a process and as a strategy the target of which is continuous and long-term perfection which, however, does not require large investments and fundamental changes.

The principles are not based on fundamental changes concerning the technologies, production equipment, but they particularly try to change the thinking of the people. Kaizen makes employees become aware that by using their skills to improve a process they make business more successful.

The intention is to stimulate creative thinking, to look at the routine tasks and to define areas which cry for improvement. Constant repetition of tasks can lead to the state in which we become dull and unable to define things which should be changed. Continual improvement also means to fight dreariness and let some inspiration in our work. Nowadays, Kaizen is considered to be a general term for the whole range of modern trends. Many of them originate in Japan and they were carried forward to the rest of the world: TPM, TQC, quality clubs, innovation suggestion system, Kanban, JIT, zero defects, work discipline, product development, etc. The time course of innovations by means continuous improvement principles. Kaizen moves ahead slowly on the basis of many small improvements (fig. 2).

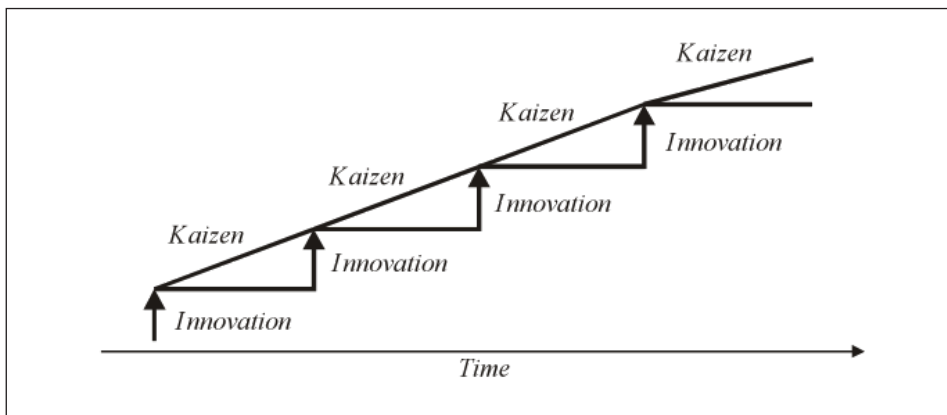


Figure 2 – The course of innovation with Kaizen. Source: Imai, 2007: 56.

Western Approach: Top-Down System

In this concept, the innovations are perceived as fundamental changes with the major emphasis on technological development or implementation of the latest manager's concepts and technologies. The innovation is radical, dramatic and it attracts great attention. The logical consequences of such vast changes are, naturally, huge investments. The Western approach towards innovations is therefore especially focused on technologies and money.

The time flow of the innovation process is another important aspect. In the Western approach, innovation is understood as a single-shot, short process. The innovation can be very well compared to the function presented below (fig. 3).

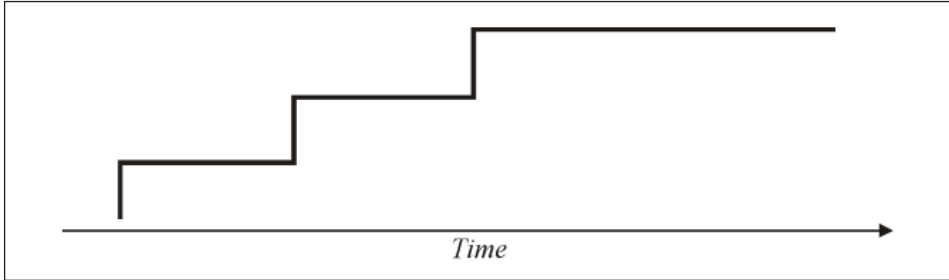


Figure 3 – Course of innovation in Western approach. Source: Imai, 2007: 55.

The improvement is planned in short periods of time and in leaps (implementation of new technology, new management system, etc). The real course of innovation is rather similar to figure no. 4. It is Top-Down System. It is necessary to identify two aspects which can't be omitted. Each status quo is, in each moment, devaluated by the dynamic environment. If we do not maintain the present state in an adequate way it will continuously grow worse. A number of further steps must follow in order to secure and improve the current state after a leap improvement to a higher level.

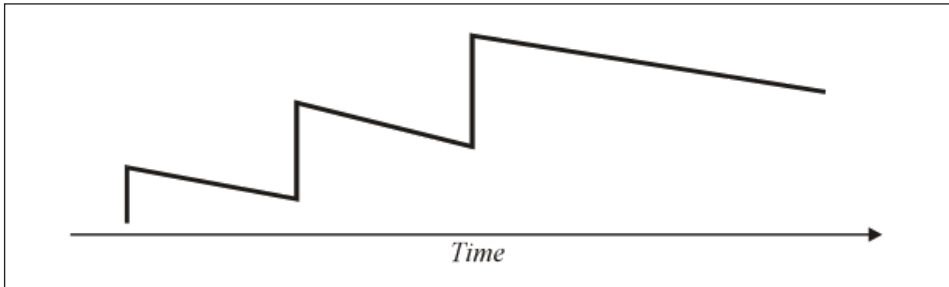


Figure 4 – Real course of innovation in Western approach (Top - Down System). Source: Imai, 2007: 55.

Michael Hammer's and James Champy's reengineering principle is a classic example of understanding innovation as a major change. Reengineering is treated as a method causing radical transformation and changes in main areas of enterprise functioning. The concept means the company starts with a blank piece of paper before it determines its process, as it tries to put aside the old and routine practices.

The difference between Kaizen and Top-Down System presents figure 5. The features distinguishing Kaizen, from typical innovations and reengineering are: short-term realization, low costs, utilizing available potential of human resources

and stimulating its creativity and involvement. The source of changes is information about manufacturing process, its analysis and implementing improvements on this base [Wrobel, 2010: 216].

The other crucial aspect which divides these two approaches to innovations is the participation of employees on the realization of changes. In case of Kaizen principles, they must address everybody, from the top management to the workers. The participation of all employees and the realization of continuous small changes in the production process are the major differences from the Western approach towards improvement. According to Masaaki Imai the Kaizen principles are not set only to be used at work but in the private life as well. The principles are not based on fundamental changes concerning the technologies, production but they mainly try to change the thinking of the people. The objective is to stimulate creative thinking, look at the routine tasks and to determine the areas which must be improved. The space for innovation in the Western approach is mostly limited to the area of the middle and top management. There is minimal support for creative thinking from lower and middle management employees or it is even unwelcome. With respect to these in many cases routine performance of employees duties without any possibility to contribute to higher efficiency of the performed duties are assessed in positive way.

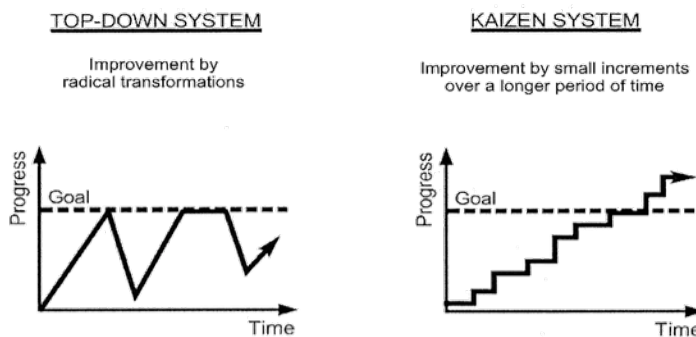


Figure 5 – Innovations in Japanese and Western approaches. Source: Own study.

The Japanese way encourages small improvements day after day. These results are small increments over a longer period of time (Kaizen System). Western managers are too impatient for this approach. They often expect large results and eventually disappointed (Top-Down System).

Implementing the Kaizen principles in FAMAK Machinery and Equipment Company

The company is located in Kluczbork at Opole region in Poland. It is a recognized manufacturer of hoisting equipment: cranes and handling machines. The company is active in the field of heavy industry and it belongs to the leading world producers. The implementation campaign of Kaizen and quality policy was launched in 2000. Prior to the beginning of the project the management has set long-term objectives which should be fulfilled in the course of project development. These objectives can be summarized in the following points:

- Reduce the production costs - increase the competitive ability.
- Reduce the volume of unfinished production.
- Shorten the production times.
- Eliminate waste and non-value-adding activities.
- Eliminate poor quality production.
- Support the ISO standards.
- Influence the employees in a positive way.

The company has based its competitive advantage on systematic approach to quality matters and responsiveness to customer needs covering: design, manufacturing, onsite installation, maintenance, training and post sale support. The management of the enterprise also focused on research and development. FAMAK was among first Polish companies which paid attentions to implementation of quality system according to ISO 9001 standards and modern concept of management. One of them was Kaizen policy. The implementation of the five steps of good management – “5S” was one of the first steps in the implementation of Kaizen principles. This principle developed from multi-year experiences of people working in production departments. All the experiences are compiled in five rules represented by five Japanese names. Kaizen in any company should start with understanding and implementation of “5S” and standardization (fig. 6).

The “5S” pillars provide a methodology for organizing, cleaning, developing, and sustaining a productive work environment. In the daily work of a company, routines that maintain organization and orderliness are essential to a smooth and efficient flow of activities. This lean method encourages workers to improve their working conditions and helps them to learn to reduce waste, unplanned downtime and in-process inventory.

Five steps of good management:

- Sort (Japanese word: Seiri) – separate the essential and useless things in your work station and remove the useless ones.
- Set in order (Japanese word: Seiton) – organize all things which were left in your work station after seiri in a well arranged manner.
- Shine (Japanese word: Seiso) – keep the machines and the work station clean.

- Standardize (Japanese word: Seiketsu) – expand the concept of cleanliness on you and continuously carry out the previous three steps.
- Sustain (Japanese word: Shitsuke) – build your self-discipline and practise the five steps by introducing standards.

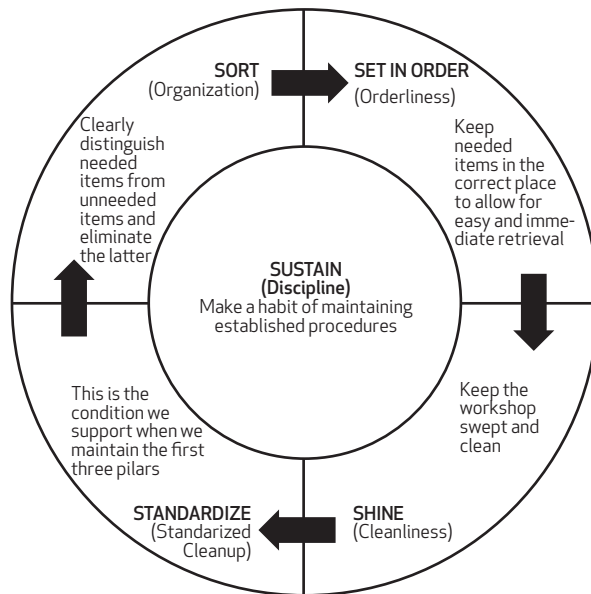


Figure 6 – The pillars of good management – “5S”. Source: Own study based on: Imai, 2007: 251.

Straight from the beginning of implementation of the Kaizen principles the management put the accent on the development and support of the employees' activities. The main objective was to motivate the employees, to support their creative thinking and by means of their positive participation on the changes build their positive approach towards the company and their work. There has been a campaign with the objective to support the employees in submitting small ideas for development in terms of this strategy. There was no limit imposed on the area of possible suggestions. The only criterion was that the idea should be possible to realize in a short time, without high financial, material or operational and organizational requirements. The reward for a good idea is paid immediately on the next pay day. The amount of this award is determined according to its contribution to the company, eventually as percentage of saved costs which resulted from the implementation of the new idea in operation.

The employees were not very interested in submitting these ideas at the beginning. Gradually the employees understood that it pays off to be active and to open their eyes. Average 300 improvement proposals were accepted every year.

Moreover, the employees and teams which submit the highest number improvement proposals in the given period are evaluated on a regular basis. Naturally the winners of this competition are rewarded too.

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Polish thin capitalization rules in the light of EU tax law

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Abstract

The article deals with the conformity of the Polish thin capitalization rules (hereinafter TCR) with the EU tax law and the case law of the Tribunal of Justice of the EU. The author analyses the tax consequences connected with different methods of companies' financing used by their shareholders: equity versus debt from the domestic, international and the EU perspective and shows the tax advantages with respect to debt financing. Then the author presents the scope and mechanism of application of the Polish TCR which are designed against thin capitalization. In the last part the author answers the question whether the Polish TCR violate the EU fundamental freedoms, especially the freedom of establishment. This analysis is based on decisions of the Court of Justice of the European Union in following cases: C-324/00 *Lankhorst-Hohorst GmbH v. Finanzamt Steinfurt*, C-524/04 *Test Claimants in the Thin Cap Group Litigation v. Commissioners of Inland Revenues* and C-105/07, *NV Lammers & Van Cleeff v. Belgische Staat*.

Keywords: *The OECD Model Tax Convention; The Parent/Subsidiary Directive; The Tribunal of Justice of the EU; The Treaty of Lisbon; Thin capitalization; Thin capitalization rules; Withholding tax*

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to examine the conformity of the Polish thin capitalization rules (hereinafter the TCR) with the Treaty of Lisbon (hereinafter the TFEU Treaty) fundamental freedoms and the case-law of the Tribunal of Justice of the EU. In the first part the tax consequences concerning different types of income (dividends and interest) which arise as the result of shareholders' choice of a method of company' financing will be reviewed in the context of the phenomenon commonly known as "thin capitalization". Contrary to dividends, interest in general constitutes deductible expenses for the borrowing company, so the risk of economic double taxation is eliminated. The lack of economic double taxation in case of interest constitutes a huge advantage of debt financing over the equity financing and leads to excessive use of loans and other debt instruments as a basic method designed for financing the companies by their shareholders. The second part will focus on the "shape" of Polish thin capitalization rules which limit in certain circumstances the level of deductibility of interest payed by a company to its shareholder. In the third part the problem of conformity of domestic thin capitalization rules will be disused in the light of the EU Treaty fundamental freedoms – especially with the freedom of establishment (Art. 49 at the Treaty of Lisbon – previous Art. 43 of the EC Treaty). The article refers to judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union (hereinafter: the Court or ECJ) in following cases: C-324/00 Lankhorst-Hohorst GmbH v. Finanzamt Steinfurt, C-524/04 Test Claimants in the Thin Cap Group Litigation v. Commissioners of Inland Revenues and C-105/07, NV Lammers & Van Cleeff v. Belgische Staat. The article ends with the author setting out his extensive conclusions on the subject matter in question.

The Methods of Company's Financing and their Tax Implications

Generally, company may be financed by its shareholders either by equity or debt. These two methods of financing lead to different tax treatment of income which arises as the result of shareholders' choice in this matter. Specially in countries using the classical system of dividend taxation – like Poland¹ – in case of equity

- 1) According to the Corporate Income Tax Act (hereinafter: the CIT Act) from 15th February 1992 and the Personal Income Tax Act (hereinafter the PIT Act) from 26 July 1991, dividends payed by a company resident of Poland to its shareholders are subject to final withholding tax at the rate of 19%. In cross-border situations where a recipient is resident of a country with which Poland has concluded the bilateral double taxation convention – the rate of withholding tax at source in Poland is reduced up to 5% or 15%. The EU, EEA and Swiss parent companies receiving dividends from their Polish subsidiaries may benefit from the application of domestic tax rules implementing the Parent-Subsidiary Directive (1990/435)/EEC which provide the full exemption from withholding tax in Poland. Individual shareholders and corporate shareholders not qualified as parent companies receiving Polish-sourced dividend payments suffer from economic double taxation. Polish tax law provides reliefs for elimination of economic double taxation solely to corporate parent companies.

financing **economic double taxation**² occurs because dividends paid by a company to its shareholders are first taxed at the company level with a corporate income tax and then are taxed again at the shareholders level – as their income from shares and other company's rights. Economic double taxation does not exist in case of debt financing. Interest constitutes a deductible expense for a debtor – a company – which means that there is no taxation of invested capital at the company level. The only tax which is levied on interest is a withholding tax payed by a creditor (in this case a shareholder). In cross-border situations debt financing seems to be even more advantageous. In order to eliminate **double taxation in the juridical sense**³ of dividends and interest countries conclude bilateral double taxation conventions. Those international measures against double taxation are usually based on the OECD Model Tax Convention⁴. They allocate the taxing rights in respect to different types of income between both contracting states. According to the Article 10 of the OECD Model Tax Convention dividends may be taxed at source (in country where the distributing company is resident) but also in the country of the recipient's residence (shareholder)⁵. In case of dividends a tax payed at source cannot exceed 5% or 15% of the gross income (the 5% rate applies to dividend payment made by a company to its "substantial" shareholders; a shareholder is deemed to be a "substantial" if a certain holding requirement of at least 25% of company's share capital is met). In case of cross-border interest payments the OECD Model Tax Convention in Article 11 introduces a similar allocation rules⁶. Interest may be taxed at source at the rate not exceeding 10% of the gross income and also in the country of the recipient's (creditor's) residence.

In order to avoid double taxation in juridical sense the country of recipient's residence is obliged under the treaty to give an ordinary tax credit. The ordinary tax credit is one of the methods for elimination of double taxation according to which a country of taxpayer's residence allows him to deduct the tax payed abroad from

- 2) Economic double taxation occurs where two different persons (in this case a company and its shareholder) are taxable in respect of the same income. Economic double taxation may be both a domestic and international issue.
- 3) Juridical double taxation in an international issue; juridical double taxation occurs as a result of exercising of taxing rights by at least two different countries. It means that the same income is taxed twice in the hands of the same person by more than one state for identical period. Usually it arises in case where one country subjects the same person on his worldwide income (unlimited tax liability – the residence principle) and the second country taxes the same person – not being a resident of that country – on income derived from sources located in that country (limited tax liability, the source principle).
- 4) OECD Model Tax Convention on Income and on Capital. Consolidated version – 2005, IBFD Publications, Amsterdam 2005, pp. 21- 49.
- 5) See: Commentary to Article 10 of the OECD Model Tax Convention of Income and Capital [in:] OECD Model Tax Convention on Income and Capital, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-163.
- 6) See: Commentary to Article 11 of the OECD Model Tax Convention of Income and Capital [in:] OECD Model Tax Convention on Income and Capital, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-177.

foreign-sourced income. However such deduction in either case cannot exceed that part of the income tax, as computed before the deduction is given, which is attributable to the foreign-sourced income⁷.

The OECD Model Tax Convention contains only a proposal of allocation of taxing rights for bilateral treaty concluded by countries. Countries may adopt different solutions from the OECD Model's. In many bilateral treaties interest payments are exempt from withholding tax, where the taxation of dividends in both contracting states is still allowed. So when it comes to interest payments, the problem of elimination of double taxation in the juridical sense is totally solved. In this case there is no need for application of complicated and time-consuming ordinary tax credit method⁸.

Taxation of dividends and interest is also interesting from the internal market perspective⁹. There is the EU secondary law in this field: the Parent-Subsidiary Directive (1990/435/EEC, hereinafter the PSD) and the Interest and Royalties Directive (2003/49/EC, hereinafter the IRD) play the most important role because they modify the allocation rules set by bilateral treaties concluded between the EU Member States¹⁰. The PSD covers distributions of profits made between the EU, the EEA and Swiss) subsidiaries to their EU, EEA and Swiss parents and provides measures for elimination both: juridical and economic double taxation of such by eliminating withholding taxes paid by the recipient parent company at source (in the EU Member State which is a country of subsidiary's residence) and by exempting the EU-sourced dividends from taxation in the country of parent company's residence¹¹. The IRD applies to interest or royalty payments made between associated companies, residents of two different EU or EEA Member States. It provides the

7) See: Commentary to Article 23B of the OECD Model Tax Convention of Income and Capital [in:] OECD Model Tax Convention on Income and on Capital, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

8) Poland has concluded more than 80 double taxation conventions based on the OECD Model Tax Convention. Most of them follow the OECD Model, but some in case of interest payments are exempt from taxation at source (in the debtor's country of residence); for example treaties concluded with Austria, Belgium, Belarus, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, Kuwait, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, The United Kingdom and the United States.

9) Towards a Homogeneous EC Direct Tax Law. An Assessment of the Member States' Responses to the ECJ's case Law, Edited by C. Brokelind, IBFD, 2007, p. 398.

10) See: P.Farmer, R.Lyal, EC Tax Law, Oxford European Community Law Series, Oxford 2003, pp. 254-277.

11) According to the PSD a company is deemed to be a "parent company" if it holds at least 10% (25% in case of Swiss parents) of shares in capital of another company continuously for at least 2 years; this condition can be also met after the payment. Both companies: the parent and the subsidiary must meet certain general conditions established by the PSD: *inter alia* relevant companies must have a legal form listed in the Annex to the Directive and be subject to a corporate income tax in country of their residence.

exemption from withholding tax of interest and royalties if certain conditions set in the Directive are met¹².

Becoming the EU Member State in 2004, Poland has implemented both the PSD and the IRD into its domestic tax system. Since according to the Council Directive 2004/76/EC of 29 April 2004 providing the transitional periods regarding the application of the provisions of IRD, within the period of 1 July 2005 and 30 June 2009 Poland was entitled to levy a withholding tax on interest at the reduced rate of 10%. From 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2013, this rate is reduced to 5%. Full exemption will be available thereafter¹³. The same transitional periods were granted also to Portugal.

The IRD - Transitional periods for some EU Member States

Member State	Interest Payments	Royalty Payments
Bulgaria	31 December 2012	31 December 2014
Czech Republic	-	1 July 2011
Greece	1 July 2013	1 July 2013
Spain	-	1 July 2011
Latvia	1 July 2011	1 July 2013
Lithuania	1 July 2013	1 July 2011
Poland	1 July 2012	1 July 2013
Portugal	31 December 2010	1 July 2013
Romania		31 December 2010

Differences between taxation of dividends and interest lead to a phenomenon known as thin capitalization. Thin capitalization occurs where company's capital is made up of a much greater proportion of debt than equity¹⁴. Thin capitalization is usually one of the legal forms of reduction of tax burdens at the company's level. This phenomenon leads to the tax avoidance and causes significant budgetary losses (the erosion of taxable basis of the corporate income tax by the deduction of interest paid by a company to its shareholders – creditors). In order to protect the budgetary revenues from this erosion, many countries have introduced special tax

12) According to the IRD the paying company and the receiving company must be associated companies. Two companies are associated if (a) one of them holds directly or indirectly at least 25% of the capital of the other or (b) a third EU or EEA company holds directly at least 25% of the capital of the two companies; additionally a continuous minimum holding period of 2 years is required; relevant companies must have a legal form listed in the Annex to the Directive and be subject to a corporate income tax in country of their residence.

13) W. Nykiel, Z. Kukulski, M. Wilk, *Polish equity and debt financing regime in the light of neutrality principle, EC tax law and ECJ case-law* [in:] *European Tax Studies 2010*, No 1. Retrieved from <http://ste.seast.org/articoli/pdf/polonia.eng.per.pdf.2.pdf>.

14) See: D. Plitz, *International Aspects of Thin Capitalization Survey*, "International Tax Review" 1994, No 7/9, 24-25.

measures addressed to thinly capitalized companies restricting in certain situations the deduction of interest paid to company's shareholders. These measures are called: **thin capitalization rules (hereinafter: TCR)**. Basically the TCR apply solely to interest on loans provided to a company by its shareholders. Interest on loans paid to other creditors than shareholders are excluded from the scope of their application.

The EU member States apply the huge variety of legal instruments against thin capitalization among which the TCR can be regarded as an example. Usually the TCR set a fixed and acceptable from the taxation point of view proportion between company's equity capital and debts provided by its shareholders¹⁵. This proportion is manifested by a special measure, called the **debt-to-equity ratio**, usually **of 3 to 1**, where **3** represents the acceptable *value of company's debts* granted by its shareholders and **1** represents the *value of company's equity*. If the ratio is exceeded some part of interest paid by a company to its shareholders over this ratio will not constitute a deductible expenses for a debtor. Some countries still permit companies to be thinly capitalized (i.e. Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Iceland¹⁶, Liechtenstein¹⁷, Malta, Slovak Republic and Sweden), but in some the tax authorities in those countries are entitled to limit the amount that company can claim as a tax deduction on interest on the different legal basis than the TCR, for example: the general anti-avoidance clause, the general transfer pricing rules or even the substance over form doctrine developed by national courts. This form of reaction on thin capitalization is common *inter alia* in Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway¹⁸, and the UK. These measures against thin capitalization are applied particularly when company receives loans from its shareholders at non-commercial rates (i.e. excessive interest rate) or a loan is deemed to be a hidden profit distribution (i.e. the rate of interest paid by a company to its shareholders depends on company's profits – so called participation loans or the amount of loan exceeds the amount of money which would have been lent by a third non-related party). In all these cases interest can be **re-classified** for taxation purposes into dividend payment and taxed accordingly.

Despite the legal construction of rules against thin capitalization they modify the general rules concerning the deductibility of interest on loans paid by a company to its shareholders. That is why they have a direct effect both for application of bilateral double taxation conventions, the EU Treaty fundamental freedoms and domestic tax law provisions of the EU Member States implementing the PSD and The IRD.

15) R.A. Sommerhalder, *International Approaches to Thin Capitalization*, "European Taxation" 1996/3, 82; Z. Kukulski, *Niedostateczna kapitalizacja w prawie podatkowym*, Wydawnictwo C.H. Beck, Warszawa 2006, 87-90.

16) The European Economic Area Member State.

17) The European Economic Area Member State.

18) The European Economic Area Member State.

General Description of the Polish thin Capitalization Rules

The TCR were introduced in Poland in 1999¹⁹. Like in many other EU Member States, these rules are based on the debt-to-equity-ratio of 3:1 and limit the deductibility of interests paid by a domestic corporation (limited liability company and joint stock company) or domestic cooperative to its **direct shareholders** if the normative *ratio* mentioned above is exceeded. Also interests on loans provided to a company by its sister company are covered by these rules²⁰. Within *the ratio* shareholders are allowed to finance their company (or cooperative) by loans and other debt instruments without any restrictions. It should be mentioned that present Polish TCR in force apply to interests on loans provided both by domestic and foreign shareholders. This subject will be discussed in details in the third part of this article.

The level of debt-to equity-ratio in selected EU Member States

The level of debt-to equity-ratio	The EU Member State
1:1	Belgium
3:1	Bulgaria
4:1	Czech Republic
4:1	Denmark
1,5:1	France
1,5:1	Germany
3:1	Greece
3:1	Hungary
4:1	Italy
4:1	Latvia
4:1	Lithuania
85:15 in case of holding of participations exclusively	Luxembourg
2:1	Portugal
3:1	Poland
3:1	Romania
5:1 - from 2010 till 2012 and 4:1 from 2012	Slovenia
2:1	Spain

For the application of restrictions provided by the Polish TCR, a loan (credit) must be provided to a company (cooperative) by a group of shareholders who have

19) See: Article 16 Sec. 1 points 60 and 61 and Article 16 Sec. 6, 7 and 7a of the CIT Act.

20) Two companies are deemed to be “sister” companies if another company (a parent) holds at least 25% of the share capital of each of them.

the status of “**qualified lenders**”. This group covers: both **individual or corporate direct shareholders** who own – either alone or in aggregate (i.e. together with the other direct shareholders) – at least 25% of the share capital of a thinly capitalized company – as determined on the basis of number of votes (voting power) which can be attributed to these shares.

Initially the Polish TCR have not contained the legal definition of the term “loan” for the purposes of their application. The definition of the term “loan” was added from 2005 and now different types of debt financing instruments follow under the scope of application of the Polish TCR- for example emission of bonds and debentures, the irregular deposit and the bank deposit²¹.

The Polish TCR demand for their application the comparison of the value of company’s equity and the value of its debts provided by its shareholders in any form. In my opinion, the present measures governing the calculation of acceptable *debt-to-equity* ratio are strongly in favor of equity financing, because they artificially decrease the value of company’s equity, because for the purposes of calculation of the ratio, the nominal value of the company’s equity is not taken into account. Following parts of the equity are excluded when calculating the level of the *debt-to-equity ratio*: (a) the one which was not actually contributed by the shareholders, (b) the one which was covered by loans, credits and interest from such loans and credits granted by the shareholders which were converted into company’s share capital and (c) the one which was covered by tangibles and intangibles from which depreciation allowances are not allowed according to the CIT Act (i.e. immovable property, buildings)²². On the other hand, there are no measures providing how the value of company’s debts has to be calculated. The lack of proper regulations leads to the conclusion that it ought to be understood in the broadest sense as the total value of all company’s debts provided by a group of shareholders who can be determined as a “**substantial shareholders**”²³. This is completely different category of shareholders than “qualified lenders” as described above. The term “substantial shareholders” refers exclusively to direct shareholders who own at least 25% of the company’s share capital and also indirect shareholders with at least 25% of shares in the equity of the company’s direct shareholder. Indirect shareholders are excluded from this category. But also direct shareholders who in aggregate own at least 25% of company’s equity are not deemed as “substantial”, although they follow under the scope of application of TCR²⁴. It must be noted that loans made by this group of shareholders are not added to company’s

21) Art. 16 Sec. 7b of the CIT Act.

22) Art. 16c of the CIT Act.

23) W. Nykiel, Z. Kukulski, M. Wilk, *Polish equity and debt financing regime in the light of neutrality principle, EC tax law and ECJ case-law* [in:] European Tax Studies 2010, No 1. Retrieved from <http://ste.seast.org/articoli/pdf/polonia.eng.per.pdf.2.pdf>.

24) W. Nykiel, Z. Kukulski, M. Wilk, *Polish equity and debt financing regime in the light of neutrality principle, EC tax law and ECJ case-law* [in:] European Tax Studies 2010, No 1. Retrieved from <http://ste.seast.org/articoli/pdf/polonia.eng.per.pdf.2.pdf>.

debts in the process of calculation of the debt-to-equity ratio. However, it must be emphasized that interest paid by a company to indirect “substantial” shareholders does not follow in Poland under the restrictions provided by the TCR. Such interest is fully tax deductible even if the ratio is exceeded. This is a unique feature of the Polish TCR. Normally those rules restrict the deductibility of interest on loans (debts) provided by “substantial” shareholders and demand for the purposes of the debt-to-equity-ratio’s calculation the comparison of company’s capital with the value of company’s debts provided by those shareholders being “substantial”.

The Conformity of Polish Thin Capitalization Rules with the EU Treaty Fundamental Freedoms and ECJ’s Case Law

The concept of the internal market is based on the Custom Union and four fundamental freedoms: **free movement of goods** (Art. 28 of the TFEU Treaty (former Art. 23 of the EC Treaty), **free movement of persons** (Art. 45 of the TFEU Treaty (former Art. 39 of the EC Treaty) – which includes also **freedom of establishment** (Art. 49 of the TFEU Treaty (former Art. 43 of the EC Treaty), **free movement of services** (Art. 56 of the TFEU Treaty (former Art. 49 of the EC Treaty) and **free movement of capital** (Art. 63 of the TFEU Treaty (former Art. 56 of the EC Treaty). The EU law does not preclude the legislation of the EU Member State which restricts for tax purposes the deductibility of interest paid by a company resident of one EU Member State on loans granted by a direct or indirect shareholder who is resident of the other EU Member State. Moreover the TFEU Treaty allows the Member States to introduce special tax provisions – like thin capitalization rules – eliminating taxpayers’ behavior designed solely for purposes of tax avoidance or circumvention of domestic tax law regulations of a given State²⁵.

This general presumption is also accepted by the ECJ. In the *C-324/00 Lankhorst-Hohorst GmbH v. Finanzamt Steinfurt* case²⁶ the Court has examined the German TCRs and emphasizes that the **freedom of establishment** regulated in Art. 43 of the EC Treaty (now Art. 49 of the TFEU Treaty) should be interpreted as precluding a measure as that contained in Paragraph 8a(1), Head 2, of the *Körperschaftsteuergesetz* (The Corporate Income Tax Act). The German TCR were applicable exclusively to interest in respect of loans obtained from a shareholder not entitled to corporation tax credit according to the German domestic income tax regulations. In large majority of cases, the German tax credit was available only to resident companies, whereas – as a general rule – non-resident parent companies were not. As the result of application of the German TCR interest paid by a German resident subsidiary on loan capital provided by a non-German resident parent

25) S. van Thiel, *Justifications in Community Law for Income Tax Restrictions on Free Movement: Acte Clair Rules That Can Be Readily Applied by National Courts – Part 1*, “European Taxation” 2008, No 6, 279.

26) C-324/00 *Lankhorst-Hohorst GmbH v. Finanzamt Steinfurt*, from 12th December 2002.

company was taxed as a dividend (re-classification). In Court's opinion the limited scope of application of the German TCR introduced an unjustified restriction to the freedom of establishment because they provided different tax treatment between subsidiary companies according to whether or not their parent company had its seat in Germany by making less attractive for companies established in other Member States to exercise freedom of establishment in Germany.

Initially Polish TCR were not in line with freedom of establishment because they were similar to the German TCR. They applied exclusively to interest on loans granted by foreign "qualified" shareholders and domestic "qualified" shareholders exempt from corporate income tax in Poland. Therefore resident shareholders liable to corporate tax in Poland were put outside the scope of TCR. In the context of the ECJ ruling *Lankhorst – Hohhorst*²⁷ the scope of Polish TCR was amended. Since 2005 they have covered both cross-border and domestic situations²⁸.

Usually TCR – beside limitation of deductibility of interest paid by a thinly capitalized company – may have a specific purpose. They may be designed for preventing wholly artificial arrangements between a company and its "substantial" shareholder (i.e. parent company), in order to combat the circumvention of the tax legislation of the borrowing company's country of residence. The Court accepts such national provisions relating to thin capitalization if they are target at these particular forms of tax avoidance, inasmuch as they are based on the internationally-recognized arm's length principle. Those rules are generally aimed against hybrid financial instruments which blends elements of equity and debt financing regimes (forms of hidden profit distribution). Common examples of such instruments cover inter alia the excessive interest rate of interest when comparing to the opened market interest rate, profit participating loans, convertible bonds, back-to-back loans, guaranteed loans and perpetual debts²⁹.

This question was examined in details by the Court in two similar cases: *C-524/04 Test Claimants in the Thin Cap Group Litigation v. Commissioners of Inland Revenues*³⁰ and *C-105/07, NV Lammers & Van Cleeff v. Belgische Staat*³¹. In some EU Member States – like in countries in question: the United Kingdom and Belgium – there are no thin capitalization rules based on the debt-to-equity-ratio. Domestic tax law of those countries limits the deductibility of interest paid by a resident company

27) *Lankhorst – Hohhorst* from 12th December 2002 r. (C-324/00).

28) See: F. Świątała, O dostosowaniu ustawy o CIT do dyrektyw unijnych, PP 7/2004, s. 33; por. A. Kośmider, Odsetki od pożyczki udzielonej spółce kapitałowej przez jej wspólnika, PP 6/2004 s. 12

29) See: *The Use of Hybrid Financial Instruments in Cross-Border Transactions. Tax Considerations*, Amsterdam 1990, 75; Z. Kukulski, Niedostateczna kapitalizacja w prawie podatkowym, C.H. Beck, Warszawa 2006, 28-32.

30) *C-524/04 Test Claimants in the Thin Cap Group Litigation v. Commissioners of Inland Revenues*, from 13th March 2007.

31) *-105/07, NV Lammers & Van Cleeff v. Belgische Staat* from 17th January 2008.

in respect of “excessive debt” to non-resident related parties and re-classifies it as dividend payment for tax purposes. By contrast, interest paid to resident shareholders was not. Those rules were found by the Court not with compliance with the freedom of establishment (Art. 43 of the EC Treaty – now Art. 49 of the TFEU Treaty). In the Court’s opinion a tax provision which foresees a different tax treatment for a paying company (a subsidiary) solely on the reasons of the fact that the registered office of its parent company is located in another EU Member State, deprives the freedom of establishment of all meaning. As a consequence, foreign companies may refrain from managing a company established in the UK or in Belgium, or even refrain from acquiring, creating or maintaining a subsidiary in the UK or in Belgium.

According to the Court the restriction on the freedom of establishment **may only be justified by the need to prevent tax avoidance**. This justification exists where a transaction specifically targets wholly artificial arrangements designed to circumvent the legislation of a given EU Member State. In both cases: C-524/04 *Test Claimants in the Thin Cap Group Litigation v. Commissioners of Inland Revenues* and C-105/07, *NV Lammers & Van Cleeff v. Belgische Staat* – the restriction was based on a general presumption of the existence of an abusive practice in any case where a resident company is granted a loan by a related company resident in another Member State. That is why the Court considered that, even through the UK and Belgian TCR seek to combat abusive practices, they went beyond what is necessary to attain that objective³².

Final Remarks

In my opinion the Polish TCR seem to encourage the shareholders (both domestic and foreign) to choose the debt instead of equity financing. According to these rules the *debt-to-equity ratio* is calculated at the moment the interest is paid to company’s shareholders, so these restrictions can be easily avoided if a company pays off some of its debts before this moment. They are not based on the internationally-recognized arm’s length principle, which means that the Polish tax authorities are demanded to collect evidence proving the wholly artificial character of transactions which are designed for circumvention of tax provisions undertaken by taxpayers on the basis of the general anti-avoidance clause³³. In practice the application of this general anti-avoidance clause in thin capitalization situations is rather limited, because the matter whether there is a circumvention of tax provisions or not has to be decided by the court. This is a very time-consuming process.

32) T. O’Shea: *New Analysis: ECJ Overturns Belgian Thin Cap Rules*, *Tax Notes International* 2008, No 3, 837-838.

33) See: B. Brzezinski, Wykładnia prawa – tzw. Obejście ustawy podatkowej. Glosa do wyroku NSA z dnia 31 stycznia 2002 r., I SA/Gd 771/01, "Monitor Podatkowy" 2002, Nr 6, p. 50, M. Kalinowski, Granice legalności unikania opodatkowania w polskim systemie podatkowym, Toruń 2001, s. 13-22, Z. Kukulski, *op. cit.*, 16-35.

The Polish thin capitalization rules seem to be fair in compliance with the TFEU Treaty fundamental freedoms, especially with the freedom of establishment. First they do not reclassify interest paid by a thinly capitalized company to its shareholders into dividends for tax purposes. They solely limit in certain situations the level of deductibility of such interest from the debtors profits. These rules also do not recognize different types of loans (i.e. hybrid financial instruments) granted to a company by its shareholders.

In the light of the Court's decision – in general thin capitalization rules may constitute unjustified obstacle to the freedom of establishment if they are addressed exclusively to interest paid on loans granted by a shareholder who is resident of another EU Member State. Such a restriction based on the criterion of shareholder's residence cannot be accepted within the internal market because it provides less favorable tax treatment for EU cross-border investments.

Among all discussed above decisions of the Court of Justice of the EU, the *Lankhorst-Hohorst* case is the only one which had a significant impact on the Polish TCR. These rules initially were addressed solely and in fact basically to foreign “qualified” shareholders granting a loan to a Polish company. These rules were changed after the *Lankhorst-Hohorst* case by the Act of 18th November 2004 amending the Corporate Income Tax Act and some other acts. It means that after the date of 1st January 2005 thin capitalization rules in Poland cover both domestic and foreign interest payments.

It should be emphasized that the *Lankhorst-Hohorst* has not only the significant impact on the legislation process in Poland but also plays a very important role as an interpretative directive for application of the tax provisions by Polish national administrative courts. This decision was quoted *expressis verbis* in one of the latest judgments of the Polish Supreme Administrative Court (hereinafter the SAC)³⁴ where the SAC has examined the transitional rules established by Art. 9 of the Act of 18th November 2004 amending the Corporate Income Tax Act and some other acts and found these rules violating the EC Treaty freedom of establishment. In this judgment the SAC decided that transitional rules providing the exclusion from the application of the amended thin capitalization rules to loans provided before the date of 1st January 2005 in fact limit the restrictions solely to loans granted by foreign shareholders. In practice this situation means that the Polish TCR in force between the date of Poland's accession to the EU (before 1st May 2004) and between entering into force the amendments (until 31st December 2004) adopting the ECJ's decision in *Lankhorst-Hohorst* case into domestic tax regulations still in fact restrict purely cross-border situations. This situation cannot be accepted as the justified restriction on the freedom of establishment.

34) See: judgment of The Supreme Administrative Court of 21st September 2010 (sygn. act II FSK 595, not published).

The European business environment from a small and medium-sized enterprises perspective. Opportunities, threats, new challenges.

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Abstract

The main aim of the article is to present the complexity of the business environment, the impact of the external factors on the business development, diagnose the selected benefits and threats of the European Single Market from a Small and Medium-sized Enterprises perspective and the most important problems that European SMEs are facing and which prevent their growth, identify the main opportunities and threats to the Polish economy and companies in the condition of the integration with the Single European Market. The European Single Market is a very competitive environment. This means that inefficient companies will suffer a loss of market share and may have to close down. However, efficient firms can benefit from economies of scale, increased competitiveness and lower costs, as well as expect profitability to be a result. Managing of the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the European Union requires in-depth knowledge of the European business environment, the European Union's policy towards the development of SMEs and the conditions of functioning of these companies in the complexity environment. SMEs need to learn how to compete on the enlarged integrated market.

Keywords: *Business environment; European integration; Single European market; Small and medium-sized enterprises; Competition; Competitiveness*

The best managers understand the environment in which they operate, the more likely they are to be successful, either in exploiting ever changing opportunities or in avoiding potential disasters.

I. Introduction: What is meant by the business environment?

Management of the enterprises requires in-depth knowledge of the business environment. Why? The business environment refers to the environment within which business decision making takes place. The business environment may be defined as the total surroundings, which have a direct or indirect bearing on the functioning of business. It may also be defined as the set of external factors, such as political/legal, economic, social/ cultural, technological factors, which are uncontrollable in nature and affects the business decisions of a firm.

Political/Legal Factors

This includes the political system, the government policies and attitude towards the business community. All these aspects have a bearing on the strategies adopted by the enterprises. The stability of the government also influences business and related activities to a great extent. It sends a signal of strength, confidence to various interest groups and investors. Further, ideology of the political party also influences the business organization and its operations. Similarly, business will be affected by the legal framework in which they operate. This refers to set of laws, regulations, which influence the business organizations and their operations. Examples include: industrial relations regulations, product safety standards, regulations governing pricing in the privatized industries, laws preventing collusion between firms to keep prices up, etc. Issues of political risk, the rule of law, contract enforcement and institutional stability are especially important for decisions to set-up a business or invest in developing and transitional economies.

Economic Factors

The economic environment includes economic conditions, economic policies and economic system of the country. The economic conditions of a nation refer to a set of economic factors that have great influence on business organizations and their operations. These include gross domestic product, per capita income, markets for goods and services, availability of capital, foreign exchange reserve, growth of foreign trade, strength of capital market etc. All these help in improving the pace of economic growth. All business activities and operations are directly influenced by the economic policies framed by the government/ the national bank. Some of the important economic policies are: industrial policy, fiscal policy, monetary policy, foreign investment policy, trade policy. Every company has to function strictly within the policy framework and respond to the changes therein.

Generally, the macroeconomic environment considers how national and international economic circumstances affect all business. According to J. Sloman and K. Hinde (2007:7), the microeconomic environment includes:

All the economic factors that are specific to a particular firm operating in its own particular market. Thus one firm may be operating in a highly competitive market, whereas another may not. One firm may be faced by rapidly changing consumer tastes (e.g. a designer clothing manufacturer), while another may be faced with a virtually constant consumer demand (e.g. a potato merchant); one firm may face rapidly rising costs, whereas another may find that costs are constant or falling.

Social/Cultural Factors

This aspect of the business environment concerns social factors like customs, traditions, values, beliefs, poverty, literacy, life expectancy rate, etc. These include: attitudes towards working conditions and the length of the working day, equal opportunities for different groups of people (whether by ethnicity, gender, physical attributes, etc.), the nature of purity of products, images portrayed in advertising. The social/cultural environment also includes social trends, such as an increase in the average age of the population, or changes in attitudes towards seeking paid employment while bringing up small children.

The word “ethics” originated from the Greek word “ethos” meaning character, conduct and activities of the people based on moral principles. Honesty, truthfulness, compassion, sympathy, feeling of brotherhood etc. are considered ethical. Similarly, ethics from a business point of view or business ethics are the moral principles which guide the behaviour of businessmen or business activities in relation to the society. It provides certain code of conduct to carry on the business in a morally justified manner. Running the business without adopting unfair practices, being honest and truthful about quality of goods, charging fair prices, abiding to laws, paying taxes, duties and fees to the government honestly are some of the ethical behaviour of business (Jennings, 2009:3). In recent times, various ethical issues, especially concerning the protection of the environment, have had a big impact on the actions of business and the image that many firms seek to present.

Technological Factors

This includes the methods, techniques and approaches adopted for production of goods and services and its distribution. The varying technological environments of different countries affect the designing of products. Over the last twenty years the pace of technological change has quickened (Link, Siegel, 2003). This has had a huge impact not only on how firms produce products, but also on how their business is organised. In order to survive and grow in the market, a business has to adopt the technological changes. It may be noted that scientific research for improvement

and innovation in products and services is a regular activity in most of the big industrial organisations. The information-technology revolution is also enabling much more rapid communication and making it possible for many workers to do their job from home or while travelling.

The division of the factors affecting a firm into political, economic, social and technological is commonly known as a PEST analysis (or PESTEL analysis, where environmental and legal factors need to be examined in more depth). This framework is widely used by organizations to audit their business environment and to help them establish a strategic approach to their business activities. Business must constantly take such factors into account when devising and acting upon its business strategy. It is important to recognize that there is a great overlap and interaction among these sets of factors. Laws and government policies reflect social attitudes; technological factors determine economic ones, such as costs and productivity, technological progress often reflects the desire of researchers to meet social and technological needs, and so on. As well as such interaction, we must also be aware of the fact that the business environment is constantly changing. Business environment is multifaceted, complex, and dynamic in nature. Some of these changes are gradual, some are revolutionary. To be successful, a business needs to understand and to adapt to these changes and, wherever possible, take advantage of them.

II. European business environment in the light of the EU Single Market

The world economy seems to have been increasingly forming into a series of trade blocs, based upon regional groupings of countries (Lynch, 2010):

- a European region/the European Union/,
- an Asian region/ASEAN, *The Association of South-East Asian Nations* and APEC, *The Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Forum*/,
- a North American region/NAFTA, *North America Free Trade Association*/,
- a Latin American region /Mercosur, *Southern Common Market*/,
- in Africa *the Economic Community of West African States /ECOWAS*/.

Such trade blocs are examples of preferential trading arrangements. These arrangements involve trade restrictions with the rest of the world and lower or any restrictions between the members. Preferential trading has the greatest potential to benefit countries whose domestic market is too small, taken on its own, to enable them to benefit from economies of scale, and where they face substantial barriers to their exports. There are three possible forms that such trading arrangement might take:

- **Free trade areas**

A free trade area is where member countries remove tariffs and quotas between themselves, but retain whatever restrictions each member chooses

with non-member countries. Some provision will have to be made to prevent imports from outside coming into the area via the country with the lowest external tariff.

- **Customs unions**

A customs union is like a free trade area, but in addition members must adopt common external tariffs and quotas with non-members countries.

- **Common markets**

A common market is where member countries operate as a single market. Like a customs union there are no tariffs and quotas between member countries and there are common external tariffs and quotas. But a common market goes further than this. A full common market includes the following features: a common system of taxation; common laws and regulations governing production, employment and trade. It also includes the free movement of labour and capital. It might also include features such as a single currency or fixed exchange rates between members, and the pursuit of a common macroeconomic policy (De Grauwe, 2009).

The EU Single Market



The most significant and advanced trade blocs, however, are to be found not in the developing world but in the developed, notably in Europe and North America.

The two most powerful area of trade blocs are the European Union (EU) and the North America Free Trade Association (NAFTA).

From Customs Union to the Single Market

The European Economic Community (EEC) was formed by the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and came into operation on 1 January 1958. The original six member countries of the EEC (*Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands and West Germany*) had already made a move towards integration with the formation

of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952 (Johnson, Turner, 2006: 33). This had removed all restrictions on trade in coal, steel and iron between the six countries. The aim had been to gain economies of scale and allow more effective competition with the USA and other foreign producers. In 1968 EU member states have removed customs barriers between themselves and introduced a common customs policy towards other countries. But this still only made the European Economic Community (EEC) a customs union, since a number of restrictions on internal trade remained. The Community was far from a true common market: there were all sorts of non-tariff barriers, such as special regulations designed to favour domestic producers, governments giving contracts to domestic producers and so on. Leaders from business and politics wanted to harmonize laws among countries and resolve policy discrepancies.

In the mid-1980s the European Communities launched the so called Single Market Programme with the aim of eliminating any existing barriers between member states/all sorts of non-tariff barriers, such as special regulations designed to favour domestic producers, governments giving contracts to domestic producers and so on/ (Cecchini, 1988). The Single European Act (SEA) was the first major revision of the 1957 Treaty of Rome, was signed at Luxemburg on 17 February 1986 (came into effect on 1 July 1987). A core element of the SEA was to create a Single Market within the EU by 1992, a date by which, it was hoped, the legislative reforms seen necessary would have been completed. The SEA was aimed at eliminating the remaining barriers to trade among member countries. The expected consequences were increases in competition, industrial restructuring and reallocation of economic activities. A Single Market is composed of a customs union with common policies on product regulation and freedom of movement of goods, services, capital, labour (persons) (*Union Européenne – Versions Consolidées du Traité...*, 2002). Since 2007, the European Commission has started to advocate (in the light of the Lisbon Strategy) making the free movement of knowledge - the fifth freedom, in addition to the established four freedoms. Not only goods, but also factors of production & knowledge can move freely between member states of EU (Baldwin, Wyplosz, 2009).

The Benefits and Threats of the Single Market

It is difficult to quantify the consequences of the Single Market, given that many occur over a long period. Also it is difficult to know to what extent the changes taking place are the direct results of the Single Market. Nevertheless it is possible to identify the selected benefits and threats that have resulted, many of which have been substantial.

- **Reduction in the direct costs of barriers**

This category includes administrative costs, border delays and technical regulations. Their abolition or harmonisation has led to substantial cost savings. As barriers to trade are reduced, a country's industry becomes

more productive on average as those sectors or companies able to exploit comparative advantage prosper at the expense of previously protected or subsidized sectors. These static net gains are often larger in relative terms for smaller economies, where economies of scale are less able to be exploited.

- **Economies of scale**

With industries based on a Europe-wide scale, many firms and their plants can be large enough to gain the full potential economies of scale. Such gains have varied from industry to industry depending on the minimum efficient scale of a plant or firm. Economies of scale have also been gained from mergers and other forms of industrial restructuring.

- **Greater competition**

Increased competition causes commercial firms to develop new products, services and technologies (greater selection and better quality of the goods and services for the consumers). Competition puts businesses under constant pressure to offer the best possible range of goods at the best possible prices, etc. Greater competition stimulates greater innovation, the greater flow of technical information and knowledge, the rationalisation of production, can encourage efficiency.

- **The development of monopoly/ oligopoly power**

The free movement of capital encourages the development of giant firms with substantial economic power. This can lead to higher, not lower prices, less choice for the consumer, can eliminate competitors, etc. It all depends on just how effective competition is, and how effective competition policy is in preventing monopolistic and collusive practices.

The biggest objection raised against the Single Market is a political one: **the loss of national sovereignty**. Governments find it much more difficult to intervene at a microeconomic level in their own economies (Rosamond, 2000: 139).

The Single Market does not deliver benefits automatically. European laws have to be adopted, written into national law and enforced in every Member State (Sapir, Aghion, Bertola, Hellwig, Pisani-Ferry, Rosati, Viñals, Wallace, 2003; Barysh, Tilford, Whyte, 2008; Smith, 2010).

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the EU

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises³⁵ are socially and economically important, since they represent 99% of all enterprises in the EU. They provide around 65 million jobs and contribute to entrepreneurship and innovation (*European SMEs under Pressure...*, 2011). SMEs face particular difficulties which the EU and national legislation try to address by granting them various advantages.



The Mediterranean countries (Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal, and southern France) have smaller firms than the northern European countries. The further north one goes in Europe, the larger average firm size tends to become. Denmark, Germany, France, and Britain, for example have an average enterprise size over double that of Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Greece. The Scandinavian countries have the largest enterprises of all.

What are the most important problems that European SMEs are facing and which prevent their growth?

Administrative and regulatory burden

SMEs still bear a disproportionate regulatory and administrative burden in comparison to larger businesses. There is still a need to reduce the time and costs to set-up a business. Common standards should be developed according to the

35) The Commission adopts a new definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to replace, from 1 January 2005, the definition laid down in Recommendation 96/280/EC. A microenterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 2 million; a small enterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 50 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 10 million; a medium-sized enterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 250 persons and whose annual turnover does not exceed EUR 50 million or whose annual balance-sheet total does not exceed EUR 43 million.

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/enterprise/business_environment/n26026_en.htm

needs of each specific sector and should not be too costly or too complicated to understand and use. It is also important to tackle the problem of bankruptcy and the stigma that it generates and to give a second chance to entrepreneurs who fail non-fraudulently.

Access to finance

There is the necessity of improving current policies and instruments to facilitate SMEs' access to finance/awareness, procedures, cost, better adequacy of products ect./ (*Survey on the Access to Finance...*, 2010). Small businesses often have difficulties financing their growth and innovations. Getting an innovative firm off the ground or expanding it requires money, but financing SMEs is a risky proposition for financiers. To solve this, Europe needs more investors and banks willing to take the risk, and European entrepreneurs need a better understanding of investors' and banks' concerns in order to be able to provide assurances about the soundness of their proposal. The European Commission is working with the Member States to stimulate the provision of loans and venture capital (*An action plan to improve access to finance...*, 2011)

Access to international markets

Numerous studies demonstrate the direct link between internationalisation and company's competitiveness. Pro-active internationalisation reinforces growth, enhances competitiveness and supports the long term sustainability of companies. Yet European SMEs still depend largely on their domestic markets despite the opportunities brought by globalisation and by the enlarged Single Market. While 25% of EU-based SMEs were involved in exports to the Internal Market and beyond in the last three years, only 13% of EU SMEs are internationally active outside the EU through trade, investment or other forms of cooperation with foreign partners (*Small Business, Big World...*, 2011:2) Extending activities beyond their own country is a big additional investment for SMEs which requires additional resources. They also face more complex issues such as compliance with foreign laws, for example mandatory rules of contract law, customs rules, technical regulations and standards, managing technology transfer and protecting intellectual or industrial property rights. In dealing with such challenges SMEs are usually less well equipped with in-house expertise and financial or human resources than larger enterprises. Networks among SMEs and among SMEs and large companies and financing for going abroad are among the suggestions for helping SMEs to go global. The EU's strategy for SMEs, laid out in the Small Business Act for Europe (SBA), launched by the Commission in June 2008, endorsed by the European Council in December 2008 and reviewed in 2011, called on the EU and the Member States to support SMEs and encourage them to benefit from the growth of markets outside the EU, in particular through market specific support and business training activities (*Think*

Small First..., 2008). In the current economic context it becomes urgent to look for new sources of growth.

Taxation

The different and complex tax regimes across the EU are not competitive enough, hinder the development of cross-border fundraising and investment activities and lead to additional costs. Making it easier for businesses to pay taxes would result in cost savings and greater ease of doing business, which would encourage the growth of existing businesses and the creation of new ones. An efficient tax system should allow taxpayers to calculate their tax liability easily, pay their taxes and file their tax returns, and redress their grievances with limited costs. In addition, it should include taxpayer-friendly methods for tax administrators to verify tax liability and ensure that correct taxes have been paid (*A Handbook for Tax Simplification*, 2009:6).

Intellectual Property Rights protection systems

European Union has established an independent institutional framework for Union-wide intellectual property systems. A key problem is the relationship between these Union-wide systems and the national intellectual property systems and provisions on the protection of intellectual property rights. A uniform or one-size model for the optimal arrangement of these relationships does not exist. Intellectual Property is an integral part of value creation in innovative SMEs and as such is a critical element in obtaining funding, e.g. venture capital (*EVCA 's response to the European Commission consultation...*, 2008: 2).

Other problems:

- Access to public procurements
- Unfair/too strong competition
- Labour law
- Access to EU structural funds
- Access to information/appropriate support for newly created enterprises.

The rules governing the four freedoms of movement – for goods, services, labour and capital are not, by themselves, sufficient to achieve the objectives of the Single Market and to make the EU “*the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world*” according to the Lisbon Strategy (Mundschenk, Stierle, Stierle von Schütz, Traistaru (eds.), 2006: 15). These objectives can be achieved if national and European policies create a favourable climate for business to grow across borders. Firms need to be confident that they can compete on a level playing field and that appropriate legal structures exist to allow all businesses, whatever their size, to operate effectively across the European Union. If SMEs have a significant impact on Europe's economy, they need to grow bigger – take on more employees, and

EU membership referendum (Clem, Chodakiewicz, 2004) – Poland and other 9 countries became the members of EU on 1 May 2004.

Poland membership in the EU has brought a lot of profits for Polish economy coming from different sources related directly and indirectly with integration processes. The transposition of EU legislation allowed Poland to profoundly reform the way in which its economy is regulated. The further benefits from integration processes Poland expect due to the accession into euro zone. The standard analysis shows that Polish benefits are to be comparable to the elimination of non tariffs barriers under the Single Market framework and will give additional moderate impulse to economic growth. This additional growth would come mainly from: intensification of trade with the EU member countries, increase of competition on Polish market, elimination of risk of rate exchange of Polish zloty and transaction costs, increase of attractiveness of Polish market for international direct investment, new possibilities for Polish companies to finance their activities on European Single Market. According to the National Bank of Poland studies:

Improvement of perception of the national economy due to the introduction of the single currency should also lead to the mitigating macroeconomic risk. Macroeconomic stability and credibility are of key importance to economy as they influence possibilities and willingness of investors to make investment decisions, decide on allocation of economic resources, and impact the pace of economic growth. In the long run, chances connected with the said benefits may materialise, such as enhanced competition, trade intensification, increase in investments, or tighter integration of financial markets, which may finally translate into accelerated economic growth, increase in employment and income, and an overall increase in prosperity. (Report on Full Membership of the Republic of Poland....: 89).

The economic costs may occur in the long run which are related to the fact that economic structure of Polish economy is not perfectly similar to the EU core countries and there is low flexibility of wages. The importance of costs bearing from functioning of common currency in Poland would be related to further structural changes in the economy, growth of productivity and reforms of the labour market.

The privatisation of Small and Medium state-owned companies and a liberal law on establishing new firms has encouraged the development of the private business sector, which has been the main drive for Poland's economic growth. At the end of the year 2010, there were in Poland over 3.63 million of SMEs. Poland's accession to the EU created for Polish entrepreneurs new possibilities, different advantages, but also threats (Wach, 2007). 90% of the entrepreneurs see advantages of Poland's EU accession on running their business activity.

The largest **advantages** include:

- abolishing custom duties,
- access to EU structural funds,
- increasing interest among foreign investors with investing in Poland.

The **disadvantages** of EU accession among others include:

- high costs of adjusting to the European standards,
- bureaucracy,
- lack of adequate labour force on the local market.

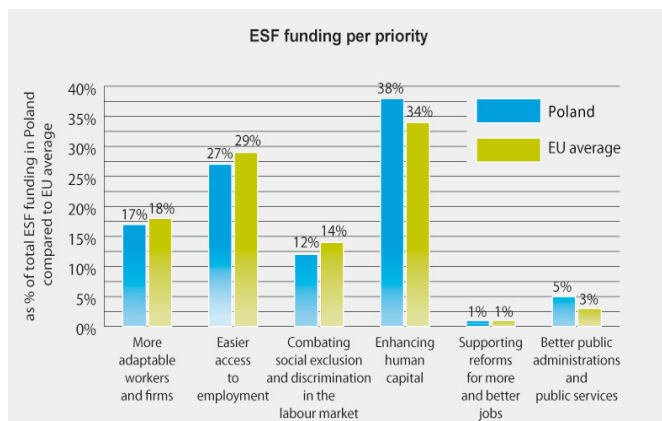
Abolishing custom duties

The entrepreneurs exporting to the EU member states have noted a simplification of export procedures, decrease of bureaucracy and improvement in border crossing. After accession to the EU the Polish agro-food sector became an export “hit”: growth rate of agricultural export was almost twice faster than import growth. The positive trade balance with the EU partners in agro-food sector indicated that Polish farmers were able to compete on the EU Single Market. The biggest trade partner of Poland is Germany. UK, Czech Republic, France, Italy and Russia were the next destinations, whereas Russia, China, Italy and France were after Germany the most important import partners. The product structure of Polish exports has been seriously changing over the recent years. According to the PAiIZ and PwC (2011:14):

Between 2000 and 2010 machinery and transport equipment became the main group of products exported by companies located in Poland. As an example, the window panes produced in the new Pilkington Automotive factory will be sold to major world car makers e.g. General Motors, Ford, Volkswagen and Fiat and in the future some 70% of the facility’s production will be exported.

Access to EU structural funds

Poland has benefited from access to EU structural funds (EUR 68 billion in the current financial perspective: 2007-2013), which contribute to the improvement of the competitive ability of Polish enterprises, to the development of human resources, etc. (*Innovative Economy...*, 2007).

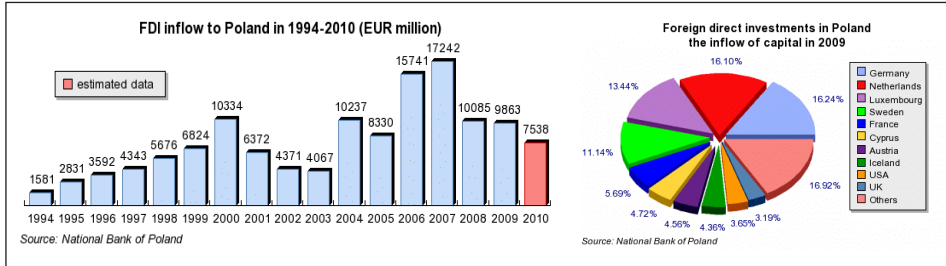


Source: Ministry of Regional Development, 2007

The EU funds generally positively contributed to economic growth, improved many sectors of Polish economy like transport, environmental protection, education, functioning of the SMEs and convergence among regions.

Increasing interest among foreign investors with investing in Poland

After accession to the EU, Poland continued to lead in attracting Foreign Direct Investment in central European Region. Poland is the 6th most attractive investment location in the world (*World Investment...*, 2011).



According to the data from the National Bank of Poland, the EU partners are the biggest foreign investors in Poland and about 85% of the FDI in Poland originated from them. The key reasons why they have decided to do business here are: strategic location, investment potential and human resources. Another important factor that increases the competitiveness of the Polish economy are investment incentives. Capital originated from the EU partners was invested in a number of sectors: car industry, telecommunication, textile, business services, real estates, financial intermediation, trade and repairs, etc. Among the sectors which have been experiencing dynamic development and enjoying the greatest popularity there are industries which have a long tradition in Poland e.g. the aviation sector, sectors which require qualified people e.g. BPO sector, industries with a well-developed net of suppliers e.g. the automotive industry and those which have a considerable untapped development potential like the renewable energy sectors. According to R.J. Shapiro (2011: 1):

The modernization process driven by FDI proceeds in many ways. The transfers involve not only advanced technologies and other equipment but also advanced management skills and operational knowledge, all of which can be emulated and reproduced by domestic companies. The FDI-based enterprises also stimulate the expansion of local firms or the creation of new domestic businesses to provide local goods and services for the new enterprises. Further, they create new import-export networks which local firms also use.

For example, FDI transfers proceed through joint ventures between a Western multinational company and a local company partner. The multinational provides new technologies, operational knowledge and management skills, and its network of international suppliers and customers. Over time, skilled workers and executives from the local company acquire new operational and managerial knowledge and techniques and sometimes use them to set up their own modern businesses. The

presence of new FDI-based enterprises leads to the establishment of new domestic firms formed to provide local goods and services which the FDI-based enterprises require, and also to existing local firms upgrading their operations to provide them.

High costs of adjusting to the European standards

Some enterprises noticed negative effects of the membership mainly as a consequence of additional costs stemming from the adoption of the Community regulations and standards. But, almost 50% of enterprises consider that the cost of products certification increased, what was necessary in order to introduce these products onto the market.

Bureaucracy

There are still some obstacles in the process of dealing with the EU structural and Cohesion Funds in Poland. Firstly, problems occur on the level of application for funding. They include several kinds of barriers, such as complicated legal regulations, procedures, formal requirements, such as the need for numerous documents, certificates and extensive paperwork. The decentralized system of managing structural programmes, the poor quality of relevant legislation, insufficient public financing for infrastructure development projects and the co-financing of infrastructural investments, and the inadequate capacity of public administration are to blame for the slow absorption EU budgeted funds in Poland.

Lack of adequate labour force on the local market

A very important problem is a brain-draining trend concerning well-qualified workers, who after 1 of May 2004 are quitting Poland in order to work abroad. The EU members were among the most important destinations for Polish emigration and included: UK, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands. Some branches of industries and services started to complain about the lacking of adequate labour force on the local market (Iglicka, Ziolk-Skrzypczak, 2010).

IV. Conclusions & Recommendations

- A clear understanding of the business environment (the political, legal, economic, social, cultural, technological factors) helps the business in the following ways: determining opportunities and threats (for meeting the challenges successfully), giving direction for growth (it enables the business to identify the areas for growth and expansion of their activities), continuous learning (environmental analysis makes the task of managers easier in dealing with business challenges; the managers are motivated to continuously update their knowledge, understanding and skills to meet the predicted changes in business activity), image building (environmental

understanding helps the business organizations in improving their image by showing their sensitivity to the environment within which they are working), meeting competition (it helps the firms to analyse the competitors' strategies and formulate their own strategies accordingly), identifying firm's strength and weakness (business environment helps to identify the individual strengths and weaknesses in view of the technological and global development).

- The European Union (EU), as well as its member states, tries to improve and create the best conditions for SMEs development. Despite the important progress attained, there still remain several restrictions, which put a limit to the full operation of a Single Market for goods, services, labour and capital within the EU. Policy measures need to take into account the needs of European SMEs. They should give concrete solutions to the diverse challenges that different SMEs face along their lifecycle. Mechanisms to improve the regulatory environment for SMEs should include improving the understanding of the impact of regulatory change on small businesses, the consideration of exemptions or a phased introduction of regulations for small companies and the provision of clear and reliable guidance.
- Poland's accession to the EU provides a unique chance of increasing the competitiveness of the economy and reducing the distance to most advanced European economies in the long term, despite substantial adjustment costs. This chance is associated not only with additional funds available from the EU and from the increased FDIs, but also with acceptance of strict rules, standards and mechanisms of the Union, obligatory for all enterprises and institutions acting on the Single Market. Changes in regulatory background (in such areas as financial markets, company and competition law, accounting, Intellectual Property Rights, etc.) have affected significantly the practical activity of the majority of enterprises in Poland.
- The perception of changes on the market, an advantages and disadvantages of EU accession depends on the scope of the enterprise's activity. Local operators, not cooperating with foreign partners, felt only very slightly impact of Poland's joining the Union. Their situation is influenced first by macroeconomic factors linked to the dynamics of the national market. Despite undertaken adjustment and adaptation effort, many enterprises (particularly SMEs and in these branches of industry where restructuring process has been slow) have failed to acquire the ability to act in the conditions of strong international competition. This fact proves low competitive ability of such entities which still have a limited growth potential. Other enterprises have re-oriented their approach to increase competitiveness in reaction to changes in external environment. They

have increased their competitive potential, use it more skillfully, change competition tools (in favour of non-price tools), better identify sources of competitive advantage, and improve their market position in Poland and on the EU Single Market. They are assuming competition strategies based on cooperative enhancing of competitive ability and competitiveness.

- Managers/owners and employees of companies should systematically widen their knowledge on these factors and mechanisms which are significant from the point of view of the functioning and development of the enterprise and try to use them skillfully. The interaction between the business and its environment helps in identifying the opportunities for and threats to the business. It opens up new frontiers of growth for the business firms. Environmental analysis makes the task of managers easier in dealing with business challenges. It helps the firms to analyse the competitors' strategies and formulate their own strategies accordingly, keeping in mind its own strength and weakness.
- Enterprises should aim at transforming a company into a learning organization. They should manage knowledge, i.e., engage in activities which relate to identification of the already possessed and necessary from the point of view of the company knowledge, its creation and diffusion, and use both in acting and protecting.

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Contemporary challenges of quality management

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Abstract

The following article concerns contemporary challenges facing a conception of the quality management. The author starts his deliberations with analyzing a few key arguments for the benefit of quality, which may determine popularity of this idea in the contemporary management. Afterwards, two perspectives are analyzed: complex and a relating conception of Total Quality Management (TQM), and systemic together with a conception of the quality management systems. The idea of quality management interrelates inseparably with improving. The next part of the article is concentrated on the heterogeneous nature of improvements whose implementation through innovations and kaizen is analyzed.

Keywords: *Quality; Quality management; Quality management system; Kaizen; 5S*

Introduction

The quality management in contemporary enterprises has already become not a distinguishing mark of a competitive position but necessity enabling their everyday functioning. Quality as an idea has gained great popularity among both theoreticians and practitioners of management. However, is it possible to define in

a coherent way such a wide concept as quality exactly is? At first glance, it may seem to be impossible. However, the general system theory is helpful because as an applied science in the form of system theory of organization it has enabled not only comprehending this incomprehensible and ambiguous quality but also allowed to manage quality in the complex grasp. The following text concentrates precisely on challenges of this type connected with comprehension, application, and development of the quality management conception. A journey through these several pages starts with explanations of some proqualitative arguments – arguments for applying this conception in its whole complex nature. In fact, these are the complex and system attitudes of quality management that are discussed in the following parts of the article, and try to explain how to manage better and better – more complex and systemic. However, in order to fulfil these considerations, it is necessary to lean over the issue of the nature of introducing changes – improvements; it is elaborated on in the next part of the article. The summary and at the same time conclusion of the article are words of a manager of one of the companies that is a power in terms of the quality management. It is a conclusion of the article but is it a finishing line and goal for a reader? The author hopes it is not, and that the following text is only a refuelling stop but not a port of destination. Otherwise, the idea of constant improvement being a foundation of quality management can no longer exist.

Arguments for the Benefit of Quality?

At the beginning, it is worth to consider the phenomenon of quality in the contemporary enterprises, why the idea has gained this, mentioned already in the introduction, popularity. As a result of such reflection, a dilemma appears: “more or better?”. From this perspective, there are doubts what better (quality) means and what only more (quantity). Greater profit is a positive phenomenon; understanding chase of quantity this way, increased to the limit production schedules, practically unrealizable sales plans, murderous piecework – briefly speaking, one-sided profit should be a motive force for progress and development. From general observations it is known that this way is still inappropriate. In turn, on the other hand; there is a chase of quality, i.e. improvements, constant development, general engagement, and serving customers. After all, these are costs, risk of mistakes resulting from changes, necessity of adapting to new organizational practices, changes of the company’s culture, and attempt to look at an organization through the customer’s glasses. All these, aimed at leading to development, cast a shadow on the profit and may endanger an organization’s existence. Trying to brighten the dilemma “more or better” it is worth to concentrate on synthetic arguments for quality proposed by John Beckfod who enumerates three qualitative imperatives (Beckfod, 2002: 3): economic, social and ecological. Quality management from the point of view of economic effectiveness is the only way of its growth, and consequently, organizational

development. However, it is important to make quality management an authentic strategy manifesting itself also in the deepest layers of an organizational system, so in an attitude of a team and ubiquitous quality culture. Quality management in the contemporary market realities cannot be limited only to the technological sphere but also must be broadened on psycho-social subsystems. Otherwise, an isolation of quality in the limits of production lines and leaving it within production engineers' competences exclude service organizations, public institutions, and non-governmental organizations from the peloton of the quality civilization. There is common knowledge that even normalized systems of quality management (as popular as ISO 9001) do not propagate such exclusion. Unfortunately, however, among many contemporary organizations a view still exists that quality management means, above all, a product. A product attitude has been already supplemented with process and system attitudes many years ago, and a direction of evolution enables to forecast a holistic attitude in future. Quality management realized this way minimizes economic risk of failure and makes profit progress possible, which so easily becomes the only touchstone of effectiveness of functioning of many organizations. Thus, it should be underlined that management based on "mediocrity", so non-systematic, devoid of thinking and strategic acting, fragmentary and chaotic, is economically not only unreasonable but also, simply, destructive. Therefore, one cannot explain management based on low quality with pressure of customers because the great majority of them prefer "better" goods and services, thus more functional, more durable, healthier, all this certainly in relation to the price; but it also cannot be an excuse for inefficient organizations. As Peter Drucker claims, "the only proper definition of a business goal is creation of customers" (Drucker, 1998: 52). These organizations which do not cope with this are unable to manage effectively; they try to find excuses in mediocrity of management and multi-sided critique of all management tools. The fact that they are not able to use them does not equal with their uselessness but with inefficiency of users.

Quality is also a socially useful idea. It is impossible to build development neither in macro scale (civilizational development) nor in micro scale (development of organizations and individuals) basing on everything but quality. Therefore, quality management goes far beyond the walls of an organization and more or less formalized tools of improvements. This conception finds its foundations in the quality of life and quality of work, decides, to the great extent, about frustrations and stresses, or motivations and pride with work. Many years ago Elton Mayo (Mayo, 1930:256) already showed in his research that people wanted to do their job well, and still today managers professing the only right Theory X by McGregor (McGregor, 1972:133), or proponents of Taylorian systems of the scientific work organization may be an obstacle. From the social perspective, management basing on low quality not only does not contribute to the organizational development, but also is, simply, demoralizing. An emphasis on finding and managing talents (not

only the most talented employees) is one of the most effective ways for success; on the other hand, wasting social potential leads to coming back to historically distant times when, e.g. in the factories of Henry Ford workers could not talk with each other (also during lunch breaks), laugh and smile, whistle or hum, because it was treated as a sign of absenteeism and insubordination (Piotrowski, 2005: 640). Then, admittedly technologized and based only on the financial motivation management system was, according to Ford, a social and organizational innovation, today such activity cannot be any longer judged in categories of social progress because of a different (one wishes to say higher) level of development and social awareness.

However, diffusion of ideas of the quality and quality management is impossible without the perception of the importance of natural surrounding in contemporary organizations. From the theoretical and academic perspective, this sphere of management science is known quite well, much is being said about ecological responsibility of an organization, ecological awareness of managers and customers who are becoming more “green”. There is a number of useful tools within the range of environmental management (wide series of ISO 14000 norms, European EMAS, Responsible Care, or Cleaner Production), ecological philosophy comes to the aid of those searching for deeper reflection, and not only mechanical application of the tools (deep ecology of A. Neass (Devall, Sessions, 1995), ecological humanism of H. Skolimowski (Skolimowski, 1993), Gaiá’s hypothesis of J. Lovelock (Lovelock, 2003)). In practice, however, dissonance between the idea of quality and ecology is observable. On the other hand, this improvement of life’s quality as the most general from pro-quality ideas cannot be accomplished without any improvement of the natural surrounding’s condition. Among organizations, actions of superficial not strategic Public Relations’ character are often visible and emphasize irrelevant aspects of organizational work as if they were ecological, whereas strategic values are left conventional and inconsistent with the sustainable development, thereby with quality management. Indissolubility of these two ideas should be strongly emphasized. It is a much more difficult task than connecting quality and economy, or quality and society. For some reasons, it is difficult for the contemporary generation to understand a global context of influences of environmental activities of an organization on some self-limitation of a brutal and dirty expansion; without inscribing ecological needs in the canon of human needs it will be very difficult. Treating environmental protection in the counterpoint to quality, because as expense is short-term thinking, should be replaced with treating natural environment as organizational and as one of the whole set of interest-holders. Only then, an integration of economic, social, and ecological values may appear, and the idea of quality will practically become complex, or even, as Ch. Laszlo underlines, planet-wide (Laszlo, 2008: 49).

Complex Perspective

From the above considerations, a necessity of complex, not fragmentary, perspective in terms of quality reveals. In the simplified configuration one may enumerate basic distinguishing marks of these two attitudes (compare the figures below):

- Whereas quality from a narrow perspective concentrates on products, services, and processes, procedures of their producing (technologies), the complex quality notices the relevance of a relation “customer-company”; additionally a client is not understood only as a final receiver-consumer, but also as each next stage of the process in an organization and outside. It is also by any means not allowed to be isolated from the organizational surroundings.
- While the narrow quality focuses on fulfilling bureaucratic directions and achieving certain level of quality, the complex quality concentrates on constant learning processes, pursuing of gaining personal mastery, and continuous attempts at crossing previous borders of quality.
- In effect, the complex quality is a conception that is not left only on the production workshop, but spreading on the whole enterprise, so a general culture of quality among all team members who participate together in improving quality appears.

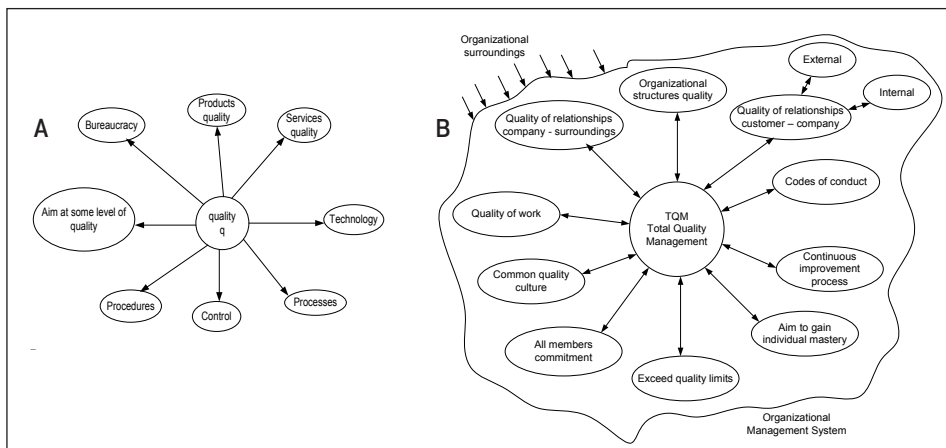


Figure 1 – Quality from narrow (A) and complex (B) perspective.

Source: proprietary work (Žemigala, 2009: 55).

Systemic Perspective

The idea of complex management of quality (TQM-Total Quality Management) is possible to be applied in the practice of an enterprise’s functioning, to the great extent because of the system approach. In order to explain a little the essence of

system management of quality, it is worth to recall a definition of the general system theory formulated by its author himself, Ludvig von Bertalanffy, who describes its gist this way (Bertalanffy, 1984:68):

(...) its subject is formulating principles valid with reference to systems in general, whatever the essence of their component elements and relations among them, i.e. powers functioning in them, is. The general system theory is then general science concerning holisticity which has been so far considered an ambiguous, vague, and half metaphysical concept. In the developed form it would be a logic – mathematical discipline, purely formal in itself but suitable for applying in various empirical sciences.

On the theoretical grounds, in management sciences a system pattern of an organization constructed by F. E. Kast and J. E. Rosenzweig is used contemporarily (Kast, Rosenzweig, 1972:447) (compare the figure below).

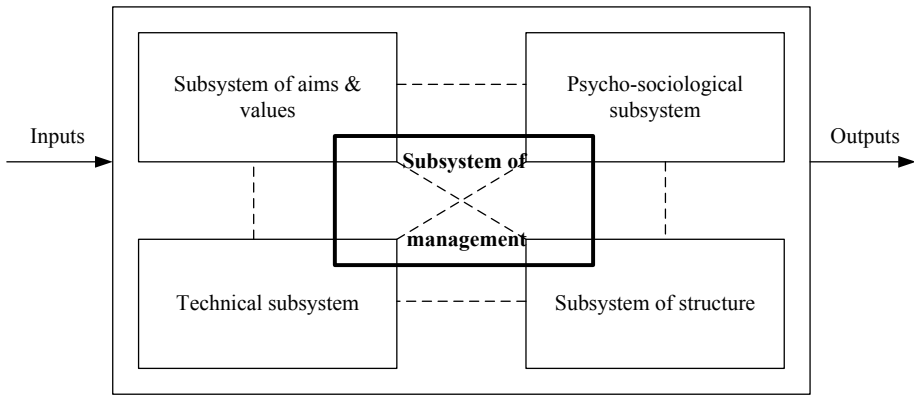


Figure 2 – Pattern of an organization as a system³⁶. Source: (Bielski, 2004: 44).

Therefore, it is visible what this complexity means both from the general organizational perspective and from the angle of quality management. Unfortunately, theoretical models are unwillingly accepted by practitioners of management because of rather great analytical-intellectual requirements needed for their implementation. The problem is solved with the model applied in the ISO 9000 standards which coherently and clearly explains how to design, implement, sustain, and then, constantly improve the quality management system in accordance with the TQM idea (compare the figure below).

36) The previous form of such perspective of an organization elaborated by H. Leavitt lacked precisely the management subsystem. He enumerated four subsystems of an organizational system – people, tasks, structure, and technology (Bielski, 2004: 43).

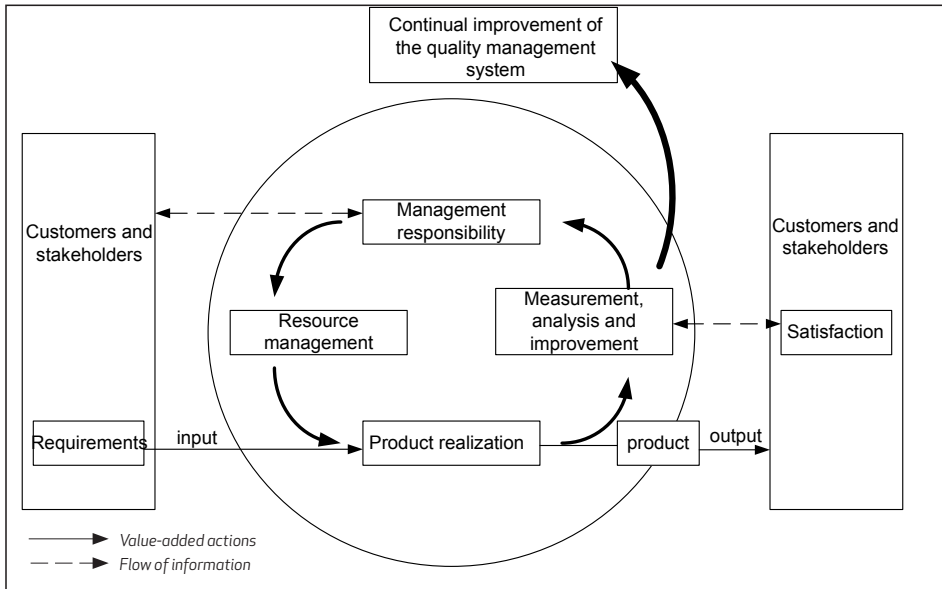


Figure 3 – Model of the quality management system from the angle of the ISO 9000 series.

Source: (PN-EN 9001, 2008: vi).

In the centre of the figure there is a loop of reciprocally affecting processes connected with responsibility of management, managing resources, realizing product and measuring, analyzing, and improving. All these processes contributing the quality management system should be constantly improved. The effect of a process of realizing product are items manufactured from the point of view of customers' requirements. Analysis of the level of customers' satisfaction allows improving previous quality management system and all the processes being its part. The assurance that customers' requirements in the whole quality management system are fulfilled and customers are satisfied is the task for the organization's management. The basis of application of this system approach to quality management is a four-staged cycle of Deming (compare the figure below) consisting of:

- The stage of Planning that includes identification and definition of goals, tasks resulting from them, and also documentation which is necessary to accomplish what was planned.
- The stage of Doing during which a plan is implemented.
- The stage of Checking when the factual effects of actions are verified and confronted with the assumptions resulting from the stage of planning.
- The stage of Acting during which adequate corrective and repair actions should be undertaken (if any deviations between a plan and its realization appeared). First of all, however, the whole system needs to be minutely analyzed and re-designed in accordance with the state of the previously acquired knowledge in order to start planning again in another cycle,

taking into consideration the actual marginal conditions, and introduce improvements.

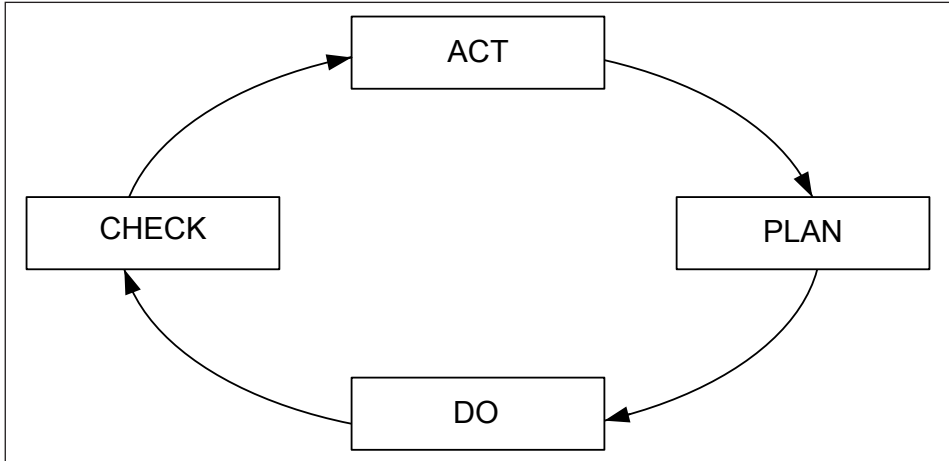


Figure 4 – Deming's Cycle: PDCA. Source: (Samson, 1991:173).

The Nature of Improvements

The key issue in the TQM conception are precisely improvements, streamlining which should be constant and never-ending. Schematically, improvements may be implemented by means of innovations (revolutionary changes, great and rare) or by means of kaizen (evolutionary changes, small and constant). Improvements introduced through innovations allow a fast increase of effects in short time. Unfortunately, however, they are usually connected with huge expenses (there are often changes of the whole technologies) and difficulties in application (new knowledge, new technology), and sustenance of the effectiveness level (the initial mistakes of a team attending improvements). In this connection, a high level of the effects' increase usually breaks down for some time reducing potential lying on the improvement. Evolutionary changes, however, are not connected with huge expenses (present technology, tools, materials), easy for a team to apply (resulting from the already acquired knowledge) and sustain (any consultant is unnecessary, a change is self-sustainable, natural). Certainly, one cannot try proving preponderance of one perspective over another, but try to integrate them. When it is possible – one should introduce innovations, whereas in the everyday management apply the point of view of kaizen. Schematic comparison of the perspectives of improvements is presented in the figure and table below.

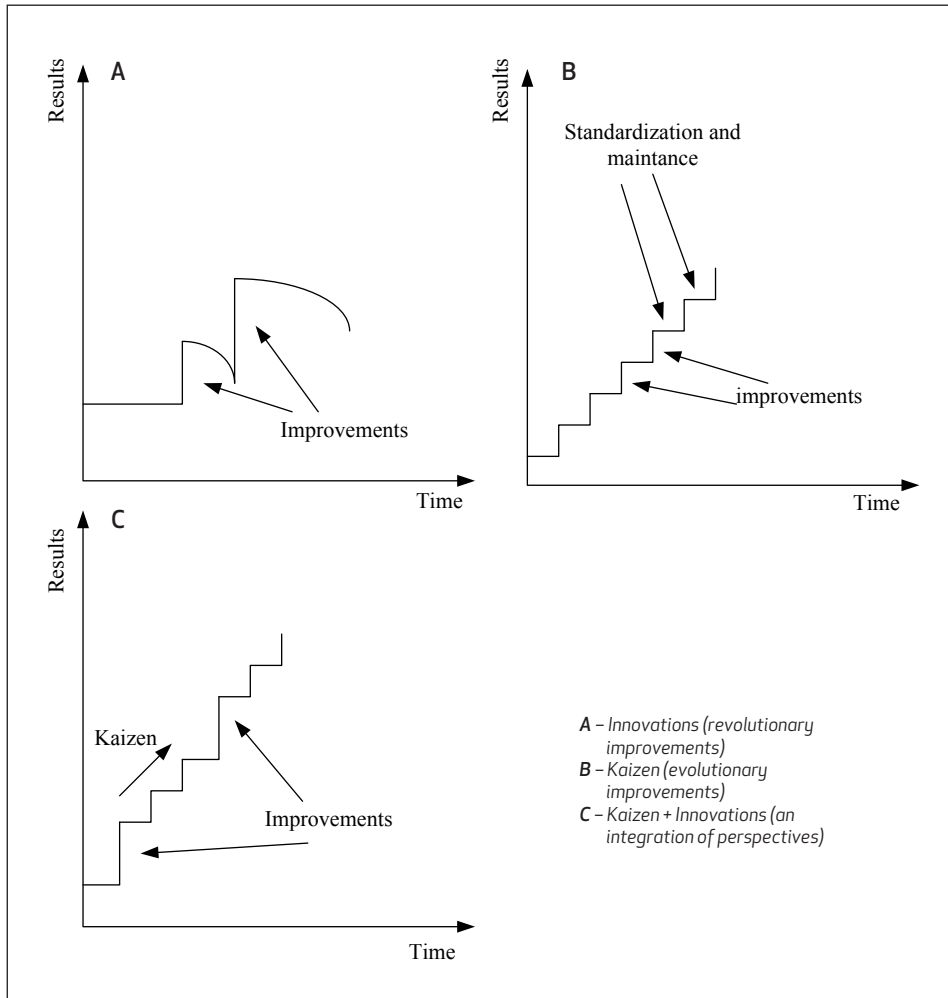


Figure 5 – An Implementation of Improvements by Means of Innovations and Kaizen.

Source: (Karaszewski, 2006: 229).

Table 1 – Kaizen and innovations. Source: (Wawak, 2002: 136).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity • Individualism • Specialists orientation • Importance attached to general issues • Technique orientation • Information restricted to proper persons • Orientation for particular departments • Searching for new technologies • Employees + management • Restricted feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptivity • Teamwork, system approach • Orientation for persons of general adaptation • Importance attached to details • People orientation • Common, generalized information • Inter-departmental orientation • Basing on existing technologies • Inter-functional organizations • Strong feedback
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The tool simplifying an introduction of improvements, particularly those based on kaizen, is 5S. This is also a Japanese approach concentrating on five fundamental directions (in the Japanese language each of them starts with the letter “S”) relating to the organization of a working place (and originally human life) in an adequate harmony and order (Łuczak, Matuszak-Flejszman, 2007: 338):

- Seiri (selection, order) in this stage one may distinguish useful items from the useless ones and eliminate those irrelevant. To achieve this goal in an enterprise one may use, e.g. red sheets of paper and by means of them conduct a visualized stocktaking of everything that is actually irrelevant in performing tasks on a particular working position.
- Seiton (systemization, organization) in this stage the method and proper place of storage of items already identified as relevant are determined. In particular, it is about various tools, raw materials, resources, means of transport, semi-products, and all this that is necessary in the work or organizational process. The essence of this stage is acting in a way so that each item is easily available in a number indispensable in the particular moment. As a result, organized and neat working places should be created, characterized with a functional disposition of items, which should bring an increase of efficiency caused by an easy availability of working items. In this phase, attention is paid to intensive betterment, struggle against any losses and improvement of all processes and actions in the working place.
- Seiso (cleaning, cleanliness) in this stage one concentrates on eliminating dirt, dust, shavings, waste products, and other effluents, making a working place and used there appliances almost perfectly clean. One should strongly present employees with the connection between losses and dirt, showing grime as a serious consequence of the enterprise’s dysfunctions, creating attitudes inducing employees to eliminate first causes of dirt, and, in consequence, losses. In practice, it is precise and repeated cleaning, clearing in full stoppage, creating everyday cleaning schedules, and leading clearing operations together with a review of appliances, working places.
- Seiketsu (neatness, keeping up cleanness) in this phase one is obliged to determine conditions that would enable stabilization during already implemented organizational behaviors concerning tidiness and cleanness. It is about setting standards of the three realized “S”, creating adequate structures and mechanisms of control (mainly self-control), and determining a method of searching for causes of incorrectness.
- Shitsuke (self-discipline, abidance by any rules) this last stage aims at achieving full abidance by rules of the previous “S”. One should aspire to the state in which keeping up tidiness and cleanness becomes an everyday, usual, and natural practice.

Concluding Remarks

Arguments in support of the quality presented in the first part of the article have led to the concentration on the complex and system perspective in terms of quality management. Systems applied in management practice according to norms of ISO 9000 are multinational. However, the Deming's Cycle as a basis of application of quality management systems finds the greatest acceptance in Japan. Certainly, today as a result of globalization processes one may talk about internationalization of this simple tool. However, kaizen and 5S discussed in the further part of the article have not been fully understood and accepted by the Western societies yet. It shows differences in perception of quality and approach to perfection. In order to strengthen this statement, it is worth to recall the example of Toyota.

Toyota has elaborated unique rules and methods of running business which are based on five rules formulated in 1935 by the founder of the company, Sakichi Toyoda. However, the Toyota Way has not been written down right up to 2001 when it was acknowledged that an increasing number of foreign employees of the company required a detailed training in using these rules. (Stewart, Raman, 2008: 46).

Among the employees who were not Japanese commonly applied rules of action were not so obvious, did not result from their way of life and thinking, were not inculcated in them since their earliest years in their family homes, therefore their comprehension, acceptance, learning, and application in practice have required and still requires much effort. During an interview for the Harvard Business Review the president of Toyota, Katsuaki Watanabe answers the question: how much time it is needed to learn Toyota Way, with these words (Stewart, Raman, 2008: 46):

Just yesterday I spent the whole day with our thirty young directors. At least half of them came from Japan. We were divided into teams and gave various issues to solve. Afterwards, discussed in the form of a presentation what we had learnt while searching for solutions, acting in accordance with the Toyota Way. I listened to and commented. Managers were satisfied and admitted that they had learnt a lot. Many claimed that they fully understood then the rules of Toyota Way. And this is a complete nonsense. Two or three months are not enough for anyone to understand Toyota Way. Those managers had only tasted the scrap of this conception but there is much more in it – what they are not aware of. I asked them to study further. The study of Toyota Way is never finished. I doubt that I might be able to completely get to know its rules myself, and I have been already working in the company for forty three years.

Let this quotation become the ground work of further reflection about the complicated nature of quality and quality management, and challenges (also the cultural ones) connected with this.

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Education and Teacher Training

Convivencia en el ámbito escolar y social

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Abstract

Violence constitutes one of the hindrances we come across in our urge for searching a more righteous society at a global scale. Nowadays, aggressive and intolerant behaviour is present in all areas (political, social, familiar...) invading even school life. As an answer to this situation, education policy proposes different measures favouring the coexistence in the classroom. Likewise research is carried out undertaking school harassment and coexistence in teaching institution. These measures that reveal sensitivity for this subject have to be supported by complementary and effective actions which involve the whole educational community. In this paper we delimit the meaning of certain concepts (peace, tolerance, bullying, school harassment, problem solving...) that allow us to put forward some proposals for achieving a good school atmosphere, extrapolated to teachers' and pupils' social and daily life. In short, it is a question of avoiding intolerant and violent behaviour in school, as well as familiar and social environment and of promoting the education and the practice of tolerance and coexistence through problem solving.

Keywords: *Education for coexistence; Tolerance versus intolerance; School harassment; Problem solving*

Introducción

Es una constante a lo largo de la historia la sucesión de enfrentamientos bélicos y luchas étnicas. Asimismo, en la vida cotidiana actual se dan situaciones conflictivas a nivel político, social, familiar y escolar; por ello, nos parece oportuno centrar la comunicación en torno al tema de la convivencia, abordando el significado de determinados términos (paz, tolerancia, *bullying*, acoso escolar, resolución de conflictos...), que nos permiten clarificar una serie de acciones a favor buen clima escolar y social.

En definitiva, se trata de evitar manifestaciones intolerantes y violentas en nuestro entorno escolar, familiar y social y de promover la educación y práctica en la tolerancia y convivencia mediante la resolución de conflictos, tomando como núcleo e hilo conductor de nuestras vidas: la cultura de paz.

1. La cultura de paz: significado y dimensiones

Si nos preguntamos ¿qué es la paz?, posiblemente la respuesta de una gran mayoría coincidiría con ésta: la paz es la *ausencia de guerra*. Y efectivamente la paz es eso, pero es mucho más. La noción de paz ha sufrido una evolución, delimitando en ella dos dimensiones:

- la *paz negativa*, vinculada al sentido más tradicional, como ausencia de guerras y conflictos armados, dimensión que se articula desde la política.
- la *paz positiva*, que se manifiesta en una postura comprometida que intenta poner fin a los actos de violencia que acaecen en diversos escenarios: con nosotros mismos, con los demás y con el entorno.

Para el profesor Rodríguez Rojo (1998) la *educación para la paz* es “el proceso de construir una respuesta a la crisis del mundo actual, crisis que se manifiesta en una agresión del hombre contra sí mismo, contra los demás y contra la naturaleza. La respuesta trata de buscar una concienciación y compromiso de las personas y de la sociedad que considere la armonía del ser humano consigo mismo, con sus semejantes y con la naturaleza, como sustrato de la sociedad. Esta triple orientación incluye tres dimensiones:

- la *personal o afectiva*, centrada en la modificación de la conducta a nivel de relaciones interpersonales y en la adquisición de actitudes no violentas y de disfrute ante los placeres de la vida.
- la *sociopolítica*, en cuanto regula las relaciones de justicia y convivencia en la sociedad.
- la *ambiental o ecológica*, que persigue el cambio del trato con la naturaleza.

Todo ello pretende la consecución de un objetivo: la convivencia entre personas, reguladora de conflictos, a través de estrategias no violentas. Objetivo refrendado por el Manifiesto a favor de la paz del año 2000, cuyos puntos clave son los siguientes:

- *Respetar la vida y la dignidad de cada persona, sin discriminación ni prejuicios.*
 - *Practicar la no-violencia activa, rechazando la violencia en todas sus formas: física, sexual, psicológica, económica, social, en particular hacia los más débiles y vulnerables.*
 - *Compartir tiempo y recursos materiales, cultivando la generosidad, a fin de terminar con la exclusión, la injusticia, la opresión política y económica*
 - *Defender la libertad de expresión y la diversidad cultural, privilegiando siempre la escucha y el diálogo, sin ceder al fanatismo y al rechazo del prójimo*
 - *Promover un consumo responsable y un modo de desarrollo que tenga en cuenta la importancia de todas las formas de vida y el equilibrio de los recursos naturales del planeta*
 - *Contribuir al desarrollo de la comunidad, propiciando la plena participación de las mujeres y el respeto a los principios democráticos, con el fin de crear juntos nuevas formas de solidaridad.*
- 1) Por consiguiente, el significado de paz trasciende al concepto de ausencia de guerras y representa un enfoque positivo de educación para la paz. Supone una toma conciencia de que somos ciudadanos del mundo y que compartimos la responsabilidad de conservar y salvar el planeta. Es decir, incluye el cuidado de la naturaleza y el medio ambiente, la lucha por la conservación de las especies vivas y ecosistemas amenazados por la destrucción, así como el respeto por los pueblos y sus culturas, las tradiciones y sus formas de vida o las etnias y sus creencias. Esta dimensión pacifista necesita la eliminación de la violencia y el acoso escolar, la educación en la tolerancia y la resolución de conflictos, lo que desemboca en una convivencia pacífica, aspectos que van a ser abordados en los siguientes apartados.

2. La tolerancia: trayectoria y sentido actual

El término tolerancia tiene diversas acepciones, según el contexto en que se utilice. Para unos tolerar es *respetar las opiniones y prácticas de los demás*, aunque no coincidan con las nuestras. Para otros, tolerar es también *sufrir y llevar con paciencia algo*, desde el dolor físico a un hecho desafiante. Pero además, tolerar es *permitir algo que no se tiene por lícito*, sin aprobarlo expresamente. Tolerar significa aceptar, incluso, lo injusto, aunque tenga unos límites, pues a nadie se le ocurre que haya que tolerar el robo, la violación, el asesinato o la xenofobia.

Una vez abordado su triple significado, intentaremos describir la trayectoria de este controvertido personaje, “la tolerancia”, que inició su andadura hace miles de años. La tolerancia, desde siempre, ha estado transitando por el acontecer humano,

poniendo de manifiesto esa antigua sabiduría que ha hecho progresar a los pueblos, al tiempo que confiere dignidad a los hombres y mujeres. En su largo caminar ha encontrado posadas amables y acogedoras, fugaces momentos de esperanza que han impulsado la historia hacia un futuro más digno y respetuoso con los demás. Como personajes emblemáticos que la aplicaron podemos citar a Confucio, Jesús de Nazaret, Lutero King. Pero el recorrido de la tolerancia no ha sido siempre lineal, ya que ha sufrido multitud de vejaciones en su peregrinar por la historia. De hecho, personas, países, gobiernos, acontecimientos y situaciones han mostrado ante ella actitudes vejatorias, de desprecio o de indiferencia.

Actualmente, sigue caminando entre nosotros por un sendero nada fácil ni exento de peligros. Los viejos despropósitos del pasado la acechan en cualquier recodo del camino y la esperan disfrazados de situaciones económicas o laborales, de leyes de extranjería, de nostalgias absurdas, de posturas racistas que no tienen nada que ver con la condición humana y que olvidan la presencia de nuevas sensibilidades y los logros solidarios alcanzados en la aldea planetaria, en donde la tolerancia encuentra hospedaje. Un ejemplo muy significativo se dio en nuestro país en 1978, con la gestación y elaboración de Constitución Española, ley emblemática que puso de manifiesto la convivencia tolerante, pacífica y cooperativa entre los padres de la constitución. Personas pertenecientes a diversos partidos políticos, quienes no sólo se toleraron en un momento en que aún no habían cicatrizado las heridas del pasado, sino que buscaron afanosamente los valores fundamentales de la vida colectiva española. El artículo 1.1 de nuestra Constitución es una solemne declaración de los valores comprometidos, encontrados en una afanosa búsqueda, codo a codo y hombro a hombro, por unos hombres que ignorando los paralizantes enfrentamientos pasados, nos dieron una ejemplar lección de tolerancia.

Por el contrario, situaciones contrapuestas, de intolerancia, las encontramos a menudo en los enfrentamientos étnicos, que representan la más devastadoras experiencias de los últimos años en diversos países del Norte y Sur.

Existen diversas manifestaciones de intolerancia en la sociedad actual entre las que cabe destacar: a) *las intolerancias irracionales*, alimentadas de ignorancia, prejuicios y miedos. La más común es la xenofobia u hostilidad hacia los extranjeros; b) *las intolerancias ideológicas*, representadas por ideologías religiosas o seculares, que se apropian de forma exclusiva de la verdad (fanatismos, fundamentalismos,...), o se apoyan en la creencia de la desigualdad entre los seres humanos (racismos, sexismos, nacionalismos exasperados,...); c) *las intolerancias formales y arrogantes*, por parte de quien ostenta el poder hacia quienes son mantenidos al margen. El problema se agrava cuando cambian las relaciones de fuerza, dejando la puerta abierta a peores intolerancias; d) *las intolerancias cotidianas*, que aunque no sean tan hirientes, van corroyendo los cimientos de una convivencia pacífica. Están presentes en el lenguaje cotidiano, en la literatura, en los cuentos clásicos, en los medios

de comunicación, en el cine..., así como en acusaciones, actos de intimidación, exclusión, segregación y destrucción que se dan en el ámbito escolar.

En general, las posturas intolerantes se dan porque se ven y juzgan los hechos desde una sola perspectiva. En cambio, el mundo no es ni blanco ni negro, sino que miles de pinceladas decoran la tierra para formar un conjunto plural, enriquecedor, multiétnico. Todas las personas, ya sean refugiados, emigrantes, negros, gitanos, árabes, jóvenes, ancianos, católicos o musulmanes proporcionan un peculiar y enriquecedor retoque de diversidad a la sociedad.

Sin embargo, no siempre se asume esta realidad y cuando se habla de las posturas intolerantes (xenofobia, racismo, fundamentalismo), con frecuencia se insiste en que estos males vienen de los demás, que nosotros no somos responsables de estas posturas. A menudo, se abdica de la responsabilidad personal y se alega que las medidas legales y sociales pueden resolver estos problemas.

3. Violencia y acoso escolar

La *violencia* es la expresión extrema de la agresividad, es una acción intencionada que cuando va dirigida a objetos o animales afecta a la integridad de estos. Cuando se dirige a otra persona, causa un daño *físico, emocional, sexual o económico*. Si la acción violenta se dirige a propiedades con la intención de destruirlas o estropearlas se denomina *vandalismo*

Si ocurre en las instituciones educativas se identifica con el *acoso escolar*, sobre el que han proliferado en la última década numerosas investigaciones. Cabe destacar el X Informe Cisneros “Violencia y acoso escolar en España” (Oñate, 2006), que forma parte del Primer estudio epidemiológico nacional y europeo sobre este tema, realizado con una muestra de 24.990 escolares, desde 2º curso de educación primaria hasta 1º de bachillerato.

El acoso escolar es un continuado y deliberado maltrato verbal y modal que recibe un escolar por parte de otro u otros compañeros, que se comportan con él cruelmente con el objetivo de someterlo, asustarlo, amenazarlo, atentando contra su dignidad (Oñate, 2006).

Un escolar es víctima de acoso escolar desde el momento en que padece determinadas *conductas repetitivas de hostigamiento* que le exponen al riesgo de generar daños físicos y/o psicológicos, que el mencionado Informe acota a estas conductas:

- a. Comportamientos de desprecio y ridiculización.
- b. Coacciones.
- c. Restricción de comunicación y ninguneo.
- d. Agresiones físicas.
- e. Comportamientos de intimidación y de amenazas.
- f. Exclusión y bloqueo social.

- g. Maltrato y agresiones verbales.
- h. Robos, extorsiones, chantajes y deterioro de pertenencias.

Actualmente, en España se puede decir que las 3/4 partes de los acosos escolares se efectúan utilizando las *nuevas tecnologías* (mensajes de móvil, correos electrónicos, blogs, páginas de internet, etc.). Ésta es la patética y dolorosa realidad. Patética, porque pocos pueden sustraerse a este tipo de agresión tan dañina y eficaz, pues llega a todos los hogares si el acosador se lo propone, casi sin que se detecte su rastro; dolorosa, porque al hogar, concebido como un lugar seguro, pueden llegar este tipo de agresiones, valiéndose de las nuevas tecnologías.

El hecho de utilizar los medios tecnológicos punteros para degradar a las víctimas, denota miedo y cobardía. Miedo porque quizá ellos también fueron cincelados por el sello de la agresión. Cobardía, por ocultarse detrás de estos medios, sin dar la cara y manteniendo el anonimato, siempre que sea posible.

Por estas razones, ante el acoso escolar, la sociedad, en general, y la institución educativa, de forma más precisa, no pueden quedar impasibles. Se hace necesario proponer una serie de acciones que afectan al centro, al profesorado y a las familias. Respecto al *centro*, debe:

- a. Incluir en el currículo como incrementar las habilidades sociales y la resolución de conflictos.
- b. Contribuir a que los estudiantes puedan discutir los problemas de relación entre iguales y busquen las soluciones.
- c. Establecer pautas claras de actuación inmediata en casos de acoso.
- d. Definir con claridad las actuaciones en casos reincidentes de acoso.
- e. Buscar formas de apoyo permanente a quienes se sientan acosados.

Las actuaciones del *profesorado* deben encaminarse a:

- a. Escuchar a los padres que denuncian un caso de posible acoso.
- b. Vigilar los lugares en que se puede producir más fácilmente el hostigamiento.
- c. Comprobar si hay algunos indicios de acoso: miradas, papelitos, empujones.
- d. Procurar que nunca estén solos un agresor y su víctima ya sea en las dependencias del centro o durante actividades extraescolares.
- e. Adoptar medidas disciplinarias y de reeducación de actitudes con transgresores.
- f. Aprovechar el poder socialización de los proyectos del entorno y de otros estamentos profesionales, como educadores sociales, de calle.
- g. Trabajar en clase la convivencia, la empatía.

En relación a las *familias*, se recomienda:

- a) Observar posibles cambios de comportamiento de los hijos. Irritabilidad, encierro en sí mismos, conexión a internet y videojuegos muy frecuentes.

- b) Vigilar si tienen magulladuras, ropas sucias o rotas de forma no habitual.
- c) Constatar si presentan trastornos psicossomáticos: vómitos, mareos o dolores antes de ir a clase.
- d) Dialogar con ellos para descubrir las causas.
- e) Poner en conocimiento del tutor o del equipo directivo la posible situación de agresión.
- f) Dar credibilidad y apoyo al hijo o hija, reforzando su autoestima.
- g) Explicarle que está siendo víctima de un comportamiento injusto.
- h) Trabajar la convivencia y colaborar en la búsqueda de solución al conflicto, aspecto que se va abordar en el apartado siguiente.

4. La convivencia y la resolución de conflictos. Propuestas de mejora desde el contexto escolar

Si en el apartado anterior aludimos al acoso escolar, como la lacra social que atenta contra la dignidad de algunos escolares, en éste nos detenemos en una medida preventiva: la instauración de la convivencia pacífica y solución de conflictos en las aulas.

Entendemos por convivencia no solo la ausencia de violencia, sino sobre todo, la construcción día a día, de relaciones de uno consigo mismo, con las demás personas y con el entorno, relaciones basadas en la dignidad humana, en los derechos humanos, en la paz positiva y en el desarrollo de valores de respeto, tolerancia, diálogo y solidaridad.

La convivencia escolar es un requisito para un proceso educativo de calidad, siendo asimismo, resultado de dicho proceso. Convivencia y aprendizaje son dos aspectos estrechamente ligados entre sí, que se condicionan mutuamente y que requieren que el respeto de derechos ajenos y el cumplimiento de obligaciones propias se constituyan en una finalidad y en un verdadero reto de la educación actual, mediante el compromiso por conseguir una sociedad más ética.

El conflicto, en cualquier actividad humana, surge de la propia naturaleza y del intercambio de intereses de quienes participan en dicha acción: mujeres hombres, seres sociales que conviven y pueden entrar en conflicto

Mejorar la convivencia, abordar tempranamente los conflictos y conseguir un clima escolar adecuado que favorezca el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje deben ser prioridades de todos y cada uno de los sectores de la comunidad educativa.

En los últimos años existe una preocupación y acciones a favor de la convivencia en los centros educativos. Hecho que se pone de manifiesto en algunas investigaciones, como por ejemplo, en el *Informe del observatorio estatal de convivencia* (Díaz Aguado, 2008). Esta investigación ha sido llevada a cabo en 301 centros de Educación Secundaria: 23.100 alumnos y alumnas, 6175 profesores, equipos directivos y departamentos de educación y también padres y madres,

obteniendo respuesta a las siguientes cuestiones nucleares, ¿Cómo es la convivencia en los centros escolares?; ¿Cuáles son los principales problemas que tiene?.. ¿Estamos mejorando o retrocediendo en los temas de la convivencia?

En relación a la primera cuestión, frente a las posiciones alarmistas, puede afirmarse que la convivencia en los centros escolares es buena y que las actuaciones llevadas a cabo para su fomento están demostrando su eficacia en la mejora del clima de los centros y de las relaciones entre los distintos colectivos. La mayoría de los alumnos (90%) está satisfecho con su centro y destacan positivamente las relaciones que mantienen con otros compañeros, existe un buen nivel de integración y expresan la necesidad de incrementar los esfuerzos para mejorar la cohesión grupal y erradicar cualquier situación de exclusión que pueda darse. La mayoría del profesorado (85% considera que su trabajo es importante, se siente orgulloso de su trabajar en su centro, valora la calidad de las relaciones y está dispuesto a colaborar para la mejora de la convivencia escolar. Por lo general, es bien valorado por el alumnado, tanto por su capacidad profesional, como por liderazgo e influencia en éste.

En relación a las *situaciones problemáticas* que afectan a los centros, se constata que las buenas relaciones que se dan con los entornos próximos necesitan ampliarse a otros entornos menos habituales. Un 15% tanto del alumnado como del profesorado no encuentra su lugar en la escuela y cambiaría de centro si pudiese, y un 25% considera insuficiente el desarrollo personal que consigue en el centro, como adquirir confianza en si mismo y aprender a tomar decisiones. Todos los colectivos estiman insuficiente la participación del alumnado en la organización y gestión del centro, incluido el tema de la convivencia.

Para un 60% del alumnado, los profesores no muestran cualidades con las que se identificarían o les gustaría tener; hay un déficit importante de autoridad en el profesorado. La relación con las familias se limita, la mayoría de las veces, a la información que dan el centro y los profesores sin avanzar a planteamientos de mayor participación y calidad.

El profesorado manifiesta que los principales obstáculos que impiden el desarrollo de la convivencia en el aula son las conductas disruptivas (hablar en clase, interrumpir al profesorado en su trabajo, molestar a los compañeros, levantarse y desplazarse por el aula, no llevar el material necesario, contestar al profesor..), pero, curiosamente, el alumnado considera que no tienen importancia.

Otro gran obstáculo para la convivencia lo constituye el *bullying*: acoso, violencia entre iguales, que se da en menor proporción que en Europa, y ha decrecido en los últimos años. En nuestro país son víctimas del acoso escolar un 3,8 % de alumnos y alumnas, mientras que el porcentaje de acosadores se sitúa en 2,4 %. El maltrato más frecuente no es físico, sino verbal y psicológico. Como antes hemos visto, tiene especial importancia el *ciberbullying*, fenómeno en aumento.

Los motivos que inducen a que alguien se convierta en víctima son: aislamiento, indefensión, no comportarse como la mayoría de los chicos y chicas, ser nuevo, tener determinadas características personales: color de piel, gordura, baja altura... Los mismos motivos llevan a ser acosadores. Es decir, ser diferente.

Por ello, es necesario enseñar y trabajar el respeto a la diferencia, transmitir la riqueza que puede y debe suponer la diversidad, trabajar en el aula la igualdad, la cohesión del grupo y el respeto a la diversidad, es decir aplicar el principio: aprender a convivir mediante actuaciones o medidas concretas, que puedan contribuir a la mejora de la actitud ante la violencia:

Algunas propuestas o sugerencias que pueden contribuir a prevenir la violencia en contextos escolares son las que reseñamos a continuación, que, ciertamente, tienen sentido y son más eficaces incardinadas en un proyecto educativo global en el que todos los miembros de la comunidad educativa se sientan implicados.

- Valorar formas de estar y convivir basadas en el diálogo y en el conocimiento de la realidad concreta.
- Crear espacios de reflexión donde sea posible expresar sentimientos y prejuicios y donde se produzca un intercambio de opiniones y experiencias.
- Crear relaciones en las que predominen el reconocimiento y la comunicación, evitando catastrofismos y jerarquizaciones impuestas.
- Cuidar el lenguaje y los procedimientos de actuación, los cuales, en ocasiones, reproducen la violencia que no nos gusta y que queremos evitar.
- Favorecer, a través de las modificaciones pertinentes en el currículum, los cambios cognitivos, afectivos y conductuales que ayuden a superar los distintos componentes relacionados con la violencia. A veces, los mecanismos a través de los cuales se transmiten estos comportamientos son tan sutiles, que si no hay intención explícita de combatirlos activamente se perpetúan y se transmiten de generación en generación.
- Llevar a cabo experiencias de discusión y aprendizaje cooperativo en grupos heterogéneos y favorecer una participación activa en el sistema educativo, incrementando y distribuyendo las oportunidades de poder y protagonismo.
- Integrar la formación para la prevención contra la violencia dentro de una perspectiva más amplia y universal como es la defensa de los derechos humanos; insistiendo en que estos problemas perjudican no solo a sus víctimas más directas sino a toda la sociedad.
- Desarrollar habilidades alternativas a la violencia, que permitan expresar los conflictos y resolverlos de forma no violenta; así como habilidades que protejan contra la victimización, para evitar situaciones de riesgo o salir de ellas y pedir ayuda.

- Integrar la intervención que se ha de realizar en el contexto escolar con la que debe llevarse a cabo en todos los contextos en los que se estructura la sociedad. Como ya apuntábamos anteriormente, las causas de la violencia son múltiples y complejas; y se producen en todos los contextos y niveles en los que transcurre nuestra vida, desde lo más inmediato y específico a lo más general (familia, escuela, ocio, trabajo, estructuras sociales...).
- Proporcionar reconocimiento a quienes posibilitan, con su trabajo y actitud, la comunicación de aquellas personas que no se arredran ante la violencia, que aportan elementos necesarios para la convivencia y aceptan con ello los miedos y contradicciones que existen en cada grupo humano.

A pesar de las múltiples iniciativas de mejora, aún hoy en los diferentes contextos de desarrollo humano, se siguen reproduciendo modelos obsoletos. De ahí la necesidad de reflexionar sobre qué mensajes transmitimos, qué acciones llevamos a cabo en nuestra vida cotidiana que puedan estar contribuyendo a generar violencia o simplemente, qué deberíamos hacer para prevenirla. Porque es necesario construir otra forma de convivir en la familia, en la escuela, en la sociedad, donde la relación entre iguales sea la norma y los conflictos se resuelvan de forma pacífica.

Respecto al *alumnado*, existen una serie de medidas que obtienen resultados a largo plazo como, educar en la igualdad y el respeto mutuo para que nadie agrede al que es diferente; promover el trabajo cooperativo y por equipos, para que la clase esté más unida, consensuar entre todos las normas de convivencia, los derechos y deberes de los alumnos y de forma más inmediata, hacer que los compañeros apoyen al estudiante agredido y que no le dejen solo.

Por otra parte, cada vez son más las Comunidades Autónomas que están desarrollando una normativa a favor de la convivencia. En la Comunidad de Castilla y León, destacamos

- Orden EDU/52/2005 de 26 de Enero, relativa al fomento de la convivencia en los centros docentes de Castilla y León
- Decreto 51/2007, de 17 de mayo, sobre derechos y deberes de los alumnos y la participación y los compromisos de las familias en el proceso educativo, y normas de convivencia y disciplina en los centros educativos de Castilla y León, que incide en la labor preventiva, el refuerzo de la figura del profesor y la responsabilidad de todos los miembros.
- Orden EDU/1921/2007 de 27 de noviembre, sobre medidas y actuaciones para la promoción y mejora de la convivencia en los centros educativos de Castilla y León.
- Resolución de 15 de junio de 2009, por la que se establecen los indicadores para la elaboración de los informes de seguimiento y evaluación de la convivencia escolar en los centros educativos de Castilla y León, así como el modelo de informe de los mismos.

Pero no solo hay que promulgar disposiciones legales sobre la convivencia escolar. A la administración educativa también le compete dotar a los centros de recursos humanos con capacidad para mejorar y gestionar una buena convivencia, promover una mayor coordinación entre equipos educativos y desarrollar programas de prevención y acciones a favor de la convivencia, abordando todo ello como un proceso y fundamentalmente evaluando los resultados.

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Education of Romani people in chosen countries³⁷

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Abstract

The concept “education of Romani ethnic group” is usually used to describe the actions conducted by the country, which is inhabited by Romani people. It is an activity conducted in order to educate members of Romani ethnic group, typically conducted in the frame of public educational system in the chosen country, but it also includes the actions taken by the non-governmental organizations, other educational institutions, as well as Romani people and their minority associations. Not to forget mentioning all the acts taken to extend the knowledge about the

37) This study is based on the book from Łukasz Kwadrans *Edukacja Romów. Studium porównawcze na przykładzie Czech, Polski i Słowacji*. Wrocław-Wałbrzych 2008. (*Education of Romani people. Comparative study based on Czech, Poland and Slovakia*. Wrocław-Wałbrzych 2008). Author has presented problems included in the article to some extent in Poland: Kwadrans Ł. *Charakterystyka sytuacji edukacyjnej Romów w Czechach, Polsce i Słowacji po 1989 roku*. [w:] *Romowie w Polsce i Europie – historia, prawo, kultura*. Red. Borek P. Kraków 2007. [transl. *Characteristics of educational situation of Romani people in Czech, Poland and Slovakia after year 1989. Romani people in Poland and Europe- history, law, culture*. Red. Borek P. Kraków 2007.] He also discussed the same problems in publication issued in Slovakia: Kwadrans Ł. *Romowie w Czechach, Polsce i Słowacji po 1989r.-charakterystyka sytuacji edukacyjnej*. [*Romani in Czech, Poland and Slovakia after year – characteristics of educational situation*. 1989[w:] *InterRRA 5. Interkulturalita a romska narodnostna mensina v socjalnych a pedagogických suvislostiach. Zbornik z medzinarodnej vedeckej konferencie konanej 25-26 septembra 2007 v Spisskej Novej Vsi*. Nitra 2008.

Romani people among the representatives of the majority societies. Romani education in Czech, Poland and Slovakia is still in bad condition. It is caused by many years of negligence of the former political systems. They were directing the model of national education without taking into consideration dissimilarity of Romani pupil/student, his/her identity and language. For the last 20 years the educational changes can be noticed. Those changes are in favor of minority and multicultural education. This work suggests improvements on a disadvantaged situation of Roma education.

Keywords: *Multicultural education; Romani people; Educational policy; Comparative pedagogy*

The first sentence of this article can cause confusion among readers; nevertheless the period of Communism in the researched Visegrad countries is worth mentioning. Before the period of the social, political and economic transformation, towards the end of Communism era, the level of education in Czechoslovakia and Poland among Romani was higher than ever before, since many people from this community have gained an elementary education at the level of primary school.

The governmental bodies put in those times a big pressure on reduction of educational negligence in the minority groups. Despite the attempts of assimilation policy towards Romani people, government's actions were far ineffective. While the majority of the society has increased the level of education, more and more people have graduated from high schools and colleges, Romani people still remained the educationally disabled group (Barany, 2002: 164). During 45 years (1945-1990), the number of analphabets has been reduced and part of Romani society has been educated at the elementary level. However, the disproportion was still present and even increased leaving a considerable gap between the educational achievements of Romani people and the rest of the society.

In all three countries (Czech, Poland and Slovakia), during Communism, Romani people felt that their ethnic identity, language, culture and social hierarchy were brutally violated. All of it influenced Roma's self-esteem. The change of regime contributed to the shifting of the Romani in the majority of the post-communist countries (also in Czech and Slovakia, a bit less in Poland) to the margin of the social life. Some writers describe Romani people, who live in settlements, even in the categories of *underclass*, not to mention the ethnical perspective. Gypsies who live in such agglomeration most often remain in a long term unemployed, they do not have elementary level of education and professional skills, they are also dependent on the social welfare support (Połeć, 2003: 137). In connection to the reforms conducted in the period of transformation (privatization, industry

restructuring), Romani people lost often their employment and place of residence. In Czech Republic and Slovakia this led to establishment of suburbs occupied in majority or solely by Romani people (ghetto). In such areas the Romani society faces problems with accessing both health system and education. Very often there is lack of running water and electricity. All those aspects create even bigger distance between Romani people and the communities that constitute the majority. This in turn leads to a double marginalization of the Romani society especially in some regions (North-East Slovakia). Because of their marginalization, the Romani are forced to occupy the regions of the country that are also deprived in comparison to the remaining parts of the country. The settlements often do not satisfy fundamental (biological) human needs, therefore the educational problems become a lower priority there. In such circumstances, an effect of vicious circle is created, in which unemployed parents, analphabets who live in poverty do not send their kids to schools and children in turn are forced to share their parents' destiny.

In the following social researches conducted in the past few years, many persons declare reluctance towards people of Romani origin, and in public opinion poll Gypsies are the least tolerated minority. Negative emotions in the community are very strong which is reflected in the events commonly called Gypsies' pogroms, as well as some other individual and group intolerance acts, which took place in Poland, Czech and Slovakia. Years of system transformation contributed to the changes among Romani community. When the private entrepreneurship ceased to be an offence, Gypsies took advantage of the free market economy and started to deal in deficit goods which stirred up even bigger hostility towards them than in previous decades. The increasingly more difficult financial situation, unemployment and the feeling of helplessness contributed to the fact that the nation needed scapegoats, and so e.g. in Mława (in Poland), Gypsies became imaginative source of social and economic problems. Just few, who did well, became a subject of jealousy, while the rest was criticized for being lazy and unpractical. Economical frustration coincided with the erosion of authorities in the whole country. (Giza - Poleszczuk, 2001)

In Czech Republic, there are different cases of intolerance towards Romani people, i.e. entrance prohibition into some restaurants. Wall erection that separated tenement houses inhabited by Romani people and the rest of the society in Usti upon Laba, was well known and commented in the whole Europe. This wall became a symbol of intolerance. Skinheads assaults and xenophobic speeches of Czech prominent people are also known. Stigmatization of Romani children in Czech school system is also a big problem since offices send Romani children straight to special schools (in most cases just because they have a lower command of Czech language).

It is estimated that around 70% of Czech children at schools for children with special needs, are Gypsies. Romani people file complaints to Constitutional Tribunal in Strasburg. As it can be noticed, in Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia,

as well as in other countries, not just in this region, not only in politics, but also at all levels of social structure, there are attitudes that can be treated as a sign of xenophobia and intolerance.

Data from Statistical Offices in Czech, Poland and Slovakia show that during national census, fewer persons declared their Romani origin than it was forecasted by demographers (fear of showing the Romani origin can be one of the causes for such behavior). According to demographers the smallest number of Romani community inhabit Poland (20-30 thousand), more in Czech (150-250 thousand), the number of Slovakian Romani is far the biggest one (480-520 thousand), and constitutes 8,9-9,6% of all Slovakian citizens. Factors referring to the level of education significantly deviate from the data concerning the majority of society.

Segregation versus Assimilation

Educational systems are still unprepared to work in culturally diversified environment of Romani children, who have very often difficulties in understanding the dominant language during lessons. As a result, many Romani end up their education at elementary level, very often special school. Sending Romani children to special school is a particular problem in Czech Republic and Slovakia. Some sources show that 90% of pupils in such schools constitute Romani children in Slovakia, and 75% in Czech Republic (*Konflikty etniczne*, 2002: 50).

In the second mentioned country, until October 1999, graduating from special schools automatically closed the door to education in secondary schools. Another problem is a situation in which Romani parents being special schools graduates enroll their children to such institution without researching, testing and evaluating it first.

In Poland, Gypsy children are also relatively often directed to schools for children with special needs and specialist counseling center. Out of a bit more than one hundred Romani children in Cracow – Nowa Huta over twenty attend special schools, which is nearly every fourth child (Szmunesówna, 2002). In Poland *disability epidemic* existed among Gypsy children. This phenomenon was also prevailing in our Southern neighbors (Kraus, 2001:317-322; Siwek, 2001: 95-104). Intellectual abilities of children were falsely estimated on the ground of the dominant language, which is a secondary language for Gypsies who use Romani as their mother tongue. Many teachers and educators blamed the fact that very few Romani children attend kindergartens and so called preparatory classes (zero level), where they could get appropriately socialized. Teachers in the researched countries do not possess proper qualifications in order to work with Romani minority (they do not know Romani culture, tradition, history and language). In Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia, teachers' occupation is one of the least paid and does not have appropriate prestige, which in turn probably influences the teachers' and educators' motivation. Even though in all the countries there were legal regulations implemented describing the

qualifications needed in order to perform the teacher's occupation, there are cases where people are not properly trained. In some countries (e.g. Bulgaria), teachers in the so called Gypsy schools, possess lower education and qualifications than their colleagues from mass institutions. Work in such institution is treated as a punishment for teachers (Barany, 2002: 168). There are different opinions concerning the situation of schools in special education, e.g. in Czech Republic teachers working in such institutions have higher degree and are better paid, similarly to Poland. Class sections in special schools are less numerical. Education in such institutions increases the chances of gaining a promotion to the next class and consequently gaining occupational training (Barany, 2002: 169).

Many Romani children attend segregated classes or schools, especially in regions where Romani people constitute the majority of the population. There are cases where the school administration creates separate classes for Romani, because parents of children that constitute the majority of the country do not agree for integrating groups. According to some authors, at the beginning of the nineties Romani children were 20 times more often directed to special schools than their Czechoslovakian peers (Barany, 2002: 167). Schools for mentally disabled children were very often called *Gypsy schools* (*Stigmata... 2003; A Special Remedy... 1999*).

Roma Education

Side effect of assimilation activities and compulsory education resulted in a small niche of Romani intellectuals and activists, who in the majority of cases came from the group of sedentary Romani.

During the Communism regime a new model of segregated education as described above was created. It was characterized by creating special programs for Romani children and directing them in a non-proportional number to schools for mentally disabled children, children homes and educational centers (Mirga, Gheorghe, 1999: 20-21). According to Romani activists such governmental behavior was violating equal opportunities of Romani children as per access to education. Andrzej Mirga assumes that assimilation policy contributed also to strengthening negative factors, which characterize the Romani education: high absenteeism at school, quitting school and considerable number of children repeating class or never completing primary schools (Barany, 2002: 170). According to the author, educational situation of Romani people looked similar in western countries despite more liberal governmental policy. Leading a migratory life style could be a reason for hindering Roma's educational process.

Before the year 1989 a good education was not a requirement for employment, since people with the minimum level of education were able to get a job at that time and were even required to do so. After the fall of Communism, employment market has been rationalized which in consequence brought many changes. Education and skills became elements which intensified competition on the job market but as

well as increased the chances of finding a suitable employment. Therefore, changes which appeared during the fall of Communism had an influence on the social and economic situation of Romani people. During the period of transformation the Romani minority in the Central and Eastern Europe lost their financial position, which was related to the secure social welfare support in the form of compulsory work order and supposedly non existing unemployment. Romani people, as the disabled society when it comes to the professional qualifications and education, could not cope with the competitiveness on the job market.

Many connected factors hindered educational development of Romani people. In the whole region there was a large amount of Romani kids/children, who while growing up knew only a language from their own group and did not possess any communication skills required by the educational system.

Due to the lack of proper teachers' qualifications, educational programs and most of all the political unwillingness of educational authorities, the Romani language was not used at schools, except in a few cases. In some regions Romani people could not agree among themselves on the dialect that should be used in teaching (Barany, 2002: 165). Participation of Romani kids in kindergartens, with its goal to prepare the youngest for interaction with the society, became also an important problem. After the fall of Communism regime in the majority of countries, fees for kindergartens and preschools have been implemented. Governmental bodies were not able to secure independent functioning of such institutions. In some countries Romani people placed their kids in kindergartens, because they received a social welfare help in the form of food and care. Once the fees for the institutionalized upbringing have been implemented many Gypsies have been given kindergartens. For example, in Slovakia before the year 1991 85 up to 90% of Romani children attended kindergartens, meanwhile in the year 1999 just 15% (Barany, 2002: 165; *Strategy... 1999*: 14). This influenced the level of preparation for school of Romani children. In Czech Republic and Slovakia, there is still insufficient amount of Romani children attending kindergartens. Similar situation is in Poland. This situation has slightly improved as a result of governmental and social organizations' campaigns as well as greater awareness of the parents. Around 95% of the surveyed Romani people in the *Świętokrzyski voivodship* have stressed out the importance of their kids attending preschools and acquiring Polish language. This survey shows that 57,6% of persons stated that gaining education in public schools helps in adaptation to the life of the majority. (Zakrzewski, 2002)

During the period of transformation the already difficult social situation of Romani society in Central Europe has been aggravated. This left a mark on the level of children's participation and Gypsy youths in the educational system. Until now Romani students could account for support from schools in the form of free food in the canteens and free books. The State financial contribution for the Romani people decreased with the fall of Communism. Social family problems in

many countries have deepened the problems in accessing education. In case of Romani people, the low level of wellbeing reflects the lack of equipment in the form of schoolbooks and school equipment as well as clothes adequate to the season, transport to classes. Romani kids are not provided with proper conditions in their homes for studying and doing their homework.

Nowadays, education requires financial input and involvement, and most often Gypsies lack both of them. Difficult living conditions and low standard of living are the reasons for not wanting to invest in education as well as the lack of educational tradition among Gypsies. Many parents are analphabets and others claim that acquiring education leads to the loss of Romani identity. Another problem is Gypsy girls leaving schools at the early age due to getting married or becoming pregnant. School programs, even in places where Romani people constitute the majority, do not refer to history, culture, language and experiences of that group. Due to the fact that there is a large number of analphabets among Romani community, parents very often cannot assist their children in doing their homework and help in after school activities. Romani parents do not show proper interest in the school situation of their children. Researches show that Romani people sometimes do not know about the segregation character of classes or schools, and do not intervene when their children evade school for many weeks (Barany, 2002: 167; *Struggling...* 1992: 42).

During the Communism, Romani parents were obliged to send their children to schools, they perceived it as gaining profit connected with the improvement of their material status. Education did not, however, become deeply rooted in the value system of most Romani people. Additionally, such attitude towards gaining a degree was resulted in the inadequate relation between salary and degree, which existed in socialist countries. For Romani people it was useless to spend time at school, whereas they could start working earlier and obtain gratification sometimes even higher than salaries of educated people.

The highest number of Romani people finished their education at elementary level (48%), secondary education without secondary school certificate have approximately 32,7% members of that community, and only 6,5% passed the final exams. Situation of the higher education degree is the worst one, as only 0,6% Slovakian Romani people have it (Kriglerova, 2002: 746).

In Slovakia, the rise of educational awareness among Romani people is noticeable (similarly to Czech Republic and Poland). Nowadays, nearly half of Romani people claim that education is important. Polish school is not Romani people friendly, even though according to researches conducted by the National Ministry of Education and Association of Romani People in Poland, it turns out that three quarters of parents recognize the need to educate their children (Gerlich, 1998).

In Czech Republic, there are similar disproportions concerning the level of education among Romani minority and the rest of citizens. Approximately, 80 - 85%

of Romani people have primary education, including education obtained at special school. 8,4% of elderly Romani people completed vocational schools, and only 1,2% of the community representatives have completed a secondary level education. Higher level education is still in the biggest disproportion to the majority and amounts to 0,3%. The factor for the whole Czech Republic amounts approximately to 10% (Kaplan, 1999: 359-360; Navratil, 2003: 134-137).

The situation, related to the disproportionately lower participation in educational system of Romani people than general standards described in this section of the research, seems to be similar in all the three studied countries. Report – *Romani people – unemployment. Elements of description of the social placement of Romani people in Poland in 1999*, prepared by Romani Association in Poland as per request of the National Unemployment Office confirmed that only 0,8% of the investigated population have higher education. Based on this research, it has been claimed that every third Romani person did not complete primary education. The education level of the majority of Polish Romani can be described as very low. Among the adult and older population (grandparents, parents) analphabetism is very common. 80% of Polish Romani children attend school regularly. In some communities the vast majority of children do not realize the educational obligation, and the attendance of Romani children is very low.

Lately, Czech government has been working on changes implementation to the educational system, which could lead to evening out the linguistic barriers. It is planned to use the Romani as a second language, organize preparatory courses and individual pupil's approach. There are already *preparatory classes* existing in regions of Slovakia, where majority is inhabited by Romani people. They are to create an easier access of Romani children to schools and prepare for further education. Supporting language used during classes is Romani. At the same time, the problem of standardization of Romani language, differentiated by many dialects has been underlined. After 1999 Eastern-Slovakian dialect has been accepted as the dominant one (85% of Slovakian Romani people use this dialect).

In spite of so many undertaken activities the situation of Romani community in the sphere of education and upbringing is still a complicated one. The evidence is the data concerning the level of education among Romani people and their performance in the educational systems that has been presented up to now.

Educational Programs

Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia have worked out its own governmental and school programs, differing with the time of implementation, character and way of realization of projects within the minority schools. Czech Republic and Slovakia are the most progressed nations in terms of rising the educational identity and level of education among Romani people. Poland, due to lower number of

Romani people, started improving the Gypsies' situation a bit later. All of those three countries have to catch up on the losses resulting from dozen of years' delay in this matter. It should be stressed that without the pressure of international environment (among other European Union, The Council of Europe, UNDP as well as governments of particular member states, specially Great Britain) Romani programs would be implemented even later. Romani issues would still not arouse any interest of particular countries' authorities.

Czech

In response to the vast number of Romani children in special schools and difficult educational situation of Romani people, Czech, Polish and Slovakian governments were trying to introduce new special programs designed specifically for this minority.

Ministry of Education in Czech Republic found solution to the problem in creating so called preparatory classes/zero level, in which Romani children could, thanks to the supporting Romani language, gain necessary requirements needed for educational start in a public school. In the school year 2000/2001 operated 110 such class groups (1 364 pupils), and in the next one 116 preparatory classes (1 489 pupils). However, during classes, Romani language was not always used. Romani language classes were incorporated into the program of some secondary schools. Consequently, the problem of communication between teachers and Romani pupils still exists, because Romani people lack some competences in the usage of Czech language, and the teachers do not know Romani language. This leads to directing the Romani children to special schools and the case of acquiring language competency and staying in the public school can lead to assimilation. Young Romani are in danger of losing their identity, culture, tradition and language, because there is a lack of programs cherishing their Romani origin. In order to solve the problem and in response to the accusation concerning discrimination at schools as well as preventing the education of Romani people on higher levels, Czech Government started to introduce Romani assistants at schools (Romani pedagogical assistants) recruited mainly from the Gypsy community. Their tasks were to support Romani children in the process of education, support their development as well as serve as a mediator in communication between school and Romani children, their parents and social environment.

A separate educational system created for Romani people can cause difficulties. It is more important to initiate their participation in integration schools with the help of accessible motivating, improving attendance and learning results aids (Balvin, 2004). However, in Czech Republic, a Public Secondary Romani School was created in 1998 in Kolin, near Prague supported by private sector (dr Rajko Djuriče Foundation) with the permission granted by Ministry of Education, Youths and Physical Development. The aim of this institution is to accept approximately

50 pupils annually and educate them at the secondary level with additional courses about Romani community, tradition, language and other socio-cultural issues. This program aims at preparing the candidates for work in Romani environment, for example as a social worker in public administration or non-governmental organizations.

Poland

Period of system transformation in Poland brought changes in the sphere of Romani education. On the 8th July 1992 a special three-year-program concerning Romani children's primary education of a visibly integrating character was approved by the Minister of National Educational (Nowicka, 1997). It was experimentally incorporated in Podhale in September. It reduced the requirements towards pupils, but allowed to continue the education. It was rather an optional program, re-educational, introducing the pupil to the requirements existing in Polish school (Nowicka, 1999: 45-52; Brągiel, 2004: 145-146). Romani people were to learn in Polish language, and Romani was treated as a supporting language. It was underlined in that project, that Gypsy children attend schools irregularly and it is difficult to talk about education continuity among Romani people. The program focused on linguistic barriers between pupil and teacher as well as personality characteristics of Romani children that could be the cause of difficulties at school. In fact, in the school year 1995/1996 the program was completed which was characterized as seeing the pupils as representatives of different cultural characteristics continuously being compared with the group of majority.

In the nineties an idea called Romani classes was created. A huge impact on their creation had National Romani Priest – father Stanisław Opocki from Limanowa – working with Gypsies from Bergitka Roma group as well as teachers from Nowy Sącz. The aim of those classes was to allow adaptation of Gypsy children to Polish schools instead of supporting their national culture as it is the case with other minorities. Although, some Gypsy activists claim that this leads to the creation of *school ghetto*, the fact is that Romani classes still function. Apart from the Parish Romani Primary School in Suwałki, the level of education in Romani classes is visibly lower than in integration classes (Prażmowski, 1996).

However, majority of Romani pupils attend public schools and study in the integrating system together with Polish pupils, without the help of special programs or qualified personnel (only since 2001 there is an institution in Poland of *Romani assistant* and *assisting teachers*). Approximately 30% of the population of Romani children do not fulfill educational obligation.

Slovakia

In Slovakia, similarly to Czech Republic and Poland, there is a program being conducted that is to support young Romani in their introduction to education by

giving them the possibility of preschool education and participation in preparatory classes (Kovacikova, 2001: 329-333).

National Educational Institute (Statny Pedagogicky Ustav) in Bratislava introduces an empirical project of Romani language, literature and culture within the scope of a subject called *Romani reality*. This program is to be realized in all types of schools in Slovakia. The aim of this experiment is to introduce a subject called *Romani reality* to various institutions so that pupils could learn new issues concerning history, culture, way of living and language of Romani people living in Slovakia and around the world. It is meant to be a trial of incorporating projects concerning multicultural education, which would help raise pupils' tolerance towards others, understanding and acceptance as well as preparation for coexistence in socially and culturally differentiated community. The program has started in September 2004 and is being conducted in two forms: first was an obligatory subject/specialization *study of Romani language and culture* in selected school being under the patronage of National Educational Institute (SPU), the second one being optional subject in different schools (primary school 1 hour weekly, secondary school 2 hours weekly). Other institutions can take part in the experiment as well.

At present, the project is carried out in 5 schools monitored by its creators: Primary School in Koszyce, administrated by Town Hall; Private Junior High School of four years in Koszyce, specialization – foreign modern languages and ICT, institution led by The Good Romany Fairy Kesaj; Secondary Artistic School in Kosice (preparing Romani musicians, painters, designers and people of the theater). The leaders of the project are: Voivodship Office in Koszyce; Junior High School of 8 years – Gandhi School in Zvolen (institution operates following the example of Hungarian School Pécsi and Czech in Kolin, focusing on education of Romani intellectuals, developing talents and social abilities needed for working in the disadvantaged, underprivileged environments). Specialization – assisting teacher, social worker directing body - Voivodship Office in Bańska Bystrzyca, KARI; Bilingual High School of 5 years in Bratislava, specialization – English and public administration, directing body - Voivodship Office in Bratislava.

The main problem in Slovakia is the high number of Romani community and a low standard of living in most of its representatives. It does influence the participation of Romani children in education.

Summing up the educational situation of Romani people, it should be underlined that insufficient members of that community attend schools and the majority of Romani people gain education on the lowest level. In none of the tested countries the number of Romani people with a higher degree does not exceed one percent. Raising qualifications, educating elderly people, preparation for preschool, these are the most important challenges for the countries inhabited by the Romani minority independently of their number. Gaining higher education, Romani

people could get out of marginalization, unemployment and improve their living conditions. Various governmental programs are there to help achieve it however, without the motivation of those interested one cannot count on fast results of the governmental bodies.

To sum up, we leave the conclusions and recommendations to the initiators of Roma education programs and all other people engaged in the projects for Roma. One of works of Andrzej Mirga, a recognized expert of Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, includes strategic planning for the amelioration of Roma education (Mirga, 2003). Roma organizations and representatives of different environments need to take an overall approach to the problem of Roma education with the help of existing government programs and carried out projects. While drawing up such a programme, the idea of intercultural education needs to be taken into account but, first of all, all the facts related to Roma issues need to be examined - all the cultural, social, economic and political factors that might influence schooling - of the Romani. Government programs and projects, which had already been carried out successfully in different countries, can also be employed. All the offices for Roma affairs in Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia or other institutions targeting Roma living and educational circumstances, should communicate with one another, exchange experience and data related to the achieved results up to the present. Cross border cooperation targeting Roma situation in Poland and Slovakia could be established, to find the solution to the poorest living conditions of the Romani living on both sides of Tatra Mountains. Similar collaboration would be possible between communities of Kotlina Kłodzka and Roma living in Nachod and Broumova area on the Czech side of the border.

The Governments of those three countries and school administration should not only grant Roma children and teens equal access to education but also focus on improving the quality and efficiency of Roma's schooling and upbringing.

Close attention should be paid to the amelioration of Roma schoolchildren's social situation that has a profound influence on their school attendance and school results. Lots of children from rural areas face the problems when commuting to schools and their parents cannot pay for their books and school accessories due to the lack of material resources. Romanis should see a direct benefit in the education of their children, as a way of ameliorating their living conditions and as an opportunity for better social integration of the next Roma generations. The Governments could create and develop scholarship system for the gifted Roma pupils and provide social grants for the most needed students. School administration should eradicate all the forms of discrimination, acts of intolerance and racism directed at Roma children and should possess the tools that would monitor this type of actions. Moreover, they should provide relevant in service – trainings to teachers, educators, form

tutors and even school administrators which would make it easier for them to work effectively with Roma students. This kind of actions would support more tolerant attitudes towards distinctness of Roma student. Additionally, non-Roma students could be familiarized with Romani culture during history, Polish language and general educational classes. Following the idea of intercultural education comprised in paradigm of mutual coexistence on the school floor, schoolchildren should get to know each other and capture the best from both cultures (interaction leading to integration). The tendency to segregate Roma kids from non – Roma in different classes, schools and the common tendency to place them in ‘special’ schools for children with learning disabilities, needs to be changed or completely eradicated. Romani pupils can acquire social, educational competencies necessary for their social inclusion only in the integrating classes, appropriately prepared to their school age and intellectual capacity. Roma children and teens should be supported in such school and classes by Roma teaching assistants and support teachers, scholarship programmes and different other aids aiming at improvement of Roma schoolchildren’s social situation and their families. The school would be the place of contact and coexistence of different cultures, where the ideas of intercultural education would be developed. This could be an ideal solution for the school ghettos and mass assimilation in mainstream schools.

Intercultural models of education with educational programmes including elements of Roma culture, history and language should be introduced to schools with national and ethnic minorities. It would allow preserving Roma identity and building a positive image of their community and origin. Such experiments are currently being conducted in Slovakia.

It is also important that representatives of Roma community, Roma leaders, members of organizations and associations engaged in Roma education share their opinions about relevant changes. Moreover, everybody can benefit from the expertise and help of various experts on the education of ethnic and national minorities. Educated Romani elite should be engaged in creation and management of the educational policies for their community. Roma students and university graduates should be supported throughout their university career and after the graduation, and as a next step effectively engaged in different government programmes and projects implementation for their own community group.

Roma children need to be supported in kindergarten education, pre-school classes (0 level classes) and encouraged to study in mainstream schools, situated in the proximity of their home. Roma educational organizations could support these practices (such non-governmental organisations already exist in the three researched countries).

It is necessary to raise educational awareness of Roma kids and their parents. The whole process of engaging Roma families in their children education, adult education, pointing at positive role models, can be done with the help of public

media but first of all, with cooperation of local organizations. Roma parents should be involved in their children school life. School authorities and teachers can play here an important role in creating a friendly, unbiased environment for Roma children. Better educated and qualified teachers and educators, specializing in the work with Roma children should be supported and motivated by pay incentives and other forms of promotion.

The author of this paper is aware that limited character of his work did not allow him to develop many issues in detail. Therefore, presented outcome might seem to be too general. However, because it is a complex problem, it can be successfully further developed and analysed in detail.

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Portuguese history storyboard

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Abstract

This paper intends to present relevant facts about the Portuguese culture and history, so as to enable a better understanding of who the Portuguese are and provide an overall perspective of the course of history in this westernmost part of Europe. Although the choice of historical facts was subjective by nature, it is believed it achieves the aim of presenting information in a critical but blithesome way, with a view to also deconstructing national stereotypes, such as that Portuguese people are always late or are crazy about football. Finally, it focuses on some information about the Portuguese language mainly to serve as a term of comparison with other European languages.

Keywords: *Portuguese culture, Portuguese language, historical facts, national symbols and icons.*

Introduction

This paper starts with providing a brief introduction to Portugal, by focusing on general information about aspects such as our governmental system and suffrage, national languages, territory and climate, literacy and education, and national

holidays. Then five historical events of the utmost importance for the history of Portugal will be referred to, namely the independence of the kingdom in the 12th century, the two main struggles to regain independence towards Spain due to the succession crises (in the 14th century and then in the 17th century), the liberal revolution of the 19th century, the birth of the Republic at the beginning of the 20th century and the right-wing dictatorship which was overthrown by the Carnation Revolution of 1974.

Thirdly, it shall focus on a group of national symbols and icons that enhance the characterisation of the Portuguese people and their cultural and historical contexts. This choice of symbols and icons follows a European Union publication (López-Menchero & Milano 2011) intended to describe each of its nations.

Finally, the last part will cover some basic aspects about the Portuguese language, namely where Portuguese is spoken and its varieties, the origins of the language and its Indo-European family, the alphabet it uses and some features of its phonological system in terms of consonants, vowels and diphthongs.

As a final note, it should be emphasised that this paper is not a research paper based on Portuguese culture and language, but rather a very personal selection of historical and cultural issues that intends to provide an in-depth perspective of Portugal's history throughout 6 centuries, without neglecting the modern times. Despite the conversational tone, academic concerns have been followed and information is to be considered trustworthy and reliable in historical terms.

1. Brief Introduction to the Country

As a Portuguese citizen, it is quite a thorny issue to introduce one's own country. Therefore, for the first image of Portugal, CIA Factbook (2012: online) was selected, which will aid us throughout this first introduction part:

Following its heyday as a global maritime power during the 15th and 16th centuries, Portugal lost much of its wealth and status with the destruction of Lisbon in a 1755 earthquake, occupation during the Napoleonic Wars, and the independence of its wealthiest colony of Brazil in 1822. A 1910 revolution deposed the monarchy; for most of the next six decades, repressive governments ran the country. In 1974, a left-wing military coup installed broad democratic reforms. The following year, Portugal granted independence to all of its African colonies. Portugal is a founding member of NATO and entered the EC (now the EU) in 1986. (CIA 2012: online)

Portugal consists of a Republic, i.e. a government based on representatives and a president elected by the people, and comprehends mainland Portugal and the archipelagos of Madeira and Azores. It also included the African colonies and East Timor or Timor Lorosae until 1975 (though they were unlawfully occupied by Indonesia until they became a sovereign country in 2002) and Macau, which was finally ceded to China in 1999. Her well-known capital is Lisbon, as it always

was during the period of the Portuguese empire, though there were times when the capital shifted to other cities, such as Coimbra.

In administrative terms, it is divided into 18 districts: Aveiro, Açores, Beja, Braga, Bragança, Castelo Branco, Coimbra, Évora, Faro, Guarda, Leiria, Lisboa, Madeira, Portalegre, Porto, Santarém, Setúbal, Viana do Castelo, Vila Real and Viseu, covering an area of 92,090 sq km and a coastline of 1,793 km.

As far as the official languages are concerned, Portuguese and Mirandese must be mentioned. An interesting fact about our national language is that Portugal has always presented herself as a monolingual country, the oldest in Europe to have one common language for the whole of her population. However, when Mirandese came to be recognised as the second official language in 1999, there was no legal document to be found stating that Portuguese was the first official language of the country, perhaps explained by the fact that everyone took it for granted. It was only in 2004 in the *Lei constitucional* no. 1/2004 of 24th July, within the context of the 6th constitutional revision (article 11), that Portuguese was enshrined as the first official language of the country. However, the Portuguese sign language spoken by about 30,000 people has not yet been acknowledged as an official language, despite the fact that the Portuguese constitution states the following in the law referred to above: “Proteger e valorizar a língua gestual portuguesa, enquanto expressão cultural e instrumento de acesso à educação e da igualdade de oportunidades” (DR I-A 2004: 4662) [to protect and appreciate the value of Portuguese sign language as a cultural manifestation and a tool to access education and equality of opportunities].

As for her climate, it is described as maritime temperate, usually cool and rainy in the north, and much warmer and drier in the south. For instance, while the north might bear 15°C during the day, several places in the south will have splendid 20°C. Nonetheless, there is also a difference between inland and coastal areas: Bragança often has 5 or 6°C during winter days, whereas Porto will have 14°C or 15°C. This 10-degree difference can be understood in light of the mountain range of Marão that separates the region of Vila Real and the remaining of Trás-os-Montes (literally ‘behind the hills’), which also led to the widespread use of a proverb: “para além do Marão mandam os que lá estão”, that is ‘beyond Marão, those who are there are in charge’, as if they were unreachable, and maybe untamed, due to geological features.

There are not many cases of natural hazards in Portugal, apart from volcanism in Azores, though sporadic occurrences of earthquakes can be accounted for, particularly in the south, such as the 1755 earthquake in Lisbon, preceded by a tidal wave.

Portugal’s terrain is generally described as mountainous at the north of the Tagus River (rio Tejo) and rolling plains in the south. The main resources the country has to offer are fish, forests (i.e. cork), iron ore, copper, zinc, tin, tungsten, silver, gold, uranium, marble, clay, gypsum, salt, arable land and hydropower (CIA 2012: online). Unfortunately, many of these resources, though still abundant, are

limited either because of European laws and restrictions, but also due to lack of national investment for the exploration of, for example, our fertile land or metals.

The National Census conducted by Statistics Portugal (*Instituto Nacional de Estatística*) in 2011 states that our population is 10,561,614, of which 246,746 live in Azores and 267,785 in Madeira; 15% of the 10.5m people are between 0 and 14 years, 66% between the age of 15 and 64 and 19% 65 years or over (INE 2011: 11). In 2009, the Portuguese's life expectancy was situated at the age of 79.2, though for males it was 76.1 years and for females 82.1, concurrent with the European average and tendency (PORDATA 2011: online).

The ethnic groups are classified as Mediterranean stock, black-African descent immigrants, especially from the former colonies, since 1990, East Europeans and lately Chinese. In terms of religion, Portuguese are said to be mainly Roman Catholic, an impressive 94% of people, which is highly doubtful, and the remaining 6% for other religious beliefs. (CIA 2012: online)

The literacy in Portugal, that is those who are aged 15 and over that can read and write, is of 93.3% – 95.5% males and 91.3% females (CIA 2012: online). This concept of literacy can be greatly criticised, since it does not cover the extent of the ability to read: is it to be able to interpret a text and be critical about it? Not to mention the ability to grapple with official documents.

The Portuguese government is based on a Parliamentary Democracy, a system that nevertheless is turning out to be flawed and leading to a great deal of dissatisfaction, expressed in the high (and frightening) numbers of abstention at the several most recent elections. People are demanding a more participatory system, where they can actually see their governors fulfil their election promises and care for their interests and needs, which is not happening at present. Suffrage is universal and comprehends those over 18 years of age, a situation that only changed after the 1974 coup. In the 1934 “elections”, all autonomous citizens over 21 could vote and be elected; however, the illiterate could vote only if they had paid their taxes – the astounding amount of 100 escudos (the old currency) – and women could also if they possessed secondary education, a technical or higher education degree; this curtailment in clear violation of the law no. 19894 from 1931, which had granted women the right to vote (AR 2008: online).

The functioning of our parliament and government is based on our constitution, which has a long history, having started with the Constitutional Charter of 1822, but the current Portuguese Constitution dates from 25th April 1976 and it has been revised many times.

Finally, our main national holidays are the Day of Portugal or Camões' Day on 10th June, chose because it is the day on which Camões is said to have died in 1580, and the Restoration of Independence on 1st December to celebrate the 1640 coup which dethroned the Philippine dynasty. National days are also thorny

issues for any nation, since it is hard to choose a date which will not overlook part of the population.

2. Historical Milestones

The birth of the Kingdom of Portugal is usually identified in 1096, when Portus Cale was offered to a French count, Henry, as a reward for the defence provided against the Almoravids, a Muslim sect from North Africa. Henry's son, Afonso Henriques, who reigned between 1139 and 1185, achieved Portugal's independence in 1143. After the battle of Ourique, in 1139, Afonso Henriques began to call himself Afonso I, King of Portugal, and was acknowledged as such in 1143 by the Spanish King Alfonso VII. King Afonso I conquered Lisbon from the Moors in 1147 and the final battle against the Moors took place in 1249 under King Afonso III (1248-1279), when the Algarve was finally conquered.

The first succession crisis is situated between 1383 and 1385, leading to conflicts with Spain. Castile claimed the Portuguese crown when King Fernando's (1367-1383) only heir to the throne, his daughter Beatriz, married the Spanish King Juan I. The Portuguese *cortes* (consulting meetings between the monarchy and representatives of the nobility and the clergy, and later of the councils as well) asked João of Avis, the illegitimate son of former King Pedro I, to take over the Portuguese throne to avoid Spanish dominion. The Spanish invaded Portugal in 1385 and the Portuguese won the Battle of Aljubarrota led by Nuno Álvares Pereira and a small force of English archers, by using an Anglo-Saxon strategy, which was based on a balance between offence, in which the Portuguese army advanced towards the opponent, and defence, by looking for natural obstacles to hide them from the Spanish.

There is also a legend related to this infamous battle: the Baker of Aljubarrota. It is said that Brites de Almeida was an ugly tall sturdy woman who became an orphan at the age of 20 and decided to travel around the country, meeting people from all walks of life, until she got tired of this life, accepting a job as a baker in Aljubarrota and getting married to an honest farmer. When the battle broke, she decided to join the Portuguese army and fight the Spanish. Coming home from the battle, she discovered she had seven Spanish hiding in her oven, whom she immediately killed with her baking paddle. She also led a group of women who chased the lost Spanish left behind from the battle. (Infopédia 2012: online)

The history of Portugal and Spain is intertwined, often for purposes of unlawful overtaking: another of these examples is the Philippine dynasty between 1580 and 1640, during which Portugal was ruled by the Spanish. D. Sebastião had died in the Battle at Alcacér-Quibir in 1578, and the Cardinal D. Henrique, D. Sebastião's great-uncle, became king until his death in 1580. Since there was no legitimate heir, King Felipe II of Spain, a nephew of Portugal's former King João III, invaded Portugal and claimed the throne for himself.

The situation did not please anyone. On the one hand, the bourgeois felt disappointed and impoverished due to the attacks made to Portuguese territory and ships; on the other, the noblemen were also discontented because of the loss of privileges and posts, and the obligation to fight for the Spanish and to pay taxes. Then a nobleman gathered the necessary conditions to be acknowledged and accepted as the rightful owner of the Portuguese throne – D. João, Duke of Bragança (later King João IV). Added to this, in Spain, King Filipe IV also faced serious problems not only of warfare with other countries, but also of popular dissatisfaction which led to several rebellions, the most serious of which the Catalonia rebellion.

Therefore, on 1st December 1640, the noblemen who conspired against Spain invaded the Royal Palace, arrested the Duchess of Mantua and proclaimed the independence of the country. After 28 years of unsuccessful attempts to regain control of Portugal, both countries signed the Treaty of Lisbon in 1668, in which Portugal was once again acknowledged by Spain as an independent nation.

Almost 100 years afterwards came the Liberal Revolution, a political revolution that erupted in 1820 and lasted until 1826, unchained by a military insurrection in Porto that spread to the rest of the country. This event was preceded by the French invasions between 1807 and 1811, when Napoleonic forces invaded Portugal three times and the Portuguese royal family had to be transferred to the Portuguese colony of Brazil, from where King João VI ruled his trans-Atlantic empire for 13 years: Portugal found itself virtually as a colony of Brazil or a British protectorate (Oliveira Marques 1984: 408-409). Although the British came to help with the French invasions and the liberal wars, they always wanted something in return: Portugal was forced to accept commercial treaties that opened the vast and wealthy Brazilian territory to the British in the shape of free commerce and navigation (Sá 1988: 245).

The revolutionaries demanded the immediate return of the royal *cortes* to restore the metropolitan dignity and organised the election of a constitutional assembly to debate the nature of the future government. King João VI returned to Portugal in 1821 and his heir-apparent D. Pedro became regent of the Kingdom of Brazil. The constitution was approved in 1822, the same year in which Brazil declared its independence from Portugal. Its independence was only recognised in 1825 and King Pedro was acclaimed the first Emperor of Brazil.

The dawn of another century brought along the Republic and the end of monarchy. A coup d'état organised by the Portuguese Republican Party (*Partido Republicano Português*) dethroned the constitutional monarchy and established the first Republic in Portugal on 5th December 1910. There were a myriad of reasons that led to this and also to the fairly violent end of our last monarch: the subjugation of the country to British interests, the expenses with the royal family, the power still held by the Church, social and political unrest, the rotation of the political parties and the incapacity of following modern times.

The National dictatorship started in 1928 with the election of President Carmona and lasted until the adoption of the new constitution in 1933, when the regime changed its name to *Estado Novo* (New State) or the Second Republic. It was a totalitarian regime, inspired by conservative and authoritarian ideologies developed by António de Oliveira Salazar, who ruled Portugal from 1932 to 1968, when he fell ill.

Salazar's programme was strongly opposed to communism, socialism and liberalism, thus being pro-Catholic, conservative and nationalistic. Its policy envisaged the perpetuation of Portugal as an empire spread throughout many continents, financially autonomous and politically independent from the dominating superpowers, as well as a source of civilisation and stability to overseas possessions. One of its pillars was PIDE, the secret police, which established severe censorship and imprisoned political dissidents. The regime was known for its propaganda, reflected in many mottos, such as “Deus, Pátria e Família” (God, Fatherland and Family); “Tudo pela Nação, nada contra a Nação” (All for the nation, nothing against the nation); “Persistentemente, teimosamente, não somos demais para continuar Portugal” (Persistently, stubbornly, we are not too many to continue Portugal); “Enquanto houver um Português sem trabalho e sem pão a Revolução continua” (As long as there is a Portuguese without work and bread, the Revolution will endure); “Temos uma Doutrina. Somos uma Força.” (We have an ideology. We are a Force); “Orgulhosamente sós.” (Proudly alone).

3. National Symbols and Icons

In order to discuss Portuguese culture in more depth, we chose to make use of a booklet published by the European Union (López-Menchero & Milano 2011), in which each country is presented by means of a set of national symbols and icons.

It is worth mentioning the difference between icon and symbol. Every sign consists of a stimulus pattern that bears a meaning and relates to its referent by means of a convention. There are different types of signs according to the way the meaning is associated with the pattern: icons, indexes and symbols. We shall focus only on icons and symbols: an icon is the simplest form of sign, since it physically resembles the pattern it stands for, whereas a symbol is an arbitrary, non-logical pattern (usually a sound pattern in a language) that gets its meaning primarily from its mental association with other symbols and only secondarily from its correlation with environmentally relevant properties. (Cobley & Jansz 1997: 33)

Therefore, we shall analyse the icons and symbols presented by this EU publication from a personal perspective, since it is impossible to have access to the underlying knowledge of the publishers, or the origin of such knowledge: were these icons and symbols provided by research of the authors or were they part of a survey conducted to Portuguese people?

The flags presented in figure 2 are examples of the evolution of the national flag, which went through a great deal of change before reaching the current layout. The widespread interpretation of the Portuguese flag states that the green stripe symbolises hope, the red the blood shed by the Portuguese and the golden globe the Discoveries. Within the coat of arms, the blue shields represent the 5 Moorish kings defeated and the 7 castles in the 7 fortified hills conquered by Afonso Henriques.

Infante D. Henriques was the junior prince of the Kingdom of Portugal and an important figure in the early days of the Discoveries. He was the third child of King João I, the founder of the Avis dynasty and he himself encouraged his father to conquer Ceuta in 1415 and other lands down to Cabo Bojador. According to Gomes Eanes de Zurara, in his *Chronicles about the deeds in Guinea* (“*Crónicas dos feitos da Guiné*”), Henry is described as having no luxuries, speaking with soft words and calm gestures, a man of many virtues that never allowed any poor person to leave his presence empty-handed.



Figure 3 – Diogo Cão (*idem*).

Diogo Cão is the first European known to sight and enter the Congo River and to explore the West African coast between Cape St. Catherine and Cape Cross. He made 2 voyages in 1480s: to Congo and Angola, and then to Cape Cross. Related to the trips to and around Africa, it is also noteworthy the mention to Bartolomeu Dias and the Cape of Good Hope (*Cabo das Tormentas*), originally named the Cape of Storms, where a monster, Adamastor, was said to live. It was later renamed Cape of Good Hope, because it represented the opening of a route by sea to the east, especially to India.

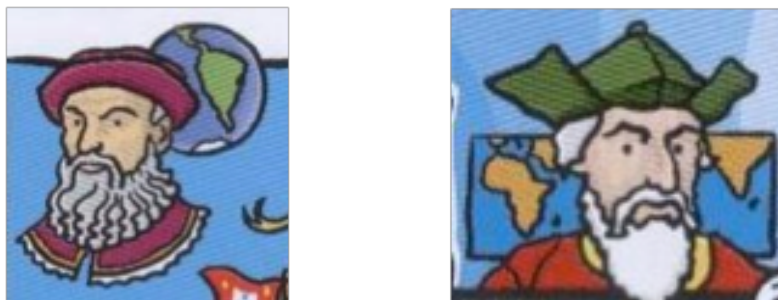


Figure 4 – Two possible representations of Vasco da Gama (idem).

These two representations of Vasco da Gama match the paintings in which he was portrayed in the 15th century and onwards, with these two different types of hats, bearing the world behind him. Vasco da Gama was the commander of the first ships to sail directly from Europe to India, through the Cape, Mombasa, Malindi and then Calicut, and he was also responsible for Portugal's success as an early colonising power.



Figure 5 – Pedro Álvares Cabral (idem).

Pedro Álvares Cabral was a Portuguese nobleman, a military commander, a navigator and an explorer, who is well known for the discovery of Brazil. He was appointed to head an expedition to India in 1500, following the newly-opened route around Africa. His fleet consisting of 13 ships sailed far into the western Atlantic Ocean. He anchored in Monte Pascoal and Porto Seguro, which he claimed for the Portuguese crown.



Figure 6 – Spanish caravels (*idem*).

The fact that there are Spanish items amidst Portugal's symbols and icons can be interpreted in two different ways: the intertwining of the history of Portugal and Spain throughout the centuries, as mentioned above, namely when concerned with the Discoveries, as well as some blurred misconceptions from the authors towards what is specifically Portuguese and Spanish.

Nonetheless, the story states that Cristóvão Colombo came to offer his services to the king of Portugal, who refused them and ultimately led him to head for Spain, where his services were accepted. 1494 is a milestone of the Discoveries, because the *Tratado de Tordesilhas* was signed, which divided the newly-discovered lands outside Europe between Spain and Portugal along a meridian 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands.



Figure 7 – Luiz de Camões (*idem*).

Luís de Camões was probably born in Lisbon approximately in 1524 and died in 1580. He wrote the first Portuguese epic poem – “Os Lusíadas” (The Lusíads) – about the Portuguese Discoveries dedicated to D. Sebastião. It is composed of about 1102 stanzas or strophes and organised in 10 *cantos* or thematic groups of stanzas and some relevant historical episodes, such as the council of the Olympic Gods, the Adamastor or the machine of the world. There is a proverb about this great Portuguese writer: “Camões que vendeu um olho por dois tostões” [‘Camões who sold one of his eyes for two cents’, though in Portuguese it rhymes], which

is supposed to be based on the fact that when he was coming back from India, where he was sent in exile for having injured a member of the Royal Stables, he was shipwrecked. Because he had already written *Os Lusíadas*, it is said that he sold one of his eyes to the devil in exchange of saving his masterpiece, and not his Indian lover. Regardless of managing to reach shore without any harm and publish his epic poem, he died in penury.



Figure 8 – Fernando Pessoa (*idem*).

Another literary symbol, Fernando Pessoa was born in 1888 in Lisbon and died in 1935. He was a Portuguese poet, writer, literary critic and translator, one of the most significant literary figures of the 20th century and one of the greatest poets of all times. He was brought up in Durban, becoming fluent at English, and started writing under the name of Charles Robert Anon, a tendency he maintained with his many heteronyms (almost 80!), such as Alberto Caeiro, Ricardo Reis and Álvaro de Campos. One of his most famous works, “Mensagem” (Message), is a symbolist epic made up of 44 short poems organised in three parts: *Brasão* (Coat-of-Arms) relates Portuguese historical figures to the coat of arms; *Mar Português* (Portuguese Sea) covers the Portuguese Discoveries and the construction of the Empire that ended with the death of King Sebastião; *Encoberto* (The Hidden One) refers to Pessoa's vision of a future world of peace and the Fifth Empire, the fulfilment of the destiny of mankind, designed by God since before Time, and the accomplishment of Portugal (cf. “O Nevoeiro” by Chamaste mó?, a traditional music group, see References and its translation in Annexes).

Pessoa's name is also ubiquitous, owing to the fact that some of his verses turned into popular sayings, such as “Tudo vale a pena quando a alma não é pequena” (All is worthwhile if our soul is big enough) or “Deus quer, o homem sonha, a obra nasce” (God wants it, man dreams it, it is born).

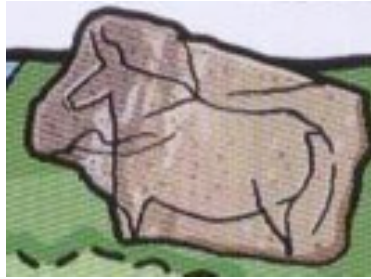


Figure 9 – Foz Côa Rock Art Sites (*idem*).

These rock art sites comprehend hundreds of carvings from the Upper Paleolithic period to the Magdalenian/ Epipalaeolithic (22,000-8,000 BCE), representing animal figures, namely horses and oxen, whose size range from 15cm to 1.80m. They were found in 1995, at the time of the construction of an EDP (National Electricity Company) dam and was inscribed as UNESCO's WH in 1998.



Figure 10 – The rooster of Barcelos and D. Luís Bridge in Porto (*idem*).

Barcelos was originally a Roman settlement, in Braga, and the rooster became well-known because of a legend that goes like this: a rich man threw a big party. When the party was over, the rich man noticed that his sterling cutlery was stolen by a guest. He accused a pilgrim and let him go to court. He protested his innocence, but the judge didn't believe him. The judge was about to eat a roasted rooster when the pilgrim said: "If I am innocent, this rooster will crow three times." When the pilgrim was about to be lynched, the rooster crowed. The judge released the pilgrim. The story ends a few years later when the pilgrim returned and made a statue over the event. (Wikipedia 2011: online)

Below the rooster, the Bridge D. Luís I can be seen, one of the symbols of Porto, the city that gave its name to Portugal, probably evolving from its first name *Portus Cale*. It meant the ancient town and port at the mouth of the Douro River and also a county of Portugal, predecessor of the kingdom of Portugal. *Cale* came either from Greek, meaning beautiful, or from Latin, standing for warm, both of which match the description of Porto. The city was of paramount importance in

the commerce of Port Wine and also known for its liberal way of thinking and will to fight against injustices; honesty is its rule of thumb. It was the cradle of many local and national rebellions and revolutions, e.g. 1820 liberal revolution, the 31st January popular rebellion, the end of monarchy and the birth of the Republic.

The Bridge was designed by Gustave Eiffel's pupil, Théophile Seyrig, and started being built in 1881, opening in 1886. It has a span of 172m and was then the longest in the world. At the left side of the bridge, it is noticeable the hills of Vila Nova de Gaia, leading to the Monastery of Serra do Pilar, also an architectural landmark of Gaia and UNESCO WH since 1996. The monastery was built in 16th century and it belonged to the Order of Saint Augustine. In 1832, during the Siege to Porto, it was used as an improvised fort; at the beginning of 20th century, it was also used for military barracks and remains.

Port Wine is obviously of inescapable mention, since it is 1st protected designation of origin in Portugal, provided by Marquês de Pombal in 1756 and either 1st or 2nd in the world. The Roman invasions, first in 1st century BC and then in 3rd century AC, introduced the culture of vines. In 1211, King Afonso II forbade the cutting of vineyards because they were considered possessions of the kingdom; in 14th century, wine was already the largest piece of Portuguese exportations, assessed in about 1£m. In 17th century, a privileged relationship with the British was born: Sandeman, Offley, Hunt, Newman, Roope, Campbell, Bowden & Taylor, Croft became well-know because of producing and trading in Port Wine. The micro-climate of the region characterised as hilly and the long and dry autumns and short winters also allowed the fields to become fertile places for experiments and the development of vineyards, the so-called 'generous wine'. Later, in 1756, the *Companhia Geral da Agricultura das Vinhas do Alto Douro* (the General Company of the Agriculture of Vineyards of Douro Alto) was created. Now the *Região Vinhateira do Alto Douro* or *Alto Douro Vinhateiro* (Alto Douro Wine Region) includes 26,000 acres and was classified as UNESCO's WH in 2001 within the category of cultural landscape.



Figure 11 – Warriors castrejos (idem).

The Castro culture developed during the first millennium AC and is related to the appearance of the first populations in Portugal; one of its features was the new set of symbolic representations, mainly masculine figures, intended to glorify heroic ancestors.



Figure 12 – Ria de Aveiro (*idem*).

Ria de Aveiro is known as the Portuguese Venice. It's an inland lagoon, parallel to the sea, that is 45-km long and can reach up to 11km in width, but rather shallow (up to 1.5m), though artificially maintained between 4 and 7m for navigation purposes. It resulted from a retreat of the sea which occurred in 16th century, in which 6,000 acres of land became permanently inside water, creating canals. It's rich in fish and water birds (that migrate here, such as storks) and famous for its salt. Instead of gondolas, the lagoon has its *moliceiros*, also roughly represented in figure 12. Above there is an icon of conservas, that is fish “preserves”, such as canned sardines, mackerels, tuna, octopus or squid, whose development was related to the long-time activity of fishing, since we are fishermen by nature, tradition and history. Some of the most famous ones are exported worldwide, and Ramirez can be found in Harrods, in London.



Figure 13 – Fado de Coimbra (*idem*).

Fado means ‘destiny’, ‘doom’ or ‘fortune’, but it also came to designate the type of song that deals with *saudade* (missing someone and longing or yearning to be with them), love and betrayal. *Fado* developed in several places and has been used for centuries by university students for their serenades, usually twice a year, at the beginning of the academic year, dedicated to the freshmen, and, at the end, during the *Queima das Fitas* (the burning of the ribbons, symbolising the end of higher studies).

Fado from Coimbra is different from Lisbon’s: it has to do with students’ lives, the fight against injustices and later against the dictatorship; women could not sing it and its melancholic sound comes from the Portuguese guitar and the voices of men. It was Coimbra the first to develop the *monumentais serenatas* performed in their See (see “Balada da Despedida” in References and its translation in Annexes).

The University of Coimbra is the oldest university in Portugal; it was established in 1290 by King Dinis, offering Arts, Canonical Law, Civil Law and Medicine. The hill where the university lies is also famous for its 34-metre-high *Torre da Cabra* (Goat Tower), because of its clock tower and the bells which used to oversee students’ life at the university. The tower was built between 1728 and 1733 by António Canevari in Barroque style of Italian inspiration. Its three bells are called *cabra*, *cabrão e balão* (goat, bitch and balloon, the two last ones rhyming in Portuguese), each jingling in a different direction.



Figure 14 – Amália Rodrigues (*idem*).

Although, from our viewpoint, *fado* from Coimbra is the most beautiful one, it is undeniable that Amália Rodrigues must be mentioned. She was born in 1920 and died on 6th October 1999, a day of national mourning, being buried at *Panteão Nacional*. She is one of the most renowned Portuguese singers, said to be the Queen of Fado and an ambassador of Portugal; she performed everywhere in the world: Chez Carrère (Paris), Ritz (London), Lincoln Centre (New York), Rome, Trieste, Dublin, and the like. It is interesting that she launched her first LP in the USA in 1954 by Angel Records, at a time when women were forbidden to travel without their husbands, let alone if they were single. Listen to one of her most beautiful *fados* “Com que voz” (see References and its translation in Annexes). One of the most pungent criticisms was that she embodied the 3 Fs of the dictatorship: *fado*, Fátima (the sanctuary) and football. Nevertheless, we believe that one cannot be held responsible for being turned into a symbol and incorporated into the regime’s propaganda.



Figure 15 – Padrão dos Descobrimentos (*idem*).

Salazar ordered the original monument dedicated to the Discoveries to be built for the 1940 Exhibition of the Portuguese World and was later taken down. In

1960, it was put up again to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Infante D. Henriques, the Navigator, the sponsor of the Discoveries. It consists of a 50-metre replica of the old one, carved into the shape of the prow of a caravel; on both sides, there are 33 Portuguese personalities, among which explorers, cartographers, artists, scientists and missionaries, with the Infante leading ahead into the unknown (there is a brochure online explaining the entire monument: see EGEAC in the References). The pavement in front of the monument features a mosaic decoration showing a world map with the routes of various Portuguese explorers and a wind rose, offered by South Africa in 1960.

On the right of the *Padrão*, we can see the *Torre de Belém* (Belém Tower or Tower of St. Vincent). It was built in the early 16th century from limestone and is a prominent example of the Portuguese Manueline style or late Portuguese Gothic. The tower was commissioned by King João I as a defence system at the mouth of the river and a ceremonial gateway to Lisbon. It is composed of a bastion and a 30-metre four-storey fortified tower located in Belém. This district in Lisbon, Belém, played a significant role in the era of the Discoveries, and it is currently the presidency headquarters. It became UNESCO's WH since 1983, along with the *Mosteiro dos Jerónimos* (Hieronymites Monastery). This hermitage place was founded by Infante D. Henrique, the Navigator, in 1450, and this was where Vasco da Gama and his men spent the night in prayer before departing for India in 1497. Its construction started by order of King Manuel I (1502) to commemorate Vasco da Gama's successful return from India.



Figure 16 – Torre de Vasco da Gama at Expo'98 (*idem*).

Expo'98 was the official specialised World's Exhibition held in Lisbon, from May to September 1998, under the theme “The Oceans, a Heritage for the Future”, also chosen to commemorate 500 years of Portuguese Discoveries – it received around 11 million visitors in 132 days and 155 countries and organisations were represented. The ambitious project enabled to renovate a derelict area of Lisbon,

providing the city with a new bridge, a new subway line and a new multi-modal station. It became famous for its Aquarium, the Atlantic Pavilion, later turned into *Parque das Nações* (the park of the nations).

Torre de Vasco da Gama is a 145-m lattice tower, named after the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama, whose steel structure represents the sail of a caravel. At the height of 120m, there was an observation deck and a luxury panoramic restaurant. While it was still open, it was the tallest structure in Portugal open to the public. On the right of this tower, we have the Vasco da Gama Bridge, a cable-stayed bridge, flanked by viaducts and range views, that spans the River Tejo. It's the longest bridge in Europe, and the ninth longest in the world, with a total length of 17.2km. It was opened on 29th March 1998, in time of the opening of Expo'98 and the 500th anniversary of Infante D. Henriques.



Figure 17 – Carnations and the Carnation Revolution (idem).

The red carnation represents the Carnation Revolution, which occurred on the 25th April 1974, marking the end of the dictatorship and the recovery of the principles of the long-lost Republic installed in 1910. The use of carnations symbolically represents the bloodless revolution and the flower is said to have been used because a florist started handing out carnations to the people on the streets, who later gave them to the military.



Figure 18 – The military wearing carnations on 24th April 1974
(http://www.encyclopedia.com.pt/articles.php?article_id=1094).

The coup was carried out by the armed forces, the military that mainly belonged to the intermediate hierarchy, called the captains, most of whom had participated in the colonial wars. Initially, it was related to corporative demands of the military, although later it comprehended political concerns as well. After the fall of the dictatorship, a *Junta de Salvação Nacional* (Council for National Salvation) was created and a period of intense turmoil followed: the so-called PREC (undergoing revolutionary process) was marked by demonstrations, occupations, provisional governments and nationalisations, which ended on 25th November 1975. This period of political and social unrest is also known as the hot summer of 1975. Our current constitution was approved in 1976, after a long way since the Constitutional Charter from 1822.



Figure 19 – Azulejos (*idem*).

Azulejos is a Portuguese word that comes from the Arabic word *zellige*, meaning ‘polished stone’, a form of Portuguese painted, tin-glazed, ceramic tilework that became a typical aspect of our culture and has been produced continuously for 5 centuries. The art of tiling can be found in churches, palaces, ordinary houses, train or subway stations; they are applied on walls, floors and even ceilings as ornamental art, but also for specific functions, such as temperature control.



Figure 20 – Bullfights and taking the face (*idem*).

Many people in Portugal stand up to the defence of bullfights and the work of *forcados* as a vitally important manifestation of cultural heritage that must be upheld. This is highly debatable and we do believe bullfights are ultimately an issue of animal rights. *Forcados* are groups of amateurs who perform the *pega de cara* (taking the face), the final event in a typical bullfight, who use a 1.7-metre-long pole to assist them in such action: this pole is called a *forcado*. The *pega* involves 8 *forcados* who challenge the bull with their bare hands. They appear in traditional clothing of damask or velvet for this event, including a green, long, knit hat, worn only by the one who’s going to ‘take the face’. To obtain a clearer view of what the *pega de cara* consists of, have a look at the trailer of a Portuguese documentary called “Taking the face” (see References).



Figure 21 – Olive trees and the montes alentejanos (*idem*).

The *montes alentejanos* (or hillocks in Alentejo) are a typical image of Alentejo, south of the Tagus River, which represent a fairly extensive rural estate and its facilities, usually situated at the highest point of a hill or hillock. However, in the last decades, they have gradually been abandoned and purchased by foreigners. Related to these hillocks and Alentejo (though not exclusive of this region), we also have olive trees and their much appreciated product, olive oil. *Olea europaea* is a species of a small tree native to the coastal areas of the eastern Mediterranean Basin, as well as northern Iran. Its fruit is of major agricultural importance in the Mediterranean region as the source of olive oil. Olive trees are very hardy, drought-disease- and fire-resistant, and can live for a very long time – an olive tree in Algarve is said to be 2,000 years old.



Figure 22 – The island of Azores (*idem*).

As far as the islands are concerned, the Archipelago of Azores is composed of nine volcanic islands situated in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean: Flores, Corvo, Graciosa, Terceira, São Jorge, Pico, Faial, São Miguel, Santa Maria and the Formigas Reef. The first islands were “discovered” in 1431 by Gonçalo Velho Cabral, but credit is also given to the explorer Diogo de Silves, in 1427. Its main activities are

agriculture, dairy farming (cheese and butter products), minor livestock ranching, fishing and tourism.



Figure 23 – Bird of Paradise (*idem*).

Finally, as for Madeira (meaning ‘wood’), the archipelago comprises Madeira, Porto Santo, the Desertas and the Savage Islands. It was discovered by Infante D. Henrique in 1419 and settled after 1420. Madeira is famous for its wine, flowers, landscapes, embroidery artisans and its annual New Year’s celebrations featuring spectacular fireworks. The *ave-do-paráiso* (*Strelitzia reginae* or Bird of Paradise) represented in figure 22 is typical of this island.

4. A Bit About the Language

To conclude, a few facts about the Portuguese language will be offered to provide some insight into this highly complex language.

Portuguese is officially spoken in Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé e Príncipe, East Timor and Macau, by around 250 million people, 200 million of which in Brazil only.



Figure 24 – Representation of the countries which speak Portuguese (<http://www.mundodoscuriosos.com.br>).

As mentioned above, Portugal has 2 official languages, Portuguese and Mirandese (not to mention Portuguese sign language) and many dialects or regional varieties, such as *transmontano* (from Trás-os-Montes), *portuense* (Porto), *lisboeta* (considered to be the standard), *alentejano* (Alentejo), *madeirense* (the island of Madeira), *açoreano* (the archipelago of Azores), among others. Their main differences are found in the pronunciation and intonation, as well as in the lexicon.

Portuguese is a language which belongs to the Indo-European family, specifically the branch of the Italic family, descendant of Latin and Galician-Portuguese with influences of Celtic, Arabic and Germanic tribes, and later Latin. It came to lose Latin inflection and it now depends on word order to convey the syntactic function within phrases and sentences. It makes use of the Roman alphabet.

Its phonological system is composed of 19 consonants (since the Medieval affricates merged with the fricatives around 18th century, though they still occur in special contexts and in specific regions around the country, e.g. *chuva, os olhos*); 9 vowels (both oral and nasal), such as *maçã, sento, sinto, sondo*; 10 oral diphthongs, decreasing and increasing, for instance, *pai, rei, dois, fui, mau, seu, céu, viu, ouro, quase*; and 5 nasal diphthongs (all decreasing), for example in the words *nação, limões, alemães, muita, tens*.

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Annexes

The following songs were translated from Portuguese into English by Tânia Moutinho and Maria José Mesquita, both students of the 2nd year of the bachelor's degree in Foreign Languages: English and Spanish, and to whom I address my special thanks.

1. Monumental Serenade: "Balada da Despedida"

BALADA DA DESPEDIDA

Sentes que um tempo acabou
Primavera de flor adormecida,
Qualquer coisa que não volta que voou,
Que foi um rio, um ar, na tua vida.

E levas em ti guardado
O choro de uma balada
Recordações do passado
O bater da velha cabra.

Capa negra de saudade
No momento da partida
Segredos desta cidade
Levo comigo para vida.

Sabes que o desenho do adeus
É fogo que nos queima devagar,
E no lento cerrar dos olhos teus
Fica a esperança de um dia aqui voltar.

E levas em ti guardado
O choro de uma balada
Recordações do passado
O bater da velha cabra.

Capa negra de saudade
No momento da partida
Segredos desta cidade
Levo comigo para vida.

FAREWELL BALLAD

You feel that one time is over
Spring of the sleeping flower
Something that doesn't come back flew away
That was a river, air, in your life

You carry in you well kept
The crying of a ballad
Memories from the past
The beating of an old goat

Black gown from saudade
At the moment of farewell
Secrets from this town
Carry with me for the rest of my life

You know the drawing of farewell
Is the fire that wastes us slowly
And in the slow closing of your eyes
Stays the hope of one day coming back

You carry in you well kept
The crying of a ballad
Memories from the past
The beating of an old goat

Black gown from saudade
At the moment of farewell
Secrets from this town
Carry with me for the rest of my life

2. Amália's fado: "Com que voz"

COM QUE VOZ

Com que voz chorarei meu triste fado,
que em tão dura paixão me sepultou.
que mor não seja a dor que me deixou
o tempo, de meu bem desenganado.

Mas chorar não estima neste estado
aonde suspirar nunca aproveitou.
triste quero viver, pois se mudou
em tristeza a alegria do passado.

Assim a vida passo descontente,
ao som nesta prisão do grilhão duro
que lastima ao pé que a sofre e sente.

De tanto mal, a causa é amor puro,
devido a quem de mim tenho ausente,
por quem a vida e bens dele aventuro.

HOW WILL MY VOICE

How will my voice cry my sad fate,
that such a strong passion buried me,
that love be not what pain left me
time, of mine disillusioned love

But crying isn't the answer
where sighing never enjoyed
sad I want to live, because it changed
the past joy into sadness

So I spend my existence unsatisfied
to the sound of this hard prison
that regrets near those who suffer and feel it

The reason for so much pain, pure love it is,
for someone who is away from me
whose life and belongings from him I quest

3. Pessoa's poem turned into a song: "Nevoeiro"

NEVOEIRO

Nem rei nem lei, nem paz nem guerra,
Define com perfil e ser
Este fulgor baço da terra
Que é Portugal a entristecer
Brilho sem luz e sem arder,
Como o que o fogo-fátuo encerra.

Ninguém sabe que coisa quer.
Ninguém conhece que alma tem,
Nem o que é mal nem o que é bem.
(Que ânsia distante perto chora?)
Tudo é incerto e derradeiro.
Tudo é disperso, nada é inteiro.
Ó Portugal, hoje és nevoeiro...

É a Hora!

FOG

No king, no law; no peace and no war
Defines the essence and existence
This dim sparkling of the land
Which is Portugal saddening
The glow without light and without burning,
As what the corpse will-o'-the-wisp holds.

No one knows what they want.
No one knows the soul they carry,
Nor what is evil nor what is good.
(What distant anxiety nearby weeps?)
All is uncertain and ultimate
All is sparse, nothing is whole.
Oh, Portugal, today you are fog...

It is Time!

How we can teach cultural diversity and dealing with "others" in kindergarten (Slovenian context)

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Introduction

Cultural diversity is not a new phenomenon. In modern society with ever growing migrations however, it became something very common in a large part of the world. In our daily interactions we meet people that may differ from us in many ways: culturally, religiously, socially, by the abilities they (do not) possess. How we interact with these different people and the attitude we have towards them is a very important issue. It is therefore necessary that we learn how to cohabitate and cooperate with other people as early as possible, no matter how different they may be. In this lecture we want to demonstrate the use of storytelling as an important asset in pedagogical work in kindergarten, school and even university. Further on we want to provoke discussion about possible scenarios that can evolve from the beginning of the story that has been told, and to make students find arguments for different outcomes of the story, as well as to define the role of institutional education and the role of a teacher in shaping one's personality. The goal is to encourage students to reflect on their future role as kindergarten teachers and the responsibility that they accept in the process of education. To put all that into context we also aim to present some basic facts about Slovenian Kindergarten Curriculum and explain the present situation in Slovenia with regard to multiculturalism, mainly from the viewpoint of international migrations and its consequences.

As previously stated in this lecture, we use storytelling, discussion as well as some standard "ex cathedra" lecturing. Depending on available time within the discussion, it is also possible to include work in pairs or small groups. The whole lecture is intended to be as interactive as possible to make students more active in the shaping of partial conclusions of the lecture's topic.

The Story and the Discussion

The lecture starts without any introduction and instead begins with the story of 'Peter the Rabbit'. Normally students, as adult as they are supposed to be, do not expect that a university teacher is going to tell them a story, as stories are usually considered to be only for (small) children. The element of surprise is crucial because it attracts students' attention and provokes their curiosity which certainly enhances cognitive processes. The beginning of the story goes like this:

"Peter the Rabbit, in Portugal also known as Pedro Coelho, was certainly the bravest rabbit in the world. He was braver than any knight or king; he was even braver than any queen.

Once when he was still a little child, Peter suddenly said to his mother: 'Mama, when I grow up I will kill 50 snakes every day!'

Mother was astonished, surprised and above all worried, since she was terrified of snakes. Therefore after she pulled herself together, she answered: 'Holly rabbit in the wood my dear child, what are you talking about? My little rabbit is not supposed to talk like that. You know that snakes are wicked, tricky and sticky. I told you about that at least a hundred times. Snakes are hiding their legs and still they are as fast as a rabbit. Whenever you see one you must run away as fast as you can. Remember, beware of the snakes my son, always and everywhere.'

That was the response of little rabbit's mother, but of course as usual, her little son Peter the Rabbit did ..."

At this point in the story we interrupt it and ask students to discuss and decide the destiny of Peter the Rabbit. We give them some possible outcomes and also leave them to invent their own one if they want to. However, the four scenarios of grown up achievements of Peter the Rabbit as we offer them to students are as follows:

1. Peter the Rabbit, as a grown up rabbit, really killed 50 snakes every day and lived happily ever after, day after day!
2. Peter the Rabbit, as a grown up rabbit, was frustrated every day because he wanted to kill 50 snakes every day, but he could not kill a single one. Eventually he became so depressed that he finally ended up in a rabbit's mental institution!
3. Peter the Rabbit, as a grown up rabbit, killed all the snakes in his country and became internationally known as 'Peter the snake killer', a famous leader of SKF (Snake Killers Front - the most terrifying terrorist

organization ever). They say that he was killed by a SSIS (Superpower's Secret Intelligence Service) and his body was eventually thrown into the sea.

4. Peter the Rabbit, as a grown up rabbit, met a really pleasant snake, they got acquainted and as they got to know each other better, they really started to like each other, became best friends and finally Peter the Rabbit became the most famous rabbit of the world as a founder of SRFS (Snake-Rabbit Friendship Society).

Students are supposed to think about the above scenarios (and about their own if they create it) and reflect on the reasons that may lead the life of the story's main character to its final 'destiny'. We direct them to think about the process of primary socialization in contrast to the process of socialization in kindergarten (school) where students, as future teachers, will take an active part in it. The values of the family environment and peer groups may differ dramatically from the values promoted by kindergarten and school curriculum. What the decision making set of values adopted and internalized by our story's hero will be, is actually a result of coordinated activities and efforts of parents' teachers and the wider society; if all three share mainly the same values. If not, it is a result of a more or less violent struggle that is always uncertain and difficult. This applies to both the individual, who is caught into a vicious circle of conflicting values and the teachers who are trying to promote (enforce) socially accepted values as well.

Through the discussion we try to help students to get a deeper insight into their role in the process of children's socialization and their responsibility for the outcomes. We also try to focus them on the fact that we have a rabbit in our story that has a certain attitude towards someone very much different from him: a snake. We must also highlight the fact of fear of those who are different from us and the fact of generalization. A poisonous snake is dangerous; therefore all the snakes are dangerous. Furthermore we must direct students to think about what the people are usually afraid of. We must consider other people and what the easiest ways of overcoming the fear of 'other' (different of oneself) are. Slovenian proverb says that the fear is something that is hollow from inside and consists of nothing on the outside. The fear is therefore something that comes of ignorance, absence of knowledge and it disappears when we possess the necessary knowledge. We need to know the danger to avoid it, but we do not have to fear it. Knowledge is also the best way to break stereotypes and false generalizations.

Slovenian Kindergarten Curriculum

The fear of the unknown, together with stereotypes, is in close relation with xenophobia. It is a fear of foreigners that may lead to hatred and persecution of everyone and everybody that is not 'ours', everybody who is different and does not conform to what is considered as proper according to different 'extremist' groups.

To avoid the clashes between the dominant 'homeland' culture and the cultures of 'newcomers' or the cultures of ethnic minorities and to prevent tension and conflict among certain groups 'protecting' their own culture, democratic societies worldwide promote multiculturalism. However, it is not only the respect for other cultures, languages, religions that matters. When we have to deal with the attitude towards 'other', we have to take into account all the differences that can provoke fear, ignorance and hatred. Equal rights and equal treatment for everybody are therefore the least we have to guarantee to all the citizens in a democratic society. The important thing to know about that is that we cannot achieve that only with legal means. Without wide educational support at all levels and within all social settings, the hope for success is not worth the mention. Kindergarten curricula in Slovenia tend to set the goals in a manner that tries to ensure the children to be socialized in a way that promotes living in creative and fruitful cohabitation with different members of society, no matter how different they are, be it culturally or in any other way. The curriculum global goals in the field of social science are (Kurikulum za vrtce):

- the experience of the kindergarten as an environment **where equal opportunities** for participation in activities and daily life are guaranteed **regardless of gender, physical and mental constitution, national origin, cultural background, religion, etc...**;
- learning about self and other people;
- creation of basic living habits, and **learning about differences between our lifestyle and those of other cultures and different social groups**;
- learning about the social and cultural environment and **learning about cultural and other differences**;
- **promotion of sensitivity for ethical dimensions of diversity**;
- constitute the basis for the understanding of historical change, learning that people and the environment, society and culture change over time;
- **possibility for getting acquainted with different cultures and traditions**;
- learning about safe and healthy lifestyle.

Five out of totally eight global goals are directly or indirectly related to the problem of dealing with others and preparing children for life in a multicultural setting. It is therefore clear that the aim of wider society in Slovenia, as it may be observed through educational policy (curriculum), is to build multiculturalism through equal opportunities, mutual acceptance of groups and individuals with different characteristics and integration and inclusion of people that are different because of their special needs.

Cultural Differences in Slovenia

It is necessary to give some basic figures about Slovenia so that Portuguese students can fully understand the context of the goals presented above. Slovenia is

a central European country at the southeastern fringes of Alps and at northeastern coast of Adriatic. It has about 2 millions of inhabitants while the surface of the country is slightly over 20.000 square kilometers (if compared to the Bragança region it is approximately 13 times the population and about 3 times the area, if compared to Portugal about one tenth of Portugal population and area as well).

The major part of Slovenia's territory today has been a part of Hapsburg Empire while a smaller part along the Adriatic coast used to be part of the Venetian republic until the time of Napoleonic wars. In inland cities, especially in the northeastern Slovenia, the share of German speaking population was considerably high, while in the coastal cities had Italian speaking majority. German speaking population moved out after the collapse of Austro-Hungary in 1918 when Slovenian territory became a part of kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later Yugoslavia), while a large part of Italian population departed after World War II when Italy lost a part of territory annexed after world war I. Therefore Slovenia was ethnically most homogenous at the time when it became a constituent part (a republic) of Yugoslav socialist federation. In the 1950's almost 97% of all inhabitants in Slovenia were Slovenians (Figure 1). Slovenia has two autochthonous minorities (Italian and Hungarian), both represented in Slovenian parliament with one seat each and also a Roma ethnic group that is represented at local level only. Since 1953 (the first after war Census) the share of Slovenians in Slovenia constantly shrunk. The reason was economic prosperity (industrialization) of Slovenia within Yugoslavia that caused the flow of economic immigrants from other Yugoslav republics.

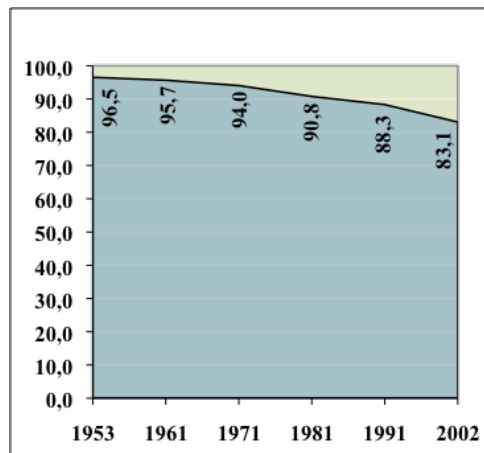


Figure 1 – The share of Slovenians in Slovenia according to Population Censuses 1953-2002
(Source: Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia)

Economic immigration did not change dramatically after independence nor did after the accession to the European Union. The major part of immigrant still comes from former Yugoslav republics, mainly from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

According to this year's Census first results at the beginning of 2011 Slovenia had 2.050.189 inhabitants and 4% (82.746) of this number were not Slovenian citizens.

In 2002 almost 86% of all inhabitants reported that their mother tongue was Slovenian, 2,6% did not answer and the remaining 240.602 (11,9%) mainly reported that their mother tongue was one of those spoken in former Yugoslavia (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia). Figure 2 shows that more than four fifths of inhabitants with non-Slovenian mother tongue have chosen Croatian, Serbo-Croatian, Serbian or Bosnian. There is little difference between these languages and only native speakers are able to notice them. One could say that these languages differ similarly as British English and American English or maybe Portugal Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese. These languages are all Slavic languages like Slovenian. It is therefore as easy for immigrants to learn and to speak Slovenian as it is for Slovenians too to learn the language of these immigrants. Before 1991 Serbo-Croatian language was compulsory in elementary school. Therefore Slovenians who are older than 35 mainly speak that language relatively well.

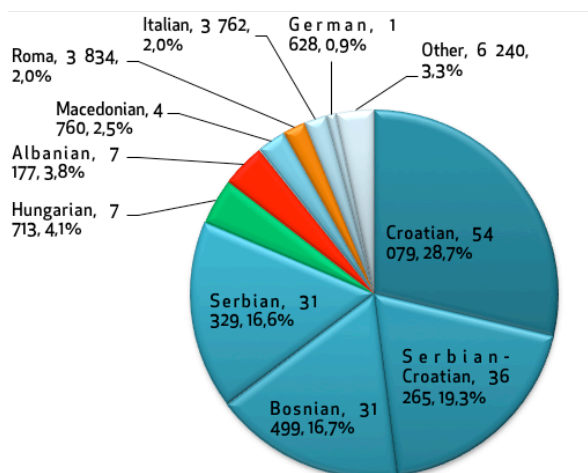


Figure 2 – Mother tongue of Slovenian inhabitants with non-Slovenian mother tongue according to the Population Census of 2002 (Source: Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia)

Among other languages the most numerous group is the group with Hungarian mother tongue, closely followed by the group with Albanian mother tongue. These two languages are more foreign to Slovenians. Hungarian is a language of autochthonous minority spoken mainly in some villages with mixed population along Slovenian-Hungarian border. Albanian on the other side is spoken mainly by immigrants from Kosovo. It is therefore very likely that a preschool teacher has a child or even more of them that speak(s) only Albanian, which may be a very challenging task.

The group with Macedonian mother tongue was considerably less numerous than the Albanian one, but more numerous than the two autochthonous groups (Roma, Italian). Macedonian is also a Slavic language, but less similar to Slovenian than the Slavic languages previously mentioned. Italian is also an official language in ethnically mixed areas along Adriatic coast and is therefore also spoken by Slovenians in that area. Roma language on the other hand is a problem as it is not taught officially and also not understood by Slovenians. Roma children are mainly included in Slovenian kindergartens and schools and are taught in Slovenian which is very difficult for them not only because of the language but also because of the difference in the value system and other cultural differences.

One of the consequences of immigration in the last decades is that predominantly catholic Slovenia became much more religiously diverse than it used to be. In rural areas more than two thirds of the population in 2002 still identified themselves as Catholics, but less than half did so in urban areas. As can be seen in Figure 4, a considerable share of people did not identify as religious, did not answer or were of unknown religion. This also shows how delicate the issue of religion is. Many people believe that their religious determination is an intimate thing that is of no concern to the public.

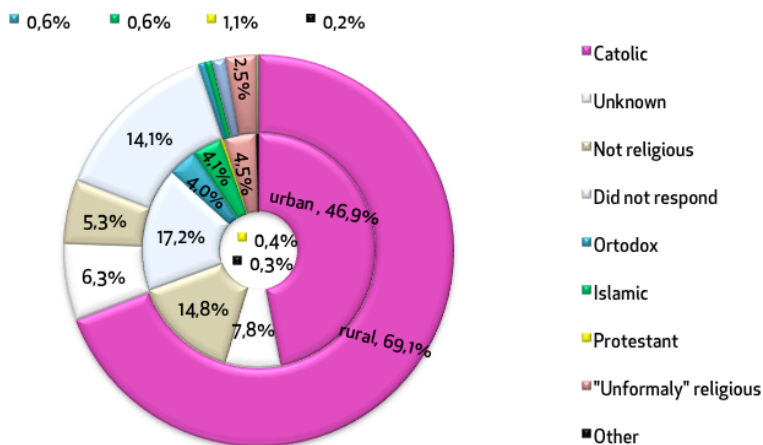


Figure 3 – Religious determination of inhabitants in Slovenia according to 2002 Population Census (Source: Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia)

Figures important for cultural diversity are those regarding the shares of people with orthodox and Islamic religious determination. Both groups have a 4% share, but only in urban areas. In rural areas their shares are only slightly above half percent. The reason is in the fact that immigrants from Islamic and Orthodox areas of former Yugoslavia settled in cities where they were employed in industrial plants or mines etc.

Immigrants from former Yugoslavia also differ from Slovenian population culturally because of historic background. Large part of former Yugoslavia was a part of Ottoman Empire for a half of millennium. Cultural residues from that historical setting can be traced in present day popular culture, culinary, attitude etc.

Conclusion

Slovenian kindergarten teachers as well as many others in today's world are faced with the challenge of being a responsible teacher who has to prepare children for life in a society with many differences and many different people. He therefore has to know these differences and the problems that they may evoke. He has to be prepared to work within a group of children with different language(s), practising different religion(s), with different cultural characteristics, with individuals with different psycho-physical characteristics, etc. Every single one of them can provoke stigmatization of a different individual (small group). A heterogeneous group of children can be difficult to handle, but on the other side it provides good opportunities for overcoming the differences and for learning that differences are something that makes us all richer and everybody can profit from diversity, if we know how to live with each other even when we are different. Storytelling can be one of the possible ways of how we may bring the topic into the group and start to discuss it within an imaginary world of stories. After that it only takes one step to go back into the reality of a group and the social setting within which the kindergarten is set.

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Where are we going, where have we been?

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Abstract

Changes in communication technology have sparked massive changes in the ways humans interact, govern themselves, how, and what, they learn. Communication theory describes how the structures that organize society (institutions such as government and education) grow out of the environment created by the dominant mode of communication. Disruptive communication technology changes that environment, triggering large and mostly unpredictable changes to the institutions which grow out of it. This paper will attempt to identify how changes brought about by IT create new challenges to the authority of academia.

Keywords: *Communication theory; IT; Education*

In the widely anthologized Joyce Carol Oates short story “Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?”³⁸ is about a 15 year old teenage girl struggling with the typical dramas of growing up. When we meet Connie she is concerned with

38) Joyce Carol Oates First published in Epoch, Fall 1966. Included in Prize Stories: *O Henry Award Winners (1968)*, and *The Best American Short Stories (1967)*.
<http://jco.usfca.edu/works/wgoing/text.html>

hanging out with friends, school, and her appearance. She dislikes being compared to her older sister, and argues with her mother: a typical teenager. Connie is pretty, rebellious and a bit vain. She's at the cusp of young-adulthood, and one act of minor rebellion sees her venturing with her friends to a fast-food place where the big kids hang out. There she is spotted by a stranger. One Sunday afternoon she is alone at home, and the stranger pulls his car into her driveway. He invites her out for a ride, and she refuses. Through suggestive language it becomes clear that the stranger is dangerous and menacing. One interpretation is that he is the Devil himself. In an eerie scene that is equal parts horror and suspense, we see Connie trying to resist, but failing, and going out to what is almost certainly her death. The story's power derives from the seamless way we are taken from a world that is familiar, recognizable and safe into something unknown, bizarre and frightening.

Why this story? I'm going to try to make the case that metaphorically we, and I mean the big WE of academia, are like that girl being seduced and tempted by something powerful and not remotely understood, and which holds the danger of being able to strip us of our identity. That "something" is not the internet, or this or that new communication device, but rather it is the environment that is those things represent.

What is it that we do anyway? What's the purpose of institutionalized education? A look at recent headlines shows that diploma inflation is a real problem for recent graduates both here and abroad. The traditional idea that a good job and a higher salary is the automatic reward for a higher degree is increasingly being challenged. And while the value of an education, particularly the economic value of a degree, is a recurrent theme, most people agree that having a diploma is better than not having one. It is, for the most part, a purely utilitarian view that predominates.

This debate is not new. Even in the middle ages when mastery of the Trivium and Quadrivium were the mark of an educated man, distinctions were made between the utilitarian and the liberal arts. In the introduction to her book on the Trivium, Sister Miriam Joseph writes:

"The utilitarian or servile arts enable one to be a servant – of another person, of the state, of a corporation, or of a business – and to earn a living. The liberal arts, in contrast, teach one how to live; they train the faculties and bring them to perfection; they enable a person to rise above his material environment to live an intellectual, a rational, and therefore a free life in gaining truth³⁹."

Education that only places value on the skills that can be traded in the marketplace puts our modern view squarely in the category of "servile." So the diploma is necessary. What about the often repeated complaint that most of what is studied before the test is forgotten after the test is finished? For many students, this is the frustrating truth of their university studies. "It is for nothing" they tell me, and this makes me think we are failing. There is another way to conceive it.

39) Joseph, *The Trivium*, Paul Dry Books, Inc, 1937.

We begin with the idea of the adult educator⁴⁰. This does not refer to the educator who teaches adults, rather, to use Federman's definition, it refers to the level of maturity of the educator in relation to the process of education. He defines the adult educator as one who "realizes that it is not the content of the learning, but the sustained effects of the learning that matter"⁴¹. He sums this up with the epigram that education is what remains after you have forgotten everything that you have been taught. He contrasts the adult educator with the child educator, and the description bears a closer look:

"*The child educator* is one who believes exclusively or primarily in instrumentality, that is, the supremacy of content. For the child educator, lifelong learning is predominantly about so-called reskilling or training, creating the image of educator as circus trainer in which the objects of that education – the learners – are taught to sit up and beg on command for the morsels of individual renewal that emanate from the lips of the trainer. Child educators reinforce the hegemony of the particular process that establishes a corporate power hierarchy that, in turn, necessitates credentials and mandates credentialism. But, with all of its trappings of superiority this educator has not matured beyond the level of the perpetually insecure child, continually seeking external validation, both of those beneath themselves in the learning hierarchy, and those who create the system of validation itself"⁴².

Another way of comparing these two camps is to say that that child educator is one who favours a positivist, or rational scientific knowledge paradigm, and the adult educator is a constructivist who realizes that people, individually and collectively, create meaning in a world that is subjective, contingent and complex. It also implies that the presuppositions of the child educator are wrong or at least woefully incomplete. I would include in the list of child-educator presuppositions the idea that "learning" happens when you find the right course book, or use the latest methodology, or include electronic communication technology call it a revolution in education. The adult educator is one who understands and values that there are multiple perspectives and responses possible and participates with the learner in the process of education as informed by that word's original Latin root, *educare*, meaning to draw forth or bring out. This also implies that the adult educator realizes that the relationship with the learner is paramount⁴³.

40) The inspiration for this paper lies entirely with Canadian lecturer Mark Federman. All of the ideas here, or at least all the good ones, should be credited to him and not to me. I repeat them here because they are ideas which we need to hear.

41) Federman, *Reflections of an Adult Educator* (federman@sympatico.ca; <http://whatisthemessage.blogspot.com>) Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.

42) Federman, *Reflections of an Adult Educator* (federman@sympatico.ca) <http://whatisthemessage.blogspot.com>) Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto
Federman. Reflections of a Adult Educator

43) The speech *Changing Education Paradigms* by Sir Ken Robinson addresses this is well worth a watch. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpLAU>

So where are we going, as educators? What is our purpose and our role? It might be good to look at where we have been. Specifically, I'd like to briefly review the history of knowledge, literacy and authority⁴⁴.

About 3000 years ago, before the invention of written language, all of human knowledge was memorized and passed from one generation to the next by word of mouth. The people entrusted with this task held a special position in society and derived a great deal of authority from being the living repository of the cultures' wisdom. When a new disruptive technology, the phonetic alphabet, came along, the old way did not disappear, but its authority was stripped as new social arrangements grew up as a result of the new technology. Whereas previously, during the oral era, political and social arrangements were conducted person to person, or in groups small enough that the spoken word could travel accurately, with written text the actual words of the king or priest could be recorded and re-spoken by a proxy at much greater distances in both time and space. This naturally gave the literate person a proximate power – the man who could read the words of the king, or priest, or ancient authority, became a proxy for the power represented by the original speaker.

This changed many things. One was that knowledge became separated from the experience itself, and allied with that, a shift occurred not in what was known, but what could be known. The written word meant that you didn't have to drag along the person with his ideas – the ideas could travel by themselves. Most importantly, "...in the eyes of the illiterate masses, who received all of their knowledge in masses (the first "mass media") that literate person would somehow inherit aspects of that author's authority by the proxy vested in those written words. It is easily understood how this almost magical transference of authority and power led to the dominance of what can only be considered as the greatest and most successful bureaucracy of all time, the Catholic Church. Its leaders not only had literate ability, they had command of the capital-W, Word of God himself. In the New Testament – a work of early literacy – the book of John begins with, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." And those who were literate – the priests, the monks, and the scribes – had command of the word, and thus became, in the eyes of the people, God's proxy⁴⁵."

Following this McLuhanesque critique, bureaucracy, empire and an extremely durable model for finding one's place in the cosmos grew out of the environment created by the written word. "Education" became a process by which one trained to find a place in the knowledge bureaucracy, but challenging the authority of that bureaucracy was not allowed. The statue on Prague's old town square is a testament to how the dominant bureaucracy reacted to challenges to its authority. But those

44) Federman No Educator Left Behind: The present future of educator reform originally presented as keynote addresses at the National Extension Technology Conference, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, April, 2008

45) Federman, "How Do We Know" This essay was originally presented as the keynote address to the biennial conference of SEARCH Canada, held June 15, 2007, in Edmonton Alberta.

challenges took in renewed energy when they were animated by yet another disruptive technology, movable type. We should all be familiar with how the Gutenberg Bible, and more importantly, the technology of movable type, led to a growth in mass literacy. What that technology also allowed was the challenge to the authority of the dominant bureaucracy by removing the reason for having a proxy authority. Why depend on a priest to tell you how to get to heaven when you can read the book yourself? A simple enough question, but one with profound effects, including 200 years of bloody religious wars, the Reformation, the Renaissance and ultimately the birth of modern scientific thought.

But what about the inherited authority that came with the written word? If everyone or a significant portion of the population at least, was literate, did that mean that everyone equally shared in this authority? The short answer is no. Simple logistics preclude it. But the societal response to this phenomenon was to a bureaucratic one, with effects that we live out today.

“Knowledge soon became institutionalized, with institutions such as universities defining the means through which new knowledge could be added to the cultural compendium of wisdom by authoritative authors. From where did an author obtain such authority? The literate world emerged in such an ingenious way so that authors could inherit the authority of other authors, and both stand on and contribute to the aggregated authority of institutions of authors. When I write a scholarly paper, I cite other authors whose works have been deemed to be knowledge by an authority called a publisher. In that case, my work has been reviewed by other authors who are deemed to be my peers, and some of their authority is transferred to me. If I repeat that exercise sufficiently well, an institution of authors, otherwise known as a university, will confer one or more designations of authority. Thus the Bachelor of Arts, the Master of Science, and the Doctor of Philosophy becomes the proxy representation of institutional authority. Just as the written word was an easily transportable conveyance of a person’s ideas without the necessity of dragging along the person, so too is the university degree an easily transportable conveyance of knowledge authority without the necessity of dragging along a senate of authors⁴⁶.”

It is this conveyance of authority that constitutes the basis for much, if not most of the significance of a diploma or degree. Please note that this critique of the peer –review and by implication, the scientific method, replete with its demands that knowledge be obtained objectively, as if such a thing were even possible, does not address the “truth” of the knowledge in question. What is addressed is the institutions’ authority to deem it so.

Consider the power structures implicit in the seating arrangement of the typical classroom or lecture hall. The podium is the place of power, the source of all knowledge. It is a place no mere student would mistake as “his” seat upon entering the room, as it is clearly the place for the person who holds the information, and

46) Federman, “How Do we Know?”

has been deemed a fit holder of that information by the institution. It is a place of authority. If the furniture is a metaphor for a world view of authority rooted in the 17th century, what then is the wi-fi connection that permeates these chairs, these walls, this entire building? Those signals, representing the connection with the World Wide Web, race through the chairs and walls and you and me, just as the web and all that it entails races through the boundaries and degrees of knowledge established by traditional institutions. E-mail, e-shopping, e-dilemmas, e-Learning, the web-connect world races through all of them, and in doing so, it e-rases traditional lines of authority and this is what constitutes the threat, if so conceived, to academia. It is a threat to the knowledge authority of the academia of the child educator, and it opens the doors to possibilities that we, those of us raised and credentialed by the old system, are ill-equipped to imagine. Like Connie, hypnotized by the stranger, we're being tempted to leave behind what is familiar. You could argue that Google has already made us obsolete. So where are we going?

Given the current state of technology, is the university the best place for learning? What's learning for? The answer should bring us from the printing press in the 1500's right up to the modern age. The industrial age brought with it a need for first, a more regimented and uniform workforce, and later a regimented and uniform workforce that was equipped and skilled enough to be productive. The modern form of mass-education was born, and with it the ethos that transmission of information should serve a productive economic end.

The effect of this was to make learning about money. As mentioned, education is about getting and keeping a good paying job. In this sense, learning is purely functional, instrumental, and utilitarian. And as education became institutionalized and formalized, it took on and followed the factory model and the logic of industrial production. The ideal of the true liberal arts education lives on in a few hearts, and the hunger for learning returns in each new class who enter our doors each autumn, but the reality is that institutionally, academia has adopted, or adapted to, economic rationalism. If you want a good job, you need to get a degree.

As opposed to the broader concept of education, "learning" favors of what is instrumental, efficient and economic. It is skill centered, and has an economic target as its main goal. As such, any program that adopts economic benefit as the only valuable outcome necessarily implies choices about what's important and what's not. A good academic is one who can successfully identify what is necessary to complete the course, solve the problem or pass the test. In doing so, that learner develops the mental habit, the intellectual skill, of successfully ignoring the information that is not necessary, and the institution of education and economic, has successfully created a culture of ignore-ance. By this, I mean that any system so conceived necessarily ignores much of what is problematic in what is efficient and economic.

The culture of “learning” creates a culture of ignore-ance, which is to say a learned ability to ignore or discount that which doesn’t contribute to the economic goal⁴⁷.

But if you pay attention to the things which are systematically ignored by a system that has adopted a purely utilitarian goal, you find issues such as the development of the soul, aesthetic beauty, ethics and moral development – in short – all of the questions that need a good answer before a man can call himself fully human.

And now there is a stranger at the door. That stranger is at once unknown and yet seems to know a lot about how we operate. And he wants us to come out. It seems hopeless, yet we go to the door. But first, let’s take a look at where we’re going.

The generation we are teaching now is the very first to have always had the internet, always had Google, always had a mobile phone. Being connected always to everyone who matters, is not “new” to them the way it is to us. Their experience of the world is shaped by this reality as surely as ours was by the politics and economics of the latter 20th century. Federman uses the acronym UCaPP to describe this new world. Ubiquitous Connectivity and Pervasive Proximity. It means that everyone is, or soon will be, connected to everyone else and all available information will always be close at hand⁴⁸. This technological transition is as momentous and important as was the invention of the written alphabet or movable type, and the changes it will bring can be expected to be equally revolutionary. In his description of the historical transitions brought on by new communications technology, Federman claims that the process takes about 300 years⁴⁹. And he claims that we’re right in the middle of one of those changes now. We, the older generation are doing what people have always done: we’re trying, sometimes frantically, to make the new technology fit the old way of doing things. And that includes making the authority of academia, as the source of knowledge, fit into a world that is always on line, always connected.

This new generation, at the very least, will have the tools to build something very different. In much the same way that carriage makers were unconcerned about the advent of automobiles, so is the modern university confident that it’s position as the arbiter and repository of knowledge. “Why worry?” they asked, “A horse-less carriage is still a carriage.”

The Devil is at the door, and he’s getting impatient.

47) Federman makes this point in his Reflections of an Adult Educator essay, and develops the point that by buying into the education power-structure, they become implicated in the maintenance of that structure.

48) Federman, How do We Know?

49) Federman No Educator Left Behind: The present future of educator reform Available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yq0tMYPDJQ> This talk covers all the ideas presented in this paper, in full. It’s worth watching.

Reference

Link suggested by the author: *A Vision of Students Today*

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGCJ46vyR9o&feature=Playlist&p=99B872CB8BFC87FA&playnext=1&playnext_from=PL&index=47



Tourism, Sport and Leisure

Tourist maps versus computer maps

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Abstract

Almost everything that happens happens somewhere. Knowing where something happens can be critically important. Geographic location is an important attribute of people's activities, policies, strategies, and plans. Because location is so important, it is an issue in many of the problems society must solve.

Geographic information systems keep track not only of events, activities, and things, but also of where these events, activities, and things happen or exist. Some of these are so routine that we almost fail to notice them.

Problems that involve an aspect of location, either in the information used to solve them, or in the solutions themselves, are termed geographic problems. With a single collection of tools, GIS is able to bridge the gap between curiosity-driven science and practical problem-solving.

People who encounter GIS for the first time are sometimes driven to ask why geography is so important – why is spatial special?

The paper is dedicated to the problems and questions of the relations between (paper) tourist maps on the one side and the computer or Internet maps on the other.

Keywords: *Tourist maps; Computer maps; GIS*

Importance of Spatial (Geographical) Location

Almost everything that happens, happens somewhere and knowing where something happens can be critically important. Geographic location is an important attribute of activities, policies, strategies, and plans. Because location is so important, it is an issue in many of the problems society must solve. GIS (Geographic Information Systems) keep track not only of events, activities, things but also where these events, activities and things happen or exist. These phenomena are so routine that we almost fail to notice them. They are for example concern commuting, the daily question of which route to take to and from work.

Problems that involve an aspect of location, either in the information used to solve them, or in the solutions themselves, are termed geographic problems. There are numerous examples of such situations; travelers and tourists solve geographic problems when they give and receive driving directions, select hotels in unfamiliar cities, and find their way around theme parks; National Park authorities solve geographic problems when they schedule recreational path maintenance and improvement; delivery companies solve geographic problems when they decide the routes and schedules of their vehicles, often on a daily basis (Longley et al, 2006).

There are more. E.g. health care managers solve geographic problems (and may create others) when they decide where to locate new clinics and hospitals; transportation authorities solve geographic problems selecting routes for new highways; geodemographics consultants solve geographic problems when they assess and recommend where best to site retail outlets.

These problems do not only concern the location. They are part of so called Spatial Decision Support Systems.

Forestry companies solve geographic problems when they determine how best to manage forests, where to cut, where to locate roads, and where to plant new trees. Governments solve geographic problems and they decide how to allocate funds for building sea defenses. On individual scale farmers solve geographic problems employing new information technology to make better decisions about the amounts of fertilizer and pesticide to apply to different parts of their fields.

The range and extent of application of GIS grow each day. One of the important aspects of GIS applications is scale or level of geographic details. It is an essential property of any GIS. The use of GIS certainly reinforces the idea that science and practical problem solving are no longer distinct in their methods and this kind of software is used widely in all kinds of organizations.

Aspects of Spatial Data

With a single collection of tools, GIS is able to bridge the gap between curiosity-driven science and practical problem-solving. Spatial problems are very special and very difficult to solve. People who encounter GIS for the first time are sometimes driven to ask why geography is so important, why spatial is special.

This situation especially concerns the situation of tourists and visitors, when they encounter quite new situations in a distant place from the place where they are living.

Usually information systems help us to manage what we know, i.e. they help to organize, store, access, retrieve, manipulate, synthesize and apply knowledge to the solution of problems. So why is geographic information so special?

After all spatial data information is multidimensional. Because at least two coordinates must be specified to define a location (latitude and longitude, and additionally sometimes height or time). Geographic spatial data are voluminous since a geographic database can easily reach a terabyte in size and simultaneously is multiresolution. It means that the information may be represented at different levels of spatial resolution. Sometimes people need the information concerning the exact information of the objects and their neighborhoods, sometimes they only need simply the knowledge of direction they ought to go.

The geographic, spatial data may be represented in different ways. This aspect is very important, because then strongly influence the ease of analysis and the end results, and consequently people undertake their decisions based on influence of spatial data representations. After all these representations are maps, which are two dimensional. It means that despite of that if this is paper tourist map or computer map, often displayed on few inches size LCD of cellular phone, smartphone or GPS device it must often be projected onto a flat surface.

The perception of spatial data depends on culture of the society during education. The interpretation of the results of the inference from maps (no matter if it is paper or digital map) requires many special methods for its analysis and is dependent on patterns of culture and the qualifications and the skills acquired during the education process. The process of display and analyzing of spatial data can be time-consuming because display of geographic information in the form of a map requires the retrieval of large amounts of data. It can be also an expensive and complex process. Additionally, although much geographic information is static, the process of updating spatial data is also complex and expensive.

Geographic information systems make also possible of sharing data and information between the people. It is obvious that knowledge based on spatial behavior rising from the analyses of spatial data is more difficult to detach from the knower. Especially GIS offer value added information by interpretation based on a particular context, an experience and purpose of use (Longley et al, 2006). The information available in books or on the Internet or on maps becomes knowledge only when it has been read and understood in the context of a specific situation. How the information is interpreted and used will be different for different readers depending on their previous experience, expertise, and needs.

The knowledge (especially concerning spatial behavior based on the interpretation of spatial, geographic data) may be double-faced i.e. codified and tacit. The ability to codify and write down (or draw on the maps) knowledge makes

of course its relatively easiness of the transfer to others. On the other side tacit knowledge is often slow to acquire and much more difficult to transfer. The difference in transferability means that codified and tacit knowledge need to be managed and rewarded quite differently. The competitive advantage of tacit knowledge is based on its nature. The tacit knowledge often is a source of competitive advantage, especially concerning spatial behavior of people. For example tourists and visitors choose the most known popular way to the planned destination but usually there are more options, sometimes more interesting, often faster or taking less time.

Use of GIS may be the source of prediction for people. But on the other side the knowledge about how the world works is more valuable than knowledge about how it looks, because such knowledge can be used to predict. GIS combines the scientific and practical knowledge. The proper use of GIS solves the ancient problem of combining general scientific knowledge with specific information, and gives practical value to both.

What is GIS

Definitions of GIS, and the groups who find them useful	
A container of maps in digital form	The general public
A computerized tool for solving geographic problems	Decision makers, community groups, planners
A spatial decision support system	Management scientists, operations researchers
A mechanized inventory of geographically distributed features and facilities	Utility managers, transportation officials, resource managers
A tool for revealing what is otherwise invisible in geographic information	Scientists, investigators
A tool for performing operations on geographic data that are too tedious or expensive or inaccurate if performed by hand	Resource managers, planners

Source: P. Longley et al., (2005)

From the beginning the development of GIS was parallel to the development of Internet. Nowadays the spatial data infrastructure i.e. both maps, GIS applications and software became important part of Internet. Users connected to the Internet could zoom in to parts of the map, or pan to other parts, using simple mouse clicks in their desktop WWW browser, without ever needing to install specialized software or download large amounts of data.

This research project soon gave way to industrial-strength Internet GIS software products from mainstream software vendors. The use of the WWW to give access to maps dates from 1993. And GIS has turned out to be a compelling application that has prompted many people to take advantage of the Web. There are numerous benefits from use of GIS on Internet. Today there are many successful applications of GIS on the Internet. They range from using GIS on the Internet:

- to disseminate information – a type of electronic yellow pages
- to selling goods and services
- to direct revenue generation through subscription services
- to helping members of the public to participate in important local, regional, and national debates.



Internet became a vehicle for delivering GIS applications. It is an established, widely used platform carrying accepted standard for interacting with information of many types. It also offers a relatively cost-effective way of linking together distributed users (for example, telecommuters and office workers, customers and suppliers, students and teachers). Interactive and exploratory nature of navigating linked information has also been a great hit with users. Additionally availability of geographically enabled multi-content site gateways (geoportals) with powerful search engines has been a stimulus to further success.

Another advantage is portability of Internet technology. There are numerous devices (smartphones, gps devices) which make Internet technology increasingly portable. Not only that portable GIS-enabled devices can be used in conjunction with the wireless networks available in public places such as airports and railway stations, but also that such devices may be connected through broadband in order to deliver GIS-based representations on the move. This development can be described as Geographic Information Services. GIServices involve electronic commerce (e-commerce) and include location as an essential element. Many GIServices are also made available for personal use through mobile and handheld applications as location-based services.

Personal devices, after all mobile phones (smartphones or PDA), are able to provide real-time geographic services such as mapping, routing or geographic yellow pages. These services are often funded through advertisers, or can be purchased on a pay-as-you go or subscription basis, and are beginning to change the business GIS model for many types of applications.

Such vast extent of services makes the space for the new professions. It means that the new information workers i.e. GIS professionals appeared on the market. On the other side there are spatially aware professionals (SAPs). They represent various skills, depending on the roles they perform. All of them will have the basic knowledge needed to work with geographic data i.e. knowledge of such topics as: data sources, scale, accuracy, software products to be used in strictly defined situations and will also have a network of acquaintances in the GIS community. They operate on the commercial market and they are paid for their high-qualified skills.

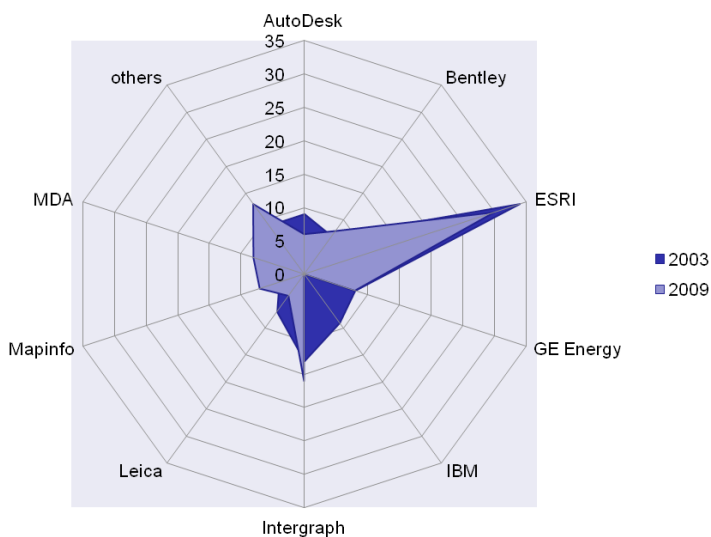


Figure 1 – GIS vendors in the market (2003, 2009)

On the other side there are communities developing free and open source software for GIS, resources and services.

Currently the whole GIS service industry uses Internet as the primary carrier, creating specific spatial contents, special interested communities and common interests. The Internet also allows GIS users to access specific functions that are provided by remote sites – routing services that are used by millions of people every day to find the best driving route between two points. There are clear synergies of interest between GIS service providers and organizations providing location based

services, and both activities are part of what we will describe as GIS-business. Many sites that provide access to raw GIS data also provide GIServices.

There are also critiques of such situation. Although repeat purchases of GIS technology leave the field with a buoyant future in the IT mainstream, there is enduring unease about GIS applications and their social implications. The social implications of use of Geographic Information Systems are not so obvious and clear. Favouring certain phenomena and perspectives involves the ways in which GIS represents the Earth's surface, and particularly human society, favor certain phenomena and perspectives, at the expense of others. GIS often reflect view of majority, often forces knowledge into forms more likely to reflect the view of the majority, or the official view of government, and as a result marginalizes the opinions of minorities or the less powerful. There are more ethically questionable applications. Although in principle it is possible to use GIS for any purpose, in practice it is often used for purposes that may be ethically questionable or may invade individual privacy, such as surveillance and the gathering of military and industrial intelligence (e.g. microdrones).



The GIS technology may appear neutral, but it is always used in a social context. The idea that a tool can be inherently neutral, and its developers therefore immune from any ethical debates, is strongly questioned in this literature (Longley *et al* 2005). The power of GIS with adoption of Internet creates the new situation. There are concerns that GIS remain a tool in the hands of the already powerful – notwithstanding the diffusion of technology that has accompanied the plummeting cost of computing and wide adoption of the Internet. By implication, any vision of GIS for all society is seen as unattainable. On the other side there is lack of GIS in many fields. There appears to be an absence of applications of GIS in critical

research. Some of its protagonists are of the view that such connections are not amenable to digital representation in whole or in part.

The digital representation of spatial data involve the problem of the GIS representation i.e. what to represent and how to represent. The infinitively complexity of the real world meet finite abilities of the computer modeling. The representation of spatial data must somehow limit the amount of detail captured. In reality all objects that are perceptible to humans are three dimensional, and their representation in fewer dimensions can be at best an approximation. But the ability of GIS to handle truly three-dimensional objects as volumes with associated surfaces is very limited. But there are some solutions e.g. temporal parallax (i.e. motion parallax) and nowadays the new 3D television technology appears.

One of the important perspectives of use of GIS are the georeferences and placenames. Giving names to places is the simplest form of georeferencing. Any distinctive feature on the landscape can serve as a point of reference for two people who wish to share information. Each country maintains a system of authorized naming, often through national or state committees assigned with the task of standardizing geographic names.

Commonly used systems of georeferencing		
System	Domain of uniqueness	Spatial resolution
Placenames	Varies	Varies by feature type
Postal address	Global	
Postal code	Country	Postal number area
Telephone calling area	Country	Varies
Cadastral system	Local	Codes of lots in spatial extent
Latitude & Longitude	Global	Infinitely
Cartographic projections	Global	Infinitely
National Projections	Country	Infinitely

Nowadays, revolutionary navigation systems (GPS, the Global Positioning System and its analogs, GLONASS in Russia, and the proposed Galileo system in Europe) have revolutionized the measurement of position, for the first time making it possible for people to know almost exactly where they are anywhere on the surface of the Earth. There are several different versions of GPS exist, with distinct accuracies.

Old fashioned GAZETTEERS were one direction searching method: from the geographical name to location on the map. The oldest method of converting georeferences is the gazetteer, the name commonly given to the index in an atlas that relates placenames to latitude and longitude, and to relevant pages in the atlas where information about that place can be found. But it works only in one direction as a conversion between georeferences (from placename to latitude and longitude).

Currently the evolution of GAZETTEERS in the digital era has taken place. It is now possible to obtain large databases of placenames and associated coordinates and to access services that allow such databases to be queried over the Internet. Today, with modern methods of measurement, it is possible to direct another person to a point on the other side of the Earth to an accuracy of a few centimeters, and this level of accuracy and referencing is achieved regularly in such areas as geophysics and civil engineering. But georeferences can never be perfectly accurate, and it is always important to know something about spatial resolution.

There is obvious advantage of the use of GIS. It is geovisualizations. The paper map had the one only available interface between the mapmaker and the user; this interface was permanent. It contained a fixed array of attributes of predetermined and invariant scale and rarely provided any quantitative or qualitative indications as to whether it was safe to use. Today's GIS applications characterize the seemingly unfathomable complexity, entails visualization of data which are richer, continuously updated and often scattered across the Internet.

Geovisualizations and Spatial Queries

Geovisualization is much more than conventional map design. The principal purpose of geovisualizations is to ease exploration. The purpose is to establish whether and to what extent the general message of a dataset is sensitive to inclusion or exclusion of particular data elements. Next it makes possible synthesis to present the range, complexity and detail of one or more datasets in ways that can be readily assimilated by users. Good geovisualization should enable the user to 'see the wood for the trees'. Another purpose of geovisualizations is presentation to communicate the overall message of a representation in a readily intelligible manner, and to enable the user to understand the likely overall quality of the representation. And last but not least it makes possible analysis to provide a medium to support a range of methods and techniques of spatial analysis.

Geovisualization allows users to explore, synthesize, present, and analyze their data more thoroughly than was possible hitherto. The most important element of the contemporary geovisualizations interfaces are spatial queries. They consist of several routine questions realized through the network using the dispersed spatial data resources. They are the following:

- Where is...?
- What is at location...?
- What is the spatial relation between...?
- What is similar to...?
- Where has... occurred?
- What has changed since... ?
- Is there a general spatial pattern, and what are the anomalies?

The WIMP (Windows, Icons, Mouse Pointers) interface allows spatial querying through pointing, clicking, and dragging windows and icons. The spatial queries may concern:

- Queries about the taxable value of properties,
- Customer care applications about service availability,
- Internet site queries about traffic congestion,
- Websites concerning weather conditions,
- Identify the location of services,
- Provide routing and direction information,
- Facilitate rapid response in disaster management,
- Provide information about domestic property and neighborhoods to assist residential search.

Geovisualizations try to mimic the real world situations and they can be elements of virtual-reality systems. Conventional 2-D representations continue to be used in the overwhelming majority of GIS applications. But increasing interaction with GIS now takes place through 3-D representations. This is closely allied with developments in computing, software, and broadband networking, which together allow users to access virtual environments and select different views of phenomena. Geovisualizations present incremental changes in these perspectives to permit real time fly-throughs and repositioning or rearrangement of the objects that make up such scenes. Users can be represented graphically as avatars – digital representations of themselves. These avatars engage with others connected at different remote locations, creating a networked virtual world.

Three-dimensional (3D) geovisualizations are the representations enabling the creation of 3-D representations of natural and artificial (e.g., cityscapes) phenomena with help of airborne instruments. Moreover the 3-D representation of artificial environments, specifically cities, has been aided by the increasing availability of very-high resolution height data from airborne instruments. Importance have whole-Earth visualizations which parallel with the development of fine-scale 3-D models of cityscapes. They have been similarly impressive advances in whole-Earth global visualizations.

In fact they are not virtual – but augmented reality systems. Such software systems allow raster and vector information, including features such as buildings, trees, and automobiles, to be combined in synthetic and photorealistic global and local displays. Simultaneously the development of hand-held computing and geovisualizations provide better remote interaction. Immersion of desk- and studio-bound users in 3-D augmented reality presents one way of promoting better remote interaction with the real world, using computers that are physically amongst the largest of the digital age. Hand-held devices are at the other end of the computer size spectrum. They improved direct interaction with the real world

and made possible by the development of a range of hand-held, in-vehicle, and wearable computer devices.



Figure 2 – 3D visualization of Warsaw city center

Using these system supports decision making. Geovisualization can make a powerful contribution to decision making and can be used to simulate changes to reality. Sometimes a situation of information overload occurs.

Mapping is about seeing the detail as well as the big picture, yet the wealth of detail that is available in today's digital environments can sometimes create information overload and threaten to overwhelm the message of the representation. In the perspective the distributed GIS will appear. Nowadays the elements of the distributed GIServices in smartphones are the limited GI services which are already available in common mobile devices such as cellphones, and are increasingly being installed in vehicles.

There are four distinct locations of significance to distributed GIS:

- User location is the location of the user and the interface from which the user obtains GIS-created information,
- Data location i.e. the location of the data being accessed by the user – traditionally, data had to be moved to the user's computer before being used, but new technology is allowing data to be accessed directly from data warehouses and archives,

- Data processing location i.e. the location where the data are processed, according the introduced concept of GIService, a processing capability accessed at a remote site rather than provided locally by the user's desktop GIS.
- Subject location i.e. the area that is the focus of the GIS project, or the subject location.

In distributed GIS the user location and the subject location can be the same. Other elements of distributed GIS are Geolibraries. The concept of geolibrary has been coined to describe digital libraries that can be searched for information about any user-defined geographic location. They play a most important role in creating virtual or augmented reality systems. One of the great strengths of GIS is the window it provides on the world. Virtual environments attempt to place the user in distant locations. On the other side augmented reality combines information from the database with information from the senses. Both elements: geovisualizations and geolibraries are extensively used by LBS, i.e. location-based services, which has been described as one of the four big trends in software is location-based applications. (*Bill Gates, Wireless 2000 Conference, March 2000*)

A location-based service is provided by a computing device that knows where it is. The simplest and most obvious form of locationally enabled device is the GPS receiver, and any computer that includes a GPS capability, such as a laptop or PDA with an added PCMCIA card or chip, is capable of providing LBS. But the most ubiquitous LBS-capable device is the modern cellphone. One of the strongest motivations for LBS provides emergency services.

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