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# Catalyzing Change



CCN conference proceedings  
Hamar 2006

Dag Tangen and Victoria W. Thoresen (eds.)



Hedmark  
University  
College



CONSUMER  
CITIZENSHIP  
NETWORK

## Catalyzing Change

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Proceedings of the third international conference of The  
Consumer Citizenship Network, Hamar 2006

Dag Tangen and Victoria Thoresen (eds.)

*"There is a new socio-quake taking place which is set to transform the mainstream society. In a world of exponential choice, the consumer is no longer a grateful and passive recipient. He or she is an expert and active participant."*

Evans, Moutinho and Raaij

Høgskolen i Hedmark  
Oppdragsrapport nr. 4 – 2007

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# I. INTRODUCTION

**Dag Tangen and Victoria Thoresen**

*The Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN), Hedmark  
University College, Norway*

Dramatic and rapid transitions characterize the world today. Triggering *constructive* change is a major challenge facing the global community. Yet many individuals do not have the opportunity, the knowledge or the competence to actively participate in the debates and decisions that shape their lives. Commercial and political pressures often convince people that they have no influence. Empowering people to play a more effective role in the development of a just and caring society involves creating new attitudes, spaces and mechanisms which can stimulate involvement and strengthen trust. The third international conference of the Consumer Citizenship Network, *Catalyzing Change*, focused on consumers as agents for constructive change. The following issues were examined:

- Which incentives contribute to the development of consumer citizenship?
- What can be done to transform the consumer's frustrations and uncertainties into change-creating energy?
- How can consumer citizens contribute to improving public discourse and informed debate?
- How can responsiveness, transparency, and trust between the producer and the consumer be stimulated?
- How can consumer citizens use scientific research to create sustainable lifestyles?
- How can commitment and consistency to sustainable consumption be promoted?

It was acknowledged that many individuals do not have the opportunity, the knowledge or the competence to actively participate in the debates and decisions that shape their lives. Commercial and political pressures often convince people that they have no influence. The conference participants considered how new attitudes, spaces and mechanisms which stimulate involvement and strengthen trust can empower people to play a more effective role in the development of a just and caring society.

The conference was organised by The Consumer Citizenship Network, an Erasmus thematic network of educators and researchers. The conference was coordinated by the Hedmark University College, Norway and hosted by the Hedmark University College, Norway. The conference was made possible with the support from the SOCRATES programme and the Norwegian Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and Ministry of Education.

The central theme which participants explored at the third international conference of The Consumer Citizenship Network was *“How can the consumer citizen trigger constructive change in a world characterized by dramatic and rapid transitions?”* 157 participants from 27 countries attended.




The plenum session


The conference started with opening speeches of **Yngve Haugstveit**, rector of Hedmark University College; **Alvhild Hedstein** from the Norwegian UNESCO Commission; **Richard Lloyd** from Consumers International; **Gjertrud Pilcher** from the International Federation of Home Economics (IFHE); **Niels Røhne** from the County of Hedmark and **Einar Busterud**, the mayor of Hamar. **Krishna Chudasama**, State Secretary of the Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality said: “The family of national states with an active consumer education and an interest in these matters is growing. (In Norway) sustainable development is one of our top priorities in consumer policy along with consumer education and information, and the +reduction of the commercial pressure on children and the young people.”


During the conference there were 4 key note speeches, 20 research and development papers presented in 15 work shops, a symposium of three presentations, a plenum debate, panel discussion, issue corners and presentation of other related projects. In addition to this, there were sketches, musical theatre, ironic commercials, short film elements, interactive comment walls, exhibitions and various social events.



## Key note speakers

	<p><i>Dr. John J. Shea</i> Boston College, Boston, Mass., USA</p> <p><b><i>“Constructing a mature society”</i></b></p> <p>Dr. John J. Shea teaches in the areas of religion, pastoral counselling, and adult development. He is a Catholic priest belonging to the Order of Saint Augustine and is a Fellow in the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. John Shea has been actively involved in international projects in Asia dealing with strengthening the family as a core unit of society. John Shea talked about Human Adulthood as the Foundation of the Mature Society; Adulthood — An Adult Self; Adulthood in relation to morality; Adulthood in relation to spirituality; The Centrality of Empathy in Human Development.</p>
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<p><i>Nirman Arora</i> UNU-CRIS, University of Ghent, Belgium</p> <p><b><i>“Stimulating transparency and trust”</i></b></p> <p>Nirman Arora, has his background in India where he has worked with issues of human rights. He has researched European and comparative law and published papers about consumer’s rights and awareness as well as on such topics as e-commerce, information technology and copyright laws. Nirman Arora discussed the issues related to accountability, transparency and trust between consumers and business. He emphasized the following questions: How do we expect trust &amp; transparency regime to be? How to win trust?</p>	
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	<p><i>Victoria W. Thoresen</i> Hedmark University College, Hamar, Norway</p> <p><b><i>“Releasing untapped resources”</i></b></p> <p>Victoria W. Thoresen is Associate professor of education and project manager of The Consumer Citizenship Network. Thoresen has speicalized in global education, curriculum development, peace education and sustainable consumption. Victoria W. Thoresen presented some of the basic prerequisites of change initiation using the Consumer Citizenship Network as a case study.</p>
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Rodrigo Gouveia  
Secretary General, EURO-COOP

***“Improving public discourse and informed debate”***

Rodrigo Gouveia represents 22 million European consumers through his work directing the European Community of Consumer Cooperatives. Euro-Coop spreads relevant information and acts as a forum for debate and discussion on consumer related issues. Euro-Coop promotes and defends consumer interests at the European level. Rodrigo Gouveia presented the Eurocoop, the European Community of Consumer Co-operatives and then addressed the question of how public discourse and informed debate can be improved. He emphasized the consumer education as a tool for catalysing change.



**Other speakers and professional events**

Updates Commission on Sustainable Development 2006 session

By Sylvia Karlsson, University of Turku, Finland

Symposium and plenum discussion

***“Fostering commitment and consistency”***

Sylvia Karlsson, Arthur Dahl, Wendi Momen

This symposium explored three key dimensions in motivating individual consumers to commit to new forms of behaviour and to build those commitments into a more sustainable lifestyle consistent with their beliefs.

Round table discussions

***“Creating opportunities – C2B,B2C”***

C2B and B2C = Consumer to business and Business to consumer.

Ifakat Karsli, Maltepe University, Faculty of Education, Istanbul, Turkey

Ravi Fernando, Strategic Corporate Social responsibility Futures LTD, Sri Lanka

Violeta Dimitrova, University of Economics, Varna, Bulgaria

This session was lead by Thor Øivind Jensen, University of Bergen, Norway

This discussion looked at different aspects of the responsibilities business has to the consumer and vice versa, by means of concrete examples from their respective countries.

### Work shop presentations:

#### **Work shop 1: "Incentives"**

Alvarez, Gustavo Moral	Spain	Tell me a tale
Graffe Leena & Taina Mannisto	Finland	Searching pedagogical challenges for consumer citizenship education: films as a starting point in analysing own lifestyle
Fani Uzunova	Bulgaria	Triggering change towards sustainable consumption
Rinaldi Emanuela	Italy	A national survey on consumer education in Italy: participation, motivations and evaluation
Dourado Alcina	Portugal	Media education ; some useful headlines in the class room
Melissana Marino	Italy	Cultural changes and the path to sustainable development
Dimitrova Violeta and Todorka Atanasova	Bulgaria	Stimulating consumer trust
Jacobsen, Eivind, Laura Terragni, Hanne Torjusen & Gunnar Vittersø	Norway	Ethical products and consumers' trust. An up to date issue

#### **Work shop 2. "Transformations"**

Søren Breiting	Denmark	How to build mental ownership to consumer issues in education
Velta Lubkina and Liga Danilane	Latvia	Life skills education in Latvia
Theodoropoulou, H. and S. Kyriakopoulou	Greece	The contribution of non-farm small-medium enterprises to rural development
Ndela Nkosi and Selin Erben	Norway Turkey	Consumer citizenship and the mediated public discourse
Karsli Ifakat	Turkey	What can be done to transform the consumers frustrations and uncertainties in change creating energy?

#### **Work shop 3. "Interactions"**

Klabausayova Nadezda & Marie Mikusova	Czech Republic	Catalyzing changes in responsiveness between organisations and consumers
Vassileva Bistra	Bulgaria	Corporate Responsibility standards and practices; debates and challenges
Borbos Lazlo; Vija Dislere, et al	Hungary	Some content of consumer rights and responsibilities as catalysts for changes in behaviour
Dzhabarova Y & N Nencheva	Bulgaria	Consumer - the main catalyst of changes in the perception of functional foods.
Kalkan Sevgi	Turkey	A comparative study: business ethics of European and American corporations in turkey
Mazur Barbara	Poland	The Polish way how to loose on life assurance
Szabo, Richard	Hungary	Consumer's participation in catalyzing changes in the Hungarian Insurance Market

#### **Work shop 4: "Responses"**

	Norway	Fair-trade towns: Examples from U.K. and discussion about possibilities elsewhere
Francois Jegou	Belgium	LOLA (Looking for likely alternatives): The didactic process of identifying, evaluating, and documenting innovative cases of sustainable consumption
CCN thematic group 6		Teaching sustainable consumption: a framework for teacher training courses
Isabella Marras, representing UNEP and UNESCO	France	YouthXchange: Teaching materials and toolkit about responsible consumption

#### **Posters**

Biasior, Carlo	Italy	Examples of law protection for consumers
Lobanova Tamara	Latvia	Teaching technologies in profile education
Lubkins, Gatis; Velta Lubkina, & Nellija Guda	Latvia	Active Lifestyle - a basis of higher life quality
Chelov M	Latvia	Specialised education as a means of developing the self determination of lyceum students

#### Issue corners

Issue corners focused on the following topics: 1) How can the Consumer Citizenship Network strategically engage business? 2) What is the motivational framework of a responsible consumer? 3) How can teaching food safety be improved? 4) How can the concept of consumer citizenship be more widely spread?

#### "Notworthit"films

*Not Worth It* is an idealistic film-project that was presented at the CCN conference. The project consists of a series of six short films, all between 35 and 55 seconds. (whereas four films were screened at CCN). The project is initiated by Lilja Ingolfssdottir and Sara Eliassen, who are also the screenwriters/ directors/ co-producers of the six films.



Work shop presentations



Work shop audience



Group discussions



Music theatre by CCN partner Gustavo Moral Alvarez, performed by youth from Hamar



LOLA exhibition

(Looking for Likely Alternatives)

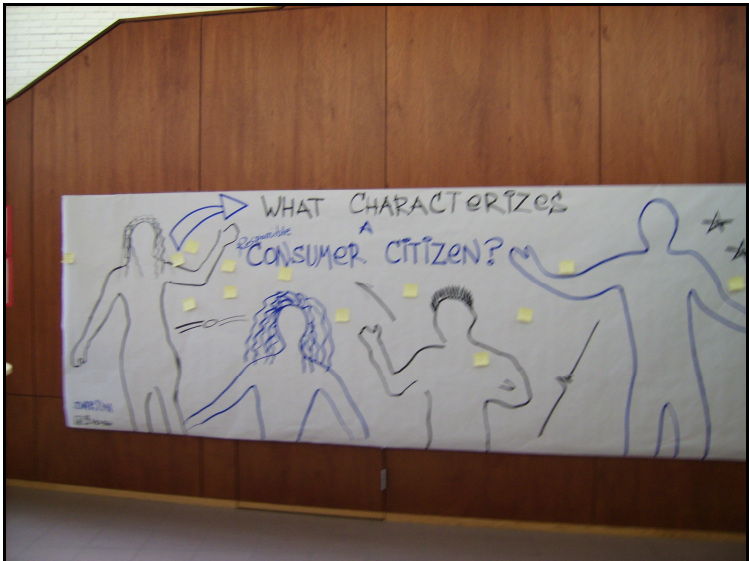
A didactic process to approach sustainability investigation of social innovation.



Other exhibitions

The pilot project, Looking for likely alternatives, (LOLA), is a pedagogical tool for teachers and students which assists them in the process of identifying, evaluating and documenting cases of social innovation towards sustainable lifestyles. It is organised in two parts by first involving teacher training schools from Portugal, Belgium, Norway, and Lithuania in the process of collecting cases of social innovation, documenting the didactic process and maintaining an open discussion on the

experience amongst the CCN members. A series of discussions and an exhibition were organized at the conference. The LOLA project allows teachers and their class to discover approach and give visibility to new sustainable lifestyles in their surroundings. It provides an opportunity to progress beyond the common pedagogical use of case studies and project work which tend to be limited to the immediate classroom context. The process brings the students into direct face-to-face contact with groups of people (the "creative communities") already implementing sustainable solutions in their daily life and thereby increases the learning potential of working with cases.



Interactive comment wall about the characteristics of a consumer citizen.



Musical events



Visit to the Hamar Glass Cathedral



The Conference dinner



Social discussions

### **Conference committee**

**Victoria W. Thoresen**, CCN Project manager;

**Dag Tangen**, CCN Core Unit - Conference manager;

**Björg Quarcoo**, CCN Core Unit, Hedmark University College.

The CCN conference committee also included **Larissa de Bleuwe**, Catholic Hogeschool South-West-Flanders (KATHO), Belgium; **Knut Haugen**, Hedmark University College; **Arturas Martinkus**, Hedmark University College; **Declan Doyle**, Institute of Technology, Ireland and **Fani Uzunova**, Technical University, Varna, Bulgaria.

### **About the Consumer Citizenship Network**

The Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN) is an interdisciplinary network of educators, researchers and representatives of non-governmental organisations who share an interest in how the individual's role as a consumer can contribute constructively to sustainable development and mutual solidarity. The Consumer Citizenship Network began functioning 1. October 2003 and ends its first three year cycle in September 2006. The CCN will continue in a new project period 2006 - 2009.

The CCN aims are

- To stimulate the dialogue between consumers, researchers and educators
- To be a channel for information to the public as a whole and students in particular
- To influence authorities and even in some cases corporate enterprises
- Contribute to the development of curriculum and of didactic approaches

- Contribute to strengthening the profile of the subject in schools
- Increase the competence of the teachers

What is a consumer Citizen?

*“A consumer citizen is an individual who makes choices based on ethical, social, economic and ecological considerations.*

*The consumer citizen actively contributes to the maintenance of just and sustainable development by caring and acting responsibly on family, national and global levels.”*

In 2006 the Network consisted of 125 institutions in 29 countries in Europe. The network has also 9 associated partners from Latin America, Asia and Africa.

Approximately three quarters of the partners are universities and colleges. The fourth part consists of consumer organizations and international organizations as UNESCO, UNEP (United Nations environment programme) and CI (Consumers International).

The CCN has published newsletters, conference proceedings from the two first annual conferences, general brochures, CD's with all the speeches and papers from the two first conferences, a Nice mail journal, conference reports, annual illustrated reports, Consumer Citizenship Guidelines, vol 1. Higher Education, The LOLA (Looking for likely alternatives) teaching material in cooperation with the Sustainable Everyday Project and a series of books entitled in which the first was Promoting New Responses, vol 1. Taking Responsibilities.

The CCN have been cooperating with many organizations, for instance the YouthExchange project, the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development, the International Federation for Home Economics, The Archipelago of the Humanistic thematic Networks and the International Standard Organization for Social Responsibility.

The following thematic groups functioned during the third year of the project.

1. Ethical challenges:

***How can the consumer citizen deal with the ethical challenges of prosperity?***

This group deals with subjects concerning e.g.: value-based education, character building, fair trade initiatives, sustainable lifestyle initiatives, transparency and accountability, and collective vision.

2. The information society:

***How can the media and ICT be constructive tools for the consumer citizen?***

This group deals with subjects concerning e.g.: commercial influences on youth and children, the acquiring and handling of information as a consumer citizen, how complex concepts can be made accessible and understandable for young people, e-commerce and e-marketing.

3. Rights and responsibilities:

***What are the consumer citizen's rights and responsibilities as regards food,***



***transport, housing, energy use and personal finances?***

This group deals with subjects concerning e.g.: the impacts (social and ecological) of production and consumption and how the consumer citizen can prevent or change them. Other related topics might be: industrial ecology, lifestyle modifications, financial literacy, and community initiatives.

4. Global solidarity:

***What contributions can the European consumer citizen make towards the eradication of poverty in the world?***

This group deals with subjects concerning e.g.: North/South issues, industrial poverty, resource management, economic systems, and civic action.

5. Involvement:

***How can awareness and social involvement be stimulated in the consumer citizen?***

This group deals with subjects concerning e.g.: use of case-studies, active learning, scenarios for the future, and training of communication skills, conflict resolution skills and change management.

6. Education for sustainable development:

This group deals with how to stimulate and improve education for sustainable development in general and education for responsible, sustainable consumption in particular.

## II. KEY NOTE SPEECHES

### Releasing untapped resources

**Victoria W. Thoresen**

*Hedmark University College, Norway*

Change happens—undeniably, often rapidly and at times distressingly. Catalyzing change for change’s sake alone is anarchistic. To stimulate change in order to achieve “sustainable consumption” or to bring about “an ennobled civilization characterized by peace and justice” is not only idealistic -- it is imperative because humankind is, in so many contexts, already proceeding briskly along paths of misery and self destruction. There is no single strategy for change which guarantees a brighter tomorrow; nor can the separate efforts of governments, businesses, organisations and individuals succeed to any significant degree without the complementary efforts of the others. Yet each can benefit from the insights of traditional wisdom and modern research into the fundamentals of change and innovation; for it is not only mountains of facts and seas of detail which enable individuals to have an impact on the complex systems which control modern society. Constructive change -- change leading to sustainable human development -- depends upon individuals being able to identify patterns and processes and realizing that the basic mechanisms of change involve the domains of personal integrity as well as the realms of material considerations. It requires the quiet change of individuals adjusting their lifestyles and the demonstrative change of groups of individuals, politicians and corporate enterprises ostentatiously translating intentions into action. The daunting challenge which this paper tries to address is how to release the untapped resources in individuals and thereby assist them in becoming agents for constructive change.

#### *Historical perspectives*

Divergent worldviews have existed side by side for centuries. Similarly, theories of change and innovation stem from varied conceptions of how people “define their social situations and how these definitions effect ensuing action and interaction.” (1) There are four basic schools of change theories: a) functionalist theories of change expounded by, for example, Emile Durkheim. These theories see change as shaped by the necessities of survival. Dinosaurs are an example of this as they failed to adapt and became extinct. b) Conflict theories of change, such as professed by Karl Marx, place

the control of valued resources at the heart of social interaction. One need only look as far as the oilfields in the Middle East at present to register changes brought about by consequences of oil-dependency. c) Technological theories of change claim that technology drives change. Thorstein Veblen is a spokesman for this approach which lead to the “green” agricultural revolution of the 80’s. d) Interpretive theories of change identify an array of possible futures rather than bowing to one-way causality. These theories are described as: “social interaction processes between people and groups resulting in the creation and ongoing negotiation and revision of meanings, symbols, and social definitions that constitute both society and change”.(2) Max Weber’s theories are among the more well-known in this category and the Millenium Development Goals are a result of thinking along these lines.

### ***Present vantage point***

Adolescence is a period in a person’s life when scores of conflicting emotions and attitudes combine with unpredictable physical alterations. The resulting behaviour is at times erratic; the process can be unsettling. Analysts who ascribe to interpretive change theories based on an evolutionary explanation of the history of civilizations, identify the upheavals and disruptions of present times as humankind’s coming of age. They liken societies to youth moving into adulthood. (3) Change in this context means not only new opportunities for self gratification but the taking on of wider responsibilities for the benefit of the whole of society. In other words: the participating in “human development” and the maturing of the human race.

In most cases youth have parents or teachers to assist them in their change processes. Gradually the adolescent gains new perspectives about life and his role therein. Societies have traditionally relied on laws, religion, and the guidance provided by intelligentsia. However, the contours of today’s events are increasingly dominated by economic interests that define the content and tempo of change. Despite the international community’s endeavours to define new collective goals for a mature human race, a strong tendency still exists to maintain “business as usual”. Accepting that past performance does not necessarily decide future outcomes can create a new vantage point from which humankind can emerge from its rites of passage and look at the past, the present and the future with renewed insight. Among other things, it may discover that the global community is already well into the ten-year countdown toward the Millennium Goals which according to the Human Development Report for 2005 has been:

*“A decade of accelerated development but a decade of lost opportunity, half-hearted endeavour and failed international cooperation”*

There has been an increase in prosperity but less impressive gains in human development. Statistics indicate greater preoccupation with the messages of the entertainment media than with the conditions of fellow inhabitants on the globe as described by facts like these: “on current indicators a child born in Zambia today has less chance of surviving past age 30 than a child born in England in 1840” “The

present demographic shock of AIDS exceeds that of the first WW.” (4) “Nearly two-thirds of the ecosystems services on which human society depends are being degraded or used unsustainably.” (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment)

### ***Basic barriers***

*“One of the greatest pains to human nature is the pain of a new idea. It...makes you think that after all, your favourite notions may be wrong, your firmest beliefs ill-founded... Naturally, therefore, common men hate a new idea and are disposed more or less to ill-treat the original man who brings it.” (5)*

A number of psychological and physical barriers make catalyzing constructive change difficult. Certain attitudes act as brakes, stopping initiatives even at the initial stage of identifying the challenge. Habits are comfortable. The habitual consumer is a well known figure in consumer research. Insecurity is a significant damper to the entire change process. Patterns which one is used to following, demand less energy from the person involved than hiking along uncharted trails. Uncertainty sets adrenaline flowing, calls out our defence mechanisms and prepares us for battle. The unknown is generally regarded as threatening until one has learned to meet uncertainty not as something dangerous but as a prelude to previously unrecognized opportunities.

The reluctance to abandon something we already have invested in, the so called “sunk-cost-effect”, also hinders innovation. A similar attitude has been described in relation to the challenge of just global distribution of resources. This has been called the “spoilt child syndrome” of the industrialized world—(characterized by the cry, “don’t take away my toys!”).

Dislike of those who first perceive problems and complain publicly, creates apprehension about the change makers and thereby distracts focus from the problem itself. Yet of the many attitudes which act as barriers to change, blaming others for the problem at hand appears to be the most common excuse for passivity and inaction. Blame stems from mistrust which is a major obstacle for consumer citizens to overcome in relation to producers. In addition to mistrust, there is also the fear of “losing face” or status by admitting that what one is used to doing or buying may not be good. This occasionally leads to “wooden headedness” or persistence in habits despite the fact that one is aware that a certain habit is not wise.

Clashes of interest rather than awareness of mutuality of interests is, in economic terms, referred to as the tragedy of the commons and tends to serve as a major constraint on initiatives for change. The inability to identify the relative advantage of a new solution is often the reason for rejection of new approaches.

Distance and time create barriers by distorting situations and making immediate solutions awkward. In some cases distance blurs the origins of dilemmas, causing them to be literally imperceptible. In other cases, the fact that managers and leaders are not close at hand complicate the possibility of stakeholders bringing problems out in the

open and suggesting alternative solutions. There is also the condition of “creeping normalcy” in which the slow pace of change makes new trends and tendencies seem as if they have always existed. This can result in what is referred to as “landscape amnesia” which is when modifications are so subtle that it is not easy to recall how things were before. One accepts the present situation as being what has always been and sees no need for critical concern. Consequences of “landscape amnesia” can be “idleness in the face of disaster” or in other words, trivializing the severity of a situation. Related to this barrier is the “boy who cried wolf”-syndrome where previous warnings which were false alarms create doubt about new warnings. The opposite of this is an historical lack of hindsight which can undermine the awareness of the need for change.

### ***Change makers***

*“It is not the flour that makes the bread, but the baker”*

Slovenian proverb

Barriers make the process of change initiation complicated but far from impossible. Dream, plan, achieve. This simple formula may sound naïve but these three steps lie at the heart of all change. It is the change agent who throughout history has been the key factor in creating innovation. Many social scientists agree that a changed individual will effect change in society. Whether “liberal”, “radical” or “revolutionary”, change agents are the ones who question the status quo, release untapped resources and act to modify situations. They are stakeholders seeking to “improve” specific conditions. Many a politician stakes his/her career on platforms of collective ambitions for alterations in society. Many a businessman has to keep abreast of change in order to secure his product’s or service’s place in the market. It is the consumer who, up to now, has been seen as the one who “uses up” instead of creating anew. The consumer citizen per definition integrates the dynamics of change initiation and the taking of responsibility with their role as a consumer.

To bring forth the resources necessary for change, the consumer citizen faces four major tasks. The first is that of developing certain qualities of the spirit such as self-confidence, gratitude, empathy, courage, honesty and commitment. The second involves developing qualities of the mind such as the ability to envision and prioritize. The third, and perhaps the most difficult task, is developing qualities of action connected to implementation of hopes and plans. Talk is easy. Fantasies flourish. It is the doer who carries change into the world of reality. The fourth task the individual faces is that of developing qualities of communication so as to be able to diffuse the change, encourage its adoption and measure the consequences it has.

### Qualities of the spirit

In a world where cities, markets and power constellations acquire monumental proportions, the individual can seem dwarfed in comparison. Recognizing the inherent power of one strengthens the individual in his/her attempts to effect change. Thus building self-esteem and self-confidence are prerequisites for releasing human potential.

*“If we are not grateful for our gifts and opportunities we are not likely to work hard to preserve and improve them. Gratitude is an important attribute of good citizenship, especially among people blessed with an inheritance of political freedom and material wealth...”* (6)

Reverence is a characteristic by which a person can express appreciation and respect. Together with gratitude it stems from a sense of humility which often opens the doors to consultation and constructive cooperation. Gratitude is not equivalent to submissiveness or indebtedness. It is a genuine expression of esteem without necessarily overshadowing that which requires improvement or transformation.

*“Change agents’ success in securing the adoption of innovations by clients is positively related to empathy with clients”* (7)

Understanding the other person’s point of view or situation is a direct consequence of empathy. It provides the foundation for collaboration and paves the way for change which not only benefits the change maker but those affected by the change.

Challenging the status quo requires courage. Whether one is confronting transnational enterprises, governments or local merchants, resistance can be strong. Competition in the modern global market is intense with enormous profits at stake. Questioning corporate culture or even neighbourly mannerisms goes seldom unnoticed. Conviction of purpose combined with a solid measure of boldness are characteristics the consumer citizen, acting as a change maker, must possess, as has been proven by those who have been involved in actions involving for example, the tobacco and pharmaceutical industries.

Short-term involvement in change initiation does not always lead to the adoption of change. Commitment and self-discipline are qualities which distinguish the effective change maker from those whose involvement in issues is only a passing fad. Those who exhibit commitment to causes are the ones who more easily convince others through the power of their example.

Commitment depends upon a clear sense of purpose. In the case of the consumer citizen, the goals which motivate him/her are to be found in existing definitions of sustainable development, world citizenship and global solidarity.

### Qualities of the mind

*“Invocation of moral principle is a necessary first step for eliciting virtuous behaviour, but that alone is not a sufficient step.”* (8)

The next step in catalyzing change is diagnosing the symptoms of a situation or problem. The early detection of conditions requiring change involves reading signals. Research and scientific analysis provide essential information for the interpretation of

signals. The greater the focus on research about sustainable consumption, the greater the source of valuable documentation for diagnosing the need for changes. Alongside research-based analysis, the more subjective exchange of experiences and the voicing of satisfaction or dissatisfaction contributes to the process of identifying problems. Friends calling each other on cell phones in shops to give advice as to which product they recommend is a growing phenomenon. Websites sharing detailed information about products and services are becoming continually more popular. Media reports present performance results and feed the information flow. Increased use of labelling helps consumers make more informed choices. This sharing of knowledge (or at times, slanting of knowledge) provides a valuable user perspective.

The change agent must then develop the ability to envision, on the basis of available information, alternative solutions. Envisioning involves anticipating, looking ahead and adapting creatively. Various data utilization techniques are available such as: technological forecasting, role playing, reasoning by analogy, morphological analysis, translating problems into theory, and simulation. (9) Alexander the Great's solution to the riddle of the Gordian knot exemplifies radical resolutions to seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Nanotechnology which is now growing in influence is a modern example of radical thinking. Although ingenious inventors have made significant contributions to modernizing the world, it can also be shown that individual stakeholders have suggested creative adaptations of products or services which have also had significant effects.

Imagining financial literacy, fair-trade, corruption-free markets, safe and ecologically sound products or sustainable lifestyles does not necessarily make them happen. The well of good ideas seldom runs dry. The next step in the processes of change initiation is to give priority to the ideas which are the most feasible, reliable, timely and culturally compatible. Achievability and affordability are also criteria to be considered when making risk assessments and giving priority to change initiatives. Realistic goal setting must also include a thorough evaluation of the power constellations relevant to the proposed adaptation. Many a reform has been put aside due to the change agent being unfamiliar with the systems which were necessary to pass through in order to affect the desired innovation.

### Qualities of action

In private life, change makers can take the first steps towards implementing new initiatives. They set the stage and give the change its first spurt of momentum, in the manner that bobsleds are set off down the track, or rockets are boosted to their first stage of flight. For the change to have more wide-reaching influence and release resources in others—who are often referred to as “adopters”, different kinds of change strategies are available.

Facilitative strategies “assume that the target group already recognizes a problem; is in general agreement that remedial action is necessary and is open to external assistance and willing to engage in self-help” Facilitative strategies come under the category of democratic change which is based on the premise that the most

important change agents are the stakeholders themselves. Re-educative strategies are usually used when there is sufficient time for gradual change or when changes are made “top-down” (from authorities to the grassroots) and there is the need for gaining the support of those required to change. Persuasive strategies of change use “reasoning, urging and inducement” to achieve innovation. Power strategies “involve coercion to obtain the target’s compliance” and do not fall under the category of “positive qualities of action” (unless perhaps if you belong the Mafia) even though they may release resources by the one wielding the power and stimulate responses by the one being coerced. (10)

All of the abovementioned strategies affect “targets” or stakeholders. The term “stakeholder” is often used by corporations and organizations to identify their clients and customers. Used in the wider context of sustainable, responsible consumption, the stakeholder is in fact the consumer citizen. Stakeholder involvement has generally been restricted to complaints and redress. Recent developments, such as the International Standards Organization’s COPOLCO (Consumer participation in standardization processes (<http://www.iso.org/iso/en/comms-markets/consumers/iso+theconsumer-09.html> ) opens for more dynamic involvement on the part of the stakeholder. In addition to representing the user perspective (children, pupils, students, adults, disabled, marginalized, elderly), stakeholders can provide alternative solutions.

*“The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.”* Franklin Delano Roosevelt 1937

In connection with this part of the change process, the individual may run into the “free market quicksand”, officially called: “breach of fiduciary responsibility” which effectively scares many businessmen from taking steps to initiate change because they might be accused of “acting knowingly so that *profits* are reduced.” The question then becomes whether or not one can define “profits” in terms other than monetary ones. Is progress towards sustainable consumption to be considered “profitable”? The answer is of course “no” if one is only thinking of immediate paybacks. When considering long-term benefits, the answer can be seen in another light.

### Qualities of communication

*“A system’s capacity for innovation is dependent on the system’s ability to reveal its intelligence in a particular systems environment”* (11)

Communication is central to three different stages of the creative change process. The first is during the period when ideas are being collected and reviewed and new actions are being planned. It is at this point that the individual needs to tap the “group’s collective genius”. (12) By practicing the art of consultation in which expectations, principles, and diverse opinions and facts are merged together to express consolidated views, the participants transform their personal interests into mutual ones.



It is at this point that untapped collective resources can be released. The sharing of knowledge in a conducive atmosphere can stimulate the members of the group to contribute creatively to the common effort. The process of communication solidifies the participants' involvement and potential as adopters of the innovation.

The second stage which is dependent upon skilled communication is during the diffusion of the change. The scope of the impact of change is directly related to the extent of its diffusion and adoption (13).

*"A man convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still."* English proverb

"Persuade, convince, and convert" chant some change theoreticians and politicians. It might be wiser to call out: reflect, discuss and act! Doing these steps stabilizes adoption of the change and assists in its diffusion. The use of discursive public spaces (open debates) internet, blogs, conferences, meetings, demonstrations, and hearings, are arena for sharing innovative approaches.

The third stage of the change process in which developing communication skills is essential is the phase when change is measured. Comparative reviews, impact assessments, and other tools of measurement and evaluation attempt to bring into public view the degree of quantitative or qualitative change. Change agents have responsibility for the consequences of the innovations they introduce be they snowmobiles or atom bombs. Measuring desirable consequences, undesirable, immediate, anticipated, or unanticipated effects are necessary though not always carried out.

It is not always possible to identify the "critical mass" or the "rate of adoption" which guarantees that the innovation becomes self-sustaining. Some social scientists speak of ideological breakthroughs or of movements passing "the tipping point" to affect transformation of the status quo. (14) The 100<sup>th</sup> Monkey Syndrome is perhaps the most well known example of grassroots change being adopted by entire populations not only by gradual re-education but en mass after a certain point. The change becomes internalized by the social system and is adopted by all.

## **Conclusion**

Charles L. Harper summarizes succinctly:

*"Expect change, understand change, change oneself and contribute to changing society."*

If we endeavour to follow this advice, and have as our common goal the releasing of untapped resources in order to achieve sustainable human development, then the following words of the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, may be worth considering.

*"We will have time to reach the Millennium Development Goals – worldwide and in most, or even all, individual countries – but only if we break with business as usual. We cannot win overnight. Success will require sustained action across the entire decade between now and the deadline. It takes time to train the teachers, nurses and engineers; to build the roads, schools and hospitals; to grow the small and large businesses able to create the jobs and income needed. So we must start now. And we must more than double global development assistance over the next few years. Nothing less will help to achieve the Goals."*

*United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi A. Annan 2006*

## **A brief case study in change initiation: The Consumer Citizenship Network (2003-2006)**

### **Source materials**

This short analysis of the Consumer Citizenship Network is based on the following documentation submitted during the 3 year period the network has existed:

- a) the written evaluations from the Socrates Program of the Consumer Network applications and annual final reports
- b) written evaluations from participants of all CCN meetings and conferences
- c) minutes of all CCN steering group, thematic group meetings and Core Unit meetings
- d) suggestions from CCN partners, UNESCO, UNEP, and the CCN advisory board.
- e) the verbal and email feedback given at and between meetings and conferences
- f) the official documents of the network (applications, reports)
- g) the published outcomes of the network (conference proceedings, Guidelines, books, pamphlets, etc)

This review is not a research-based evaluation of the Network and whether or not it has achieved the goals it set itself. Rather it is a summary of responses and impressions categorized in relation to the main topics in this paper on "Releasing untapped resources". Its point of departure is that there has not previously been any organized initiative of the scope of CCN connected with consumer citizenship and consumer citizenship education in Europe or internationally. The CCN makes it quite clear in its official documents that there are a number of smaller initiatives in Canada and Australia, as well as the Comenius 2.1 project "Developing Consumer Citizenship" (the forerunner to CCN), which have laid the conceptual foundations for work with consumer citizenship.

### Qualities of the spirit

The Consumer Citizenship Network appears to have developed the following qualities among its participants: *enthusiasm, openness, trust, empathy, and a spirit of volunteerism and commitment*. These are evident among other things in the manner the members function towards each other and towards the chosen goals. The fact that the membership has only fluctuated slightly (basically due to deaths, pregnancies and

changed jobs) helps confirm this; as does the fact that over 90 member institutions have committed themselves to continue three more years in the Network. When there have been tasks to accomplish, there has been willingness to carry them out. There has been a wide diversity of linguistic proficiency, professional disciplines and extent of international cooperative experience. These do not seem to have caused particular difficulties. There appears to be a *unity of purpose* binding the partners which is closely connected to the concepts of sustainable human development, world citizenship and the importance of education.

#### Qualities of the mind

In identifying the details connected to consumer citizenship, the CCN has established links with numerous national and international organizations and research centers working with related topics. The *exchange of information* has occurred via the CCN websites, at meetings and conferences, through exhibits and via person to person contact.

The Consumer Citizenship Network has *envisioned* several initiatives which they have attempted to bring into being. The inclusion of consumer citizenship education in curricula, the adoption of new and more active-learning oriented didactical methods, and the preparation of new teaching materials (both hard copies and online) are outputs envisioned by the Network from the beginning. Dialogue with professionals from other parts of the world, particularly the less-industrialized sections was also envisioned. On the whole, the most general goal which was envisioned was to assist the consumer in becoming more responsible, more critical and more aware.

Use of *scientific methods of investigation* related to sustainable consumption and social responsibility have increased during the lifetime of the CCN. Some of the partners feel the quality of the results are also better, a fact they claim can be observed by comparing the conference reports and other products. Two points of view exist amongst the partners as to scientific research. Some have expressed the opinion that the CCN partners should focus on more long-term advanced research projects; whereas others feel it is more important to focus on applied research and stimulating educational reforms.

#### Qualities of action

The CCN has employed two change initiating strategies. The Network has used *facilitative strategies* in relation to its own partner institutions and other "like-minded" educational institutions and organisations which they have had contact with. This has apparently had positive effects as the level of participation in CCN-related research and development work, meetings and conferences has steadily increased. The representation of numerous consumer interest organisations as well as Consumers International has provided stakeholder participation. The involvement of teachers and teacher trainers does the same concerning the goals of developing consumer citizenship education. The LOLA (Looking for likely alternatives) pilot project has drawn teachers and students into action within the field of education for sustainable development.

At the same time, however, The Consumer Citizenship Network clearly uses *re-educative strategies* too. The Guidelines for Consumer Citizenship Education, the spreading and supporting of YouthXchange and the teacher training courses which have been held, have all been steps towards encourage (top-down) the inclusion of consumer citizenship in the curricula of schools and institutions of higher education. The adoption level of these initiatives has not yet been documented and there seems to be an extensive need for further diffusion and adaptation of the materials.

### Qualities of communication

The Consumer Citizenship Network is just that—a network. Despite cultural and economic differences, partners have contributed to the establishment and maintenance of the network. Networks cannot exist without sufficient communication. This is something the CCN discovered took much more time and energy, particularly in the first phases of the three year cycle. Establishing a common understanding of words and professional jargon has taken time and is not yet finished. Envisioned strategies for public appeals about consumer citizenship have only been carried out to a very limited degree.

*Consultation* has flourished since the beginning of the network, but it is difficult to deduce whether this has been as frank and direct as it could be. References were made to other professional arena where a more competitive atmosphere occasionally heightens the temperature of debates. At the same time, the CCN partners have made it clear that they appreciate the lack of what several refer to as “the tendency to arrogance amongst professionals in their efforts to impress each other”. The quality of CCN consultations has improved during the Network’s existence as attested to by the thematic groups and the conference reports. One important factor has been, as mentioned above, the evolution of a common professional vocabulary. As the CCN is interdisciplinary, this was an essential step in improving communication. Consultation has been stimulated by a number of administrative steps, such as reducing the number of papers presented at conferences and allowing more time for discussion. In addition the CCN website, password locked documents online, etc, have contributed to improved communication between CCN partners and with the public.

As to communication with the public at large, the Consumer Citizenship Network has brought topics which the Network has focused on (such as sustainable, responsible consumption) into the public arena in several situations. Aside from at international conferences and in publications, the CCN’s participation in the development of ISO standards of social responsibility is particularly worthy of note. However, communication via the media and through collaboration with other networks and organizations is an area in which the CCN still faces challenges.

### **Conclusion**

The Consumer Citizenship Network has initiated some change but it has only begun a process which, if it shall be of significance, needs to continue to develop and diffuse the results it has achieved.

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## Constructing a mature society

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If we want a mature society, it will have to be made up of a cadre of mature adults—adults whose presence and influence, whose values and ethical commitments, whose empathy and respect of the other allows for a society of mutuality and respect. If we want growthful change as a hall mark of a mature society, it will also have to be brought about by at least a cadre of mature adults—adults who honour the growth and becoming of each and every person, who believe that each and every person has a right to be at the table, who are committed to a just society and to trying to bring about a culture of peace.

Unfortunately, what it means to become a mature adult is not talked about very much and is not very well understood. Even though we know better, we tend to think that becoming an adult is something that automatically happens to children when they grow up. We tend to think of adulthood as something that is either chronological or biological. Even though we know it is not true, adults are thought to be those who have reached the age of sixteen, or eighteen, or twenty-one, or adults are thought to be those who are able to have children.

### ***Part I: Adulthood—An Adult Self***

The adult self is simply defined as an *integral self-in-mutuality*.<sup>1</sup> It is “a single whole system,”<sup>2</sup> a cohesive gestalt in which all the parts function for the good of the whole. This self has the strength and courage to be a center within its own boundaries. Carl Jung calls this adult self a “psychic whole that is capable of resistance and abounding in energy.”<sup>3</sup> The adult self is its own “whole.”<sup>4</sup> It may not be a perfect whole,

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<sup>1</sup> Harold H. Oliver, *Relatedness: Essays in Metaphysics and Theology* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 162, states, “The notion of selfhood which discloses itself intuitively rather than reflectively is that of the *relational self*. In relational selfhood there is no ‘I’ separated from a ‘Thou’; for the ‘experiential other’ signals not ‘separation,’ but ‘mutuality.’ The very being of the ‘I’ of ‘I-Thou’ is a co-being. Accordingly, it is more faithful to experience to say that the ‘I’ is created by the relation than to say that the ‘I’ creates the relation through its prior subjectivity. The ‘I’ emerges with its ‘Thou’ in the same creative act. Reality thus discloses itself relationally as ‘mutuality.’”

<sup>2</sup> Emily Souvaine, Lisa L. Lahey, and Robert Kegan, “Life After Formal Operations: Implications for a Psychology of the Self,” in *Higher Stages of Human Development: Perspectives on Adult Growth*, ed. Charles N. Alexander and Ellen J. Langer (New York: Oxford, 1990), 234.

<sup>3</sup> Carl G. Jung, “The Development of Personality,” *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, Vol. 17 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 169.

<sup>4</sup> Erik H. Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (New York: Norton, 1968), 87.

but it is an integrated and functioning whole, a whole that can continue to develop as itself.

At the same time, an adult self relates in mutuality to what is other than itself. The adult self is necessarily a self-in-relatedness.<sup>5</sup> From the very beginning of life, “mutuality enables the self to be what it is and become what it is becoming.”<sup>6</sup> As the self reaches adulthood, the integrity of the self is found only in mutual relating with others whose integrity is also recognized and respected. Without real dialogue and without mutual relationships of solicitude, love, and respect, the adult self simply cannot continue to be itself.<sup>7</sup>

In the mutual relating of adults, the distinctness and the integrity of each person is experienced, along with the needs, the values, and the unique concerns of each person.<sup>8</sup> In this relating in mutuality, the basic moral attitude is one of care and justice for each person. In this relating in mutuality, the interaction we have with each other—and with whatever else commands our response—is characterized by an attitude of honesty, openness, and concern. In this relating in mutuality, the experience is one of trust and love toward the other and a willingness to let the other change as the relationship unfolds. In this relating in mutuality, the ability to give and to receive what is needed fosters the ongoing growth and development of each person. In an adult relating in mutuality, there is a “common flourishing of all parties involved.”<sup>9</sup>

There are a number of characteristics important for a fuller understanding of the adult self as an integral self-in-mutuality.

1. The primary characteristic of the adult self is that it *is a body-self*. The adult self is embodied; it is “a self that finds its anchor in its own body.”<sup>10</sup> This means that the body is owned by the self and that the self is comfortable in the body. Self and body are experienced as one. When the self has become adult, the body is no longer something it *has*; the body is what it *is*. As Gabriel Marcel says, “I *am* my body.”<sup>11</sup> To experience the self is to be at home in the body, and to be at home in the body with its own unique way of being is to experience the self.

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<sup>5</sup>. For some different perspectives on the self-in-relatedness, see John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961); see also Margaret Craddock Huff, “The Interdependent Self: An Integrated Concept From Feminist Theology and Feminist Psychology,” *Philosophy & Theology* 11, no. 2 (Winter 1987): 160-172; see also Judith V. Jordan, Alexandra G. Kaplan, Jean Baker Miller, Irene P. Stiver, and Janet L. Surrey, eds., *Women’s Growth in Connection: Writings From the Stone Center* (New York: Guilford, 1991).

<sup>6</sup>. William Willeford, *Feeling, Imagination, and the Self: Transformations of the Mother-Infant Relationship* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1987), 145.

<sup>7</sup>. Martin Buber, “Distance and Relation,” *The Knowledge of Man*, trans. Maurice Friedman and Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 71, observes that “the inmost growth of the self is not accomplished, as people like to suppose today, in man’s relation to himself, but in the relation between the one and the other, between men, that is, pre-eminently in the mutuality of the making present—in the making present of another self and in the knowledge that one is made present in his own self by the other—together with the mutuality of acceptance, of affirmation and confirmation.”

<sup>8</sup>. See Robert Selman, *The Growth of Interpersonal Understanding: Developmental and Clinical Analyses* (New York: Academic Press, 1980).

<sup>9</sup>. Dawn M. Nothwehr, *Mutuality: A Formal Norm for Christian Ethics* (San Francisco: Catholic Scholars Press, 1998), 5.

<sup>10</sup>. Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 319.

<sup>11</sup>. Gabriel Marcel, *Metaphysical Journal* (Chicago: Regnery, 1952), 259.

“Being a body defines the nature and structure of our experience.”<sup>12</sup> Gabriel Marcel describes important human qualities such as fidelity, hope, love, and communion as embodied realities.<sup>13</sup> And Freud’s famous dictum about the fullness of life, “to love and to work,” can easily be seen as presupposing the wholeness of an adult body-self. Most cultures have harbored a “suspicion of embodiment,”<sup>14</sup> but the truth is that only in and through the body-self are we fully ourselves and fully able to engage what is other, making real community possible. We are an integral self-in-mutuality only in and through the body-self.

2. The adult self *is founded in feeling*. Feeling is the felt, meaningful aliveness of the body-self and the sense of this self in relatedness. “As a self, I am a subject or center of feeling, weaving together many different strands of relatedness into my identity.”<sup>15</sup> “Once the capacity to feel is gone,” observes Michael Hardiman, “then the person as a unique identity is lost.”<sup>16</sup> Wilson Van Dusen calls feeling “the background accompaniment of all perception, all thought, all action.”<sup>17</sup> It is in the intimacy of feeling that the body-self is available to itself, and it is in the intimacy of feeling that the body-self is open to others and to the world, making real community possible.

Feeling, which is *a unity of emotion and cognition*, “refuses to submit,” says Edward Casey, “to the dichotomies so obsessively pursued by reason.”<sup>18</sup> John Heron observes that, “Feeling is deeply and deliciously paradoxical. It unites us with what is other while telling us that it is other and that we are other to it. It celebrates unity in diversity, identification with what is different without loss of personal distinctness.”<sup>19</sup> For Carl Rogers the adult or congruent self is really a feeling process, a process of bodily felt interaction<sup>20</sup> that he understands as both cognitive and affective.<sup>21</sup> The expression of feeling reveals and evokes the adult self as an integral self-in-mutuality.

3. The adult self *has a sense of depth*. Living in the fullness of the body, there is a “pervasive inner sense of self.”<sup>22</sup> “We are,” says Charles Taylor, “creatures with inner depths; with partly unexplored and dark interiors.”<sup>23</sup> In the religious tradition, this depth

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<sup>12</sup> Jerry H. Gill, *On Knowing God* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), 70.

<sup>13</sup> See Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, 2 vols. (Chicago: Regnery, 1960); see also his *Homo Viator: Introduction to a Metaphysics of Hope* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).

<sup>14</sup> Drew Leder, *The Absent Body* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 128.

<sup>15</sup> Kathleen R. Fischer, *Reclaiming the Connection: A Contemporary Spirituality* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1990), 31.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Hardiman, *Ordinary Heroes: A Future for Men* (Dublin: Newleaf, 2000), 37.

<sup>17</sup> Wilson Van Dusen, *The Natural Depth in Man* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 62.

<sup>18</sup> Edward S. Casey, *Spirit and Soul: Essays in Philosophical Psychology* (Dallas, TX: Spring, 1991), xiii.

<sup>19</sup> John Heron, *Feeling and Personhood: Psychology in Another Key* (London: Sage, 1992), 93.

<sup>20</sup> Carl R. Rogers, “A Process Conception of Psychotherapy,” *On Becoming a Person* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), 145-155.

<sup>21</sup> Carl R. Rogers, “A Theory of Therapy, Personality, and Interpersonal Relationships, as Developed in the Client-Centered Framework,” in *Psychology: A Study of a Science*. Vol. 3, ed. Sigmund Koch (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959), 210; see also Eugene T. Gendlin, “Experiencing: A Variable in the Process of Therapeutic Change,” *The American Journal of Psychotherapy* 15, no. 2 (April 1961): 237.

<sup>22</sup> Leland Elhard, “Living Faith: Some Contributions of the Concept of Ego-identity to the Understanding of Faith,” in *The Dialogue Between Theology and Psychology*, ed. Peter Homans (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 137.

<sup>23</sup> Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 111.



is often seen as “interiority” or “inwardness.” of the person. Some see depth as the place of “soul” because the essence of the human lies there.<sup>24</sup> Some see depth as the “heart” because it is a center of striving and courage.<sup>25</sup> Some see depth as the place of “spirit” because aliveness, purpose, and resolve are in it.<sup>26</sup> All that is most personal to the adult self is revealed and concealed in the depth.

For an adult self as an integral self-in-mutuality, depth means that there is something “more” in who I am and something “more” in what is other. Often I can sense this “more” in its intuitions and in its inspirations, its desires and its secrets, its memories and its mysteries.<sup>27</sup> Depth is really the place of felt connection to myself and to what is other than myself, allowing for more extensive identifications, more profound meanings, and a deeper sense of integrity and compassion. Living in the body allows for an owned sense of depth.<sup>28</sup> Depth, feeling, and the body go together in adulthood, making real community possible.

4. The adult self *has clear boundaries*. With clear boundaries, “nothing that belongs inside is left outside, nothing that is outside can be tolerated inside.”<sup>29</sup> Clear boundaries make for delineation, coherence, and wholeness. With clear boundaries, the adult self knows who it is and who it is not. It knows where its own body-self ends, so to speak, and where other body-selves begin. It is able to accept itself and the other as, in Mario Jacobi’s phrase, “a Thou in his or her own right.”<sup>30</sup> In fact, as Margaret Kornfeld emphasizes, “*Relationships are made when the boundaries of selves are respected.*”<sup>31</sup>

With clear boundaries, the body-self—its needs and its nature, its strengths and vulnerabilities, its possibilities and failures—is owned. Even what Viktor Frankl calls the “tragic triad” of our existence—suffering, guilt, and death—are included.<sup>32</sup> Yet with an acceptance of the boundaries and limits of the self, there is an accompanying acceptance of the other, that is, other persons and other realities in the world. A bounded and coherent adult self is, paradoxically, a *contextual self* as well. It is a self that attends to other coherent selves and to a coherent world. Clear boundaries and a context of coherent selves go together in adulthood, making real community possible.

5. The adult self *exists in intimacy*. Intimacy is the feeling and depth of the body-self being with the feeling and depth of the other. The boundaries of the adult self, which

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<sup>24</sup>. See, for example, Thomas Moore, *Care of the Soul: a Guide for Cultivating Depth and Sacredness in Everyday Life* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).

<sup>25</sup>. See, for example, James Hillman, *The Thought of the Heart* (Dallas, TX: Spring, 1984).

<sup>26</sup>. See, for example, Max Scheler, *Man’s Place in Nature* (New York: Noonday, 1962). Writing on the effects of trauma, Kalsched, *The Inner World of Trauma*, 67, observes, “When mind and body split, the animating principle of psychological life, or what we could call spirit leaves.”

<sup>27</sup>. See Max van Manen and Bas Levering, *Childhood’s Secrets: Intimacy, Privacy, and the Self Reconsidered* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1996), 100; see also William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 402.

<sup>28</sup>. For a good understanding of depth in the context of interpersonal development see Selman, *The Growth of Interpersonal Understanding*. See also Proffoff, *Depth Psychology and Modern Man*.

<sup>29</sup>. Erik H. Erikson, *Insight and Responsibility* (New York: Norton, 1964), 92.

<sup>30</sup>. Mario Jacobi, *The Analytic Encounter: Transference and Human Relationship* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1984), 64.

<sup>31</sup>. Margaret Kornfeld, *Cultivating Wholeness: A Guide to Care and Counseling in Faith Communities* (New York: Continuum, 1998), 292.

<sup>32</sup>. See Viktor E. Frankl, *The Doctor and the Soul* (New York: Knopf, 1966).

are clear and definite, are quite penetrable at the same time. The very penetrability of these boundaries—evidenced in such qualities as openness, availability, self-forgetfulness, understanding, and love—makes intimacy possible.

Intimacy is revealed in empathy. To be “in the inner world of the other as if it were your own” is an exercise in intimacy.<sup>33</sup> “Without empathy,” says Judith Jordan, “there is no intimacy, no real attainment of an appreciation of the paradox of separateness within connection.”<sup>34</sup> Real empathy is the ability of the adult self to be with an other person, not as one needs that person to be but just as that person actually is. The empathy and love found in intimacy are at the core of being an adult. In an adult self as an integral self-in-mutuality, empathy, love, and intimacy go together, making real community possible.

6. Finally, along with these other characteristics and as their culmination, the adult self *is its own responsible process*. The adult self, as its own body-self in feeling and in depth, is its own center of responding. “To have a sense of responsibility,” asserts William Meissner, “is to have a sense of inner reality and identity.”<sup>35</sup> As George Kunz puts it, “I am I because I cannot pass off my responsibilities to any other.”<sup>36</sup> In adulthood, integrity and the ability to respond go together, the one unfolding and deepening the other. As its own responsible process of relating an adult self maintains continuity with the past, meaning for the present, and direction for the future.<sup>37</sup>

“To be responsible,” asserts Richard Niebuhr, “is to be a self in the presence of other selves, to whom one is bound and to whom one is able to answer freely.”<sup>38</sup> As it grows and moves forward in authentic responsiveness, the self experiences itself as able to be and as needing to be responsible. “I am,” says Emmanuel Levinas, “he who finds the resources to respond to the call.”<sup>39</sup> In fact, my ongoing sense of myself actually depends on my ability to respond to what is other. In adulthood, the response of the self and the call of the other go together. The adult, an integral self-in-mutuality, is a living process that is its own responsibility, making real community possible.

### ***Ways of Being of the Adult Self***

Flowing from the definition of an adult self as an integral self-in-mutuality and flowing from the six characteristics of this self are two relational ways of being that are the fullness of adult functioning. These two ways of being—always woven together—are *an actualizing self-in-mutuality* and *a reflecting self-in-mutuality*.<sup>40</sup> An adult self maintains itself and continues to grow as an actualizing and reflecting self-in-mutuality.

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<sup>33</sup>. Rogers, “A Theory of Therapy,” p. 210.

<sup>34</sup>. Judith V. Jordan, “Empathy and Self Boundaries,” in *Women’s Growth in Connection: Writings From the Stone Center*, ed. Judith V. Jordan, Alexandra G. Kaplan, Jean Baker Miller, Irene P. Stiver, and Janet L. Surrey (New York: Guilford, 1991), 69.

<sup>35</sup>. Meissner, *Psychoanalysis and Religious Experience*, 237.

<sup>36</sup>. George Kunz, *The Paradox of Power and Weakness: Levinas and an Alternative Paradigm for Psychology* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), 33.

<sup>37</sup>. James E. Marcia, “Common Processes Underlying Ego Identity, Cognitive/Moral Development, and Individuation,” in *Self, Ego, and Identity: Integrative Approaches*, ed. Daniel K. Lapsley and F. Clark Power (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1988), 217.

<sup>38</sup>. H. Richard Niebuhr, “The Responsibility of the Church for Society,” in *The Gospel, the Church, and the World*, ed. Kenneth Scott Latourette (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946), 114.

<sup>39</sup>. Quoted in Kunz, *The Paradox of Power and Weakness*, 199.

<sup>40</sup>. Abigail J. Stewart and Joseph M. Healy, Jr., “Processing Affective Responses to Life Experiences: The

## 1. An Actualizing Self-in-Mutuality

An adult self is *an actualizing self-in-mutuality*. Flowing back and forth with its reflecting and together with it, is the ability an actualizing self to pursue freely and fully its own path.<sup>41</sup> The adult self is unified in itself. Its purposeful, directed, responsible action comes from within. An actualizing self-in-mutuality has the ability to live from within its own boundaries, not having its own feeling confused by the feeling of others, not having its own values and responses dictated by the needs of others. But at the same time, and paradoxically, in freely setting its own course in life the adult self as an actualizing self-in-mutuality also experiences the imperative to weigh the needs and the feelings of others. The actualizing adult self has to do with agency, a sense of mastery, and the ability to act creatively, yet often this actualizing is experienced by us as a call and is meaningful only others in “the shared visions of adulthood.”<sup>42</sup> As an ongoing process, actualizing is a hallmark of adult functioning. It is what allows personal meaning to emerge and be owned in our ongoing life in community

## 2. A Reflecting Self-in-Mutuality

An adult self is *a reflecting self-in-mutuality*. Flowing back and forth with its actualizing and together with it is the ability of an adult self to capture the meaning and significance of personal activity. This ability to reflect is the way an adult self finds and continues to hold—in feeling, in depth, with clear boundaries, and in intimacy—who it is with others and the world. Reflecting is a gentle holding and a felt sifting of the body-self’s experience so that intention, memory, and meaning can come together. Reflecting is the way we see ourselves in context with others and the world, and it is how we gain perspective on our lives.<sup>43</sup>

This reflecting, which at times is possible only in the presence of an empathic other who genuinely cares for the self, is both a vantagepoint and a fulcrum to the self.<sup>44</sup> It is, paradoxically, the ability “to feel into” and at the same time “to stand outside of” our experiencing so that its meaning can become clearer. It is a personal and contextual knowing and valuing which comes from the awareness of one’s own feeling, from sensing what is in the depth, from being with the boundaries of the self, and from being with the feeling and the depth of the other. As we are describing it here, this reflecting is really an understanding of conscience as an ongoing process.<sup>45</sup> Conscience is how the adult self keeps itself responsible for its own continuing development and for the deepening of its relationships with what is other. As an ongoing process, reflecting it is a

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Development of the Adult Self,” in *Emotion in Adult Development*, ed. Carol Z. Malatesta and Carroll E. Izard (London: Sage, 1984), 284, characterize the adult self similarly as “the proactive, processing self.”

<sup>41</sup>. Marcia Cavell, “Erik Erikson and the Temporal Mind,” in *Ideas and Identities: The Life and Work of Erik Erikson*, ed. Robert S. Wallerstein and Leo Goldberger (Madison, CT: International Universities Press, 1998), 42, captures the sense of self-actualization when she speaks about “the identity of integrated agency.”

<sup>42</sup>. Erik H. Erikson, *Toys and Reasons: Stages in the Ritualization of Experience* (New York: Norton, 1977), 45.

<sup>43</sup>. Two procedures may be particularly helpful with accessing our feeling and depth in self-reflection. One is the process of focusing described by Eugene T. Gendlin, *Focusing* (New York: Bantam, 1981). The other is the process of psyche-evoking described by Ira Progoff, *At a Journal Workshop* (Los Angeles: Tarcher, 1992).

<sup>44</sup>. See Andras Angyal, “The Convergence of Psychotherapy and Religion,” *Journal of Pastoral Care* 5, no. 4 (1951): 12.

<sup>45</sup>. As Jane Loevinger with the assistance of Augusto Blasi, *Ego Development: Conceptions and Theories* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976), 397, observes, “Conscience is above all a reflexive concept.”

hallmark of adult functioning. It is what allows personal meaning to emerge and be owned in our ongoing life in community.

## ***Part II: Adult Self, Moral Self***

*Integral self-in-mutuality*—A second reason why adulthood is important for a mature society is that an adult self is a moral self. If morality and social justice begin when I as a self face you as a self, then the fullness of morality is when an integral self relates to whoever or whatever is other in mutuality. Susan Ross understands mutuality not only as “the social context in which moral action takes place” but also as “a normative principle that undergirds moral decision making.”<sup>46</sup> Dawn Nothwehr sees mutuality, along with love and justice, as a formal norm for social ethics.<sup>47</sup> Respect for the other in terms of relating in mutuality is at the heart of morality and social justice.

*Is a body-self*—When I as a body self in all of my circumstances of embodiment relate to you as a body self in all the circumstances of your embodiment, I am relating in a fully moral way, a way that involves care and justice.

*Is founded in feeling*—I have to be in touch with what I am feeling, and I have to be in touch with you and what you are feeling. The heart of morality and social justice is in empathy—self-empathy and empathy for the other, be it another person searching for wholeness or for the environment. Justice and care, if not founded in feeling, are only abstract principles.

*Has a sense of depth*—the fullness of morality lies in the depth. I have to take into account my own uniqueness, and history, and dreams—my inner—and I have to take into account your uniqueness, and history, and dreams—your inner—if I am to respond to you as I am in my fullness and as you are in yours.

*Has clear boundaries*—Honoring boundaries is another way of talking about being moral. I need to know and honor my own boundaries and I need to know and honor your boundaries. Morality and social justice, quite simply, lie in respect for boundaries.

*Exists in intimacy*—The fullness of morality seems to demand some kind of intimate knowing. Empathy is a part of intimacy, and empathy is at the heart of morality. Without seriously knowing ourselves and without seriously knowing the other, we cannot seriously be moral.

*Is its own responsible process*—If this characteristic is the culmination of the characteristics of adulthood, it is culmination of the characteristics of morality and social justice as well. Being responsible for one’s own self and being able to respond to the needs of the other is simply another way of describing what it is to be moral.

Two points need to be made here. First—the case I have been making—adulthood, morality, and social justice go together. Second, morality and social justice are the bedrock of any mature society. Adulthood, morality, social justice, and a mature society necessarily go together.

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<sup>46</sup>. Susan A. Ross, “Evil and Hope: Foundational Moral Perspectives,” *Proceedings of the Fiftieth Annual Convention, Catholic Theological Society of America* 50, (1995), 55.

<sup>47</sup>. Nothwehr, *Mutuality*, 10.

### ***Part III: Adult Self, Spiritual Self***

*Integral self-in-mutuality*—I define spirituality as that which gives meaning to life and allow us to participate in the larger whole. For some of us God is the center of our spirituality because our experience of God gives meaning to life and we find the larger whole in God. For others, perhaps ecological concerns or social justice give meaning to life and perhaps the larger whole is found in communities searching for the good of the world and for all its inhabitants. Spirituality—no matter what its particular form may be—is not something “other than” the human, or “transcending” the human, or “added on” to the human. Spirituality is an essential part of our human development and it finds its fullness in adulthood. The purpose of any spirituality is to make us more whole as ourselves and more able to relate in mutuality to the other. Urban Holmes says: “Spirituality is our openness to relationship, which is a universal human capacity involving the whole person.”<sup>48</sup> If we look at the six characteristics of adulthood, we can get a clearer picture of what spirituality is.

*Is a body-self*—Spirituality has to be something of the whole person, of the body-self, in which the mind and the body are together as one. There is no meaning that touches who we are and that relates us to the larger whole that goes not touch all of who we are and draw us forward as whole, embodied selves, The wholeness of who we are makes a whole spirituality possible.

*Is founded in feeling*—Any spirituality, if it is real, has to be felt and meaningful at the same time—emotion and cognition as experienced together. “We feel the connections our spirituality brings us; we feel the rightness of what draws us forward as ourselves; we feel what relates us in generosity to the larger whole.”<sup>49</sup> Spirituality is founded in feeling.

*Has a sense of depth*—William Becker observes that spirituality is a “highly useful code word for the depth dimension of human experience.”<sup>50</sup> And Eugene Kelly observes, spirituality involves “a deep sense of wholeness”<sup>51</sup> and “a deep sense of connectedness with others.”<sup>52</sup> Spirituality is of the depth. It challenges us to open ourselves to mystery so we can change and grow. “Whatever is spiritual touches us deeply and can transform suffering into learning, enmity into collaboration, and indifference into love.”<sup>53</sup>

*Has clear boundaries*—Spirituality finds us as we are. It does not violate our boundaries, and it does not transcend them. What an adult spirituality does is speak to the whole of our experience as integral selves-in-mutuality. An adult spirituality

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48. Urban T. Holmes, *Spirituality for Ministry* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 12.

49. John J. Shea, *Finding God Again: Spirituality for Adults* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 99.

50. William H. Becker, “Spiritual Struggle in Contemporary America,” *Theology Today* 51 (July 1994): 257.

51. Eugene W. Kelly, Jr., *Spirituality and Religion in Counseling and Psychotherapy: Diversity in Theory and Practice* (Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association, 1995), 89.

52. Kelly, *Spirituality and Religion in Counseling and Psychotherapy*, 92.

53. Christopher Faiver, R. Elliott Ingersoll, Eugene M. O’Brien, and Christopher McNally, *Explorations in Counseling and Spirituality: Philosophical, Practical, and Personal Reflections* (Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, 2001), 1.

knows our human boundaries and is able to speak to the “tragic triad” of suffering, guilt, and death.

*Exists in intimacy*—Just as there can be no adult self without the experience of intimacy, there is also no integral spirituality without the experience of intimacy. To speak of intimacy is to speak of empathy, openness, and unconditional love. These three qualities are the relational power at the heart of any authentic spirituality. In spiritual terms, empathy, openness, and unconditional love are compassion, and without a living compassion, there is no living spirituality.

*Is its own responsible process*—It is only in our own response to the other that meaning is found; it is only in our own response to the larger whole that our spirituality holds, deepens, and transforms the self as it relates in mutuality to that larger whole. In the words of a Zen master, “Unless it grows out of yourself, no knowledge is really of value to you: a borrowed plumage never grows”<sup>54</sup> An integral spirituality cannot be justified by something outside of itself, by fear, by force, by promises, by the glowing testament of others. And yet, paradoxically, an integral spirituality is often experienced as a call to the self from what is other. An integral spirituality calls us to be our own responsible process, even as it calls us to respond to the needs of our world.

Again, two points need to be made here. First—the case I have been making—adulthood and spirituality go together. Second, the kind of spirituality I am describing is the driving spirit of any mature society. Adulthood, spirituality, and a mature society necessarily go together.

#### ***Part IV: The Centrality of Empathy in Human Development***

Finally, I want to say a few words about the importance of empathy for human development. Empathy is really the body-self, in feeling and in depth, welcoming the body-self, in feeling and in depth, of the other.

Empathy is important for three basic reasons:

1) Empathy is at the heart of growthful change. If I can listen to you just as you are, really hear your feeling and perhaps a bit of your depth, you begin to change and be different. And in the very process, I have to pay attention to what I am feeling and perhaps a bit of my depth, and often I begin to change and be different.

2) Empathy is a central vehicle of human development. When I have empathy for myself—self-empathy—I become more of who really am. I move more and more toward becoming an integral self that is able to relate in mutuality to what is other. When I have empathy for you, you become more yourself and I become more myself. We both move more and more toward being integral selves-in-mutuality.

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54. D. T. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism* (New York: Doubleday, 1956), 97.

3) Empathy, as I have mentioned, is central for both morality and spirituality. If we are not empathic, it is hard to be fully moral and fully spiritual.

## II. INCENTIVES

### Tell me a tale

**Gustavo Moral Álvarez.**

*Escuela Europea de Consumidores*

From the “Escuela Europea de Consumidores” coordinates the E-Cons Net, a Comenius 3. The school and the network promote different projects and activities which, in a concrete way deal with Consumer Education at different education levels. The tale or story, as a didactic tool, is used with Elementary School (3 to 6 years old) and Special School pupils, at their own schools.

“Cuentos contigo” (Tales with you) is a collection of didactic material that consists of five tales accompanied by their respective Didactic Guides for teachers. This material tackles, in a specific and enjoyable way, different themes on responsible consumerism: the game and the toy, advertising, shopping, eco-consumerism, textile labelling...

“Once upon a time...”

This is the beginning of many tales that have been told us when we were children. Tales full of fantastic beings, wolves and little red riding-hoods, princes and princesses... Stories that have taught us to dream and to stimulate the imagination thinking about fables of animals that can talk, evils that are punished and stories almost always with happy endings where the prince and princess could only end living together in a wonderful castle.

The tale, in spite of video games, television, cinema, mobile phones with integrated cameras, internet or any other future technological innovation destined to fill our leisure time, still keeps the magic of fascinating the little ones in order to become something significant in their education. They look at us wide-eyed, mouths wide open, when we start with our “Once upon a time...” and that is the reason why, from the European School of Consumers, we have created the tale series “Tales with you” for the Children’s Education.



There are five tales, each of them dealing with one main theme but also containing several secondary subjects. Each tale is accompanied by its respective didactic guide where the contents are analysed. For each page of the tale, two pages with proposals are included in the guide: the text of the tale, ideas and questions in order to talk about the tale, suggested activities and ideas on ways to develop those activities.

In the conception of the tales as well as in the proposals for activities, transversal (What is “transversal”)and education aspects have been taken into account. Furthermore, no sexist aspects have been considered choosing two female protagonists, two male protagonists and the fifth protagonist (to keep the balance) a paper figure, like all other protagonists of the tale with the exception of one. (I’m afraid I don’t understand this sentence . What does “no sexist aspects have been considered” mean? I think he may mean. “Furthermore, sexism has been avoided by choosing two...”))

### **“The Rainbow Pullover”**

The tale presents a girl with her different clothes in the different seasons of the year. The girl likes one pullover a lot, but one day she puts it in the washing machine and it shrinks. Instead of throwing it away she puts it on her teddy bear.



### ***Objectives***

- To familiarise the pupils with the world of clothes: use, conservation, labelling and reutilization.

### ***Contents***

- Using different clothes in the different seasons of the year.
- The ways of taking care of clothes, washing them.
- Labels.
- The reutilization of the seemingly useless materials.

### ***Description of the didactic guide***

- Sheets are included with cut-out paper dolls helping the pupils to distinguish the clothes of the different seasons of the year.
- Various activities are proposed: different types of games, fancy-dress games, fashion shows, activities on hand-washing clothes, encourage the children to investigate the reasons why clothes shrink, to experiment with the dyeing of fabrics with water-colours, to investigate the labels, a song about the rainbow pullover to sing with mimicry, etc.

### **“The football princess”**

The tale presents a girl (princess) who would like to become a football player but does not have a football. In order to buy it, she decides to save money, and when she has saved a lot of money, she decides to buy more footballs to give as presents to the boys and girls who cannot save money because they simply do not have any.



### **Objectives**

- To familiarise the pupils with the world of money and saving, and to show solidarity with the less fortunate.

### **Contents**

- Personal efforts to achieve something.
- Learning to value the price of things.
- The place of money, and taking decisions to obtain resources.
- Purchasing, supermarkets, prices, money, the Euro.
- Saving for a special purpose.
- The purchase and consumption of sweets. A healthy afternoon snack.
- Economic differences. Poverty and solidarity.

### **Description of the didactic guide**

- The guide includes game sheets; ideas on how to decorate a coat of arms, a castle and a moneybox; cut-outs of various coats of arms and of a moneybox.
- decorate models with Euro notes; how to set up a toy shop.

### **“Pepe and the magic box”**

The tale presents a boy who sees the ad of a robot on TV. His parents buy it for his birthday but the robot plays on its own and the boy gets bored. Suddenly he discovers the (a??) box through which he goes on many adventures and journeys of the imagination which he very much enjoys.



### **Objectives**

- To familiarise the pupils with the world of games and toys, the mass media and advertising. Integrate criteria of eco-consumerism (reutilization of waste material).

## ***Contents***

- Television and advertising.
- Games and toys. Presents.
- Toys that play on their own. Boring toys.
- Containers, empty boxes and their use for playing.
- Journeys, transport media and imagination.
- Eco-consumerism and cleaning. Keeping the environment clean.

## ***Description of the didactic guide***

- The guide includes sheets of imaginative games that get the participants closer to the world of toys. There are ideas on how to continue the adventures and travels started in the tale.
- Activities are proposed on how to develop ecological consciousness and life-style; proposal of a song's text and music; two sheets to colour in Pepe and the robot.

### **“Ramón goes shopping”**

The tale presents a boy who goes shopping with his parents. The shopping list includes biscuits. A packet of biscuits advertising that it contains a free gift of a dinosaur makes the boy change the brand of biscuits. When he arrives home he discovers that he does not like the biscuits very much and that the dinosaur is a drawing.



## ***Objectives***

- To familiarise the pupils with the world of shopping, the influence of merchandising and making correct purchasing decisions.

## ***Content***

- Shopping with the family.
- The usefulness of preparing a shopping list.
- Merchandising at the sales point and its influence on purchasing decisions.
- Information and advertising on packaging and labels.
- Deceptive offers and advertising.
- Breakfast.
- The importance of comparing before buying.

### ***Description of the didactic guide***

- The guide includes sheets to carry out simulation activities and visual perception games.
- Ideas are provided to set up a “mini supermarket” in the classroom and to use it in a didactic way; ideas to promote the image of biscuits and simulate their launching onto the market.
- Ideas are proposed to develop a ludoteca (I have never seen this word before, but can more or less guess what it means, but couldn't there be a simpler word, like “set of games”?) of the senses with food. The text and music of one song are included and there are drawings to be coloured in.

### **“Rita’s birthday”**

The tale presents a little bird made of paper which celebrates its birthday and phones all its friends to invite them to a party. Each friend brings two presents: one edible and the other one an illusion.



### ***Objectives***

- To familiarise the pupils with the world of food and ways to celebrate an alternative birthday party. To value the ecology of everyday life. To value diversity.

### ***Contents***

- The personal invitation of friends to celebrate a birthday party. Using the telephone.
- Joint preparation for the party.
- Presents from the guests; tasting of the food (??? I don't understand how you “elaborate” food ) brought by each guest and meaningful, personal presents that are not sold in the shops.
- The importance of saving water and electricity: turning the tap and light off.
- Electric appliances and saving energy.
- Sweets and a balanced diet.
- Looking at the language on the labels of the products.
- Dangers in the kitchen.

### ***Description of the didactic guide***

- The guide includes ideas on how to elaborate a old fashion telephone (What on earth does this mean? What the hell is a rustic telephone? How would you “elaborate” one? Does he mean how to make a toy telephone??), paper boats and planes in order to tell tales and develop dynamics.

- There are models of masks for colouring in, and which can be used for other tales, games and activities. Games which involve searching, observations, questions and answers.
- An alternative version (text) of the “Happy Birthday” is included.
- The recipe for a birthday cake (which doesn’t need baking in an oven) is suggested, and two origami sheets are included to construct a boat, a T-shirt and a plane.

### **What is the European School of Consumers?**

It is a public entity/body?? under private management. Its objective is to carry out the education of European consumers so that they are conscious, critical, united, responsible and involved in their environment. People aware of the importance of values, knowing their rights and willing to accept their responsibilities. People with clear criteria, able to apply efficient procedures and to carry out ideas and strategies favourable to the construction of a more equitable and fair society through a sustainable consumption.

The European School of Consumers coordinates the Spanish NETWORK of Consumer Education, the NETWORK of Southern European Countries, the Comenius 3 NETWORK E-CONS and participates actively in the NETWORK of Consumer Education for Latin-America and the Caribbean. It is one of the founders of the Euro Latin-American School of Consumers.

### **3What is the Comenius 3 E-CONS NETWORK?**

The E-CONS NETWORK is an part of (action?? You probably know what is meant by this. I don’t) the Sócrates Comenius 3 programme of the European community This action promotes the creation of thematic networks to group and strengthen Comenius 1 projects in different fields of common interest. The objective of these networks is to promote the cooperation and educative innovation in the school education.

The E-CONS NETWORK has the same didactic purposes as the European School of Consumers. The main protagonist of the E-CONS NETWORK is the teaching staff of the regulated non-university education. The NETWORK tries to achieve their direct implication, active participation, joint projects and activities as well as to provide technical resources to enable them to carry out the best projects in the field of Consumer Education in the classrooms. Therefore, this NETWORK is of great interest for the European teaching staff who are involved in the education of pupils from 3 to 18 years old.

From the moment of its birth (1<sup>st</sup> October 2004), the E-CONS NETWORK has brought together teachers from 849 school centres throughout the whole of Europe, 28 partner institutions and 195 collaborating entities of 23 countries (Eventually it is

intended to reach 31). All the NETWORK members have the improvement of consumer education at school among their priorities.

The E-CONS NETWORK is coordinated by the European School of Consumers which is the head of the Spanish Network of Consumer Education (which has operated successfully since 1998) which manages the network with the Spanish Ministries responsible for Consumer and Education Affairs (through the National Institute for Consumer Affairs and the General Sub-department of European Programmes) and with the collaboration of various European universities.

The E-CONS NETWORK counts on the financial support of the European Commission - Directorate-General for Education and Culture (75% of the costs) and the remainder is covered by the partners.

### *WHAT ACTIONS ARE PROMOTED BY THE E-CONS NETWORK?*

The E-CONS NETWORK has a vocation of continuance (What is “a vocation of continuance”? ...is a forward-looking movement. The programme, planned for three years (1st October 2004 – 30th September 2007), includes the following actions:

- To actively coordinate European schools that carry out projects about consumer education and especially those within the actions Sócrates – Comenius 1.
- To create and start its own website in the internet (in all the languages of the NETWORK partner countries) where the following contents will be progressively included:
  - Divulgeable technical information about consumption.
  - A file with the centres registered in the NETWORK, indicating projects already carried out or still current projects about consumer education.
  - Three data bases: 1. a data base of experiences, 2. a data base of didactic materials, 3. a data base of institutions.
  - The virtual magazine E-CONS, with news of interest and partner searches for projects.
  - A virtual forum. Format: ludic-creative corner where ideas, poems, short stories, songs, interactive creations.... about consumer education can be included.
  - Links to the websites of all partners and organizations of each country useful for consumer education.
  - To elaborate and edit a manual of educative and didactic innovation (in all languages) about how to structure, carry out and evaluate school projects useful for consumer education (with exemplification and suggestions).
  - To develop and edit on CD-ROM multimedia presentations that accompany the manual of educative innovation in this field.
  - To evaluate and spread the best practices carried out in the schools.
  - To organize an annual local meeting (in each partner country) and one European meeting with the teachers registered in the NETWORK.

- To guarantee the permanent contact with the Sócrates Agencies and the Authorities of Education and Consumer Affairs of each partner country and in the bosom of the EC.
- To evaluate the process and activities of the NETWORK and its utility for the European teaching staff permanently. An annual external evaluation.

#### *WHY IS IT INTERESTING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE E-CONS NETWORK?*

Being part of the E-CONS NETWORK offers to the teaching staff of pupils between 3 and 18 years old the possibility to participate actively in an experience of educative investigation and innovation in the field of consumer education which will give them amongst other things:

- The opportunity to look deeply into an innovative methodology to be able to elaborate and carry out projects of consumer education in the classrooms.
- A permanent place for meetings, debates, the evaluation and exchange of educative experiences in virtual form through the website as well as in personal participation in the different foreseen international meetings.
- Tools to spread their ideas, works, educative practices, such as the virtual magazine or the place for the best education practices.
- The possibility to receive and use didactic materials that tackle the main themes of concern for European consumers (food, buying in the 21st century, the home, services, advertising and media, toys, games and school material, health and safety issues, eco-consumerism, body worship, consumer information) adapted to the evolutionary age of the pupils and to the school curriculum of each country.
- Access to exact information about institutions, projects and didactic materials related to consumer education and being able to know the projects and activities carried out in the different European countries.
- To find partners to start Comenius I projects.

The website of the E-CONS NETWORK is as follows: [www.e-cons.net](http://www.e-cons.net)

# **Cinema education as a tool for consumer citizenship education – a learning experiment in teacher education**

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## ***Project aims and content***

The project is an experiment in learning by the University of Helsinki Department of Applied Sciences of Education, the Consumer Agency and Koulukino ry (School Cinema). The project is part of the pedagogical subjects teaching module “Cooperation in institutional early childhood education”.

The main aim of the course is to approach everyday situations from an adult perspective, and to examine the related effects through the students’ own reflections and their mutual interactive working. During the study processes of kindergarten teacher education the aim is to integrate the student’s personal growth with the social and cultural tasks of the educator and education. Teaching is examined as an ethical profession. In kindergarten teacher education the aim is to increase the integration of media education to different learning objects. A period of inter-adult cooperation challenges one to examine matters from the standpoint of a multi-professional and multicultural society. In 2004 the three-year “Citizen participation in teacher education” project began in Finland. The aim of the project is to develop the examination requirements and operational culture of teacher education for supporting active citizenship. An essential factor in changing the operational culture is providing information on different viewpoints and alternatives.

In our own project we try specifically through shared experiential study to examine and to reflect, and to promote discussion. A central issue is to consider one’s own actions as an active, responsible consumer citizen and contributor. The aim of the process is to enable growth in the role of a teacher through reflection. A responsible



teacher will find the opportunities to act and contribute as an activator of the students and to work himself as an active consumer citizen and professional in society.

Common to Citizenship Education is the focus on personal and social outcomes rather than on academic or vocational qualifications that are the intended outcome of most curriculum programmes. As students become active members of society, they move from the relationship between lessons and marks and link this to relationships between the personal, local, European and global connections.

We believe it is not possible just to read about multi-professional issues. The best way is to study trying to understand the links between citizenship education, personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Understanding the relationship between the connection between consumer citizenship education and multi-professional work is one very important outcome.

### ***Background to the project***

The cooperation between the Consumer Agency and the Department of Applied Sciences in Education has continued for many years. Social work studies include a visit to the Consumer Agency, with the subject being traditional consumer education and information about consumer protection. From 2003 onwards learning experiments relating to the CCN project have been included in the cooperation. A paper entitled "Ensuring childhood in the consuming society" was presented at the Paris conference. The experiment considered the position of children in the market and the role of adults and parents in safeguarding children's development. The experiment was also linked with the Consumer Agency's focus at that time "the position of a child in the market". In many ways the role of early childhood education is seen as an important one in teaching responsible consumption and citizenship. For our own part, we have taken responsibility, as needed, for developing the teaching of the content area in kindergarten teacher education. At the Bratislava conference we presented "Life skills and responsibility - steps to the future". The project we presented there aimed to guide students to use their own reflections as teachers with a consumer and citizenship perspective as an aid to growth.

In the previous experiment we saw the need to extend the thematic learning in a way that the learner could connect the whole to the current trends and the surrounding society. In place of theoretical division we wanted to start from an experience, which is broken down into themes, and get to the theoretical core. In spring 2005 based on the film "Supersize Me" the Consumer Agency, KouluKino and the National Board of Education created learning materials for basic education, for which we received positive feedback. One benefit of this method that has been observed is the suitability of treating difficult or easily moralistic themes in a natural manner. We also wanted to use the tried and trusted method in teacher education and at the same time teach the use of cinema education more widely as a tool in itself also in early childhood education.

Project planning already began in autumn 2005 between the Consumer Agency and the Department of Applied Sciences in Education and Koulukino ry. Firstly the themes from which the material would be selected were agreed, and these themes then formed the basis for choosing films whose content had a point of contact with social themes, and which could also be evaluated from the standpoint of consumption. Selecting the films called for a wide knowledge of the films on offer and the ability to analyse the content from the standpoint of teaching and learning. Koulukino suggested some alternatives and in December we found the film “Crash”.

### *Aims of the project*

One element of teaching in Finland naturally includes the use of networks. The prerequisites for prosperity are created as a result of the successful cooperation and interaction between different actors. For teachers this means the opportunity to use experts from different fields to support their own work. Multi-professional expertise is emphasised as the building material for a new working culture. During the learning process it is crucial to objectify, for example, the work of the authorities from the perspective of the customers and the influence of the different actors in the life of the customer. The prosperity of customers, consumers and citizens is affected by the public sector and authorities in their own development and steering work, business and firms, as well as the consumers’ own active work. Teaching and education of a high standard takes multi-professionalism into account in the preparation of both the working environment and educational/teaching plans.

In teaching, the treatment by authorities has perhaps traditionally left learners with an external, fragmented entirety of the different actors and areas of responsibility. At the same time the interest to find out about the opportunities on offer for network-based cooperation has been missing. There is also a risk of categorising, whereby the customer/consumer perspective remains unlearned. This project utilises learning through experience to respond to the challenges.

The themes in the film “Crash” are racism, insecurity, marginalisation, social differences and fear, these are central elements of traditional social work. However, even more important in this film is the individual’s role and the diversity of the reference groups. For example, the same person may in turn himself be a service provider or at the same time also be the customer of another service provider. The individual’s field of experience is formed from these experiences as an individual person and a service provider. This film was chosen because it contains all the elements that help the learner to firstly analyse different themes through the film, and later also to reflect on their own actions. At the same time the students learn to use cinema education in working with children. The themes of cinema education that can be chosen in early childhood education are, for example, subjects about which the child has either little experience, or subjects that are difficult to deal with. The matters that are learned/dealt with through the film have a natural use as a life skill, such as consumer, media and citizenship skills.

In this project a model based on thematic learning was created. The film is the starting point for the learning. The selection of the film is the basis for the model. It must be suitable for the learning objectives and content of education/teaching. In this case its suitability for kindergarten teacher education was carefully evaluated. In the model the chosen film is carefully analysed, and the theoretical background of cinema education, consumer education and citizenship education is studied. It is crucial that a student reflects upon his own action as a member of society and an educator. At the same time the students learn to produce material for adults and children based on the film.

### ***Orientation lecture***

The project started off with an orientation lecture. The main aim was to increase understanding of the importance of media and consumer education in spite of its everyday nature. The aim was also to become familiar with the work of KouluKino and the Consumer Agency. Another aim was to gain familiarisation with the most important information sources for cinema education.

With regard to consumer education, the importance of consumption in society was considered, and the changes in consumption and current trends were described. The most important matter was to gain an overall impression to enable the learner to identify a media reality that can be approached from many perspectives. Several different learning objectives are achieved simultaneously through combining media and consumer education with everyday activity.

Finally, the aim was to give the learner an overall idea of the learning objectives and the progression of the project.

### **Contents**

- Learning materials, [www.koulukino.net](http://www.koulukino.net) > learning materials.
- The theoretical background of cinema education: [www.filmihillo.net](http://www.filmihillo.net).
- Copyright, supervisory authorities and sources of information
- Finnish Board of Film Classification
- Age limits for films and games [www.vet.fi](http://www.vet.fi).
- Theoretical background of consumer education: [www.kuluttajavirasto.fi](http://www.kuluttajavirasto.fi) > for the teacher
- Acting as a consumer, consumer authorities, children' rights in the market in particular: [www.kuluttajavirasto.fi](http://www.kuluttajavirasto.fi) > for the consumer.
- Cooperation in institutional early childhood education [www.helsinki.fi/sokla/english/](http://www.helsinki.fi/sokla/english/)

### **Task setting**

After watching the film the students were asked to work on what they had seen and to analyse the theme/themes of the film from an educator's perspective. They were also asked to consider their own role in society as an educator and to reflect on their own activity as an educator through the film "Crash". During the lecture the students had been given some suggestions for themes such as good/bad, crime, racism, fear, death,

career, family. They were asked to deal with these themes within the frames of reference of media and cinema education, and consumption and markets. In respect of the themes that arose, the students were asked to prepare questions that they thought could be handled in a way that they, as teachers, would find useful in teaching. They were told that the material would be used in making learning materials based on “Crash” for teachers. They were also told that the learning experiment would be presented at an international conference.

### ***Watching the film at the cinema***

The Koulukino system enables schoolchildren to go to the cinema at a subsidised price. In this project Koulukino also arranged showings of “Crash” for university students. The film was shown during lecture time at a Helsinki cinema. The students paid EUR 3.50 for a ticket, which was also a subsidised price.

Before the showing the students had looked at the task and the marketing material for the film, as well as some theoretical background material.

### ***Independent study***

The students worked through what they had seen and experienced using the task-sheets given, they also wrote about what they had thought. The work was included in the course “Cooperation between adults” 4 ECTS. The students sent their complete answers for the written tasks to Leena Graeffe, the teacher in charge, before the plenary session.

### ***Plenary lecture***

The shared experiences of the film formed the starting point. The plot of the film was dealt with by discussion. The most important matters were the themes that came out of the film and the questions written by the students. What had been experienced was further developed by means of a film analysis model. Both the students and the educators reflected upon their experiences. The most difficult theme proved to be thinking about consumption, which was found through the theme of being a customer. Expanding the theme also enabled everyday skills to be covered extensively.

At the same time it also reinforced their own knowledge and skills to act as responsible consumers and to evaluate consumer skills from a child’s and adult’s perspective. The challenges that the consumer society sets for education were also considered, and how these challenges can be objectively responded to, based on a national plan for early childhood education.

### ***Evaluation of the learning experiment***

In choosing the film “Crash” to be analysed, we succeeded in combining several important skill objectives in terms of education. This can be regarded as one of the best outcomes of the experiment. Before selecting the film we couldn’t be sure of how

well it would work as a teaching tool, nor did we even think of all the perspectives that would arise from it to support the course objectives. (Cooperation in institutional early childhood education). The course includes few teaching sessions. The small, total amount was utilised a lot in relation to the project. The students found the time used for the project to be worthwhile, that they learned the totalities of the subject content in a realistic manner. This impression was also supported by the personal portfolio discussions between the teacher and the students.

The project succeeded, through a shared experience, in reflecting upon and stimulating discussion about being a customer. The subjects discussed were the differentiation of good/bad, equality/inequality, discrimination/non-discrimination. Who defines right and wrong? In their portfolios the students considered their own role in handling racist models as well as the media influence. The most difficult for the students was to find themes of consumption and citizenship in the film. The customer themes of consumption as a provider and consumer of a service became clear for most only during the final discussion held by the Consumer Agency when the film was analysed more deeply. The students had not necessarily considered their own roles as a kindergarten teacher and provider of a service to customers. Also new was an awareness of the connection of a lack of consumer skills with, for example, marginalization issues.

With regard to cinema education, a totally new perspective was opened up to the students. They were grateful to have had the opportunity at an adult level to examine issues, recognise their own attitudes and think about the education partnership in this context.

“We have certainly analysed children’s films, but now we were put in a different position. We had not previously been able to expand on the action of analysis. We have now received a lot of tools for even more extensive cinema education”.

# Triggering change towards sustainable consumption

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## ***Introduction***

According to biology the ability to change is equal to survival. Even more – the speed of change is very important as well. Humans have more chances than any other creature on the Earth in that respect but will they be smart enough to take advantage of them?

## ***Motivation for Change***

“A man is a stubborn seeker after meaning”. This thought of John Gardner shows much more impressively than any theoretical argument the importance of motivation to human behavior. Any human action or even inaction is purposeful regardless of whether it is conscious or not. And that seems to be more than evident. Do we always realize, however, what in fact the nature of goal is? Yes, the goal is a result we are striving for but what stands behind this aspiration? It sounds too prosaically, but our life is an infinite series of choices directed towards satisfaction of our needs. We observe our environment trying to find out which object or behavior indicates satisfaction of a given need (or group of needs) and this object/behavior turns into our *goal*. In that way we discover the meaning of our actions. The bad news is resources of society are not enough for all the human needs to be satisfied and satisfaction of the majority of needs requires other people to be involved as well. Because of that we have to order our needs in respect of their importance to us. Human behavior, therefore, is stemming from two characteristics - which are needs of an individual and how they are arranged in his/her mind according to their importance, i.e. which are individual's values. This significant role of human needs became a reason the vast body of theories named content theories to explain motivation through the structure of needs. But while it is possible more or less accurately to describe types of human needs, it is almost of no use to order them according to their importance except for the particular individual, because one and the same need (or group of needs) could be the most important to one individual and even not be ‘in the list’ of other. Realizing that it is impossible and incorrect all the people to be reduced to a common denominator in respect of their values, psychology tried to found out another way to explain motivation – through the process theories. What they are stressing on is not which human needs are but how the process of becoming aware that we are motivated for a certain behavior occurs.

It's quite clear from the said above that if a behavioral change has to be achieved two preconditions must be ensured for any individual: **(1)** Needs relevant to that particular change have to become a part of his/her ‘list of needs’. In our case this is *the need of being responsible consumer*. **(2)** Those needs have to be recognized as very

important. In that way the individual will not simply want to behave in a certain manner but will not be able to behave differently. A lot of people want to give up smoking but remain smokers. Those who succeed are those for whom smoking turns into an obstacle to satisfy another much more important need.

### ***Management of Change***

If what was said above is indicating the nature of the change we want to achieve, namely motivation for sustainable consumption, the next step is to turn this change into being. That is a change management process already and its success depends on the correct understanding of the stages it is passing through. According to the most general description these stages are: recognition of necessity to change; assessment of change priority; determination of scale and depth of the change; discovering the leading idea of the change; determination of the attendant changes; choosing the change agent; identification of resistance to the change; accomplishment of change and estimation of results.

### **Recognition of necessity to change**

Due to that process people discover and become aware of the problems they are facing. In our particular case this is the process through which part of the society realizes the necessity of responsible consumption and starts activities to provoke change. Founders of the concept for sustainable development, political leaders who ratified that concept as ‘The agenda of 21<sup>st</sup> century’, as well as creators and members of our project are examples of that first stage in change management process. From now on, acting as managers of change, we have to put into practice the rest of the stages.

### **Assessment of change priority**

Very important moment in change management is taking into account the relation of particular change with other social processes. If we want people to become motivated for responsible consumption we have to realize how their own ‘agenda’ is looking like and where is the place of the needed change in that context. And because any human ‘agenda’ reflects the importance of different needs to particular individual or group, during this stage of change management process our task is to find the appropriate activities through which the need of being responsible consumer will take very high position in that ‘hierarchy of needs’. It is completely inappropriate for instance in a country with very low income as Bulgaria to promote the idea of limited consumption. The accent here should be on the kind and qualities of products and services, on possibilities to save through responsible consumption, on the importance of consumption to optimal utilization of Earth’s resources etc. We shouldn’t forget the psychological risk as well. In society ‘tired’ of reforms, transitional periods, and hard daily life it would be a big challenge to attract people’s attention and ask them to spend energy for something which is not an immediate requirement of the day.

### **Determination of scale and depth of the change**

It is evident that to manage the change we need understanding about its scale and depth because these two characteristics define the kind of tools to be used for the

accomplishment of change. In our case, the change of motivation is a change with the biggest possible scale and depth because motivation being at the very basis of personality is a complex result of innate and learning processes as well.

### **Discovering the leading idea of the change**

At this stage of the change management process solution of the problem which has given rise to the necessity of change has to be found out. For us it means to produce a model which integrates all factors influencing the development of need to be responsible consumer. And we all know how difficult that task is especially with the target group of young people. These factors are in fact other human needs which together produce synergy named a need to be responsible consumer. Different varieties of survival needs, needs of belonging, esteem needs are examples of only some of them.

### **Determination of the attendant changes**

Every change is taking place within a global environment and will not achieve its goals if attendant changes in the remaining part of environmental elements don't start simultaneously. It is of little use to develop the need of responsible consumption and not to ensure for instance responsible products and services, their prices to be in proportion to the income, sufficient information etc.

### **Choosing the change agent**

One of the most important success factors for the change is a person who is perceived by people as being 'the heart of the change'. The image of that person determines attitudes towards change. That is why it is very important who will promote responsible consumption. The choice of the change agent could be considered in a broader way as well. It is significant for any change 'points of support' to be detected, i.e. all people or groups who would like to uphold or have an interest in that particular change. Example of that stage of change management process is what we name 'lobbying'.

### **Identification of resistance to change**

This is a stage of crucial importance to the success of change management. According to Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) resistance could appear because of four groups of reasons:

(1) Personal and group interests. It is quite clear that if the change could harm interests of people they will resist it. Typical interests to be eventually damaged by the change are:

\* *Possessed power*. Almost all changes influence power positions of engaged participants. We can expect resistance to sustainable consumption from all governments and organizations which will loose power because of it. For instance if unpopular decisions as rise of excise duty on oil have to be taken and politicians may expect not to be elected again because of that some governments probably will not take them.



\* *Economical status.*

A lot of people and organizations resist change because they accept it as possible threat to their income and profit. If sustainable consumption requires more financial resources people, especially with low income probably will resist it. In my country there is no education for sustainable development even now and that is mainly because teachers and university professors from other fields are afraid of losing income and job positions. Good example from the business are producers of genetically modified products which are trying and will try in the future to convince consumers that this technology is not dangerous.

\* *The prestige.* Changes always exert influence on people's status or at least on the ways of expressing esteem and approval from others, especially when it is connected with the change in power. Consumption is a very strong status symbol especially for young people. It is much more the way to express yourself than simply to satisfy needs. So if we want to assist in developing motivation for sustainable consumption we have to find the way to turn sustainable life style into a high status symbol.

\* *Safety.* Any individual has a need not only of physical and economical but of psychological safety as well, i.e. of environmental predictability to allow rational choices to be taken and the feeling of having control over personal life to exist. And because any change is a period with high uncertainty people resist it unless they have enough control over the change process. What we have to do here is to escape moralizing and let young people find their own decisions and ways towards sustainable consumption.

\* *Competence.* Changes usually demand new knowledge and skills to perform respective activities. Resistance appears here because people don't believe they will be competent enough. To overcome this kind of resistance all the relevant information have to be ensured and this information should be everywhere – on labels, in advertisements, in manuals etc.

\* *Comfort.* All changes require the increase of efforts and not only during the change process but after that as well. For adults efforts necessary to change their consumption habits are so big that the mission looks almost impossible. That is why it's so important to start with young people. They are in a process of developing their consumption patterns and if right from the beginning these patterns are sustainable they will not feel sustainable life style as a 'sacrifice for society' but will enjoy it.

(2) The lack of understanding and confidence. It is quite evident that people will resist changes when they don't understand their goals, mechanisms and consequences and when they don't believe those who are offering changes. So we need to be very convincing in our teaching but first and foremost we should try to perform as advisors and friends. That is why, in my opinion, we have to find the way subject 'Sustainable consumption' or 'Sustainable development' to become a part of every university curricula, to give credits, but not to require final exam.

(3) Differences in estimations. Very often people have different estimations concerning the correctness, effectiveness, efficiency, and realism of the changes offered. Reasoning on the basis of one and the same information they may come to the completely different decisions. This is a natural result of human diversity and has

to be respected. Persuasion is the only possible tool to be used to overcome such a resistance.

(4) Inability to change. Some people have very little ability to change. They adopt a kind of concept and after that are not able to realize the necessity to change it when it is already out of date, inappropriate or even pernicious.

It is important not only to throw light on all reasons for the resistance to change but to find out right strategies to overcome it or, which is much better, to turn it into support. According to Ansoff and McDonnell “In managing resistance, a useful approach is to start by building a launching platform.” (1990:416) “The launching platform is a set of preconditions which achieves a power-resistance balance necessary for launching of the change.” (Ansoff,I., J.McDonnell, 1990:441)

### **Accomplishment of change and estimation of results**

Activities performed up to here are analogical to planning but in a very specific area. As in the any other activity implementation and estimation of results are the final stages of management process. To estimate results of change is not an easy task however. For a start, it is very difficult to define when exactly a change is completed, because if it is not of a technical character its end is not quite clear. Generally, it is accepted that the change ends when the intended behavior become a routine. But how to define the exact moment when a person is motivated already for sustainable consumption? Usually the most accurate estimation comes with the time, but that is not sufficient to management. Management needs realistic evaluation as soon as possible to be able to take the necessary measures – to go further with the support for the new behavior, to correct it or to drop it. So we have to create a system of indicators about sustainability of consumption. It is the same task as to create a standard for corporate social responsibility.

### ***Triggers of Change***

As it was already mentioned changes have different scope and depth and the one we are trying to achieve, namely the change in consumption patterns, is a true revolution for any individual, because it requires a change of values which is the most difficult change for a man. Revolutions, however, need a ‘trigger’. The recognition of necessity to change itself is not enough for a change to start. Usually a ‘launching event’ or ‘trigger’ is needed, something ‘to shake’ the individual and to force him/her to change. In that way the trigger appears to be that last straw that breaks the camel's back.

One possible trigger of change is attracting a newcomer. This is a person coming from outside to implement the change, because people into the system are not able to do it. The newcomer has a chance to look at the system from entirely different point of view than the insiders and to start solving problems without being bound up with the existing human relations. Tushman, Newman, and Romanelli found that “externally recruited executives are more than three times more likely to initiate frame-breaking change than existing executive teams”(1986: 42) In the case with motivation for sustainable consumption it is possible to say that sometimes the individual is not able to realize himself/herself the consequences of unsustainable consumption. It doesn't mean he/she is not aware of problems. It means something like ‘to live with

the problem' and only to try from time to time to do something about that. The trigger for change in such a situation can become a very stressing external event as the death or disease of close relative or friend, the awful disaster as that in Chernobyl etc. The problem is it could be too late. Very illustrative example of such a situation is the syndrome of a boiled frog. If a frog is placed in a container with cold water and then slowly a heating starts the frog will be boiled even if at any moment it could jump and escape. But if in the beginning the water is boiled and then the frog is dropped into it the frog jumps immediately because of the instinctive muscles convulsion and saves itself.

Another trigger of change is suggested in Levinson's and Gersick's models according to which timing of events is very important. Levinson reports that "[Near age 40, a man's] need to reconsider the past arises in part from a heightened awareness of his mortality and a desire to use the remaining time more wisely" (1978:192). Gersick found that project groups with life spans ranging from one hour to several months reliably initiated major transitions in their work precisely halfway between their start-ups and expected deadlines. Transitions were triggered by participants' (sometimes unconscious) use of the midpoint as a milestone, signifying 'time to move' (1989). "When people reach temporal milestones that are important to them they change their views of their own situations, seeing a meaningful portion of their time as closed, and the next portion as imminent. ... When individuals and groups are reminded, by temporal milestones, that their time is finite, they feel a sense of urgency to reevaluate past choices, pursue aspirations they have put off, and take new steps." (1991: 24). This kind of trigger could be successfully linked to the motivation for sustainable consumption especially of adults. The most important thing for majority of them is the well being of their children and grandchildren. So we can use that motivation to turn it into motivation for sustainable consumption referring to the argument that future life and well being depends on consumption today.

Regardless of whether the trigger is pulled by external events or temporal milestones the revolution we are looking for requires the vision of a new sustainable world to be created. We need that vision to light the faith and optimism especially in young people. But the dream of the future should not be only one. Dreams should be as many as people are. The vision we need is a future allowing all possible dreams to exist together. And change with time of course.

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# **A national survey on consumer education in Italy:**

## **Motivations and evaluation.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Consumer Education* is an important tool to develop the concept of consumer citizenship. However, in Italy its importance is still underestimated by public policies: the topic is still not much integrated in national curricula but it is left (till nowadays) mostly to teachers' personal initiative. Consequently, researches on this area have been very limited. That is why ANCC has promoted a national survey on *consumer education* involving teachers and consumer educators from all over Italy: what are the motivations that lead teachers to promote consumer education in their classroom? how much is *consumer education* integrated in their curricula? What is the usefulness of *consumer education* perceived by teachers? The present paper tries to answer these questions by showing the results of the national survey carried out between January 2006 and April 2006. Data of the statistical analysis will be discussed in order to identify the negative/critical points of consumer education in Italy as well as the positive aspects which are appreciated the most.

### **Introduction**

In order to face the dramatic and rapid changes that characterize the social, economic and cultural context they live in, youngsters need to have information, competences and skills as consumers and as citizens as well. As recently pointed out by many opinion leaders in consumer education (Rinaldi 2005a; Thoresen 2005) and consumer associations' members (ANCC 2006), "responsibility" is moving from the Government to the individual who, sometimes, feels disoriented and needs to find reliable and trustful sources of information to "act" in the complex dynamics of the post-modern market (Webley, Lea, Burgoyne & Young. 2001; Fabris 2003,). Recent surveys carried out in Italy among 3500 young people aged 15-34 years (Buzzi, Cavalli & De Lillo 2002) have underlined that young people do not trust anymore politicians, government, manufacturers (respectively trusted "not at all" + "a little" by 87,7%, 76,3% and 44,5%) but they trust still "quite + a lot" some public institutions like "the police" (62,9%) teachers (60,6%) as well as "the school" (58,6%). Therefore, teachers can still be considered an important point of reference for young people and, consequently, potentially an important actor in promoting a constructive change. As *Consumer Education* (=CE) is a very important tool to develop the concept of value education and consumer citizenship (Thoresen 2000; Thoresen 2001),

especially when dealing with children and young people, CE *in school* can be considered as an effective way to make young people more competent, aware and, probably, more committed in sustainable and responsible consumption. However, in Italy the importance of CE is still underestimated by public policies: the topic is still not much integrated in national curricula but it is left (till nowadays) mostly to teachers' personal initiative. Consequently, researches on this area have been very limited. That is why the ANCC-COOP<sup>55</sup> has promoted a national survey on *consumer education projects run by COOP* involving teachers and consumer educators from all over Italy: what are the motivations that lead teachers to choose to make activities on CE in their classroom? What is the usefulness of CE perceived by the teachers? And by consumer educators? How could it be evaluated? The present paper try to answer these questions by showing the results of the survey. Before explaining the methods and the results of the research, we have to shortly explain how consumer education is carried out in Italy by ANCC-COOP.

### ***Preliminary information: how is “consumer education meeting” run by COOP in Italy***

One of the main characteristics in promoting CE in school by COOP is an interactive, creative, practical approach to education. According to the pedagogical method adopted by COOP, a meeting on consumer education can not be defined as a “lesson” but rather - using a translation from the Italian language - as “*animation*” (*animazione*). We have explained elsewhere more in detail how the *animation* is organized (Rinaldi 2005a; Rinaldi 2005b), but shortly we can say that an “*animation*” is usually run as follows:

- a) schools or teachers are contacted and receive - or teachers request - a list of different *animations* on various CE issues (for example: balanced-diet, OGM food, money-management, consumer rights, fair trade, fashion and identity...); all *animations* are free of charge.
- b) the teacher, together with the school council and after listening to parents' opinion, considering the specific class's needs and interests, select a proposal of *animation*;
- c) consumer educators meet the pupils (in the classroom, or in a supermarket, or in a park...) and carry out the *animation*, focusing not just on contents but especially on stimulating students to adopt a critical, reflective approach on consumer issues, encouraging all of them to participate actively with their own experience.

How are *animations* evaluated by teachers? And by consumer educators? And how effective are instruments and approaches adopted? In the following pages we will try to answer these questions.

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<sup>55</sup> “ANCC” indicates “Associazione Nazionale delle Cooperative di Consumatori” and it is a representative organ which promotes institutional and political interests of the Italian COOP, and take decisions on consumers' defense policies, environmental policies, solidarity projects within COOP (see [www.coop.it](http://www.coop.it)).

## **Methodology**

The study has been carried out between January 2006 and April 2006, involving 1500 teachers and 800 consumer educators from all over Italy. Teachers were asked to fill in a printed questionnaire after participating to an *animation* and then to put in a closed envelope (in order to respect their anonymity) and give it to the consumer educator who sent it to an institute of research (IARD) where data were elaborated. Similar procedures were used with consumer educators. The collected questionnaires were carefully completed and the percentage of missing value was quite low. This could indicate a good level of attention and commitment in expressing one's own opinion and evaluation about CE. However, due to some technical problems, we are forced to present here just the results of the analyses carried out on a preliminary database (259 teachers<sup>56</sup>, 148 consumer educators) while the whole database will be available probably in June 2006.

## **Results**

### **1. Motivations**

As shown in table 1, the main motivation which influence teachers in deciding to participated to a *CE animation*<sup>57</sup> is, firstly, the interests for the themes of the meeting. New products, services, troubles and trends are crossing the global market and – sometimes – the standard school curricula do not comprehend these sort of themes (OGM food, misleading advertising, fair-trade<sup>58</sup>), that is why teachers and young-people express their interest in introducing new themes dealing with consumption in the classroom in order to discuss it within the group with the aid of an expert. Furthermore, in Italy governmental financial aids for public school have been quite reduced recently: while the offer for extra-curricula activities (like laboratory on theatre, on new technology or on creative activities) is rather wide, the “economic factor” is quite important when planning activities for the classroom, that is why the fact that *animations* on CE are completely “free of charge” is also an important element, but it is evaluated as important as the quality of the didactical proposal (*mean* 8,0). Having experienced a meeting on CE or colleagues' experience with CE is not so determinant, which suggest that teachers are quite open to “experiment” new proposals.

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<sup>56</sup> 95% of the teachers come from Primary School or Low-Secondary school. Unfortunately, the database with data collected in High Secondary School is not ready yet.

<sup>57</sup> In order to simplify the results' comments, in the following pages we use the word “*animation*” to refer to “consumer education animation run by COOP”.

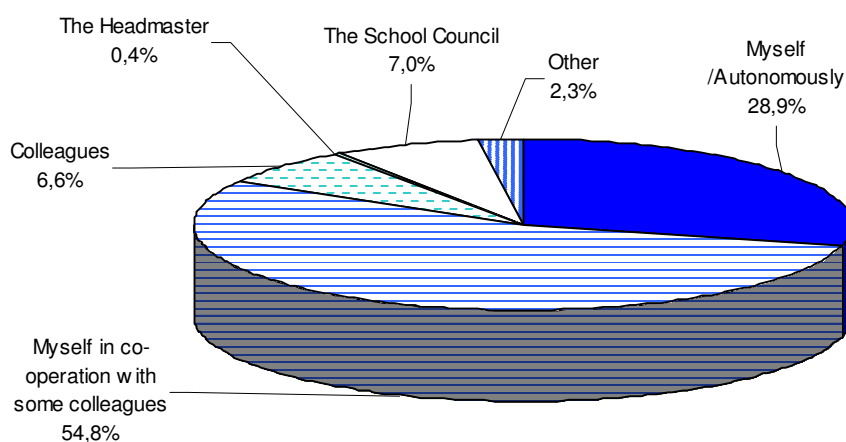
<sup>58</sup> Some titles of the *animations* run in 2005-2006 are: “CERCASI GENI DISPERATAMENTE” (=“Desperately seeking GENES” – about OGM food), “H2O”, “CIBO PER SPORT” (=“Food for sport”, about good nutrition when doing sport), OCCHIO ALL'ETICHETTA (=“Watch out the label”, about how reading labels), “PRODOTTI DEL NORD CONSUMI DEL SUD” (=“Products of the South, Consumption of the North”, about sustainable and fair consumption), “VERO, FALSO o SPOT?” (=“True, False or Advertising?”), “TOTEM&TRIBÙ” (=“Totem&tribes”, about teenagers identity, fashion and group-relationships), CIOCCOLATO CHE PASSIONE (= “Passion for chocolate”, about nutrition and fair-trade), and “GLI OSCURI ESPERIMENTO DEL DOTTOR IVO ADDIT” (=“The strange experiments of Doctor Ivo – Addictiv”, about chemical additives in food).

Tab. 1 – (School-teachers). Choosing to participate to an activities on CE could be influenced by many factors. Which elements have influenced you in deciding to participate to this animation? (1=minimum, 10=maximum)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The interest in the theme	243	8,9	3,2
The quality of the activity's contents	252	8,0	2,3
The fact that the activity is free of charge	253	8,0	1,3
The fact that some colleagues that I know have had already come experience with COOP	253	5,4	2,6
The lack of adequate materials/means to deal with this theme	235	3,6	2,7
Other <sup>59</sup>	33	8,5	1,5

As underlined elsewhere (Rinaldi 2002), most of teachers decide to participate to the *animation* by themselves or in co-operation with some colleagues, while the case where the headmaster push teachers to participate is rather marginal (0,4%) as well as the School Council (7% - see fig. 1). These indicate that institutional interest in CE is still rather limited in the Italian context. Despite the fact that, recently, school curricula have become more flexible and each school can personalize – till a certain extension – its programs (in Italy these programs are called “POF” – Piani dell’Offerta Formativa), CE is still not much integrated in the institutional program offered to students. Luckily, 76,1% of the teachers say that the *animation’s theme* is “integrated in a more broad didactical project that the class is following” (76,1%<sup>60</sup>), and only for 22,4% teachers say that the *animation* “is a limited experience that is not integrated in a wider project”. Even if these data are quite encouraging, however they indicate that almost 1 out of 4 meeting is just a “spot” meeting on CE, quite “isolated”, and that there is still a lack of “consumer education’ culture” in the Italian school system.

Fig 1– Who took the decision to participate to the animation?(N=256 school-teachers)



<sup>59</sup> Under “other” the most frequent answers were: “personal experience with animation on CE run by COOP in previous years” and “possibility to have a Consumer Educator in the classroom”.

<sup>60</sup> Where not otherwise specified, the percentage are referred to 259 teachers or 148 consumer educators.



## 2. Objectives and evaluation

Purposes of consumer education's activities in school can be quite various: give students information about specific product, teach children how to read labels or how to send a letter to request for legal assistance to a Consumer Defense Agency, how to file a complain on illegal advertising etc. etc. However, trying to summarize them, we could say that CE is useful for getting knowledge on a specific theme (*informative purpose*), become more aware of one's own rights as a consumer and how to defend them (*defense purpose*), more able in evaluating products or service (*critical purpose*) and – in a broader sense – to become more aware (*responsibility and awareness purpose*). In table 2 one can see that *animations* on CE are quite effective in reaching these objectives –according to teachers – but not at an optimum level (mean values range between 6,3 and 7,8 – while the optimum was 10). Especially when looking at the “awareness of one's own rights as a consumer” it seem that one *animation* are not enough in helping students to become more aware and informed as consumer and citizens as well. This could be due to a number of reasons – here not explored – but since consumer socialization is a very complex process (Cram, Ng 1999) the limited time available (one *animation* last, on average, 4 hours divided in 2 meeting with the class) and the fact that *animations* are not always integrated in a broader project on consumers' rights are element to be taken in consideration.

*Tab. 2- (School-teachers). Animations have the objectives of training critical and aware consumers. According to you, thanks to the animation that your class have just participated in, how much do students have acquired...(1=minimum, 10=maximum)*

	<i>N</i>	Mean	Std. Deviation
...knowledge about the specific themes.	259	7,8	1,4
...useful tools to defend themselves from advertising's influence	243	6,6	2,2

Tab. 3 – Express your evaluation on the animation which your class has just participated to, concerning these aspects (1=minimum, 10=maximum – N=259)

	school-teachers			consumer educators		
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
importance of the contents for training students as citizens	258	8,4	1,6	147	8,7	1,1
efficacy of the didactical method	259	8,3	1,5	148	8,2	1,1
efficacy of the tools/materials used	259	8,1	1,5	147	8,3	1,1
adequacy of the spaces dedicated to the animation <sup>61</sup>	254	7,6	2,0	148	7,9	1,8

Evaluating consumer educators’ training – again – one can see quite good “mark” especially in their preparation about the themes of the *animation* and the “relational” side of the didactical approach (they seem person very funny, with very good listening ability, very high dynamism) while evaluation are rather lower (and with higher standard deviation) when it comes to their ability in involving teachers.

Tab. 4 – Please express your evaluation on consumer educators concerning the following aspects (1=minimum, 10=maximum)

	school teachers		consumer educators	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
well-informed about the themes of the <i>animation</i>	8,9	1,2	8,5	1,0
funny	8,9	1,3	8,2	1,2
listening’ ability	8,9	1,3	8,5	1,2
dynamism	8,8	1,4	8,4	1,1
well-able to use the materials	8,7	1,3	8,6	1,0
good ability in involving students	8,7	1,4	8,5	1,1
well-prepared in using the didactical method	8,5	1,5	8,4	1,0
good ability in involving teachers	8,2	1,7	7,8	1,2

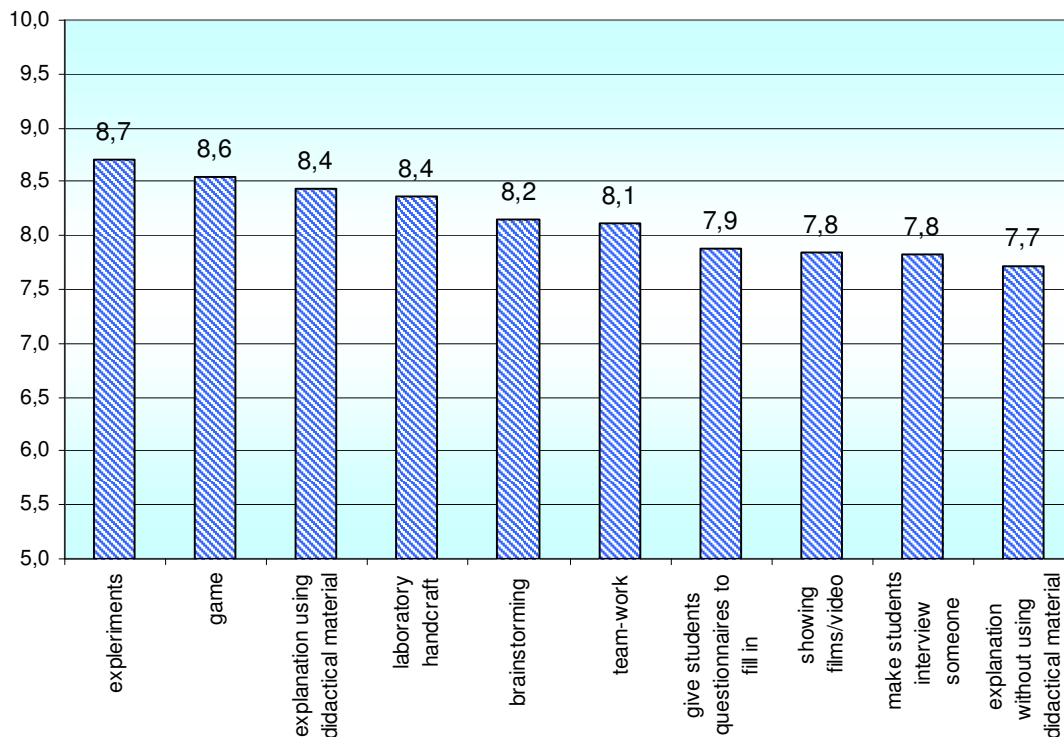
### 3. Materials

New technology (computer, Internet, video-camera) are entering the classroom becoming useful tools to learn and to teach but – a part from *materials* in themselves -

<sup>61</sup> We shall remember that some animation are carried out in the classroom, other in supermarket, or parks, or cultural center, or specific “room for social activities” inside of supermarkets.

some international research (Colombo 2005) has underlined the need for a new, more reflective *approach* to teach in the classroom and a didactic approach that involve children not only in their cognitive-logic ability but in their emotional and practical ability as well (Goleman 1996). Keeping in consideration that one can use multiple materials when doing CE, the survey shows that the most frequently used materials by consumer educators when working with children under 14 years old are: “team-work” (83,1% - out of 148 animations), “explanation using didactical material - products, illustration, books” (67,6%); “explanation without using didactical material” (= just oral explanation: 59,5%), “games” (52%) and “brainstorming” (45,3%) while “films/video” or “make students interview someone” or “give students questionnaires to fill in” are used less frequently (respectively 17,6%, 12,8%, 7,4% - probably these methods are more efficacy when working in Secondary High School). The evaluation of their efficacy can be seen in figure 2.

Fig. 2- (Consumer Educators). Thinking at materials that you have used in the animation, how much do you think they were effective in reaching the objective that



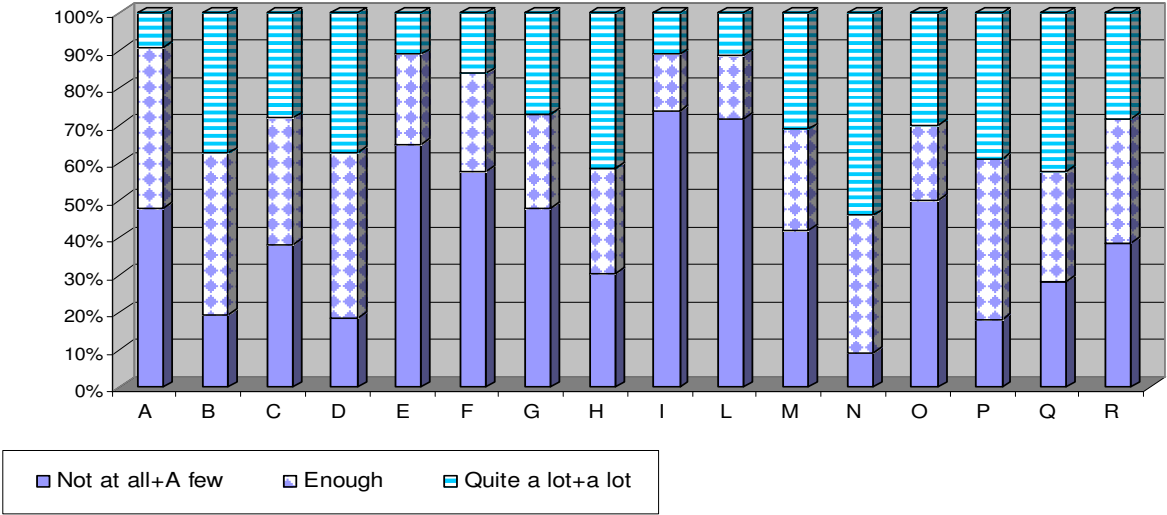
you wanted to reach (1=minimum, 10=maximum)

Data showed in figure 2 indicates that those materials that involve students from a practical and emotional point of view (“experiments” and “games”) are also evaluated as more effective in reaching the animation’s objectives. But what are the most important aspects that help consumer educators to involve students? On a 10-point scale the most involving factors were, according to consumer educators, “the direct contact and manipulation of the products” (*mean* 8,3 - *std dev.* 1,7), “the possibility to feel protagonist of the didactical activities” (*mean* 8,6- *std dev.* 1,3), but top of the list was “the possibility of doing something different than usual” (*mean* 9,0 – *std dev.* 1,0).

That is why CE education should always try to focus on themes/problems that are relevant to students' life but also those who are not usually studied at school. Results of a recent survey on CE among 100 university students in Milan (Gerroni 2006<sup>62</sup>), in fact, shows that Italian students express a strong need for information on “consumer-rights”, “light drugs”, as well as “money-management”, “environment and ecology” and “medicine and health” both for themselves and their peer-group (fig.3 – fig.4)

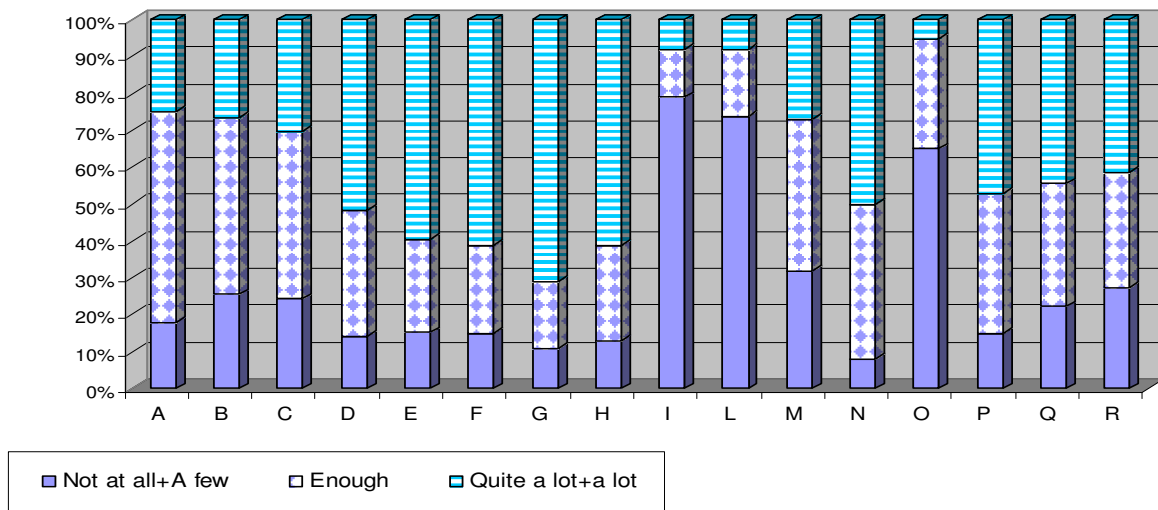
Fig. 3- How many information do you personally need on the following topics? (N= 100 university students, mean age 22years old, 53% girls and 47% boys). LEGEND: In figure 3 and figure 4

A=Food education	F=Light drugs	M=False/Misleading advertising
B=OGM Food	G=Heavy drugs	N=Consumer's rights
C=Health emergency (ex: Sars)	H=Money management	O=Quality of cloths
D=Medicine and Health	I=Mobile phones (technical aspects, services)	P=Environment and ecology
E=Alcohol	L=Mobile phones (pre-paid card, means of payment)	Q=Sustainable consumption
		R=Fair trade



<sup>62</sup> I express my gratitude to Valentina Gerroni for letting me use her data (see Gerroni 2006)

Fig. 4- How many information do you think young people over 18 years old need on the following topics? (N= 100 university students, mean age 22years old, 53% girls and 47% boys)



The survey results suggest that, on the whole, the fact that CE is perceived as something “new” and “extra-ordinary” from the ordinary curricula and the common didactical approach raises students’ attention and involvement: CE could be used not only to encourage awareness and responsibility but also as a “flexible” tools to be adapted to students’ need of information in the fast-changing world of consumption.

### Discussion

Summarizing, Italian teachers who chose to participate to CE *animations* program evaluate them largely positively, especially their usefulness in giving knowledge on specific, interesting themes and, to a less extent, in increasing student’s awareness as consumer and as citizens. However, didactical method, materials and co-operation between teachers and consumer educators are factors that still need to be improved. Due to limited time available we had for analyzing the data, unfortunately, in the present paper we haven’t deepened the comments of our results. However we have chosen to present them in order, firstly, to stimulate reflection on methods of evaluating CE and, secondarily, to describe better what is going on in the Italian context. Even if these are just the preliminary descriptive analyses of the database, we hope that comments will be a useful starting points for future considerations on CE’s evaluation and projects in consumer education.

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## Media education.

### Some useful 'headlines' in the class room

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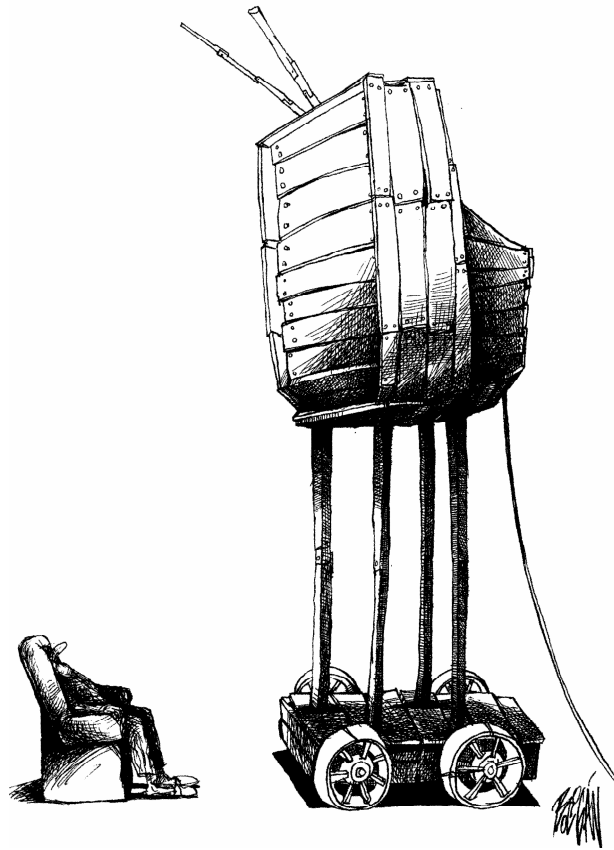


Image: Angel Boligán Corbo 'A Fraude' – 'The Fraude' - (México) published in 16/05/05 in 'El Universal' (México)

#### **Abstract**

Media literacy can be considered an important element to some higher courses, at universities and polytechnic institutes, but not as a part of consumer's education, but a part of some citizenship curricula, like social communication or journalism, for instance. But it's recognized by several experts in the educational field that giving basic tools to understand the media it's a major part of the student's ability to understand the surroundings, in particular to understand the links between the reality and the pseudo reality mediated by the media.

Little children, for instance, as TV consumers have already the ability to understand which information has any correspondence to real life and which doesn't. Cartoons are easily characterized as imaginative stories, unreal, but it becomes harder to establish distinctions between journalism features or newspaper articles and what effectively happens at the places in the 'portrait'.

There are several simple exercises that can be conducted in different classes aiming children, pre-teenagers, teenagers and young students that don't require a lot of equipment or materials and can be an interesting way of introducing/developing media literacy. Starting with the recognition of the several media and their basic characteristics, proceeding with the agenda limitations, the identification of some technical illusions, and ending by visiting media organizations or even producing their own newspapers or radio shows.

Now that the interactive TV is starting to have some relevance, it's urgent to implement some basic tools, from mental maps to short newspaper stories, for the media consumer to become more aware of the frame, which is used to present news.

## I

Media developing was a gradual process until after the Second World War, when the media had a great input: the tendency to concentration, the diversification of media resources, the development of advertisement and the subordination to the ratings. In between, the underground, *watch-dogger* and investigation press was born and the right to be informed was recognized by the Governments of several countries around the world. That includes the right to be informed by reporters and by advertisers.

Media education or media literacy are recognized to mean the same, but by definition, it's the "combination of ways of studying, learning and teaching, in all levels and circumstances, the story, the production, the using and the evaluation of the media as technical and practical arts, as well the place they take in the society, including their social impact, the implications in the *mediatized* society, the people' participation, the changing of the ways of perception they generate, the role of the creative work and the access to media" (<http://barril.dapp.min-edu.pt/scripts/terminol/definicao.asp> 27.02.2001).

In order to let media consumers – viewers, readers, students, young people... - judge by themselves there are so many ways of working in and out classrooms, from small children until adults, that the best way is to select a perspective and develop active approaches to the chosen theme, including Media Education. In spite of all that, the main objective is the same: to help developing a critical viewer, never passive.

To learn how to reduce television consumption; how to express tastes and preferences – making clear judgments based in explicit analysis criteria; placing the media rendering a service to democracy; to understand the media working process; to actively participate in the social and messages creation process; to educate the citizens for a personal, social and cultural identity are some basic paths to follow. Because the media can, basically, be structured by forms of communication and by its supports like in the Figure 1 - types of communication – it implies learning how to read images and being able to make media critical analysis. These basic steps for any teacher or group



animator also include learning a bit more about their restrictions and characteristics, by visiting the reporters working places, for instance.

Without some of these fundamental tools, among others, there's always the possibility of creating indifference or a negative aura around the media and their workers. It's a situation that the teacher / animator have to prevent: the natural reaction from the students is that they start to feel manipulated all the time, always mistrusting the media. That's not healthy: the objective resides in the importance of developing a critical way of thinking, by trying to find several sides about the same question or situation. One good resolution resides in selecting more than one media to understand a fact or report, because there's always more than one side in any situation. Reading newspapers from the origin countries or his language is a good resolution, although it's not an easy one, because of the incredible amount of media, its diversity and also the language problem.

Oral communication	télévision	Radio	Newspapers and magazines	Internet
Visual communication				
Writing communication				

Figure 1: Types of communication

The sender of a message has some intentions by communicating through the media. Usually is an media editor in the journalism field or an advertiser that uses mass media to send a message to a specific public. By understanding the media students are able to understand reporters or advertiser' messages tell stories which implies (Babin p.116) selecting facts and details, organized by an order with some links between them, as a unified whole. This means that there are a lot of details which are lost in the middle of the process. Also means, that they use some techniques to do all this and be able, at the same time, to tell interesting stories, created with a certain point of view and, obviously, with a certain interpretation. Probably, the media consumers will have some difficulties in avoiding stereotypes and prejudice in the frame of the stories they ear: there's a manifest content and a lot of untold messages that influences the consumers. As the media enterprises prefer to spend more time dealing with irruption news than with continuity (by investing in the follow-up stories), when we ear about a corruption case in a factory, in the next minute your attention goes to some other news, with no apparent connection between them. There's no time to analyze it. What the media don't tell is as important as the manifest content of the message.

Being an active and critical media consumer means that we have to know the editorial options of the media that we read, recognize that the news' selection is made by the publishers following criteria and constraints like available space, time, resources,... that the reporters eye towards the world brings his own perspective of the world. Also that the hierarchy in space and time adds relative value to events and that the message receiver selects information according different criteria from the journalist criteria. In this text there will be some examples (to work with) around this main idea. For instance, there are certain matters, people or organizations who have more privilege concerning media time / space, like cinema stars (personalization phenomenon) than others. There are several institutions, visible in the internet, that work in the media

education area, like the Media Education Foundation (<http://www.mediaed.org/index.html>) and the Media Awareness Network (<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/index.cfm>). These institutions – and the reporters of media enterprises, like in the TV broadcast ‘Arrêt sur images’ in France and recently ‘Clube dos jornalistas’ in Portugal - try to make people acknowledge that the information is the result of a construction process and that the journalists decide what is or isn’t news. In that order, the media are, in an explicit and implicit way, builders of the reality – and not just mirrors of the society we live in. To make journalism is to manipulate reality. In that order there is a lot that we, teachers, animators, parents, can do to change a little bit of this.

## II

The media gives the viewer several messages about the world he lives in. Advertising can’t be at the front of the world tendencies, but immediately after or around it, trying to get a chance to win with reality. Find our worse / best characteristics as human beings and showing it in front of everyone - in the media - is one of the most common techniques to achieve consumers. Like a distorted mirror or a filter, we use it to learn more about others and ourselves, even when the discoveries aren’t as accurate as we would like them to be.

In a shot or frame each colour, movement, shape, angle... give advertisers information about the product or service in the shelf. Deconstruct an ad it’s a simple but excellent exercise to perform in a classroom - and it’s possible to choose between a print, radio, TV or web ad. The teacher just have to select the ad, show it to the class and then use the class plan to take the most advantage of it. Because TV commercials are so short (60 seconds at the most) there’s no time to analyse it and usually the viewer finds different details and significances when he sees it again, and again, and again...



Figure 2: “The Sculptor”, Peugeot 206

Take “The Sculptor”, for instance. This ad received a Lion d’Or and a Grand Prix of the Press in Cannes, 2003, among other trophies, and was created by the Italian subsidiary company agency Euro RSCG to advertise the Peugeot 206. Many consider it as a classic advertisement and an icon of humour, but it’s not consensual, as some consider it offensive to the Indians and it’s culture. This commercial tells in 32 frames for almost 45 seconds a small simple story about one male character that seems to be Indian or living in India – notice the presence of an elephant, an important symbolic reference in India. It uses the typical scheme in advertising: problem – action – solution and ends with only one word - : ‘Irresistible’<sup>63</sup>.

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<sup>63</sup> Irresistible = attractive, desirable, strong, powerful or overpowering, overwhelming, insuperable, insurmountable, unmatched, unexcelled, invincible, inevitable, unavoidable, sure to happen, fatal, necessary,

In this story a boy wants to meet girl and the action takes place at the major square in an Indian village. The main character persists until he his satisfied with the final result (he works through the night to transform his car, alone, in an empty square), like a work of art or a dream, until it's perfect. It reproduces an object that he can see in a magazine but, as he lives in a poor country, he can't buy it.

Here's some strong ideas in this ad: the power of the magazine ad (the Indian man transformed his old car in a adapted version of the Peugeot 206 he saw in a magazine); the rupture point dividing the ad in two parts: before the car transformation and after - when he's finally able to go out with his friends and try to conquer the beautiful girl; the music essential role in the second part of this ad, because it introduces movement when there wasn't any rhythm, but disorder - just remember the sound of birds, the hammer against metal, the laughs and other typical sounds of the market,...

Suddenly, he was stylish enough to make the girl stop whatever she was doing with her date, turn around and notice him. In triumph he receives jealous looks from the concurrence. He's not alone, but with a group of friends. All happens because of the car... But it only looks like a Peugeot. Imagine the result if he only had the real object! Obviously, this car becomes one of the necessities of life for this young man.

Why this ad is very well done? It's successful because of the smiling Indian man, trying to americanise himself, the dream come true, the powerful music but, essentially, the implicit stereotype about a whole culture and a country. The visual / verbal images (an irresistible car creates an irresistible owner) it's gentle but at the same time strong visual suggestions that hidden the wide range of associations. It's a word association using the traditional technique: an adjective is used to summarize the whole idea. It turns to the impossibility of the Indian man to buy it, but the actual potential buyer doesn't live there, it's a privilege of the people in the so called 'first world', who is the spots' target. According to this, the underdeveloped countries inhabitants will obviously never have the chance to own it, unless they use an elephant to shape it to his dreams...

There's a long list of possible main questions around (this) ad: what kind of atmosphere has been created? What's the role of editing, language or sound track? There are only just one or several points of view? Whose point of view? Is it a representation of country life in India or of Indian way of life? Who are the people represented in the ad? Who are the audiences the ad it's made to target? What kind of feelings the viewer experiences? Who can buy this French car? What is it saying (the language of the ad)? Who's it talking to (the audience of the ad)? How was it made and by whom (the industry behind the ad)? What does it represent (the message of the ad)? This can cause riots in the class room and they will be, obviously, divided between pro and against 'The Sculptor'!

On the other hand the Dove's 'Campaign for Real Beauty' (started back in 2004) can be considered as an excellent contribution to the changing of habits in young women and children, by using "real women, not models, advertising Dove's firming cream.

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essential, indispensable, requisite, compulsory, convincing, charming, can't be stopped or prevented in Longman "Dictionary of Contemporary English, Longman Dictionaries

The advertisements focus on promoting real, natural beauty, in an effort to offset the unrealistically thin and unhealthy archetypal images associated with modelling.”  
<http://www.campaignforrealbeauty.com/press.asp?id=1707&length=short&ion=news>



Figure 3  
 and 4: Dove’s Campaign for Real Beauty 2004 and 2006

Dove’s ad text	Dove’s ad lyrics song (Cindy Lauper ‘True colours’)	Dove’s ad sequence of images (46 seconds)
Hates her freckles	Show me a smile then	Nine different female characters with inherent image problems (young girls) in static frames and sad faces. Exactly the same kind of structure as the last ad: problem – Dove appears with the solution – problem solved. The music goes along with this structure by introducing rhythm at the same time as the solution. The images are faster using movement
Thinks she’s ugly	Don’t be unhappy	
Wishes she were blonde	Can’t remember when I last saw you laughing	
Afraid she’s fat	If this world makes you crazy and you taking all you can bear	
Let’s change their minds	You call me up because you know I’ll be there	
We’ve created the dove self-esteem fund	And I see your true colours shinning you	
Because every girl deserves to feel good about herself	I see your true colours and that’s why I love you	
And see how beautiful she really is	So don’t be afraid to let them show	
Help us get involved at campaignforrealbeauty.com	You’re beautiful like a rainbow	

Figure 5 Dove’s ad brief analysis

Dove’s slogan “real women have curves” says it all. Emphasizes the idea that everyone is beautiful in their own way and, consequently, unique. Instead of getting worried in being like that skinny model or (apparently) perfect movie star, this campaign emphasizes the difference of each woman: being beautiful is being real and happy with her body. Julie Arko, one of the real models says, “Being a woman is beautiful. Waking up every morning and living a happy, healthy life is beautiful.”

In this colourful ad Dove uses, after all, the same rules in any ad (like persuasion), and the main objective it's still basically the same: to sell Dove's products. But this time there's a social responsibility item that it's used to reach the consumers mind.

What is, after all, real beauty? This question introduces other questions about the stereotypical view of beauty: are the media doing a good job when the main topic is womanhood? Do women see themselves in the media, no matter ages, shapes and sizes? If advertising simplifies the message, what are the major stereotypes in the media? Blond, skinny, sculptural girls and women, doing glamorous things with well paid jobs, accompanied by unbelievable good looking men and fabulous children who never get dirty...

By describing / reading the advertisement or ad campaign it's possible to find the techniques the ad uses to reach the viewers minds – like the use of emotions, symbols, humour, and beautiful people... Finally, by describing the messages or values that the ad promotes it's possible to avoid being captured by it, if only we would have the time to be reasonable and to think about all the ads we see!

### III

The first television news programme appeared back in 1949 in France. It was an experiment but latter in that same year it started to 'go on air' every day and was adopted by each TV channel since then (Arnaud, 1996). The American invention of the anchorman / woman creates an almost personal relation based on trust: the TV consumers trusts what has been said there and he's informed just by seeing this kind of programmes (which is obviously a chimera). The images in the TV screen have such an affective importance that's fundamental to use it in media education planning.

Take, for instance, the twenty-four news that were selected to appear in a public television news programme - in one night around March - gives a very good idea of what kind of themes can be noticed and presented to the TV viewers (Figure 6, Television news programme list).

The first two paragraphs of all those news shown in the television news are presented to a group of students. In groups, the students are asked to read all of that news and then decide which they include in their imaginary television news programme and by what order: the first is the most important, followed by all the others, with less importance. They can also decide to exclude some of the news, but they have to present arguments explaining their decision to exclude or include them.

It's important to ask the students if they apply any criteria to the choosing process. Invariably they say that they use de 'importance' argument, but they find it very hard to explain it. This can be used to introduce them to the journalistic criteria - it's usually applied in the agenda making process an also in the decision to send a journalist to cover any story outdoors. Criteria like proximity (geographical, social, emotional and cultural), notability / prominence, actuality, remarkable facts, conflict, impact (including visual impact) and the prediction of audience...

You can ask: is it more important to present news about a dead person in the USA or in China? Is it more important to present news about the queen of England or an unemployed mother? Is it more important to present news about what's happening at

this moment in a political congress or that a child, disappeared several months, was rescued today?

If you still have the time, ask the students to make connections between the news. They'll probably notice that there's a common interest in the news reporting to dead people and that there's a gradation between them by applying noticiability criteria. Introduce them the Alexander Cockburn text – media critic in 'Village Voice'<sup>64</sup> and start a healthy discussion around his ironic point of view... what does it tell us about the journalists and the media? What does it tell us about ourselves?

Other interesting approach implies asking the students to find categories and putting the news in each one. In this case, for instance, they could find that a) and b) belong to the Environment, c) to Economy, d) and e) Sports, from f) to n) National, o) to Education, from p) to v) International and finally, x), y) to Culture.

Then the obvious question is directed to deconstruct a real television news programme and to explain why it is organized that way. Eventually they'll find out that this kind of television programmes are organized in such a way that exposes the viewer to several climaxes and that the television news ends with happy or more relaxed information about sport, culture, socialites or the weather. Another interesting 'discovery': they'll probably find out that, in comparison with other information programmes, the facts are very alike. It's important for them to get acquainted with the 'PR Newswire' (<http://www.prnewswire.com>), for instance, which is a public relations enterprise. His job is to spread 'news' from other enterprises that can be used the media groups to publish in their TVs, newspapers, magazines...

Finding out who are the main sources of the reported news is also an excellent exercise, in comparison also with other programmes similar to this. They'll find out that the news around the world is very alike...

#### IV

When the teacher or animator has the fortune of having in the same room students from several countries in the world, the mind game is an excellent exercise in order to ask some important questions regarding the media, in a transversal way.

The Dutch Jaap Van Ginneken explains the main idea but was Walter Lippman that first introduced it in "The worlds outside and the pictures in our heads". Using three blank pieces of paper and a pen, the students were asked to draw, at first, a map of the

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<sup>64</sup> The publishers have to remind themselves that there are vast parts of the world in which people don't exist except for groups of more than 50 thousand. (...) The dead of a famous American can always be registered, even if it happened in less relevant circumstances. If the American is an eminent unknown, at least there have to die two or three (in singular circumstances) so it receives some attention. In the case of black people, the number has to be much bigger. In the following category, comes the north Europeans. You have to count 10 of them for each American. Then, we have south Europeans (Italians, Spanish, Portuguese, and Greeks). Count a 30 of them for each American. Then there are Turks, Persians and Latin Americans. Count a hundred of these for each American. Some perfectionists would include also North Africans in this category. Now, we have the Southeast Asians. Two to three hundred people for each American. Some would also include here the Indonesians. But, in that case, suppose that the counting should rise until a thousand for American, because there were 800 thousand Indonesians killed in the 1965 'coup d'état' without any repercussion. By this point, we reach a limit in numbers and go to the next category – the countless rough crowds. They are Indians, Africans and Chinese. Regarding the last ones, you don't conceive any figure. People just start to get interested if we speak in 50 thousand or 100 thousand dead. Specialists calculate that just 50 thousand would be able to be as important as 10 Americans – when we speak in news." in Moretzsohn, Sylvia, "Jornalismo em tempo real", Editora Revan, 2002, Rio de Janeiro. P. 66-67

Netherlands, secondly, a map of Europe and, at last, a map of the world (Figure 7 Mental maps).

His conclusions were revealing. Not as much about what was in the paper, but what wasn't there and the errors / distortions in the drawings. For instance, a Europe country native draw the European continent in the centre of the world, with a lot of details about his/her own country and neighbours. But a student from China or a southern country did exactly the reverse, putting the south of the world (for western and northern natives) in the centre of his/her drawings.

Ginneken says "The mechanisms in all these cases are basically threefold. The first concerns centrality. There is a tendency to place one's own country in a central position, at least, in a more central position than it would be in other's maps, and to group the rest of the world around it. Simultaneously, there is tendency to make other countries and, indeed, entire continents peripheral. (...) The second mechanism concerns volume. There is a tendency to enlarge the surface of one's own country, to inflate it disproportionately in comparison to others. Simultaneously, there is tendency to deflate others areas considered as irrelevant. The third mechanism concerns articulation. There is a tendency to render one's own country in great and characteristic detail, and to reduce other countries and continents to shapeless blobs. On the one hand, this is a very 'logical' result. On the other hand, it also betrays the collective narcissism with we are all imbued." (Ginneken 1998, p. 2)

This isn't innocent, because the way we all learn geography by using maps exercises influence over us in such a way that our world perspective and the way we see it changes when we went to school in Northern or Southern countries, for instance. There are also two things that the actual world map does: "it enormously inflates the territories closer to the poles (...) precisely those 'northern' continents and countries which came to dominate the modern world (...). On the other hand, it enormously deflated territories closer to the equator". (Ginneken 1998 p. 5) So even small northern countries appear like bigger ones penalizing actual real large countries, unfortunately located in less richer parts of the world. Can we generalize and, at least, wonder if these ways of representing the world increases and sustains an unbalanced way of seeing and make others see the same world? And what consequences this may have in a newsroom?

From "The many worlds of the world's press" (Journal of Communication) this author also presents the "relative importance of foreign news about various regions in a sample of newspapers around the world" (Figure 9 The relative importance of foreign news...) (Ginneken 1998, p. 141). Africa has almost disappeared of the face of the *journalistic Earth*, while a macro cephalous Western Europe appears in the centre of all the maps. Curiously, it's the map entitled "The world of some 'third worlds' newspapers" that tends to represent more balanced countries, but that also means that the reporters from developing countries prefer to spread news about northern and western countries than the actuality of it's neighbors, like in Africa or South America. Probably a partial explanation for this is the fact that the majority of all the news agencies are located in these countries, and besides enterprises / government public relations, they are the major information source. Other explanation resides in the Euro centric perspective: time and distance measures and other standard decisions, for

example are centralized in European countries. It is kind a strange for Europeans to change places and be regulated by Jews, Muslims or Chinese perspectives.

Another Ginneken conclusion reeferes the “general tendency to inflate the ‘developed’ countries of Northern America and Western Europe and to deflate the ‘developing’ countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America” (Ginneken 1998, p. 2) In the case of Portugal, this is a possible explanation why the Portuguese students clearly draw in detail East Timor island, Angola, Mozambique and other former colonized countries, but ‘forgot’ to draw other countries in Africa or Asia. And why the Brazilian student clearly draws Portugal on the tip of the European continent: there are Historical links between these countries that explains why the underdeveloped countries are more well drew than others.

A journalist is exposed to the same kind of influences back at school, of course. A question remains: the result of his work reveals it? The western ethnocentrism explains why there are so many news related to the western northern developed countries, but so few about the ‘rest’ of the world? For instance, why is the death of only one American as important, journalistically speaking, as 100 killing in China? And why, in general, does the news of a dead American come first in the television news programme than the one hundred dead Chinese?

If the students aren’t still convinced of the importance of media education or literacy, try another situation. Use the image, without his subtitle (Figure 8, Polluted waters in the Manila Bay, Philippines – with and without legend).

Ask them to explain the image, what’s happening, where the action takes place, when, who is in the frame... Then, put the subtitle and wait for a reaction - ‘Polluted water in the Manila Bay, Philippines’. Ask them: do they feel manipulated? Do they think it’s possible that the media (TV, press, radio, internet) manipulate them as well? Ask them for recent situations similar to this one that they are acknowledged.

After this it’s important to let the students deal with the basic rules of journalism, specially the one that establishes the 5 basic questions or the ‘five w’: *who, what, where, when, why*? The teacher just needs to give some information (basic and accessory) in order to create news and make the students aware of the difficulties of the news making process. Short, brief stories begin with the answer to these questions, but more important than this is the answer of the *how* and *what for* questions? A longer and more complete report implies writing down *how* and *what for* something happened. Sometimes, it goes underneath the surface of the basic questions (someone died in a particular day and place because...) and explains (some of) the reasons for such an event (a conflict between two religious cults, for instance).

This is necessarily more difficult but so much more interesting, precisely because it goes underneath the tip of the iceberg. That kind of work requires journalists that are able to ask difficult questions, to stay in countries where the answers to those questions can be found. One problem to this kind of approach are the economic difficulties: only the bigger media have the capacity to send journalists to foreign countries as correspondents for more than a few days or weeks and to learn more about the country and their people.



Then, there are some hard to change habits, like the media disposition of ad value to bad news – ‘bad news is no news’. But there’s a movement that’s conquering followers: social journalism or civic journalism it’s a movement started in the USA back in the 90’s as a reaction to the media low credibility. Along History, we know several examples in which powerful people and organizations like governments and enterprises control or influence the media, for instance, in Portugal, during the 48 years of dictatorship, until 1974. In the other hand, “a limited number of large G-7 media companies control most of the transcontinental flows of media material” (Ginneken 1998, p. 48).

Take a moment to analyze Figure 11 the faces of Tony Blair: who is the real Blair after all? The real Blair is the vigorous or the womanish one? Neither, but they were both used in a Portuguese weekly publication to illustrate how the image manipulation could influence the electoral results in comparison with the real British prime-minister. Could the viewer notice the differences without being properly informed? Probably not.



The real one                      the masculine one                      the girlie one

Figure 11 The faces of Tony Blair: Who is the real Blair? (In Expresso weekly publication “Única”, 25.09.2005)

Because of these small and simple examples, some authors affirm that there’s the need to promote the development of citizenship and the criticism towards politics and politicians - systematic skepticism (Traquina e Mesquita 2003) and that social / civic journalism is a possible answer. Also say that this kind of journalism promotes an attentive attitude, by recognizing manipulation and wrong information in the viewer / reader / listener. Social journalism could create a citizen agenda with pluralist approaches to the themes that are more closed to the media consumer, in a micro social perspective – which helps to explain the macro social movements and some events that seems to irrupt but that are a simple consequence of a long term process that we were not advised.

## V

Considering all of this it’s fundamental to develop the media literacy in order to change the journalistic perspective from: the negative way of telling stories to positive approaches (like social journalism); from irruptive facts to developing features (by noticing the important role of the correspondents instead of the special reporter, introducing the media consumer to processes of gradual changes); from impact images and key-words to the whole story; to emphasise the thematic diversity and diversity of

approach (citizen agenda); to avoid dramatization or exaggerating in describing emotion; to search for other *noticeability* criteria; to escape to the politicisation of news, escape to the monopoly of conflicts and social problems news by adopting plural approaches to the same theme, escape to redundancy and dichotomies (black and white, good and bad...); developing the context, analysis and reflection; act against the unbalanced information resources and international flows (by finding different resources than institutional and official source of information); to get more knowledge about themes that have been minimized or over underestimated, like the image power (going beyond photography or spectacular sequences); to forget the personalization and the dramatic effects...

In a chronicle, Eduardo Prado Coelho affirmed “Here’s the perfect television – the one in which we are able to fall asleep without no guilt or lost” (Coelho, Eduardo Prado, 21.06.2000). So much is true. In all these examples we find different ways of falling “asleep without guilt or lost”, because we have been given funny advertisements or happy and frivolous news to help us to forget the bad ones.

Specially now that there are new ways of advertising which implies new ways of dealing with it, like interactive, virtual advertising and product placement, this new step in the media developing process implies to learn and teach media literacy. Like Ignacio Ramonet says, there’s an advertising octopus everywhere we turn to, and the only way to get away from its learning to deal with it, especially in the class room. Portugal is one of the countries with the highest rates of illiteracy: documental, quantitative and written - when considering the 20 industrialized nations in the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) back in the year 2000. But 40% of the Portuguese watch TV for more than 2 hours each day! As a teacher / animator it’s fundamental to use it in the class room to help deconstruct mass media tools and products aiming to reach for media consumers. It’s fundamental to include in more than the occult curricula (external to the school), but in the actual classrooms as a subject and important by its own.

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## ANNEX

- a) A forest partially destroyed by machines
- b) Sardines fishing season stopped in order to protect the specie
- c) Study about taxes confirms that more than half of the Portuguese don't pay taxes
- d) Benfica insists in disbelieving the under-20 world championship scheduled for Nigeria: they want security warranties
- e) Guimarães is back in the race for the European competitions
- f) The population of a village started a hunger strike in front of the Parliament in order to become again a municipality
- g) A small child was taken from her family by the family court after been disappeared for two days
- h) A shooting at Setúbal caused 2 killings
- i) Studies about the new location of the Lisbon airport have ended, in the same day that the defenders of Rio Frio location used to present new arguments towards their option
- j) The 3 survivors of a shipwreck near Azores arrive tomorrow to Ponta Delgada city, the search for the fourth member of the crew are closed
- k) A family in Santa Maria da Feira had to remove his dogs from the house because of the neighbours complaints
- l) Pedro Caldeira denied to have cheated his clients
- m) PSD Party asked for an urgent debate in the Parliament about roads
- n) Hundreds of unemployed are going to be able to do internships in culture area
- o) The dentistry schools are going to be closed for 2 days in a protest against the law that's going to legalize the ones who don't have a higher degree

- p) Because a gas leak the Defence ministers of the western countries had to leave the building where a conference was happening
- q) United Nations are trying to stop a war that has been going on for 8 years at Serra Leoa
- r) 8 tourists were brutally murdered by rebels at the National Park of gorillas, Uganda
- s) The most important political trial of 4 dissidents in Cuba ended
- t) Pouring rain in the streets of S. Paulo city caused floods and the dead of 2 people
- u) Portugal is going to give more 16 millions (money) to Mozambique
- v) Xanana Gusmão accuses the Indonesian secret services of been behind the East Timor agitation
- x) The cartoon heroes are at the Communication Museum living the great adventure of the communication media
- y) It's Spring time and in Paris the stylists are already moving

Figure 6: Television news programme list or alignment

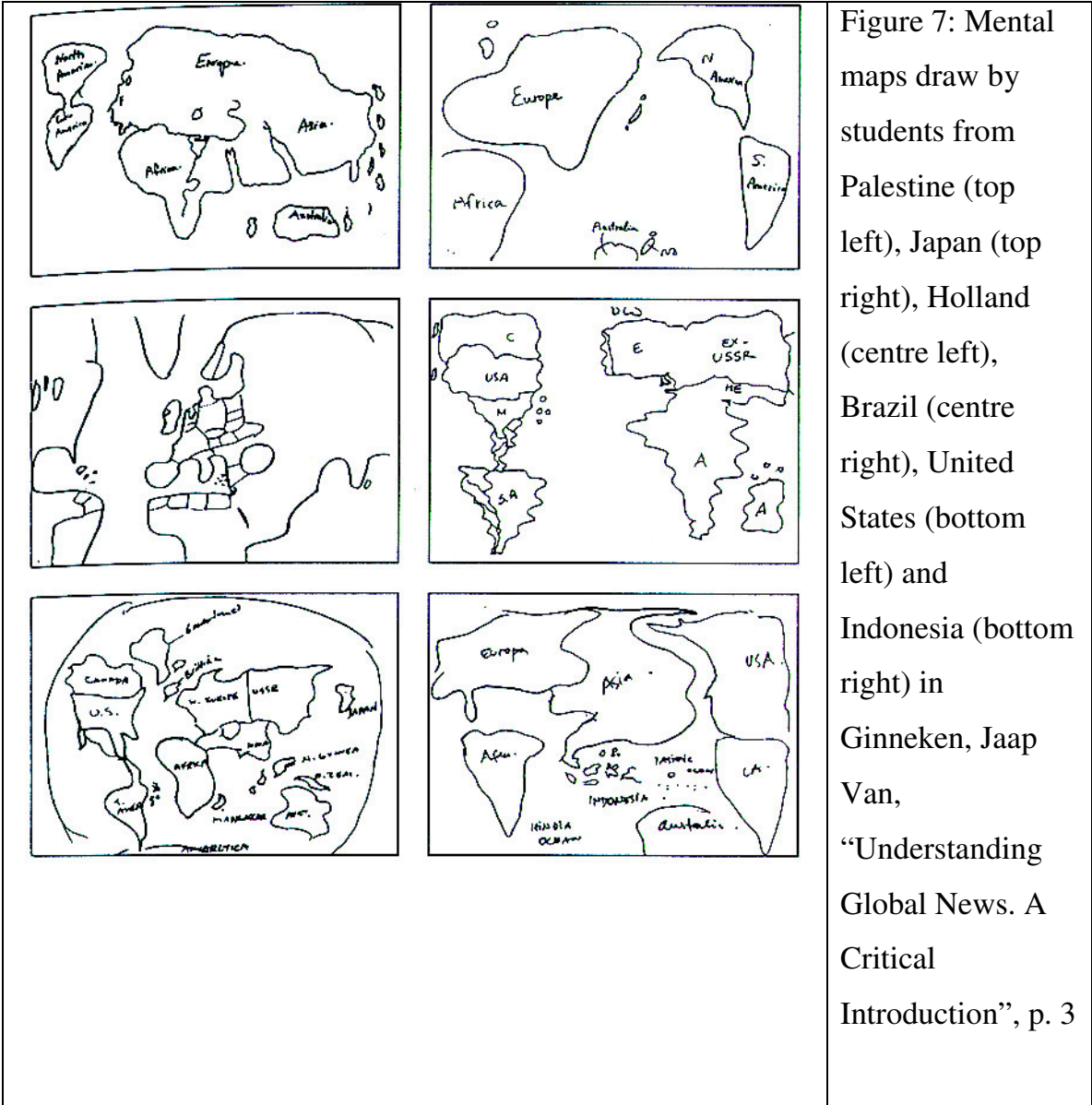


Figure 7: Mental maps draw by students from Palestine (top left), Japan (top right), Holland (centre left), Brazil (centre right), United States (bottom left) and Indonesia (bottom right) in Ginneken, Jaap Van, “Understanding Global News. A Critical Introduction”, p. 3

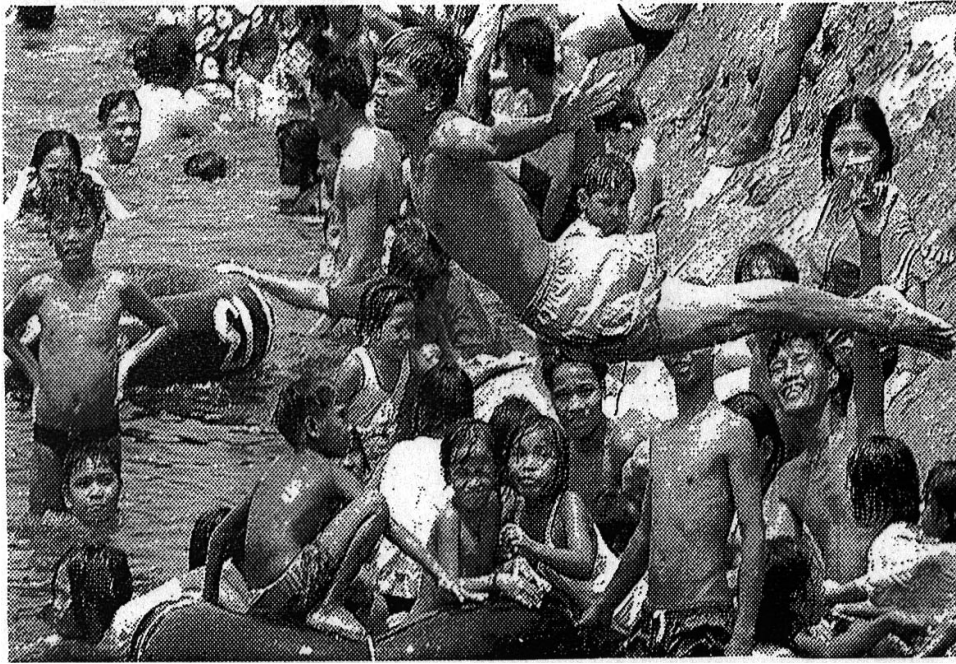


Figure 8: Polluted waters in the Manila Bay, Philippines

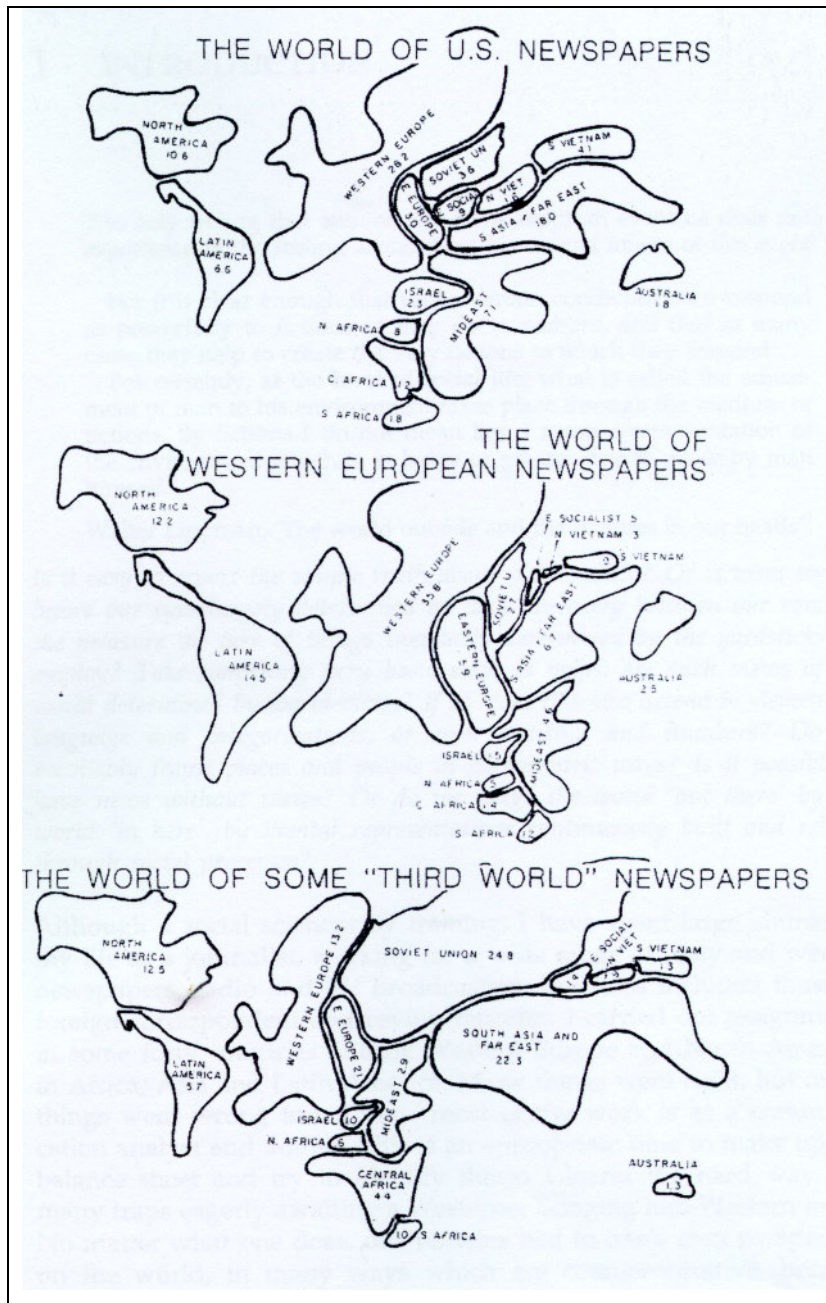


Figure 9: “The relative importance of foreign news about various regions in a sample of newspapers from around the world” in Ginneken, Jaap Van, “Understanding Global News. A Critical Introduction”, p. 141 from “The many worlds of the world’s press”, Journal of communication, 27



# Cultural changes and the path to sustainable development

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## **The drivers of Change**

Natural or human-induced factors that directly or indirectly cause a change in an ecosystem are referred to as “drivers”. A direct driver undoubtedly influences ecosystem processes. An indirect driver operates more diffusely, by altering one or more direct drivers.

Drivers affect ecosystem services and human well-being at different spatial and temporal scales, which makes both their assessment and their management complex. Climate change may operate on a global or a large regional spatial scale; political change may operate at the scale of a nation or a municipal district. Sociocultural change typically occurs slowly, on a time scale of decades (although abrupt changes can sometimes occur, as in the case of wars or political regime changes), while economic changes tend to occur more rapidly. As a result of this spatial and temporal dependence of drivers, the forces that appear to be most significant at a particular location and time may not be most significant over larger or smaller regions or time scales.

In the aggregate and at a global scale, there are five indirect drivers of changes in ecosystems and their services: population change, change in economic activity, sociopolitical factors, cultural factors, and technological change. Collectively these factors influence the level of production and consumption of ecosystem services and the sustainability of production. Both economic growth and population growth lead to increased consumption of ecosystem services, although the harmful environmental impacts of any particular level of consumption depend on the efficiency of the technologies used in the production of the service. These factors interact in complex ways in different locations to change pressures on ecosystems and uses of ecosystem services. Driving forces are almost always multiple and interactive, so that a one-to-one linkage between particular driving forces and particular changes in ecosystems rarely exists. Even so, changes in any one of these indirect drivers generally result in changes in ecosystems. The causal linkage is almost always highly mediated by other factors, thereby complicating statements of causality or attempts

to establish the proportionality of various contributors to changes. There are five major contributors to change:

*Demographic Drivers:* Global population doubled in the past 40 years and increased by 2 billion people in the last 25 years, reaching 6 billion in 2000 (S7.2.1). Developing countries have accounted for most recent population growth in the past quarter-century, but there is now an unprecedented diversity of demographic patterns across regions and countries.

*Economic Drivers:* Global economic activity increased nearly sevenfold between 1950 and 2000. With rising per capita income, the demand for many ecosystem services grows. At the same time, the structure of consumption changes. In the case of food, for example, as income grows the share of additional income spent on food declines, the importance of starchy staples (such as rice, wheat, and potatoes) declines, diets include more fat, meat and fish, and fruits and vegetables, and the proportionate consumption of industrial goods and services rises.

*Sociopolitical Drivers:* Sociopolitical drivers encompass the forces influencing decision-making and include the quantity of public participation in decision-making, the groups participating in public decision-making, the mechanisms of dispute resolution, the role of the state relative to the private sector, and levels of education and knowledge. These factors in turn influence the institutional arrangements for ecosystem management, as well as property rights over ecosystem services. Over the past 50 years there have been significant changes in sociopolitical drivers.

*Science and Technology:* The development and diffusion of scientific knowledge and technologies that exploit that knowledge has profound implications for ecological systems and human well-being. The twentieth century saw tremendous advances in understanding how the world works physically, chemically, biologically, and socially and in the applications of that knowledge to human endeavors.

*Cultural and Religious Drivers:* To understand culture as a driver of ecosystem change, it is most useful to think of it as the values, beliefs, and norms that a group of people share. In this sense, culture conditions individuals' perceptions of the world, influences what they consider important, and suggests what courses of action are appropriate and inappropriate. Broad comparisons of whole cultures have not proved useful because they ignore vast variations in values, beliefs, and norms within cultures. Nevertheless, cultural differences clearly have important impacts on direct drivers. Cultural factors, for example, can influence consumption behavior (what and how much people consume) and values related to environmental stewardship, and they may be particularly important drivers of environmental change.

## **The National System**

As far as culture and school are regarded, the Italian **Ministry of Environment and Territory**, as required by its institutive law (law 349/1986), is actively engaged in the field of education for environment and SD, especially focusing on promoting public awareness. Education is considered a crucial tool to support environmental and sustainable development policies, aiming at promoting public consciousness of environmental matters and behaviours in harmony with the nature and human beings.

In order to bring together the various actors involved in activities of environmental education, the **National System for Environmental Education, Information and Training (INFEA)** has been established in Italy. It is an innovative integrated system directly involving State and Regions in the programming and financing of initiatives. The System operates on the ground through a network of “Environmental Education Centres” (about 140 centres), established by local institutions and managed in cooperation with various stakeholders, like environmental associations, private enterprises, universities. The centres, some of them located within protected natural areas, promote and support projects of environmental education for various categories of learners. Projects for children are carried out within or in cooperation with schools, on specific themes like water, waste, air pollution etc. The activities carried out are focused, inter alia, on the dissemination of information on the local and global state of the environment, on the ways to achieve sustainable development objectives, the changes required in individual and collective behaviours; they operate in a synergetic way with the concrete measures of environmental policy. Recently, the centres have also undertaken the role of facilitating the dialogue between civil society and local administrators within Local Agenda 21 processes.

The Ministry for the Environment publishes every couple of years a national report on the state of environment. In 2002 an ad hoc version for kids of such report, named RSA Junior, has been produced for schools, aiming at promoting the environment-related knowledge in all its complexity. The main objective of this educational process is to avoid an approach based on the “sense of disaster” and to promote behaviours that lead to the prevention of environmental problems or, at least, to the identification of the best solutions to face them.

The role of **school** is fundamental, as the first context of personal growth and development of a correct and healthy behaviour. Education for sustainable development should neither only be a separate teaching subject, nor should it be identified by some specific contents, since it is a dynamic and cross-cutting process, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary. It therefore requires the involvement of all relevant governmental sectors and stakeholders.

Well-structured inter-ministerial cooperation between the Ministry for the Environment and Territory and the Ministry of Education, University and Research is in place since 1987. It has led to a Chart of principles on environmental education, approved in Fiuggi in 1997.

On this basis, the 1st national conference on environmental education has been jointly organised in year 2000 in Genoa; the second national conference was held on 17th-20th November 2004 in Tuscany (Lucca). An agreement between the two Ministries has been under way, aiming at developing training programmes for teachers on the topic of sustainable development.

### *An Emerging Understanding of Education for Sustainability*

If we want to develop in our children the capacity and ability to create a remarkably different economy, one that can restore ecosystems and protect the environment while bringing forth innovation, prosperity, meaningful work and true security, then we must examine current academic and professional research, experience, wisdom debates across the disciplinary spectrum and compare the knowledge, skills and processes that are being learned and argued in the real world with what is being taught in our schools.

Education for Sustainability is a dynamic system of core content, competencies and habits of mind coupled with a pedagogical system that is learner centered and inquiry based (just two of the instructional attributes that characterize it). The best way to engage with teaching and learning for sustainability is through the development of learning communities that develop over time. We say this because, though we know a lot, we do not know enough - and, we don't know what we don't know. Therefore, we must create new knowledge and new ways of thinking, we must be able to analyze, synthesize and transfer knowledge from various fields, we must be able to work with others and learn from their perspectives and we must be able to think and act "outside the box" to create new understandings and new behaviors that complement the enduring common sense with which many of us are still familiar

## **SUSTAINABILITY – THE ITALIAN PROJECTS**

**Eco-Schools**, a programme of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), provides an ideal way to implement Local Agenda 21 in the school and its neighbouring community. Initiated in 1995 with support of the European Commission, the programme offers a flexible approach for schools to implement an environmental management system, based on the EMAS/ISO14001 models. Initially focussing on themes such as Water, Energy and Waste, other thematic areas of support to schools have been developed in different countries, from Noise, Nature and Biological Diversity to Healthy Living. With its participatory approach, involving pupils themselves in both activities and decision-making processes, Eco-Schools can be an important instrument for promoting the values of participation

and citizenship. Fostering ties with local authorities, organisations, businesses, and indeed pupils' families, Eco-Schools provides a platform for school-based community development. As such, it has been identified by the United Nations Environment Programme as a model initiative for Education for Sustainable Development.

The Eco-Schools programme was developed in 1994 on the basis of the need for involving young people in finding solutions to environmental and sustainable development challenges at the local level, as identified at the UN Conference on Environment and Development of 1992. The programme was initiated by Member organisations of the Foundation for Environmental Education with the support of the European Commission.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> World Environmental Education Congress – Torino, 2nd-6th October 2005** **The exchange of observations and best practices at a worldwide level**

The Congress addressed the greatest number of participants possible: University professors and researchers, Educators, Politicians, Scientists, Technicians, Teachers, Students, Environmentalists, Mass media. The first objective of the Congress was to exchange observations and best practices at a worldwide level, to develop the main themes for the agenda on environmental education and to jointly discuss the theses and proposals presented in the speeches and posters from around the world.

The primary aims of the Congress were:

1. to highlight and examine how education, training, information and environmental research help develop an equitable, democratic society that is an actively involved friend of the environment; respectful of life on the planet and in harmony with nations human beings and other living species.
2. to establish a more direct, continuous exchange of best practices among all the nations of the world, where environmental education is experiencing significant growth and is tackling themes of great interest such as participative democracy, good citizenship, the equitable and sustainable management of natural resources, ecotourism, etc...
3. to give international visibility to the research and achievements of environmental education in the respective countries.
4. to contribute to the DESD- the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.
5. to identify the fields of practice and research to review at the next congress in 2007.

## INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

**1) Environment and School Initiatives (ENSI) is an international government based network focused on innovation and research in environmental education (EE) and education for sustainable development. It was established under the auspices of OECD –CERI (Centre for Education, Research and Innovation) in 1986. The current international secretariat is based in the pedagogical high school of Solothurn, Switzerland. ENSI is currently developing an official partnership with UNESCO in the framework of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (UN DESD).**

**2) SEED – School Development through Environmental Education-is a network of Comenius 3. Within the 14 European SEED partner countries and 6 SEED member countries, Environmental Education fosters an innovative culture of teaching and learning that promotes Education for Sustainability. SEED is supported by the OECD/CERI research group, Environment and School Initiatives (ENSI). ENSI experts monitor and evaluate the processes involved in school program development ensuring they focus on Environmental Education by undertaking action research methods.**

**3) The NGO Burkina Faso representative to the workshop urged everyone to participate in the 3rd forum of Planet'ERE in Ouagadougou July 18 - 26, 2005. The forum de Planet'ERE3 is a continuation of the work begun in Quebec City (Planet'ERE 1) and pursued in France (Planet'ERE 2). It represents an important step forward for environment education actors from French-speaking Africa and around the globe.**

1) ENSI has been working on competency-based curriculum development for education for sustainable development in initial teacher training and in-service training institutions - the CSCT project – which involves 15 partners from 8 different countries (Austria, Denmark, Flemish Community of Belgium, Hungary, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, and United Kingdom) and will take place from October 2004 to October 2007.

In its statement on education for sustainable development the UNECE ( United Nations Economics Commission for Europe) Ministers of the Environment make strong recommendations on including ESD in curricula from pre-school to higher and adult education. They ask for integration of ESD into all subjects and existing disciplines.

In line with UNECE statement, the CSCT project will help teacher institutions to include interdisciplinary teaching methods relating to sustainable development in the teacher training curriculum, that takes into account the scientific, economic, social, political, cultural and ethical aspects of sustainable development.

2) SEED promotes Environmental Education as a driving force for School Development and transfers models of good practise into teacher education.

### **MAIN OBJECTIVES :**

SEED supports the various European projects on Environmental Education by creating a dynamic network of different interest groups within the educational

system, to improve the process of school development and strengthen a European strategy of Education for Sustainability.

**TARGET GROUPS :**

SEED facilitates a close dialogue and better understanding between policy makers and practitioners in the educational systems. The ultimate target group are the pupils who should benefit from innovation in teaching and learning methodologies.

**MAIN ACTIVITIES AND TYPES OF ACTIVITIES :**

According to the idea of COMENIUS 3 networks, SEED encourages co-operation among stakeholders in current, completed and prospective COMENIUS projects and associated stakeholders in the field of environmental education.

**MAIN OUTCOMES :**

Tangible products are a number of new COMENIUS project tools, transnational comparative studies, reports, guidelines and materials on innovations for schools, teacher education and COMENIUS actions through Environmental Education.

3) On May 11 – 13, 2005, 48 participants from international organisations (AUF, APF, UPF,

NEPAD, CISL) and 18 countries (government and civil society representatives) gathered in Paris to attend the first-even «*Atelier de concertation des conseils nationaux du développement durable de l'espace Francophone*», a joint initiative of the «Institut de l'Énergie et de l'Environnement de la Francophonie» (IEPF) (subsidiary body of the «Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie»), and the French «Conseil National du Développement Durable» (CNDD).

A direct derivative of the historical World Summit for Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg (WSSD) less than three years ago, this workshop also reflects the spirit and operational continuity of the Ouagadougou Summit.

Workshop objectives

- Trace a diagnostic profile of existing institutional collaborative arrangements for sustainable development in French-speaking countries;
- Document national consultation experiences of civil society;
- Provide a discussion forum for CNDD; promote meetings among and concrete actions by members of Francophone civil societies;
- Develop a platform for Francophone-based collaboration (vehicles for information sharing, dissemination of good practices, twinning operations, etc.).

**Conclusions**

We have been defining together the different lines for a change towards sustainable development; a major change that cannot be postponed any longer.

Actions and projects are spread in Italy and all over the world, though there is still a long road ahead. The expected major change has to bring - passing through a

mentality change- an innovative environmental and social education, which is very often in contrast to personal interests.

It is very important that the interests of single persons do not hang over the community's interests. This is the real challenge, each of us has to work on.

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# **Stimulating consumer trust**

## **(based on e-retailing)**

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### **I. Introduction**

The shopping and the purchase, whether conducted in the conventional way (i.e. in a retail outlet) or over the Internet (i.e. by means of a web-site) are risky activities since they are connected with investment of time and money. The consumer risk is a result of the disparity between the client's expectations and the profits received from the retailer's offers. Principal means for reduction of the perceived by the consumers risk is the establishment of relations of trust, regardless of the sale's form.

The lack of physical contact at e-shopping turns the trust into a crucial factor in the consumer's choice. Several authors believe that without consumer trust, the development of e-retailing will never reach its economic potential (Ferraro 1998).

Trust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another'' (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, Camerer 1998). This definition was chosen since it depicts trust as a psychological state based upon positive expectations. In the traditional physical outlet the consumers know, on the grounds of experience what to expect – how to orient, to choose the goods, pay and receive the goods. The implementation of the on-line activity is related to a large extent with the uncertainty for the consumer. This is why the potential client needs many and sure proofs that he can trust the retailer. The trust forming appears to be a function of the risk perception during the shopping on behalf of the clients. As long as the client realizes that he or she could not attain his/her objectives, the decision for e-shopping is connected with the assumption of risk – functional, physical, financial, psychological, social, connected with the spending of time.

During the last years many researches on factors influencing consumer trust in e-retailing have been conducted. Therefore this paper is an attempt to identify the determinants and the practical steps, which will help to stimulate consumer trust in e-retailing.

### *II. Study of the purchase-forming factors in the e-shopping*

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are having an increasing economic and social impact. By means of the eEurope and eEurope<sup>+</sup> programs, the

European politicians manage to reflect the meaning of new technologies, their quick dissemination and increasingly wider usage in the everyday economic and social life of society. However, only 32% of all Internet consumers make actual purchases via Internet (according to the survey of Intermarket group, 2004). Almost 64% of the consumers of Internet use it to seek information. More often the cited barriers for online shopping are the prices (77% of the people polled), doubts in respect of the return upon frustration with the goods (67%), issues connected with the anonymity of the credit card number (65%) and issues connected with the preservation of their anonymity and the receipt of undesired mail with advertising messages (S.P.A.M., junk mail) (58%). Just about 27% of the buyers declare that they do not have any worries with respect to the online shopping.

On the other hand some companies also have worries with respect to the strategic step for migration in Internet. Among the main reasons for this, mentioned by the managers (Jupiter Communications, 1999) of some big American and international companies are:

- Shortage of skills and experience in this field (every fourth of the people polled)
- Lack of proved benefits from the e-business, including lack of “examples to follow” (18%)
- The issues of security and safeguard of the data worry around 12% of the managers

At the conference for building of the consumer trust on the European online market, held on 12.03.2004, it was suggested the European consumer’s day – March 15, to be noted through focusing of the public opinion on the developing European online market.

The survey on Information and Communication Technologies Usage in Households in Bulgaria (2004) is a joint survey of the National Statistical Institute and the European Community, carried out according to Eurostat requirements ([www.nsi.bg](http://www.nsi.bg)). The survey methodology and tool are in full compliance with the European Community Directives and Regulation No.808/2004 of the European Parliament.

The main target of the survey is to obtain reliable and comparable data on information and communication technologies dissemination and usage in the Republic of Bulgaria, compliant with those of EU Member States. The sample covers 4 614 households in total, as well as 10 150 persons from different regions in Bulgaria, aged between 16 and 74 years.

It is found at present only 9.6% of households in Bulgaria have access to Internet (14.6% of households have PCs at their disposal), compare to average 42% of households in EU countries, which have Internet access at home.

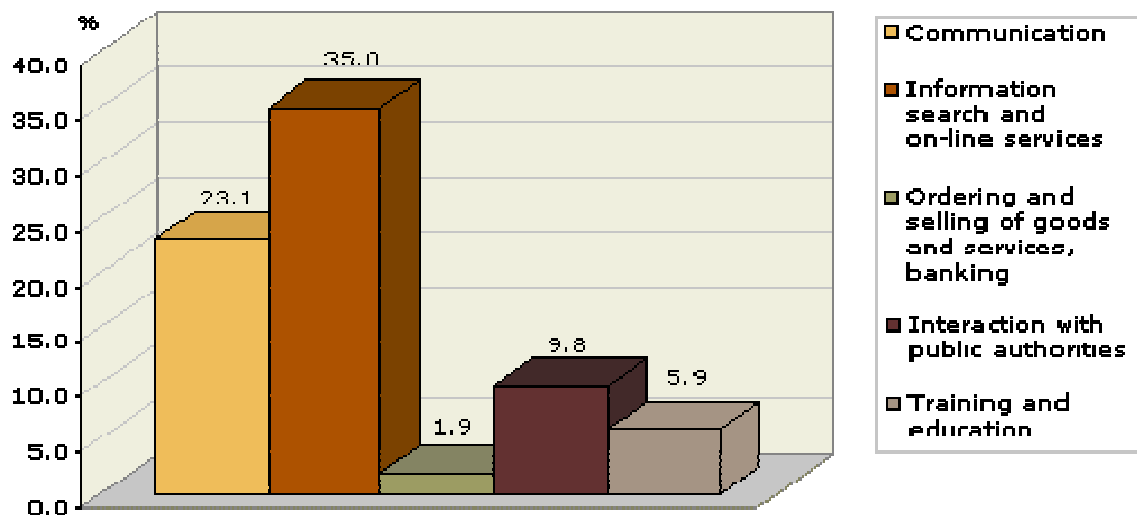


Fig. 1. Internet activities by purpose of usage

The highest percentage of users enter the net to search information or on-line services (35.0%)- fig.1. Many Bulgarians are using Internet (for communication (23.1%), while considerably lower share of persons take advantage on offered public services of e-government (9.8%) and educational on - line services (5.9%). Statistics shows that only 1.9% of persons use e-markets to order and sell services and commodities on-line, for financial services, as well as for e-banking.

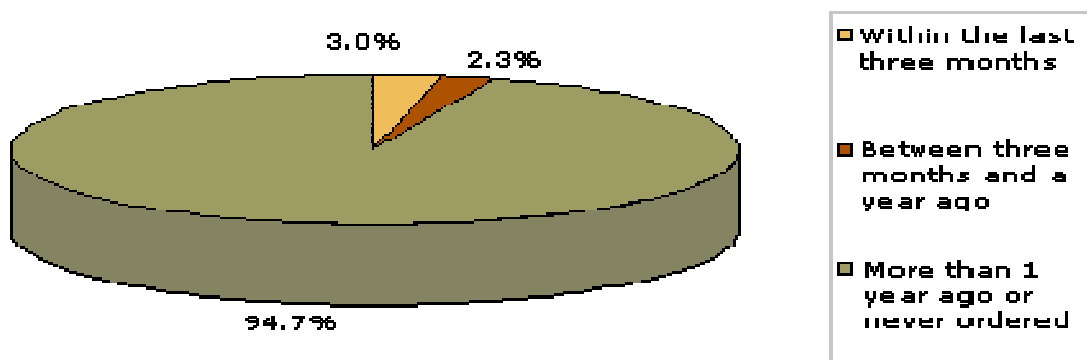


Fig. 2. Share of individuals ordered products/services via Internet

According to the survey many people do not have the opportunity or do not want to entrust on e-markets and this is confirmed by the obtained relative percentage of people, who have never ordered a commodity or service for their personal use on Internet for more than 1 year or never in their life (94.7%)- fig.2.

Young persons in Bulgaria between 25 and 34 years use the possibilities of the modern technologies most actively (3.8%), followed by the remaining two age groups from 35 to 44 years (3.2%) and 45 and 54 years (2.5%) respectively. People between 55 and 74 years use computers in their daily life more rarely (0.4%).

### III. Application of the neural networks in the study of the factors forming the consumer's trust in the e-retailing

For the purposes of the present study, a survey was conducted with a sample of 68 students at the University of Economics – Varna. Its analysis confirms the entire picture described in the country. All students have ensured Internet access on the territory of the University, and only 17.6% had been shopping in Internet or had used it for payment.

Neural networks were used in the conducted survey. The software is a product of the Artificial Intelligence's technologies. This approach is preferred, because:

- Ability of data processing with the purpose of extracting implicit dependencies.
- Existence of sufficient data from which to train the network.
- Neural networks can process imprecise and incomplete information.

The information in the surveys is of this type since there is no answer given to some of the questions.

The data from the surveys are used as training multitude of examples.

The architecture of the received neural network is shown on Fig.3. The result – indicator for the tendency of trust in the e-retailing is designated with Trend. The neural network is trained as per the method „Back propagation” (with reverse error propagation) and works at average error 0.2% level.

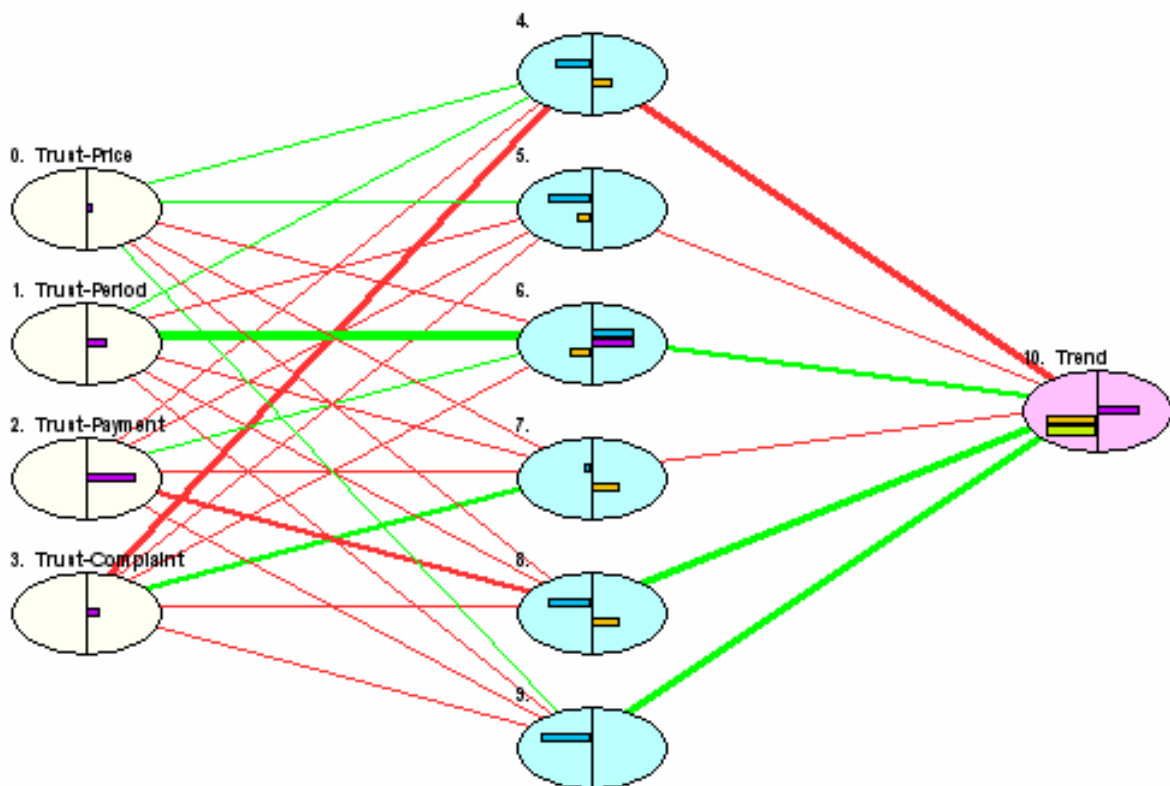
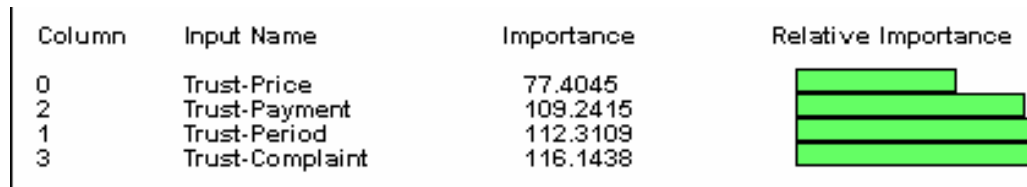


Fig.3. Neural network, used in the study

The use of neural network shows that with almost equal significance for the consumers are the trust in the payment reliability, in the possibilities for reclamation of the goods and the adherence to the delivery deadlines (fig.4).



*Fig.4. Significance of the input quantities over the output one*

#### **IV. Search of incentives for building consumer trust**

The complex character of the category trust requires the application of a systematic approach in the search of incentives for the building of trust on behalf of the consumers in the e-retailing. The golden rule in e-commerce is transparency at every level of transaction ([www.imrg.org/ISIS/](http://www.imrg.org/ISIS/)). The Consumer Protection (Distance Selling) Regulations (DSR) can be divided into two main types of protection for consumers. The first is concerned with information which must be given to consumers. The second affords consumers a cooling off period during which they can cancel the transaction.

The practical steps in accordance with the local conditions can include:

- Purchase of own domain with the purpose of winning of recognition of the company identity and the trade mark.
- Display of the company contact details on the site: telephone, fax, e-mail, postal address.
- Use of photo material, for visualization of the business. These can be pictures of the owner, the work team, the office, the production premises, warehouses, stores, manufactured products and services. The existence of such pictures gives the visitor the possibility to “feel” the company presence.
- Presentation of happy clients’ recommendations (photos, contact details, stories, tales how different people or companies work with you, what they think of you as a retailer). They help the visitors to associate with the problems of the company clients and to expect to receive the same results as them.
- Comments/recommendations for the company products or services by authorities (specialists in a given field, famous personalities). This is a kind of expert appraisal (guarantee).
- Display of the company policy in respect of the consumers’ personal data in a prominent place. The visitors have to feel anxiety-free that the submitted by them information wont be misused. Only then, they can “open” their consciousness for the extended offer.
- Presentation of a link to the company policy with respect of the deadlines and terms of delivery, mode of payment, guarantees that are offered to the clients, variants and conditions for a guarantee service, order of replacement of the defected goods or carrying out reclamations.
- Not to request more than the reasonably necessary information and to respect the visitors’ desire for confidentiality. When contact details are required it should be restrained to a name and an e-mail address. The

detailed information would have made the visitor suspicious and he/she could generally disregard the deal.

- Obligatory use of a cryptic connection in submitting personal/confidential data. This is a software decision for protection of the submitted data which protects them from being read while going on the net.
- Submission to potential customers of the whole available information on the goods/services, which are proposed before offering them to pay. This includes prices and deadlines for delivery, VAT, additional taxes, availability, guarantees and conditions for their use, ways of order canceling and refunding the sum.
- To offer the possibility to the consumers to receive more information or to contact the company at a convenient for them time and in the preferred by them way. Feedback can be carried out through the link mail to:, mail-forms, auto responders, online voting, live maintenance on the phone, automated orders for data base search and/or sending the results of the search.

The following general activities are also of a substantial importance for the stimulation of the consumers' confidence:

1. Introduction of standards for trust increase. For instance, the IMRG (Interactive Media in Retail Group) Code is the online shopping industry charter setting out standards of service. Formed in 1990, IMRG is a London-based membership organisation that works to advance the appropriate use of networked screens as a retail marketplace. The IMRG Code includes: - the supplier's VAT number; -the geographic location and name of the supplier; - certain details of professional and trade codes to which the supplier belongs; - technical steps to follow to conclude the contract; - whether the contract will be filed by the service provider and made accessible; - the technical means for identifying and correcting input errors prior to placing an order.
2. Certification offers a number of benefits, including acting as a sign that your company is well established and has the necessary structure and process in place to produce high quality e-services.
3. Consumer information and education are, therefore, an increasingly important part of a comprehensive consumer policy that aims at building consumer awareness and confidence. It is necessary to create a system for staff training and spreading of knowledge in the field of e-retailing. In the information society the knowledge is a strategic resource and the education – strategic process. This is way an important task of the educational system is not only to educate. More important is that the members of the society to be embroiled in a continual process of education and self-education.

Five major projects are being developed in order to ensure them.

\*e- class Computer classes and fast Internet at all schools;

\*e- Centre 160 telecentres on the territory of the whole country, Internet services, services of e-government;

\*e- University Computer laboratories are established at all 37 higher state schools, 2 affiliates and at over 40 scientific institutes with the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences;

\*e- Net 65 institutions (higher state schools and scientific institutes with BAS) are connected with high-speed Internet and pan-European scientific research network GEANT;

[\\*Esi@Centre](#) Transfer of software technologies and business models, authorization as per worldwide acknowledged standards

Consumers' trust stimulation along with the perfecting of the country communications are the two principal directions for the development of the eMarket. E-commerce services should be legal, truthful and fair, they should be operated with a sense of responsibility to consumers and to society. The Internal Market, in principle, gives consumers wider choice and competitive prices. At the same time, as the average consumer has a wider range of products and services to choose from, his everyday life becomes more complex.

Under the conditions of the new economy the people exchange goods, ideas, services as well as knowledge and intellectual capacities via Internet. If somebody provides data for someone else it is necessary that they both trust each other. The supplier has to be sure that his/her information is not misused and the consumer – to rely on these data. When both sides trust each other, they can share information and invest in understanding each other and to customize their information system.

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# **Ethical products and consumers' trust.**

## **Facing the challenges?**

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### **Abstract**

During the last years we have seen an increasing focus on ethical consumption in the public debate. As a consequence consumers have been looking more actively for these products in the market –and more companies have started considering the market of ethical products with increasing interests.

This may lead to a win-win situation: for consumers, producers and all the “good causes” embedded in ethical products.

The situation may however turn out more tricky:. The fact that more companies –big controversial international corporations included- introduce products with ethical claim together with an increasing number of ethical labels, may result in increasing confusion and scepticism among consumers. Small producers, who started their activity animated by ideals, may face the risk of being pushed out by powerful brands. A possible consequence is that the reliability of “ethical products” may become weaker, affecting as well the motivation to buy this kind of products.

A main challenge faced by the experience of ethical consumerism is, the wish to expand the presence in the market of ethical products, while remaining faithful to the core values of that experience. Meeting this challenge is likely to be crucial for the successful development of the market for ethical products.

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### **1. Introduction**

The idea of this paper emerged after having read a piece of news from the Financial Times <sup>65</sup>. It was about Nestlé launching an instant coffee with a fair trade label.

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<sup>65</sup> Coffees with a Conscience by Alan Beattie in Financial Times, Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2005 p.10



*“It was a moment of deep symbolism – said the author in the article- when the food giant Nestlé reversed its long-lasting resistance to paying farmers above market prices”.*

Why was it a symbolic moment?

For many years, activists, NGOs, journalists and writers, young and older people, women and men have been challenging big corporations demanding goods respectful of the environment, workers’ rights and living conditions.

The fact that a company like Nestlé introduces among its products a “fair” one can be regarded as a victory: big corporations cannot just ignore the growing pressure from the public opinion. On the other side, however, it is possible to object that the entrance in the ethical marked of companies like Nestlé inevitably opens up for new types of problems, not always easy to cope with.

According to some scholars there is in fact the risk that corporations will take over the creative space where alternative forms of relationship between producers and consumers were thought. As commented by Murray & Raynolds: *“... the space that appears to exist for creating a truly alternative trade will be captured by agrofood corporations able to transform this progressive initiative into a niche marketing scheme for products re-packaged under “green” and/or “ethical” symbols”* (Murray & Raynolds, 2000, pg. 67)

Will it be at the end just business as usual? And which will be the consequences for consumers’ trust?

In order to answer this question we should reflect on two things: the first one is “what are ethical products” and the other one is “which are the motivations that make people look for and buy ethical products”.

## **2. The nature of ethical products**

Ethical products are difficult to define –as ethics itself is a blurred concept (Terragni, Jacobsen, Vittersø & Torjusen, 2006). Every one of us, in modern societies, may have individual criteria for deciding which product is ethical and which is not.

Considering ethic in a broader perspective, as a form of collective orientation, the definition of ethical products reflects the public debate and the mobilisations occurred in the last decades.

NGO’s –or other institutions, opinion leaders, give often an important contribution in making existing problems visible, contributing to the definition of an “ethical issue”, bringing it into public discourses, creating in some instances even the words for talking about a problem.

One example of this is of course the role played by environmental organisations: they pointed at the impact that our production and consumption practices have on the life of the planet. The term “*sustainability*” became a very powerful concept in that regard.

The animal rights movement made a point in focusing on the dominant position of human beings: *specism* was a term introduced for describing the human exploitation of animals.

Solidarity organisations pointed at the injustice of the economical relationship between the richest and poorest country in the world. The term *fair trade*- although not new- acquired a new meaning in this context.

The violation of rights of the workers and the involvement of child labour for producing shoes, clothes, football, gave the inspiration to the “*no-sweat campaigns*”.

Some of the organisations involved in these campaigns did not limit themselves to consciousness-raising activity. They took a direct role in promoting lifestyles and products that could respond to these values and sensibilities. The turn towards organic production is an example of this “conversion” towards natural (and human) friendly ways of production (Guthman, 2004); the banning of fur and vegetarian choices follow the increasing awareness towards animal rights (Jesper & Nelkin, 1992). Fair trade products began to be imported and sold through alternative distribution channels (Nicholls and Opal, 2005).

From their side, people may look for ethical products as a way of living according to their values (Coff, 2005), for expressing altruistic values (Korthals, 2001), or as a way for expressing protest and try to change objectionable practices (Micheletti, 2003).

When buying ethical products people look for the intrinsic values and for the symbolic meaning related to that choice. Moreover, as Harrison & al. suggest: “*Ethical purchase may have political, religious, spiritual, environmental, social or other motives. The one thing they have in common is that they are concerned with the effects that purchasing has, not only for themselves but also on the external world around them*”. (Harrison, Newholm and Shaw, 2005).

Ethics in products, however, does not taste, neither is it visible: we cannot distinguish between fair trade coffee and conventional one just for its scent. Ethical products depend upon the fact that the ones buying them trust their ethical claims.

The problem of trust is not particularly relevant at the very beginning of the life of “new ethical products”. As we mentioned above, the birth of these products happen often in contexts where there are very close links between producers and consumers; their purchase usually happens in contexts unambiguously defining the meaning of these products (like for instance in the “world shops” for fair trade products, the box schemes for organic products or the experiences of “community shared agriculture” – Bjune and Torjusen, 2005).

As the demand for these kinds of products increase, appealing to a larger number of consumers, new challenges however emerge. How to meet the increased consumers' demand? How to find more efficient distribution channels?

The introduction of alternative, potentially critical “ethical products” into the mainstream, conventional system, often followed by discussions, is regarded as a turning point in the life of ethical products. The transition from being available in specific shops to being available in a supermarket chain implied that something had to be done to make these products recognisable and identifiable as “something different”: labels served this function. Environmental labels, organic labels, fair trade labels are among the many existing ones used for establishing a link between the person buying those products and the values these products stands for.

Following Luhmann's definition of trust, labels simplify the complexity of our consumers' role, guiding us into the jungle of symbols pervading the modern market of goods and services. They simplify our choices as they give us promptly the kind of information we need to have. Taking a stand opposite to the critics of new capitalism (such as Naomi Klein or the activist back the experience of the magazine Adbuster), we may argue that ethical/political consumption in supermarket times actually needs labels and need brands

Labels and brands function, in our every day shopping, as a kind of “traffic light”: fair trade label = green; Coca-cola=red.

But what if we find, one day, a bottle of coca-cola with the fair trade label?



Source: culture jamming of the authors.

### 3. “Culture jamming” ethical consumption

Culture jamming is a form of expression aimed at revealing the illusionary world created by advertisement and brands (Heath & Potter, 2005). Among the most

successful campaign of this counter culture is the one using the Nike logo for advertising child labour, or the American flag in which main corporations' logos take the place of "the stars".

**“Culture jamming** is the appropriation of a brand identity or advertising for subversive, often political intent (Carducci, 2006). Culture jamming plays with well known, respectable symbols transforming them into something else<sup>66</sup>.

The Nescafé box with the fair trade labels seems to belong to this kind of culture, as it “mixes up” antithetical symbols and concepts: one of the most controversial corporations for many years in the list of the boycotting campaigns for violation of worker rights and for promoting artificial milk among African women, and the one of wanting to promote justice and contrast the power of big corporations keeping small farmers into misery.



Source: [www.Nestle.co.uk/our responsibility](http://www.Nestle.co.uk/our%20responsibility)

Although Nestlé may benefit from this association, it is not certain that fair trade labelling will gain from it. Critics to this sceptical position may however argue that thanks to the Nestlé initiative, many more farmers are going to get a fair price for their coffee. As the leader of the UK fair-trade foundation said “we expect the addition of NESCAFÉ’ partners’ blend to bring a new wave of coffee drinkers to fair-trade, bringing more opportunities to more farmers in more countries (source: [www.nestle.co.uk](http://www.nestle.co.uk))

We may nevertheless consider the fact that the embrace between fair-trade and Nestlé, or other symbols of ethical consumption with questionable corporations, may generate at least some kind of uneasiness.

The Nestlé case moreover is not the only one indicating an increasing interest of established brands towards the ethical market. Chiquita, another company not famous indeed for its good reputation, has recently adopted a “green label” for its bananas (the

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<sup>66</sup> See, for instance, the journal Adbuster.

green frog), symbol of the rainforest alliance certification. An information brochure says: “*all the Chiquita bananas sold in your shop are certified by the Rainforest alliance, an independent volunteer organisation working for protecting the rainforest ecosystem and the people living there*”. Other sources of information however indicated that there are serious doubts about the fact that these bananas are actually environment and human friendly (Rostvåg Ulltveit-Moe- Natur og Ungdom/Miljøstiftelsen Genesis).

Among the examples of an increasing of “blurred boundaries” is the fact that “Body Shop-a leading company committed to animal and human rights- have become part of l’Oreal –a multinational corporation which has among its stakeholders Nestlé, criticised for animal testing and pollution<sup>67</sup>”.

### **3. Keeping a critical presence in ethical consumption**

”Trivialised discourses and the profusion of symbols and seals can lead to confusion or loss of consumers interest and trust” (Renard, 2003, p.94).

This consideration of Marie-Christine Renards, a researcher in the field of fair trade, makes explicit a relevant aspect related to the mainstreaming of ethical consumption: the fear of overloading and distrust. Trust relations are important dimensions in the relationship between consumers and the products they buy (Poppe and Kjærnes, 2003; Kjærnes, Lavik and Poppe, 2006) and they tend to be even more crucial- and vulnerable- in the case of ethical products.

As these products are promising something more and something different from conventional ones (and requires often additional money), the consequences of do not keeping up with these promises and expectations may turn out to be particularly negative. Discontent towards specific products may lead to a generalised distrust towards the ethical market in general.

But how can relations of trust be established and maintained?

In some qualitative studies among Norwegian consumers (Torjusen 2004, Terragni and Torjusen 2005, Vittersø, 2003), indicate several types of strategies used in everyday life were described. Some of them referred to formal systems, such as labelling or brands while others were based on personal relations and direct knowledge about the provenance of the food.

The importance of “someone standing by the product” was emphasised – whether this was communicated by means of a system, such as a labelling scheme, or in an informal way, for example directly from the farmer or butcher.

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<sup>67</sup> See [ethicalconsumer.com](http://ethicalconsumer.com)

Nowadays there is a plurality of labels promoted by different actors (TemaNord 2003:527). Requirements and controls are often stricter and transparent when an independent third part is behind the label. Which third part is considered accountable varies a lot across countries (Poppe and Kjærnes, 2003; Berg, 2000). Private labels may count on higher trust in UK, while in countries as Norway trust relations are strongly dependent upon the guarantee of public authorities. Trust in ethical products can also be mediated by NGOs', both in their role of certification body, importer or seller or simply "watch dog".

For a core of ethical consumers trust in ethical products will depend upon personal commitment to the "cause", opportunity to get and verify information and personal networks. However, as the market for ethical products expands, it is likely that the consumers buying these products will be more heterogenous than in its initial phase. Some interesting data at that regard emerge, for instance by a recent SIFO surveys, dealing, among others, with purchase of ethical products such as environmentally friendly labelled products, organic labelled products and fair trade labelled products (Terragni, Jacobsen, Vittersø and Torjusen, 2006). These three kinds of typologies of products differ significantly according to the length of their presence in the conventional market and the range of products available. Environmental friendly products (Swan label) are the ones with the longest presence and availability while fair trade products made their entrance in the Norwegian conventional market only few years ago and their assortment is by now, rather limited. On this premises we may assume that looking for fair trade products would imply higher "consumers' competence" (Berg, 2005) and commitment not needed to that degree when buying environmental friendly labelled products. The data from the survey confirm these assumptions, showing that fair trade products buyers are significantly more committed than others. They tend, in fact, more often to buy also the others types of ethical product considered in the survey (organic and environmental friendly). In addition, the ones buying fair trade products tend more often to boycott or buycott products and brands and participate to forms of protest via internet.

These data seems to suggest that as ethical consumerism expands, it will also became more articulated. Together with a core of highly committed consumers, other more loose forms of being an "ethical consumers" will emerge.

These different groups express specific needs and relations towards ethical products and- more in general- towards the phenomenon of ethical consumerism; the trust issue can, as well, be framed differently. While part of consumers may follow labels as a means for reducing uncertainty and therefore –once given trust to a specific labels- use this for dealing with everyday shopping, the core of ethical consumers may maintain a problematic approach towards the ethical market and be more prone to use "exit" or "voice" strategy in order to express distrust or protest.

This critical approach has an essential role for the existence of ethical consumption. As it helps in maintaining a link with the original values of alternative products, indicates new goals and new strategies for achieving it. It contribute to the maintenance of the market for ethical products as alternative and critical (and not a new market segment

for big corporations wanting to benefit from it) by endorsing a reflexive attitude towards all forms of consumptions, labels and brands.

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## **IV. TRANSFORMATIONS**

### **Mental ownership as an important aspect of consumer education to foster consumer citizenship**

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#### ***The power of the consumer with mental ownership to external issues***

The general background for the focus on the power of the consumer is very much related to the derived economic power, when consumers together change their consumer pattern. Normally, as a consumer you immediately think of what you get is what you pay for. This is about the quantity and quality of the goods and service you buy, compared to what you have to pay for it. This economic aspect is obvious for every one of us. What is less obvious for most people is that our choices can have much more influence on a wider scale, if our choices are not only related to this economic aspect, but include a concern for external issues compared to our immediate economic gain. A concern about this is behind the notion of consumer citizenship and about the societal influence the consumer can have, i.e. be a political consumer.

The so-called political consumer includes aspects of what he or she finds most appropriate to do according to own values and wishes of change. The most spectacular effect of the political consumer is the boycott of certain goods, brands, services or the like. This can be very efficient if many consumers go together and boycott a specific thing. A boycott needs to be joined by a rather high percentage of the relevant consumers. Publicity around the boycott is important to give the boycott an effect through the synchronization of the sudden change in consumer behavior patterns and the communication of what is behind it. The effect e.g. on a company has to come rather quick as a boycott is typical a time limited joint action.

The consumers' life as a political consumer is on the other side a much more complicated issue than just to follow a boycott of a product for a shorter time. This has to do with the situation of every citizen in an industrialized country: All kinds of shopping involve a lot of smaller or bigger decisions that could have a further impact than just to satisfy the immediate needs of the consumer for goods and services. At the same time most people feel they have more than enough to take care of and to take

into consideration so to bother oneself with issues and action not in our immediate reach isn't something that just happened.

As a consumer we are buying to own things, but can we feel 'ownership' to things we do not own? Yes, that is for sure. This article is about how important and useful the notion of 'mental ownership' is, especially if we make the best of that knowledge when we want to develop education. Mental ownership is here seen as an important aspect of consumer education, to foster consumer citizenship and builds on work discussed in more details in Breiting (in press).

The following indicates the potential of a more concerned focus on which mechanisms that build 'mental ownership' and hereby strengthen our engagement in problems and issues, not in our immediate interest as a consumer, fitting to the definition of a consumer citizen: *'A consumer citizen is an individual who makes choices based on ethical, social, economic and ecological considerations. The consumer citizen actively contributes to the maintenance of just and sustainable development by caring and acting responsibly on family, national and global levels.'* (Thoresen (ed.) 2005 p. 7).

### ***What is meant by mental ownership?***

When we feel ownership to things we care for, then it is because they are important for us. The notion of mental ownership has a lot in common with engagement, commitment and the feeling of responsibility. Let us take an example.

Maybe you have children attending a school. Most parents do not own their children's school but they can feel ownership to the school anyway. Their feeling of ownership will be stronger the more involved these parents are in the daily life of the school. They might sit in the board of the school and be involved in overall decisions about the school and have to handle conflicts and problems. Or they might be volunteering by joining school trips, school festivals etc. to support the work of the teachers and to benefit the children.

Let's say that a parent has worked very hard to achieve some change at the school through her position in the school board. If she is successful to achieve what she has aimed at, she will feel a strong mental ownership to the change at the school. This is an example of the general mechanism developing mental ownership: That the more people have been involved in decisions and the more they have invested their energy, time and work in a change, the more ownership they will feel to the change.

### **We can develop mental ownership to:**

#### **Physical things**

**Concrete products** (e.g. like you might produce in your work)

**Constructions**, like buildings, roads (e.g. bike paths)

**Ways of handling things**, e.g. a recycling system

### **Mental things**

**Ideas**, new ways of thinking, concepts,

**Mental products**: texts, formulations, music

**Solutions to problems**

**Problems and issues in general** (even if we do not have direct objective interest in these)

**Other people, problems related to them** (even if we do not know them personally)

*Fig. 1. Overview of categories we typical develop mental ownership to. In many cases the differentiation between ‘physical things’ and ‘mental things’ are not sharp.*

We develop mental ownership to physical things as well as to mental things, see fig. 1. Physical things to develop mental ownership to could be: Constructions, like buildings, roads (e.g. a bike path), and it can be ways of handling things, like a developed recycling system and facility. Mental things to develop mental ownership to could be: Ideas (new ways of thinking, concepts), mental products (texts, formulations, music), solutions to problems (a proposal to solve a common concrete problem), and even the problems themselves. It can be problems and issues in general, even if you do not have a direct objective interest in these, and it can be problems related to concrete people, even if you do not know them personally.

When people first have developed mental ownership to a change, they will feel some kind of responsibility to keep that change in a ‘healthy’ state, meaning that they will tend to nurse and continuously take care to support this change or even to try to bring it further forward.

### ***Lessons from evaluating a developmental project***

Some years ago I headed a so-called ‘midterm review’ of a big Danish funded development aid project in Namibia, The Life Science Project, (Breiting, Imene & Macfarlane, 1997). Our review team synthesized the experience from having interviewed a large part of stakeholders on all levels, concerning their engagement in

the changes, before and during the project, and our estimation of how sustainable these people's engagement might be, and what factors might be influential for that. Fig. 2 shows aspects to take into account when starting any initiative based on the results from Namibia. In the present case it would be initiatives concerning consumer education.

### **List of aspects to take into account when starting any initiative**

- \* If all involved participate in the goal setting or strategy formulation, etc.
- \* If all concerned are regarded as “equal” partners in the process.
- \* If all have a direct interest in the changes.
- \* If those involved give input to the process.
- \* If they can find their “fingerprint” in the final outcome.
- \* If they receive some form of recognition for their contribution to the process.

(After Breiting, Imene & Macfarlane: Life Science Project Midterm Review. 1997).

*Fig. 2. List of aspects to take into account when designing a new initiative to increase the engagement in the process and the sustainability of achieved changes, mostly derived from mechanisms of enhancing the development of mental ownership among the stakeholders.*

### ***How to make use of mental ownership in consumer education?***

These examples of mechanisms related to the development of mental ownership might seem far away from our efforts with consumer education and citizenship in education. But the point is that the mechanisms are of a general nature and as we want to engage young and older people in issues that are outside their daily duties and immediate economic gain we need approaches to help engage people in such external issues. And we want to help people to develop a more persistent interest in such issues, also lasting after the educational efforts have ended.

Awareness of the mechanisms of mental ownership can be taken into account related to a number of levels for the development of consumer education and consumer citizenship:

**In class:****a.**

You can help your learners to be much more engaged in the daily teaching situation by making use of the aspects that foster mental ownership, just follow fig. 2.

**b.**

You can help your learners to be engaged in issues that are not in their immediate objective interest by applying the principles in fig. 2: First you need to focus the attention of the learners to the potential of us all as ‘political consumers’. Then let them dig deeper into an issue of their own choice and elaborate some possible actions according to what they want to achieve. Help them to go through with some real actions to achieve some changes. Create frames for their social recognition and they will start to feel ownership to the issues they have been working with – a good step forward to develop as active reflective consumers in society (consumer citizenship).

**In project development:**

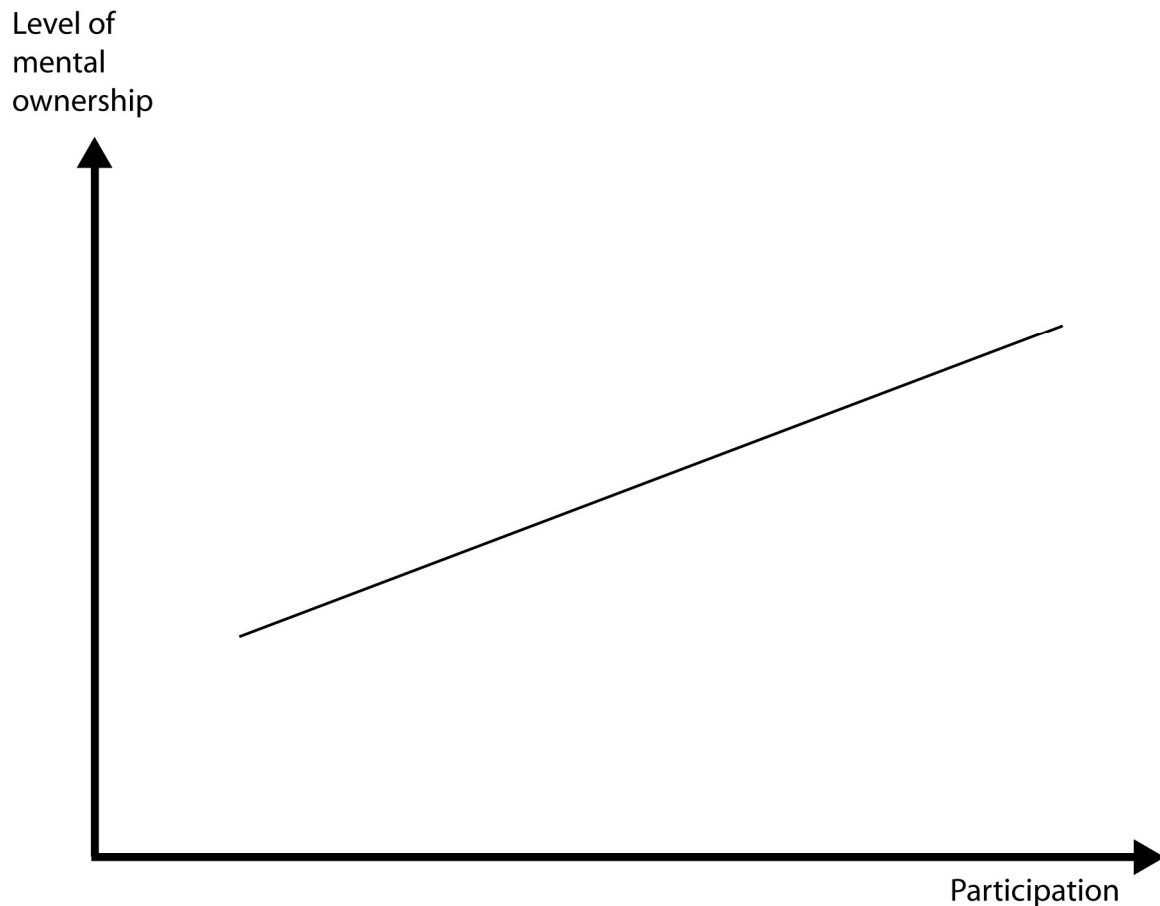
Make use of each aspect mentioned in the list of fig. 2 in your design and practice of your project intervention and this will probably develop a good level of mental ownership among all participants and stakeholders.

The aspect mentioned under ‘b’ is the real important pedagogical perspective to achieve a wider interest among the learners to issues not in their immediate ‘cost-benefit’ thinking as a consumer. It could be global issues, issues about equality and justice, issues about effects from consumption far from now in time, etc.

***Participation is the key to mental ownership***

In short we can say that mental ownership is a quality we want to obtain and appropriate participation is part of the solution to achieve mental ownership. Again, we can take a glance on the list in fig. 2 and realize that most of the points are aspects of participation in such a way that the participants are having a real influence and are respected for it. Different levels of participation and a discussion of the pitfalls related to the notion of participation are discussed in Hart (1992).

There is also an important two way relationship between participation and the level of mental ownership to a specific issue. The more and the better participation, the more mental ownership will develop. And the more mental ownership you have developed to the specific issue, the more you will want to be involved, i.e. to participate. Tentatively it can be illustrated like in fig. 3.



*Fig. 3. How participation and the development of mental ownership can be thought to be linked together, and how the willingness to participate derives from increased level of mental ownership. (After Breiting, in press.)*

In an educational setting participation is a mixture of being an individual with own values and ideas and at the same time being a member of a group having to share ideas and a common responsibility. The generated experience from having been acting alone and together concerning an identified issue will form an important contribution to the participants development of action competence (Jensen & Schnack, 1997), in the way that they will develop a higher self-esteem and believe in own influence and accordingly a trust in their capacity to be able to change something (Breiting & Mogensen, 1999). All these are important aspects of consumer citizenship education.

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<http://www.hihm.no/concit>

## Life skills education in Latvia

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Social changes in Latvia related to accession to the European Union requires purposeful formation of the education system. This process is oriented to personality development being capable of self-determination and independence to choose one's own strategy for development and self-realization in the free market economy. A variety of scientific conceptions, ideological and religious views, moral judgments, artistic forms and trends makes an individual to study oneself, form one's own position and defend it [2].

Social-economic changes occur in the society, individuals' attitude and readiness change, values and aims transform. Therefore, it is necessary to be aware of means, ways, individual qualities and factors facilitating more effective goal-orientation and self-awareness living in the modern dynamic society.

Consequently, there is an urgent necessity for creating such educational environment in which:

- *Stable moral and spiritual values would be formed;*
- *Students would be able to adapt to the changing world;*
- *Development of a physically fit and mentally stable individual would be ensured;*
- *A desire for continuous and conscious self-development would be created;*
- *The ability of self-exploration and self-awareness would be developed.*

In Latvia there is observed the process of integration and formation of the civil society having an active lifestyle (communication skills, decision-making skills, creative skills, etc.) as one of the trends in the society facilitating higher life quality for each individual.[6]

In order to fulfill this complicated task a teacher must not only know his/her subject, but also be able to create professionally a learning environment ensuring an effective teaching-learning process, facilitating awareness of moral and ethical norms and developing individual's value system as well as encouraging pupil's personality development and readiness for life, etc.

Rapidly changing society requires new knowledge, skills, abilities and approaches in various life spheres. Poor social-economic environment, easy access to addictive substances, and unfavorable contacts are domineering in the society, especially in Latgale. On the individual level, the prevailing ones are disposition to searching "cool experiences", inability to solve problems, inability to meet requirements of the society, inability to integrate into society and form a civil society.



Every member of the society is expected to have not only professional, but also emotional and social competence as well as an active lifestyle, meaning, one's ability to understand, express and manage one's emotional and social life to be able to adjust to changes in complicated everyday life, successfully execute one's duties at the workplace, be an active participant in social life and be happy in one's private life. In this process the most relevant factor is training teachers facilitating pupils to master life skills and socialization [4].

A specific situation is observed in Latgale, where 50% of the inhabitants living and working there are Latvians and 50% belong to minorities. This region still faces the highest level of unemployment in Europe (25-28%). Pupils in Latgale ought to be provided education of high quality to facilitate regional development, social integration, and competitiveness in the labor market not only as agricultural workers in European countries, but also as scholarly and knowledgeable entrepreneurs. Therefore, the teachers in Latgale must develop their pedagogical mastery, cooperation skills, and ability to develop pupils in all seven educating aspects envisaged by the new basic education standard which came into force on September 1, 2005 and which emphasized the instrumental side of education. The teacher must be able not only to provide knowledge in the specific subject, but also improve pupils' general skills enabling them to act successfully in well-known and unknown situations as well as be able to apply modern information technologies and communicate bilingually in everyday work teaching a specific subject.

The National Basic Education Standard of the Republic of Latvia (1998) states two main aims of education:

- facilitation of pupils harmonic personality formation and development,
- ensuring acquisition of the skills necessary for the social and individual life.

These aims indicate the necessity for basic education to emphasize knowledge and skills crucial for practical life, which are specified in the tasks of education:

- to learn to understand, examine and evaluate one's skills in different fields and develop them,
- to develop communication and cooperation skills,
- to form a positive attitude towards oneself and others [1].

The execution of the tasks of education put forward leads to the aim of education—a physically fit, intellectually and emotionally developed and harmonic personality. A life skills approach just emphasizes the emotional and social competence including a decision-making process, an active life style and health education left aside in the old educational system.

The new basic education standard states the main aspects of education reflecting development of individual's general skills and abilities:

- self-expression and creative aspect,
- analytically critical aspect,
- ethical and aesthetical aspect,
- cooperation aspect,
- communication aspect,
- learning and practical activities aspect,
- mathematical aspect.

A life skills approach provides students knowledge as well as develops attitudes and real practical life skills, thus all around the world it is recognized as the most effective approach to prevention of drug and other addictive substances abuse.

The basic standpoints of life skills education were developed in the USA, and they have a profound social-philosophical basis. The life skills conception is based upon the ideas about changes of the social paradigm in the world—the industrial, manufacture-oriented society today is being gradually replaced by the information society domineered by information technologies. It brings significant changes into all crucial spheres of individuals’ life: learning sphere, work and recreation sphere, human relations sphere, self-development and others’ development sphere [see Table 1]. In order to live and function in the information society effectively, each individual must accept these changes and must be able to adjust to them. Of course, it requires acquisition of new life skills and significant improvement of the traditional skills [3].

Table 1 [3]

<b>Paradigm of the industrial era vs. Paradigm of the information era (from “Life Skills Associates”)</b>	
<b>Learning sphere</b>	
<b>Paradigm of the industrial era</b>	<b>Paradigm of the information era</b>
Emphasis on learning facts. Educational institutions are hierarchical and commanding. Nationally dictated, centralized syllabus. Stereotypes and prejudices in individuals’ judgments. Reaching definite norms is relevant.  Emphasis on intellectual development.  Focus on abstract knowledge.  Education can be provided only at school. Didacticism. No choices. Yes, but ...	Emphasis on learning skills. Teachers and students mutually cooperate in the learning process. Locally created syllabus. Getting rid of prejudice and stereotypes. Excellence and brilliance in performance are relevant. Emphasis on harmonic development: intellectual, emotional, social. Specific experience and skills are of the same value as knowledge. Life long learning. Involvement. More possibilities, choices. Yes, and ...
<b>Relations sphere</b>	
<b>Paradigm of the industrial era</b>	<b>Paradigm of the information era</b>
Stereotypic views on gender roles.  The value of relations is determined by their	Flexible views on gender roles: behavior is determined by one’s needs, interests and skills, not gender.

duration. Relations between people according to the status in hierarchy.	The value of relations is determined by the quality of the acquired experience. Cooperation between the like-minded individuals.
<b>Work and recreation sphere</b>	
<b>Paradigm of the industrial era</b>	<b>Paradigm of the information era</b>
Competition is facilitated. Stability and security are two major driving forces.  Career can be only vertical. Work-oriented life.	Cooperation is facilitated. Striving for changes and growth are the main driving forces. Various career possibilities and models. Harmonic life.
<b>Self-development and others' development sphere</b>	
<b>Paradigm of the industrial era</b>	<b>Paradigm of the information era</b>
Assistance is provided by institutions and professionals. Conformism and adaptation are highly valued. Focus on elimination of illnesses. Advice and direct help. Problems must be eradicated. Changes must be avoided. Transition to the new can be complicated and dangerous.  Emotions must be discussed.	Self-assistance networks, mutual help. Pluralism and innovations are highly valued. Focus on health promotion. Consultations and support. Problems are acceptable, they must be solved. Changes must be managed. Transition to the new provides a possibility for growth. Emotions must be controlled and directed.

As you can see in the table mentioned above, the world in the third millennium will significantly differ from the world people are used to, although many new features are observed in some groups of society even nowadays making people reconsider their stereotypical views, attitudes and skills. The life in the new millennium will require a wide range of life skills in each of the social life spheres mentioned above.

Individuals are involved in social life by mastering **social roles** in the process of socialization. Social roles are relatively different behavior models accepted in a historically definite society, in which individuals perform within various life spheres more or less (depending on individuals and circumstances) in compliance with the norms accepted in the society.

There are a lot of social roles, however, so called “life roles” can be discussed, e.g., social roles to be mastered by every individual and to be played all the life or at least the largest part of one’s life. The following social roles can be considered as “life roles” in the information society:

- individual who learns,

- individual who relaxes and entertains oneself,
- householder, consumer, employee,
- friend, child, parent,
- spouse,
- citizen, etc.

In order to perform various life roles effectively, specific skills are necessary. Skills, which are important in every life role, can be called life skills [5].

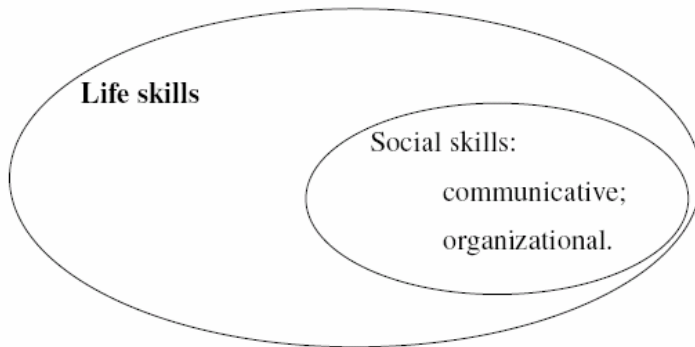


Figure 1 Social skills as a core of life skills

Life skills, which in modern society are considered to be the main ones and are necessary for fulfillment of any role in life, are as follows:

- \_ objective self-evaluation,
- \_ understanding one's own and others' emotions,
- \_ being self-assured and responsible,
- \_ taking responsibility,
- \_ forming relationships,
- \_ putting oneself in the other's situation,
- \_ being tolerant to the different,
- \_ effective communication,
- \_ resisting psychological pressure,
- \_ cooperation/collaboration,
- \_ creative and critical thinking,
- \_ making decisions.

Overall, life skills are an ability to have a positive behavior according to the conditions enabling an individual to cope with the requirements put forward by everyday life [5].

It, in its turn, indicates the necessity for training teachers being able to implement in their subjects and out-of-class activities the aspects mentioned above.

Despite the fact that an education reform was started in comprehensive schools in Latvia on September 1, 2005, only in December, 2004 there was published a new basic education standard and on April 1, 2005 there were published syllabuses in the Internet. This approach did not ensure maximum exploration of these documents as up to this moment teachers had not been trained for implementation of general basic skills in subjects determined by the standard. Besides, the syllabuses were of a limited access to rural teachers of Latgale as they were published only in the Internet. Many rural teachers in Latgale either have no access to the Internet every day or lack basic computer literacy. The basic education standard and syllabuses contain numerous

novelties and a changed approach to the teaching process. A teacher must teach a pupil, not a subject, prepare a pupil for further socialization facilitating formation of a society of information in general.

In 2001 the Latvia State Primary Education Standard emphasized the necessity to organize the teaching-learning process in such a way that a pupil not only acquires knowledge in a definite field, but also simultaneously develops general skills. In the socialization process a teacher is a part of the environment with his/her own value system, a mediator between the macro and micro environment in implementation of material and spiritual culture. A teacher helps pupils in the process of life skills and value formation.

The students – prospective teachers of Rezekne Higher Education Institution (Latvia) of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th year took part in a survey. The total number of respondents was 50 students.

Within the framework of the questionnaire it was found out how they understand the term “life skills” (see Fig. 2)

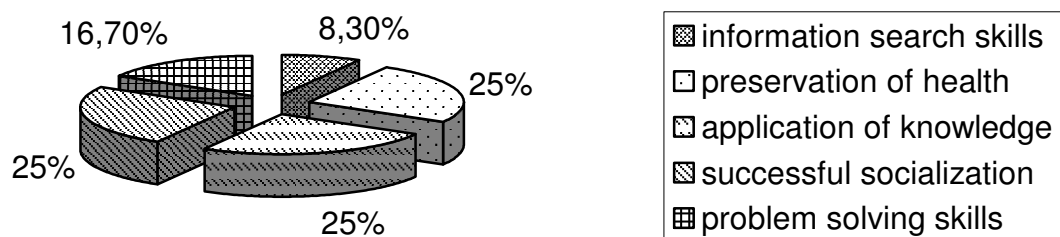


Figure 2. Life skills are ...

Figure 2 depicts five most important life skills nowadays in prospective teachers’ opinion: successful socialization, preservation of health, knowledge application skills, problem solving skills, information search skills, etc.

Prospective teachers indicated in their questionnaires that in their opinion life skills are pupils’ ability to behave positively in accordance to the circumstances enabling them cope with requirements put forward by everyday life. Others mentioned that mastering life skills enabled them to make decisions on the issues related to their lives taking responsibility for their choices and acting in compliance to the choice. Some students claimed that these skills are a prerequisite for adjusting to the changes in society, compete in the labor market, form successful relations with people and be active participants of the social life.

Other results of the questionnaire reflect what skills prospective teachers have mastered themselves during their studies at Rezekne Higher Education Institution (see Fig. 3).

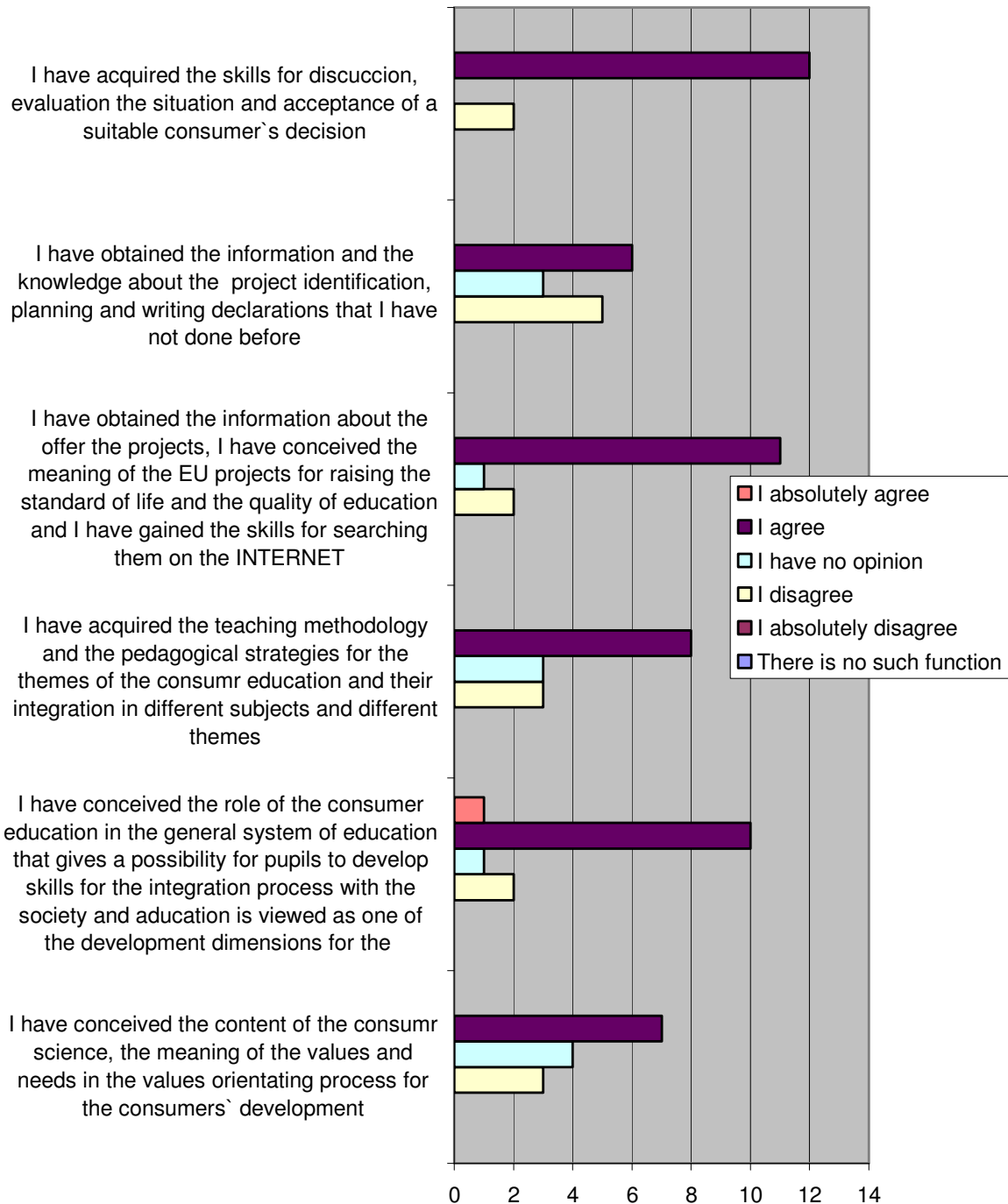


Figure 3. Results of the questionnaire

Figure 3 shows that in order to teach a specific subject at school applying the skills stated by the basic education standard a teacher must master these skills more

profoundly, be able to search for information, use computers, be competent regarding offers provided by the European Union, drafting projects, etc. [8].

### **Discussion:**

1. Life skills education in European countries
2. The importance of life skills education within the popularization of active way of life in different age groups as well as creating skills and abilities in order to prevent residents from involving into risk groups (HIV, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, etc.).

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# **The contribution of non-farm small-medium enterprises to rural development**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Rural areas are affected significantly by social and economic changes. Specifically, the economy of rural areas is becoming more diversified as the service sector grows significantly at the expense of agriculture. The dynamics of rural changes observed are the subject of many studies for policy formulation and program implementation. Devising a rural development policy involves making political choices to ease community adjustments to structural economic changes. The development of these policies requires information on rural trends on economic and societal conditions. The objective of the present study was to examine the contribution of the non-farm small-medium enterprises in social and economic changes in the rural area of Paiania in Greece. The results of the present study indicate that the development of non-farm small-medium enterprises contributes to the local development of the rural area of Paiania in Greece.

## ***Introduction***

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises or SMEs are companies whose headcount or turnover falls below certain limits. The majority of the workforce is employed by SMEs. Despite the fact that governments and many multinational organisations target this group for special financial business support, there is no single definition for a SME. According to the European Commission a small enterprise has a headcount of fewer than 50, and a turnover or balance sheet total of not more than €10 million. A medium-sized enterprise has a headcount of fewer than 250 and a turnover of not more than €50 million or a balance sheet total of not more than €43 million. Also, the Commission has a third category called Micro Enterprises. A micro enterprise has a headcount of fewer than 10, and a turnover or balance sheet total of not more than €2 million. The Commission considers application of this definition by Member States, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Investment Fund (EIF) to be an aid to improving consistency and effectiveness of policies targeting SMEs (European Commission, 2003).



At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was believed that small-medium enterprises contributed to the increase of employment and income. Schumpeter in 1911 said that small-medium enterprises introduce products and new methods of production into the market as well being able to locate new sources, in order to obtain primary supplies. In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the developed countries it was believed that small-medium enterprises were connected with low economic development, because it was observed that they had incompetent management, inefficient organisation and they used old technology. Therefore, at that time small-medium enterprises were not included in the governmental policy for industrial development (Mason and Harrison, 1990; Stanworth and Gray, 1991). According to Storey (1991) that period was characterised by the development of big industry located in specific places. After WWII, intellectuals at that time had persuaded politicians that the future of economic development would depend on the establishment of big enterprises (Thurik and Wennekers, 2001). It was not until the late 1970's, that economic analysts and policy makers started to recognise the importance of small-medium enterprises in economic development (Moha and Beal, 2000). One important reason for that change was the publication of the Bolton Report in 1971, which provided evidence for the contribution of the small-medium enterprises to economic development (Curran, 1999).

At the beginning of the 1980's there was a big change in policy formulation for small-medium enterprises, such as less strict rules and regulations and supportive policy for founding small-medium enterprises. Industries preferred to be divided in to different branches and each branch was to be located in different areas. Nowadays, small-medium enterprises belong to the economic core of a country (Stanworth and Gray, 1991). Recent studies show that small-medium enterprises are more flexible in adapting to new markets demands in comparison with big enterprises, they employ more employees per unit of capital, they contribute to a more fair distribution of income and they affect in a positive way the local development (Moha, 1999; Audretsch and Thurik, 2000).

In the European Union (E.U.) every year more than 1,000,000 new small-medium enterprises are founded. In 1996 there were 19 million small-medium enterprises in E.U. with more than 110 millions employees. Ninety three percent of these enterprises employed fewer than 10 employees while only 1% employed more than 50 employees (Storey, 1994, ENSR, 1997). It is considered that small-medium enterprises contribute greatly to European economic development since they supply 60% to 80% of the new positions annually (Department of Trade and Industry, 1998).

In Greece, most of the small-medium enterprises employ fewer than 10 people and they are mostly family business. Furthermore, it is more affordable for most of these small-medium enterprises to be launched in rural areas, and there is a tendency for people to abandon farming, which is a difficult occupation, and to search for employment opportunities in small-medium enterprises. Therefore, rural areas are affected significantly by those social and economic changes and the economy of rural areas is becoming more diversified as small-medium enterprises grow significantly at

the expense of agriculture. The objective of the present study was to examine the contribution of the non-farm small-medium enterprises in social and economic changes in the rural area of Paiania in Greece.

### ***Materials and Methods***

Data on the characteristics of the employees and the owners of the enterprises along with their business management practices were collected through a questionnaire survey during the summer of 2004. Investigators on location completed the questionnaires by visiting the registered non-farm small-medium enterprises and directly interviewing the owners in order to avoid misunderstanding in the completion of the questionnaires.

The statistical frame of the survey was based on the census of 392 non-farm small-medium enterprises registered with the Municipality of the target area of Paiania. A stratified random sampling of small-medium enterprises by size was used. Specifically, the total population of 392 registered small-medium enterprises was classified into three groups based on the size of the number of employees. The first group comprised of 313 small enterprises with less than 10 employees, the second group comprised of 57 medium enterprises with 10 to 49 employees, and the third group comprised of 22 enterprises with more than 50 up to 249 employees. The size of the draw on sample in the study was 235 small-medium enterprises, which covered 60% of the total population of registered small-medium enterprises in the target area. The sample included 50% (156) of the enterprises in the first group and all the enterprises in the second and third group (79). The number of the collected questionnaires was 133. The rest of the enterprises declined to participate in the study. Therefore, the size of the sample used in the study was 133 small-medium enterprises, which covered 34% of the total population of registered small-medium enterprises in the target area. The sample included 25% (79) of the enterprises in the first group, 70% (40) in the second group and 64% (14) in the third group.

The data collected were analysed by using descriptive statistics for calculating the means and standard deviations of continuous variables and the frequencies and percentages of discrete variables.

The variables used to describe the contribution of small-medium enterprises in economical changes in a rural area (dependent variables) as well as the characteristics of the employees and the owners of the enterprises along with the characteristics of the enterprises (independent variables) are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Social and economic variables of non-farm small-medium enterprises in the rural area of Paiania in Greece

Dependent Variables	Independent Variables		
<i>Annual gross income</i> <i>Exports</i>	<b>Demographic Characteristics</b>  <i>Age of owners</i> <i>Number of employees</i>	<b>Economic Characteristics</b>  <i>Export activity</i>  <i>Subsidies (European Union funding)</i>	<u>Characteristics of the Enterprises</u>
			<b>Promotions</b>  <i>Use of ISO</i>  <i>Use of materials produced locally</i>  <i>Legal entity (Limited company (S.A.))</i>  <i>Size of enterprise (less than 10 employees)</i>

The measurements on the dependent variables were distributed closely to normal probability law and therefore were analysed by linear and binary logistic regression models having the annual gross income or the exports as the depended variable and all others continuous variables as independent. Final models formed by backwards selection were examined for their capacity to explain the variations of the depended variable  $Y_i$  (Neter, 1980; Agresti et al., 1979) as follows:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \beta_5 X_{5i} + \beta_6 X_{6i} + \varepsilon_i$$

Furthermore, the model was tested against the basic assumptions. The  $\varepsilon_i$  was found to be identically and independently distributed with  $N(0, \sigma^2)$ , while no signs of heteroscedasticity and multicollinearity were detected.

## Results

### Descriptive statistics:

The results from the descriptive statistics showed that non-farm small-medium enterprises in the area of Paiania are mainly family operated (65%) and owned by locals (51%), so the income generated by these enterprises remains and it is consumed in the community (56%). Also, 33% of these enterprises had employed 1 up to 10 employees. Furthermore, 50% of these enterprises had hired local employees and so

they contribute to the decrease of the local unemployment. Finally, some of these enterprises have export activities (18%), which help to increase local production.

The profile of the typical owner of the enterprises that emerged from this study was that of a man (70%) aged 30-44 years old (50%). The educational level of the male owners was mostly high school (26%) and university (22%), while for women owners it was mainly high school (29%). The annual gross income for 43.6% of the enterprises was up to € 100,000, for 28.6% of the enterprises was more than € 1,000,000, and for the rest it was between € 100,000 and € 1,000,000. Most of the owners answered that their clients are locals (53%). Also, most of the owners (53%) and the employees (69%) said that they desired the development of a better infrastructure in the area, that would ensure easier transportation of people and goods, which will contribute to the growth of the enterprises.

### Regression analysis:

Linear and logistic regression models were initially analysed to investigate the direct effects of the social and economical variables on annual gross income and exports respectively of small medium enterprises. Following are the results of these backward selection analyses.

1. The equation for the effects of demographic and economic characteristics and characteristics of the enterprises on the annual gross income of small- medium enterprises was the following:

$$\ln \text{ annual gross income} = 11.32 + 0.01 \text{ number of employees} + 0.88 \text{ exports} + 1.71 \text{ promotions} + 0.93 \text{ use of ISO} + 0.009 \text{ use of materials produced locally} + 1.72 \text{ legal entity}$$

The result of the regression analyses of the above equation is presented in Table 2. The *number of employees*, *exports*, *promotions*, *use of ISO*, *use of materials produced locally* and *legal entity* were associated with 0.01, 0.88, 1.71, 0.93, 0.009 and 1.72 increase of *annual gross income* respectively. The overall capacity of the model to explain variations in annual gross income was measured to be 60,7% ( $R^2=0.607$ ).

Table 2. Regression predicting the annual gross income of non-farm small-medium enterprises (N=133)

Variables	$\beta$	<i>t-statistics</i>
<i>Constant</i>	11.32***	52.88
Number of employees	0.01***	2.63
<i>Exports</i>	0.88**	2.37
<i>Promotions</i>	1.71**	2.42
<i>Use of ISO</i>	0.93***	2.7
Use of materials produced locally	0.009**	2.44
Legal entity	1.72***	4.92
R-square	0.607	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05

2. The equation for the effects of demographic and economic characteristics and characteristics of the enterprises on exports of small medium enterprises was the following:

$$n \text{ exports} = -7.468 + 1.04 \text{ subsidies} + 1.25 \text{ use of ISO} + 0.12 \text{ age of owners} - 3.09 \text{ size of enterprise}$$

The result of the regression analyses of the above equation is presented in Table 3. The *subsidies*, *use of ISO* and *age of owners* were associated with 1.04, 1.25 and 0.12, increase of *export activity* respectively, while the *size of enterprise (less than 10 employees)* variable was associated with a 3.09 decrease of *export activity*. The overall capacity of the model to explain variations in export activity was measured to be 59,2% ( $R^2=0.592$ ).

Table 3. Logistic regression predicting the export activity of small-medium enterprises (N=133)

Variables	$\beta$	$\chi^2$
<i>Constant</i>	-7.468***	12,18
<i>Subsidies</i>	1.04**	2.55
<i>Use of ISO</i>	1.25**	3.43
<i>Age of owners</i>	0.12***	9.92
<i>Size of enterprise</i>	-3.09***	7.80
R-square	0.592	

\*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$

In addition, the analysis of more linear and logistic models showed that enterprises, which received E.U. funding, used ISO systems and their owners were of a young age and more capable to export goods. Also in the case of S.A. enterprises, the more employees they had the higher their annual gross income was. Furthermore, enterprises with export activities which using locally produced materials had higher annual gross income. Finally, enterprises whose owners were knowledgeable on new technologies and offered promotions to their employees had higher annual gross income and contributed more to local development.

### **Conclusion**

Rural areas are continuously in search of new opportunities for economic development. This study examines the role of non-farm small-medium enterprises as a part of rural system livelihood, which revitalizes rural areas and prevents their desertion. The results of the present study indicate that the development of non-farm small-medium enterprises contributes to the local development of the rural area of Paiania in Greece. In addition, the study outlines the involvement of the local population in enterprises activities in order to become better financially and improve their well-being. The existence of non-farm income sources and assets is of a great importance for a successful local development.

Small enterprises, as a part of livelihood system within the rural sector, can be an appropriate 'tool' for integrated local development in socio-economic rural areas. While rural areas are being diversified, there must be an attempt to avoid the autonomous development of small enterprises and to combine enterprises with the primary sector, in order to give the locals the ability to become financially stronger and to become socially reinstated, without the risk of degenerating the rural environment. As far as the relationship between sustainable livelihoods of rural areas and small enterprises is concerned, small enterprises are a desirable policy objective, which can be one of the profitable alternatives to improve livelihood security and to raise living standards.

As far as the role of non-farm small enterprises in the local development this study showed that non-farm small enterprises contribute to the local development of the area of Paiania, because these enterprises are mainly family operated and owned by locals, so the income generated by these enterprises remains and it is consumed in the community. Also, some of these enterprises have export activities, which help to increase local production and furthermore, since they hire local employees, contribute to the decrease of unemployment. Furthermore, small enterprises and their local owners are more willing to have local clients and there is less risk for small enterprises to be relocated in comparison with large enterprises that employ many employees. Also, the owners and the employees in these enterprises wanted the development of a better infrastructure and the use of new technology in the area that would ensure easier transportation of people and goods, which would contribute to local development.

However, in order to ease community adjustments to structural economic changes, it is of a great importance to devise a rural development policy that involves making political choices. The development of these policies requires information on rural trends on economic and societal conditions in order to choose the right tax policy for small-medium enterprises, as well as to ease the administrative hassles for the establishment of new small-medium enterprises. Finally, information about new technology and possibilities for the use of national and European funds should be easily accessible and provided by the local authorities. Consequently, small-medium enterprises with the appropriate governmental policy can contribute to the local development.

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# **Consumer citizenship and the mediated public discourse**

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## ***Introduction***

Advances in new information and communication technologies have dramatically changed the conduct and context of consumer public discourses. New technologies and delivery systems have fundamentally altered spaces of consumption as well as created new spheres of human discourses. Technology as such has the potential to bring enormous power to consumer citizens. However, this latent power of technology would not fulfil that potential without citizens themselves taking a more active role in the utilisation of the ‘new spaces’ provided. While some significant limitations do remain, this paper argues that the impact of technology on the society is evident, and it is through the same new technology that the consumer society can reinvigorate itself, by utilising the spaces and mechanisms provided by technology for more participatory forms of citizenship, whereby people act like citizens rather than just consumers.

The main purpose of this paper is thus to examine how information and communication technologies can be harnessed for more productive and engaged public discourses. With a basis on comparisons on Internet usages in Norway and Turkey, the paper discusses how discursive interaction is fostered through technologies in a mediated world. How can the information and communication technologies be used to promote rationale-critical public debate involving the widest possible citizen participation? The paper also examines the limitations and implications of mediated discourses to those without the prerequisite digital competences and access to information and communication technologies.

## ***Conceptualising Consumer Citizenship***

The concepts of ‘the consumer’ and ‘the citizen’, dominate major discourses on consumption and citizenship. The ongoing processes of globalisation and the international information and communication networks are reconstituting virtually every sphere of life. Globalisation has seen a reconstitution of national economies, political and cultural relationships (Urry, 1999:311). It has also impacted on consumption patterns, through the creation of global money markets, the Internet, globally organised corporations, global celebrities and global citizens. Globalisation



therefore seems to be a challenge to the notion of citizenship in that it goes beyond the nation state. As Urry has noted, the concept of citizenship has been based upon the notion of the bounded society (Urry, 1999:312). Issues of concern to the citizens have primarily been located within national boundaries, where the state exercised its sovereignty on the issues of rights and responsibilities of its citizens and institutions of society. Greater global interdependence and the birth of multi-national states such as the European Union have implications on how the citizenship is understood. Processes of globalisation are thus transforming this conception of citizenship and generating new forms of citizenship (Held et al, 1999). Concepts such as global citizenship, cosmopolitan citizenship, and cultural citizenship indicate the variety of citizenships that have emerged in recent times.

Consumer citizenship is one such concept that has emerged in the contemporary world. Imbued in the notion of consumer citizenship are the various constructions of consumerism, and various notions of citizenship. The scope of consumer citizenship has expanded greatly in recent years and some researchers even argue that a clear distinction between citizen and consumer roles in public life is increasingly difficult to establish (Scammel, 2000). Consumer citizenship thus goes beyond “the rights of people to be provided with appropriate goods, services and information by both the private and public sectors” (Stevenson, 1997). It also includes social responsibility and the participation of citizens in the public sphere.

The modern individual shelters many different identities –like being student, teacher, officer, citizen, parent, producer, consumer etc.– all at the same time; and he/she can perform the roles of these various identities only in predetermined spheres which are always separated from each other with definite lines. As a consequence of contrasts and intersections between the qualities of the identity of citizenship and the identity of consumer, the identity of consumer-citizen emerges. In modern times citizenship is not an identity which presents a possibility of an active political life with a certain ethics and conscience of duty directed at self-emancipation. It is a passive identity which is defined in terms of certain rights. Neo-liberalism which spread all over the globe after 1980’s created the self-managing, enterprising, model citizen of neo-liberal societies who shoulders the responsibility for maintaining social order through his or her “good” choices. (Slater, 1997, Cronin 2000, Zukin 2004). Here, consumption is presented not as an option but as a duty and responsibility of consumer citizen (Baudrillard 1998; Consumer Society, Zukin 2004).

Public spaces provide citizens the opportunity for emancipatory act which is participating in public discourse. Isolation of the act of consumption from public space results in the neglecting of social, political and ecological aspects of consumption. In modern societies communicative spaces are a prerequisite for citizen participation in the public sphere. Traditional mass media have been serving as communication platforms enabling citizens to participate in various capacities. The mass media function as mediators of consumer discourses. However, the media have certain technical and institutional limitations in the mediation of discourses. The centralisation and commercialisation of the media have affected the mediation of public discourses.

In recent times, much has been said about the possibilities of information and information technologies, especially the Internet, in providing public spaces which enable participation and deliberation. Can the cyberspace provide sites of rationale-critical discourses?

### ***Internet Emerging Opportunities***

Information and communication technologies permeate virtually every sphere of human life in contemporary societies and are speeding up a reconfiguration of production and consumption processes. Consequently, technological developments have significantly impacted on the conceptions of consumer citizenship in that they accentuates and speeds up the processes of globalisation, through networking of corporations that embody globalisation, rise to global production and consumption processes. Technology is increasingly influencing every aspect of our lives: transformations of labour markets, food, travel, leisure, social relations and consumption patterns, as well as redefining consumer rights. Castells captures the social implications of technology in his third volume when he notes that:

In the last quarter of the twentieth century, a technological revolution, centred around information, transformed the way we think, we produce, we consume, we trade, we manage, we communicate, we live, we die, we make war, and we make love (Castells 2000:1).

A major question that comes up in contemporary social theory is on the social impacts information and communication technologies. The impact of the Internet on consumers is that it has increased the proportion of computer-mediated communication and computer-mediated consumption. As Frissen has noted, “computer-mediated communication has become part of all the relationships and networks people are involved in...” (Frissen, 2004:31). Therefore in relation to consumer citizenship we can ask if the Internet provide consumer citizens with opportunities for improved communicative spaces. How does the Internet impact on consumer citizenship in terms of ‘*opportunities*’ for engagement, ‘*knowledge*’ and prerequisite ‘*competence*’ required for sustained engagement in consumer-related issues? Can the Internet, be a public space which enables consumer citizens’ participation and deliberation? We may distinguish two positions in attempts to answer this question, an optimistic empowerment thesis and a pessimistic disempowerment thesis. In this case information and communication technology, especially the Internet, have an ambivalent relationship with consumer citizenship.

There is optimism that information and communication technologies offers unlimited possibilities for the consumer citizens, within both the local and global context. As Couldry has argued, “the analysis of consumption cannot ignore emerging questions about the spaces of public connection and participation - what should participation consist of and on what scale(s) should it act” (Couldry 2004: 24). The Internet with its potential to transcend geographical and physical barriers will increase participation of consumer citizens, by creating discursive spaces, and hence facilitate participatory consumerism. DeSouza and Williamson (2002: 2) offer an optimistic view of the opportunities presented by the Internet arguing that; “whilst the Internet’s role in defining future social structures stems from the centrality of information and

communication, such a dispersed environment has the potential to allow differently constructed discursive spaces to emerge.”

Another way of thinking about the utility of the Internet in relation to consumer citizenship is to look at some familiar characteristics that distinguish the Internet from other media. Internet is much more than a technology it is a communicative space which has increased the pace and speed of information delivery and gathering; flexible medium which can suit different contents and contexts, can be different to individuals, groups, can be open or closed, blurs distinctions between formats, transcends geographical barriers and greatly lowers the costs of civic participation. Perhaps more importantly, is the fact that the Internet can be used as a networking tool for global citizen action. As Bennett has noted, “activists have learned that the same electronic communication revolution that facilitated the development of global economic networks... can be used to build global activists networks (Bennett: forthcoming). This implies that the citizens can resort to the same technologies that drive globalisation to engage in global consumer activism. Inherent characteristics of the Internet facilitate networking of consumer non-governmental organisations, thus enabling consumer citizens to operate at a global scale. Through the use of Internet individuals, organisations can organise and mobilize themselves into a global force in defence of shared interests. These global networks promote the transfer of knowledge and information, thereby supporting the empowerment thesis. The Internet permits new virtual spaces for discourses independent of either governments or commercial interests.

The Internet’s capabilities have led to some scholars asking whether it has the potential to revitalise the public sphere or it simply represents a decay ( Hunter, 1998; Haas, 2004). The mass media are often considered key institutions of the contemporary public sphere (Garnham 1995; Castells 1997; Calhoun 1988). However, Habermas has argued that the commercialization of the media system has undermined their capacity to act as public sphere (Habermas 1992: 436). He argues that the public sphere has transformed from a forum for rational-critical debate into a platform for advertising (ibid.). The commercialisation of the public sphere affected its independence and its critical edge and it is a primary cause for its degeneration (Benson 2001: 3). In the Internet lies therefore an opportunity for revitalising the ideals of the public sphere through the creative of a discursive space, where citizens can deliberate on issues of common concern. It offers a common platform for the mediation of consumer citizen interests. The Internet offers a number of opportunities for the consumer citizenship- opportunities which can be harnessed by consumer citizens in order to improve public discourses and informed debate.

If citizenship is understood “as the ongoing contribution of citizens to solving community and public problems and creating the world around us” (Boyte & Skelton, 1998) computer mediated communication provides sites for rational-critical discourses autonomous from state and economic interests. As Ekecrantz has noted, globalisation, commercialization and worldwide interactive communication networks have changed the basic parameters informing our understanding of mediated communication and its social, political and cultural functions (Ekecrantz, 2001: 16). The ability of citizens to

deliberate with other citizens on issues of common concern in an era of globalisation hinges on access to the information and communication networks. The potential in the Internet can best be illustrated with reference to the protests coordinated and organised by Indymedia during and after the meeting of the World Trade Organisation in Seattle in November 1999. An alliance of more than 700 diverse groups of various geographical localities, and interest including consumer groups integrated the internet in their anti-globalisation protests. Indymedia demonstrates the empowerment potential of using internet by global consumer citizens at a transnational level. As Frissen notes at all levels of the organisations (Indymedia), activities take place by means of mediated communication, more specifically by means of the Internet.

However, in spite of all the impressive characteristics of the Internet in providing communicative spaces for consumer citizens, it has its shortcomings. Pessimistically, some researchers point to challenges presented by Internet, especially that ICT's may lead to a fragmentation of the public interests (Frissen 2004:30). They warn that we should be careful not to exaggerate the empowerment potential of ICTs. There are still a number of obstacles and challenges to the full realisation of this potential.

### ***Comparisons: The Challenges of Digital Divide***

While there is optimism on the impact of technology in empowering the discursive abilities of the consumer citizens, significant limitations do remain and these present a number of challenges for the consumer citizen. Some of the challenges lie in the technology itself, whilst others lie with the users. Limitations in technology include access to appropriate technology and software. Lack of access to Internet technology is a major cause of digital divide within and between countries. Even at the early stages of Internet development, researchers warned about the imminent digital divide resulting from an unbalanced development and adoption of new information and communication technologies. As Tapscott noted in 1998, 'the mostly widely feared prediction surrounding the digital revolution is that it will splinter society into a race of information haves and have-nots, knowers and know-nots, doers and do-nots – a digital divide (Tapscott 1998: 255).

The digital divide between and within Norway and Turkey is glaring as shown by the numbers below.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Internet Users</b>	<b>% Population (Penetration)</b>	<b>Users Growth (2000-2005)</b>
Norway	4,632,911	3,140,000	67,8%	42,7%
Turkey	74,709,412	10,220,000	13,7%	411%

Source: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats4.htm#e>

Norway has reached a level where the majority of its population has access to the Internet. To be connected in Norway means to have access to the telephone, the computer and the Internet. Those who lack access to the computer and internet are highly likely to access it by using public amenities, including libraries and schools. Figures from Statistics Norway show a high percentage of households Internet use in Norway. 63% households in Norway have Internet at home.

	<b>Internet Use</b> (last 3 months)	<b>Computer Use</b> (last 3 months)
Norway	80	83
Male	84	87
Female	75	79

Source: Statistics Norway 2006/13

However there is a small digital divide which cuts across generations, gender, education and income. This divide is conceptualised in terms of digital competences and active or passive usage. Frønes argues that the rapid changes underway in Norway mean that the old generation will lack the competence to master the digital everyday life in the near future (Frønes 2002:67-69). Even though most people have possibilities and opportunities to access Internet, not all have the *knowledge* and *competence* prerequisites required to cope with an increasingly knowledge-based society. Technological changes mean that in the future there will be no alternatives available for those without the digital competence.

In comparison, the digital divide in Norway is not as wide as that within Turkey, where there is a major gulf between those with access to the Internet and those without, let alone the gap in digital competences. According to a survey on ICT usage on households carried by the Turkish State Institute of Statistics in June 2005, there is a huge divide not just between rural-urban, but also within urban areas and across gender.

	<b>Internet Use %</b>	<b>Computer Use %</b>
<b>Turkey</b>	<b>13.93</b>	<b>17.65</b>
Male	9.60	11.88
Female	4.33	5.77
Urban	18.57	23.16
Rural	6.05	8.28
<b><i>Proportion of those who have never used internet &amp; computer</i></b>		
Turkey	82.45	77.06
Urban	76.94	70.41
Rural	91.81	88.35

Source: State Institute of Statistics: ICT Usage Survey on Households and Individuals, 2005

It is possible to conclude on the basis of the above statistics that in Turkey there is a huge divide between information ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’, as only a small fraction of the population use Internet and computers. Given the large number of the Turkish population, millions who constitute 82.45 %, who have never used a computer are logically isolated and this has implications on their participatory capabilities. These ratios show that there is a major gulf between those with access to the Internet and those without.

There has however been a spectacular growth of access to and Internet use in Turkey between 2000 and 2005 as shown in the statistics. The liberalisation of the Turkish telecommunications market in order to conform to the EU regulatory framework has offered immense opportunities for the development of ICTs. Those who cannot have access to the computer and Internet are highly likely to access it at workplace or Internet cafes.

### ***Consumers and Internet Usage***

The Internet has not only provided a platform for communication but also consumption. Acts of consumption have become individualised and economically stratified with the help of information and communication technologies, to such an extent that the Internet has become a virtual marketplace. Through it, consumers undergo a process of consumer socialisation, whereby they acquire different digital competences required for them as consumers in a marketplace. Nevertheless this does not imply passive consumption of goods and services for the benefit of producers. The unprecedented amount of consumer information in the Internet and the possibilities of comparison give power of making informed choices to digitally competent consumers.

Surveys by government statistical agencies in both Norway and Turkey show that the most common activities in the Internet are communication and information related. The fact that communication and information services dominate the activities of individuals online bears testimony of its potential for facilitating communication and thereby participatory public discourses. In both countries a significant proportion uses the Internet technologies in their interaction with authorities. Therefore depending on the nature of interactions one would argue that the Internet provides an interactive communication platform for consumer citizens.

When it comes to consumption via Internet there is a huge discrepancy between the two countries. There is a widespread use of the Internet for consumption purposes in Norway, where 80 % of the users do their shopping, selling and banking services, compared to only 15% in Turkey.

### ***Activities of individuals online***

	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>Norway</b>
Communication	78.23	86
Information & Online Services	90.16	95
Shopping/ banking	15.95	80
Interaction with public authorities	39.97	65

Sources: State Institute of Statistics (Turkey); Statistics Norway

The relations between the Internet and the consumers in Norway can best be described with reference to a quotation by Scammell. Scammel, has observed that;

“As consumers, we at least in the developed North, have more power than ever. We have the money and more choice...We are better informed shoppers... Consumer rights and interest groups ... are daily in our mass media. Environmental lobbyists and activists ... have a clear and central place in public debate and have demonstrated their ability to score direct hits against the multinationals” (Scammell 2000: 351-2).

To a great extent consumers in Norway make choices knowingly, and the corporate world knows that it has to exercise social responsibilities if it had to remain relevant to the Norwegian market, where consumers are undoubtedly the most conscious. The increased use of new technologies in Norway is creating fundamentally new conditions for participatory consumption.

In Turkey there are some factors that impede the development of consumer networks and participation. Huge costs of telecommunication systems, unequal division of information-communication technologies, low incomes, illiteracy, and problems concerning legal regulations are a major impediment to access to the Internet. Beside these factors, the absence of a democratic culture, quality of state-society relation and the weakness of civil society inhibit the emergence of debate/discussion platform which is the base of democratic policy. Nevertheless, the Internet as a virtual public space is being used for discussions in the forums and in the organization of NGO's. Moreover, NGOs play a big role in constructing a transparent state, which includes citizens in decision-making processes. NGO's provide the recognition of citizens' diverse identities. Since we consider consumer citizenship as one of the facets of citizenship, consumer NGOs help citizens to have their voices heard, to participate in decision-making processes and to actualise their democratic rights and liberties. In Turkey the Internet is widely used by the civil networks. Therefore the main issue we should consider is whether these civil networks provide a democratic and autonomous space. Do they have the potential for democratic, strong and autonomous participation?

### ***Conclusion***

Perhaps the best way to ponder on how the Internet and related technologies would contribute to improving public discourse and informed debate is that it offers a mixed blessing for the consumer citizen. It offers immense opportunities for communication but at the same time create new cyberspace based consumption problems. Its potential for global mediation of public discourses is evidently demonstrated in the rise of global consumer campaigns and activism.

Whether public discourses would be better with the advent of the Internet will depend on how citizens conceive themselves and the nature of problems their encounter in a global community. It will also depend on their digital competences. There are still challenging issues to be taken into consideration, such as the digital divide across geographical and social spaces. Statistics show that these factors are still an impediment for accessibility and availability of the information technologies.

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**How long do consumers accept the malpractice, “caveat emptor”, without being aware of their responsibilities?**

**What can be done to transform the consumer’s frustrations and uncertainties into change-creating energy?**

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### ***Introduction***

Since 1920, in which “Welfare Capitalism” was established for favourable public opinion, consumers have been stimulated to consume more than they did in the past. Demand has been changed into extravagance cutely. Consumers, without thinking ahead the outcomes of careless and irresponsible consumption, have neglected to inspect business ethics that the companies did not follow. Environmental pollution, wasting natural resources, corruption, tax evasion, illegal competitions and, so on are the crucial issues to be focused on.

Being a consumer, is also somehow being a producer, and either being a consumer or producer everyone is a citizen. In each of these roles-consumer, producer, and citizen-the responsibilities or rather accountabilities and liabilities to people in the other roles we have the right to expect those people to fulfil their responsibilities to us reciprocally. It is known that a free society reinforces its power by its citizens’ civic knowledge, skills and virtue. To cultivate its members’ knowledge and skills and shape their civic character and commitments it allows its educational institutions to train them intensively. Fulfilling their special responsibility, schools must develop civic competence and civic responsibility through both formal and informal curricula to flourish influential, and happy consumer-citizens, who will be able to easily change their frustrations into change-creating energy, eventually. Consumer-citizenship education, therefore, is essential to the preservation and improvement of public awareness. To this end, the important role of us, as the educators in preparing our students for the obligations of citizenship is to develop a programme to promote national recognition and respect for universal values.

### ***Consumer Citizenship***

As CCN defines *consumer citizen* on its webpage as an individual who makes choices based on ethical, social, economic and ecological considerations and actively contributes to the maintenance of just and sustainable development by caring and acting responsibly on family, national and global levels, *citizenship*, on the other hand, is defined by McGregor, S. (1999, 207-211) as the ongoing contribution of citizens to solving community and public problems and creating the world around us. Agreeing with McGregor, S. the fundamental thing to do is to change people’s frustrations into

engagement in a life-long socialization process, with the interest of others and the environment balanced against self-interest in the marketplace by making them learn to see themselves as *consumer-citizens*.

The aim of this presentation is to focus on the educational aspects of public awareness of consumer citizenship responsibilities through sustainable development which would only be provided by some legal, ethical, and educational measures taken out first in the local arena. Subsequently, as mentioned by McKenzie, (1997, p.30) *glocalized operations*—derived from “**glocalization**”, which is invented by uniting the terms ‘**globalization**’ and ‘**localization**’—start to be executed all over the world while taking account of local, cultural habits, beliefs and principles in each country or market.

In Turkey, although some studies on this subject have been done in business classes, and School of Home Economics Department of Family and Consumer Sciences of some universities it should be a prevailing task in the near future. As such programmes are applied in Hacettepe University in Ankara, where the objective of the course is to give education, to do research and publication for raising satisfactory life quality (economic, psychological and physical well-being) at regional, national and universal level for individual, family and institutions, in “Family Life Education”, “Consumer Education and Protection” and “Housekeeping” areas.

To increase the number of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), which would organise panels, conferences, and seminars in relation with the improvement of public awareness in Consumer Citizenship (CC) and its responsibilities besides the rights of consumers is most likely to create a favourable public opinion in indispensability of consumer-citizenship education. For revealing business corruptions public awareness is a must. Also by these educational sessions if a heightened public reaction as such not to buy a product of a non-ethical producer is put forward, avoidance of exploitation, ruining the environment, the consumer rights and legitimacy would be provided. In Turkey, consumer rights are protected by law, however, conscious consumers are quite less than the traditional withdrawn oppressed citizens. Thus, the consumers as agents should construct change by school training.

### ***Relationship between Science and Economics***

The neo-liberal revolution of the late 1970s developed a political environment in which governments were no longer pledged to the global principles of social citizenship, an inclusive welfare state and full employment. Citizenship and welfare have been replaced by the idea that human needs should be left to the operation of the market (Turner, B.S. ‘Neo-Liberalism and Consumer Citizenship’). Turner claims that the neo-liberal revolution has converted the citizen into a passive member of consumer society, where conservative governments comprehend ‘active citizenship’, who denounces the poor services, to be an agent using the method of regulating the efficiency of public utilities. Supporting this view Dr. Mike Reed, (Free Software in Developing Countries Vital to Future Prosperity, Good Governance: UNU, 2006) claims that being a ‘passive consumer’ rather than an ‘active participant’ is not in the best interests of a developing nation’s government or business sectors. Evaluating these views it can be said that, especially in developing countries, the consumers are

far behind the awareness of their rights and responsibilities due to disinformation and lack of education.

The consumer's frustrations and uncertainties have risen from the economic changes occurred after the neo-liberal revolution, such as deregulation of the labour and financial markets, diminishing state intervention, implementation of free trade, reduction in personal taxation.

Many economists, for years, have written their opinions, and theories about the relationship between business and society. Milton Friedman, (1970) who is one of them, wrote a famous article for *The New York Times Magazine*, whose title is "*The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits.*" In his article he argues that there is merely one social responsibility of a law-abiding business that is to use its resources and engage in activities arranged to maximize profits for the shareholders, and business should involve in open and free competition without deception or fraud.

Although there are different views about social responsibility of business MacKenzie, I. (1997) notes that still some people insist that companies have social and ethical responsibilities to their customers, their workforce, their business partners, their local community, society in general, and the natural environment, that are more important than their responsibility to provide revenue to their shareholders.

### **Caveat Emptor**

*Latin for "Let the buyer beware."* expresses the idea that buyers take responsibility for the condition of the items they buy and should examine them before purchase. This is basically true for items that are not covered under a reliable guarantee, [SEC v. Zandford \(01-147\)](#). Today, the merchantable quality of many products is difficult to determine before purchase, and most products are manufactured far away from the retailers or wholesalers and the consumers who consume them. The wide variety of commodities and services perplex and disappoint consumers trying to decide what to buy, how to make ends meet, and how to use and care for the things they purchase. This can only be interpreted as a malpractice, nothing else. Nonetheless, a second Latin phrase, *Scientia potestas est* "**Knowledge is power**", emphasizes that consumers have a weapon at their disposal, and conscious consumers know their rights and pursue them because they know that information is the best defence against purchasing defective products or falling victim to deceptive practices. To achieve to be smart consumers education is the solution to learn the facts, ask questions, be aware of current fraudulent operations, and to blow the whistle if they think they are deceived.

### **Business Ethics**

As it is known by everybody, as things stand, it is ignored by some, honesty is the best policy. Thus, for honest businesspersons, social responsibility is to create a just and sustainable world by working with companies to promote more responsible business practices, innovation and collaboration leading to operate successful businesses while upholding the highest ethical standards of professional behaviour.

If some strict legal adjustments were not done how honest people could strive to avoid "*laundering money*", "*corruption*", "*bribery*" , "*tax evasion*", and "*profit smoothing*" that businesspersons use all the techniques of creative accounting unethically. When it comes to political power abuse, still some people describe it as

‘the fifth P of marketing because dishonest businesspeople spend money on lobbying to persuade politicians to pass laws favourable to their particular industry. Ipso facto, consumer protection as a public policy should be provided by legal protection, which is based on legislation and planning norms, aims to guarantee defence against any harmful treatment, provide guidelines for proper action, and institute corresponding punitive sanctions.

### ***Consumer Protection Laws***

Consumers are now participants both in global and local markets, and they normally have sought protection through legislation because the general laws and market forces have failed to provide it. The laws which immediately protect them are basically national and can only be enforced within national frameworks. Pointing out the legal dimension of consumer protection, John Goldring (*Consumer Protection, the Nation-State, Law, Globalization, and Democracy* 1996), emphasizes that consumer protection laws enable the correction of market failures and the redress of inequalities of information and power. However, the recent cases have revealed that consumer protection laws, for several reasons, depict themselves as little practical applications to protect consumers in the global economy and in cyberspace. This little practical use raises the question of whether democratic governments can ever enact laws to give remedies or impose sanctions to bring compensatory force against those who abuse their position in the global market, or if the legal consequences are ascribed to the action by the law regardless of what the consumer actually knows or wants. To be able to stipulate the consumer protection the first objective of United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection embodied by Department of Economic and Social Affairs should be taken as a covenant (as expanded in 1999, New York, 2003):

” Taking into account the interests and needs of consumers in all countries, particularly those in developing countries; recognizing that consumers often face imbalances in economic terms, educational levels and bargaining power; and bearing in mind that consumers should have the right of access to non-hazardous products, as well as the right to promote just, equitable and sustainable economic and social development and environmental protection.”

The above statements, naturally, direct us to go through the rights of consumers.

### ***Framework of Consumer Rights***

The consumer protection laws embody the four consumer rights named by President Kennedy in an address to Congress in 1962 (*Legal Rights: The Principles of Consumer Rights*) plus a fifth right—to consumer education—added by President Ford in 1975. A sixth right—to service—was added by President Clinton in 1994. The first right, similar to Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is to satisfy the basic needs such as essential goods and services, adequate food, clothing, shelter, health care, education and sanitation. Second, the right to safety, which is to be protected against products, production, processes and services which are hazardous to health or life. The right to be informed is to be treated ethically to make an informed choice, and to be protected

against dishonest or misleading advertising and labelling. As for the right to choose it is to be able to select from a spectrum of products and services, offered at competitive prices with an warranty of satisfactory quality. As for the right to be heard, it is to have consumer interests presented in the making and execution of government policy, and in the development of products and services. The right to redress is to receive amends for those claims, including punitive damages, and compensation for misrepresentation, inferior goods or unsatisfactory services. Another right is the right to consumer education, which enables people to acquire knowledge and skill needed to make informed, confident choices about goods and services, while being aware of basic consumer rights and responsibilities and how to act on them. The last and the most important right is to live and work in a healthy environment, which is non-threatening to the well - being of present and future generations in which people live and work.

As for the rights of the consumer in Turkey, they were first introduced by a provision of the 1982 Constitution. Article 172 of the Constitution grants the State the authority to take all measures necessary for the protection of consumers (Sirmen 2002, p.26). The culmination of measures taken was the adoption of the Law, No. 4077, on the Protection of the Consumer, which became applicable in 1995. Sirmen accepts the adoption of this law as a great stride in consumer protection in Turkey. Further, European Committee, in its 2004 Report about Turkey's progress in this field, justifies Sirmen reporting that since the adoption of the 1995 Consumer Protection Act Turkey has made real progress in transposing the *acquis*. Under 1995 law, consumers in Turkey have acquired certain rights and various organizations have been established for the purpose of protecting and informing the consumers. These organizations are the Advertising Council, Consumers' Council and the Arbitration Council for Consumer Problems. By establishing the Advertising Council, which monitors advertisements and penalises offenders, many complaints regarding misleading advertising were dealt with. This council meets at least once a month and consists of 25 members representing public institutions, universities, professional chambers and consumer organisations. It started its operations in 2003 and in 2004 dealt with 134 cases, imposing fines totalling EUR 2.3 million. It is wished that all these strides will be enhanced, and finalized by consumer-citizenship education in Turkey, in the near future.

### ***Consumer Citizenship Education***

Since consumer education is a lifelong process-at least, should be- it provides people with the information they need to help them assess their needs, locate services, evaluate quality, and choose the best possible life care for themselves. It has social, political and economic dimensions, including such concepts as the environmental consequences of an individual's consumption choices and the social responsibilities of business.

Consumer education, as a whole, benefits the consumers because it emboldens critical thinking, which helps consumers function more efficiently in the marketplace. Advancing self-confidence and independence it relates life skills, which contribute to success in everyday living. Distinguishing between needs and wants it inspires broadly accepted values, such as paying bills, saving money, choosing best buys,

planning and budgeting, and it improves the quality of life. Consumer education not only advantages consumers but also society and business. Inciting citizen awareness it promotes a stable society, satisfies customers, and creates realistic expectations of products and services, and increases sales.

The aim of this paper is not to repeat a teaching programme, its objectives, curriculum, materials well implemented in Nordic Countries, but to focus on launching a fairly national educational programme suiting traditional value of the Turkish society and integrating necessary skills for teacher trainers. If this paper receives favourable criticisms, asking European Universities', especially Nordic Countries' collaboration, Education Faculty of Maltepe University, as being a pioneer programme developer, would propose a project work in the framework of Socrates programmes. The academics of the faculties of education in Istanbul and Ankara can be invited to contribute to the project under the supervision of the Higher Education Council. To do this, Article F., "Education and Information Programmes", Clauses 35,36,37 written in United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection, and proposed by Department of Economic and Social Affairs, should be referred to and adapted to elaborate or encourage the development of general consumer education and information programmes, which will be launched by Maltepe University. These guidelines are as follows (as expanded in 1999, New York, 2003):

"35. Governments should develop or encourage the development of general consumer education and information programmes including information on the environmental impacts of consumer choices and behaviour and the possible implications, including benefits and costs, of changes in consumption, bearing in mind the cultural traditions of the people concerned. The aim of such programmes should be to enable people to act as discriminating consumers, capable of making an informed choice of goods and services, and conscious of their rights and responsibilities. In developing such programmes, special attention should be given to the needs of disadvantaged consumers, in both rural and urban areas, including low-income consumers and those with low or non-existent literacy levels. Consumer groups, business and other relevant organizations of civil society should be involved in these educational efforts.

36. Consumer education should, where appropriate, become an integral part of the basic curriculum of the educational system, preferably as a component of existing subjects.

37. Consumer education and information programmes should cover such important aspects of consumer protection as:

(a) Health, nutrition, prevention of food-borne diseases and food adulteration; (b) Product hazards; (c) Product labelling; (d) Relevant legislation, how to obtain redress, and agencies and organizations for consumer protection; (e) Information on weights and measures, prices, quality, credit conditions and availability of basic necessities; (f) Environmental protection; and (g) Efficient use of materials, energy and water."

The programme should be based on sustainable development along with the recent legal regulations transposed by implementing the proposals of the European strategy to change consumer's frustrations and uncertainties into change-creating energy, which requires to provide resource mobilization, and resource endowment.

### ***Sustainable Development***

While consumers consume products or services to meet their needs they should foresee possible future straits or depression involving whole world and should consume resources and energy frugally as being good citizens in the framework of their rights. It is known that most people agree on the idea that we ought to be as economical as possible in our use of natural resources, particularly energy, and to limit pollution to a minimum.

Thus, we need sustainable development, which meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (*What is Sustainable Development*, WCED,1987). It would solve all the problems, and create a social paradigm. If it is defined in details we can say that sustainable development implies economic growth, which remunerates all people, together with the protection of environmental and humanitarian quality, each reinforcing the other.

The essence of this form of development is a stable relationship between human activities and the natural world, which does not diminish the prospects for future generations to enjoy a quality of life at least as good as our own. Many observers believe that participatory democracy, undominated by vested interests, is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development. Once sustainable development along with consumer education is achieved people will enter into the spirit of consumer-citizenship for ever and ever. And this will create not only a philanthropic society caring for their fellow citizens but also a society watching out the planet so as not to consume up the portions it has allocated to us for millions of years.

### ***Conclusion***

As a result it can be inferred that if consumers are trained to integrate the skills of creative thinking, critical thinking, decision making and problem solving, communication, interaction, self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, empathy, coping with emotions and coping with stress and change their attitudes being aware of their rights and duties. This, if labelled, is Character Ethic, (Covey 1990, 18) in which there are basic principles of effective living. Integration of all the above mentioned skills create the general concept that agreements and solutions ought to be mutually satisfying to provide a Win/Win situation to see life as a cooperative not a competitive arena. Because Win/win is based on the paradigm that there is plenty for everybody, that one person's success, and /or earnings are not achieved at the expense or exclusion of the success, and /or earnings of others (Covey 1990, 207). Thus, there is no need to follow the Roman Law statement "*homo homini lupus est*" (man is a wolf to man) in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



From the viewpoint of Turkish consumers' rights, European Committee's October 2003 Report confirmed that Turkey had made good progress, but needed to continue its efforts to transpose and apply the Community *acquis* in the field of health and consumer protection. The European Committee also reports that Turkey, still needs to put in place an effective market surveillance system and allocate more resources (human and financial) in order to ensure a high level of consumer protection. Although the directive on product liability for defective products and the revised directive on general product safety have yet to be transposed there has been no progress on safety-related measures. It is also indicated in the report that administrative structures need to be reorganised and strengthened if market surveillance is to be effective.

Sustainability is important for every level of professionals involved in the construction of new facilities, because the facilities we construct have a huge impact on the society, and environment of which we are all a part. Not only do these facilities make use of natural resources for their construction and leave man-made footprints in the ecological environment which surrounds us, but built facilities also serve as our interface to the natural environment, protecting us from the elements and meeting the needs of humanity for shelter, status, and other functions. Inherent in this concept is the assumption that human development will not decline or cease but rather continue to progress, albeit at a pace which can be sustained by the ultimately finite resources of the earth. Thus, sustainability is a system state marked by stability, where changes to the system remain constrained so as to maintain the stability of the system into the foreseeable future.

To sum up, it can be concluded that, taking cultural diversity into consideration, we, as the educators, hold the power to train consumer-citizens in a more sustainable education environment, so that they meet the needs of themselves and the society with their *bona fides* without compromising the needs of others, who are *mala fide*, or jeopardizing the future survival of humanity on earth. This sustainability creates the need for training course for trainers leading to candidate teachers' training and their mobilisation throughout Turkey, and with this extensive consumer-education, irrespective of age, sex, and race, we will reach the threshold level of being a qualified global-cyber-consumer-citizen, that we all need to be.

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## **V. INTERACTIONS**

### **Catalyzing changes in responsibility between organizations and consumers**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The paper is concerned with the purpose of consumer protection. The current globalisation changes leading on one hand to the prosperity of the society have resulted on the other hand in a growing number of problem areas that, among others, have a consequent impact also on consumer protection. Even though there are many vigorous consumer organizations in Europe and also in the Czech Republic defending consumers' interests, their existence is not without problems in many respects. Therefore, this paper is aimed at the relationship between consumer organizations and the very consumers, their mutual influencing, cooperation and responsibility for each other.

#### ***Introduction***

The issue of consumer protection is considered as a very important and both socially and politically sensitive area. Advanced societies all over the world are well aware of the fact that consumer protection is actually market protection and that is why they pay to it the adequate attention. The existence of the market certainly encourages development of competitive environment but market economy itself cannot solve every problem occurring on the market. Therefore, it is necessary for governmental bodies to enter market processes. They should foresee all the situations and speed up changes especially when the consumer faces risks both physical (health) and economic. In all advanced countries it is the state that is responsible for consumer protection.

## 1. Legal adjustment of consumer's protection in the CR, determination of concepts of the consumer and consumer's position

In the Czech Republic consumer protection is ensured in the areas:

- Private and legal
- Criminal law
- Public law

The consumer is (according to the wording of the Czech law of consumer protection) a natural or legal entity that purchases products or uses services for other reason than performing entrepreneurial activities aimed at those products or services.

The consumer is a participant in the market, a subject of legal relationship arising on the basis of making an agreement between them and the provider of service. Legal position of both parties of such relationship resulting from providing services is equal. The consumer makes with the provider of service a civil/legal contract and has the same rights as the other contractual party. In this way it works from the formal point of view.

Reality, however, is a bit different. Using of form contracts, price policy, consumer credits and the like lead to a clear consequence: the consumer has only two possibilities to choose from, either they accept the offer of provided services including all in advance determined conditions or they refuse it.

The consumer in spite of their formal equality with the provider of service actually takes up a very disadvantageous position even if the supply is higher than demand not mentioning the opposite situation. Moreover, prevailing lack of professional competence of consumers should be added to what has been said. Consequently, it is hard to persuade them to make an agreement under disadvantageous conditions only because of providers overestimating their services. These are the reasons that should result in a special protection of consumers.

## 2. Purpose of consumer protection

From the above-mentioned it follows that the consumer is factually a weaker subject in the legal relationship and that is why the increased protection of the consumer is inevitable. Unlike in other European Union countries, Czech consumers have a great disadvantage in their loneliness when they want to carry through their legal claims and justified interests towards sellers and providers of services but also towards the state administration bodies or self-government.

Thanks to a number of recent amendments to the "Law of Consumer Protection" a legal regulation in the Czech Republic has been refined towards to concrete aspects. These are above all honesty of selling, a ban on consumer discrimination, a ban on the offer and selling of dangerous products, a ban on deceiving a consumer, the duty to provide information, determination of conditions of how to settle claims, returnable

packing, advertisements regulation, technical requirements of products and price regulation. There are many problems to which the laws can be applied but also problems so far having been neglected by the legislation. Consumers themselves are able to defend themselves only against small providers of services (though not always). Consumers are powerless in fighting against large companies they need help of a subject able to compete with such a strong rival. Only the state and/or public administration bodies can act as the assistance in situations that may repeat daily.

Policy of advanced countries in the democratic society should follow public interest including the interest in keeping equality in relationships between businessmen (entrepreneurs) and consumers (customers). Even though the state should act positively it cannot be perfect and people engaged in its bodies are not always able to fulfil their roles, which is caused by the influence of either objective or subjective reasons. In other words, the state is permanently failing. It is there where the state is not able or does not want to know how to interfere in order to defend consumer's justified requirements where the significance of the role of consumer organizations is growing.

### 3. Signification of civil organizations focussed on the protection of consumer rights and interests

The stated theses of the basic consumer rights and the legislative framework of consumer protection create an extraordinary space for activities of all subjects that within their working and competence may take part and have a share in consumer environment shaping.

Organizations coming into existence to protect consumer rights and interests can be defined as associations of natural or legal entities that in the society and economics promote interests of persons who do not profit from the activity of influential economic and power groups and factually they find themselves in an unequal position as regards demanding goods and services.

Establishing such organizations comes from the logics of naturalness of human groupings. Generally it can be said that joining of more persons' potential leads to an increased chance to reach something. Persons who establish such associations do not do anything else than what has already been implemented. But the subjects who did it were at the side of offer – entrepreneurs or as the case may be their interest groups. There are many interest links grouping on both sides (supply and demand) while every grouping is aimed at meeting its needs. Most of time, however, the state of mutual balance is not reached. In practice, entrepreneurial organizations used to be stronger and organizations protecting consumers are not usually able to become their equal counterpart.

To promote consumers' rights and interests, as it has already been suggested, means information and economic inequality of the relationship between businessman (entrepreneur) and consumer (customer). The consumer has neither sufficient knowledge nor possibilities to verify properly information by which the sales of

products or services are promoted. What makes them get the product of certain specification is their innermost need. A Czech consumer is often under the press of mass advertising he is not sufficiently cautious he tends to let himself manipulated and suffers from the lack of objective information.

Lonely consumers – individuals do not know how to influence legislation or the state bodies application practice. Very often there are lobby groups that to the contrary of consumers – individuals are able to enforce numerous advantages granted them by the state. Here we come across with a possibility to influence “macro” setting-up of market economy rules game. Without readiness of the consumer public to defend themselves against the pressure of lobby groups motivated by the interest to acquire more and more even at the expense of consumer public the economic freedom of an individual is becoming considerably illusory, a marginal category while “the freedom of players at the side of supply” can reverse into wilfulness even though consecrated by the valid right.

The role of consumer organizations rests not only in the individual consultancy or in the assistance in actual cases of individual consumers but above all in the initiative to induce changes in legislation, speaking in favour of consumers in a case of infringing their rights and in providing the consumers with broader information. The activities aimed at consumers’ rights and interest protection include the following areas:

- Handing over useful information including the patterns of procedures and documents (education of the public)
- Monitoring and evaluation of incentives (complaints, announcements) coming from the consumer public
- Providing the basic orientation and “the first judicial aid” to struck consumers with the following possibility to recommend a qualified judicial aid
- Influencing the firms in order to obtain respect to consumers’ rights and interests
- by discouraging the firms to act wrongfully (both by providing preventive information and by the instruments of exacting the rights through arbitration, proceedings at law, administrative procedure or through media).
- Systematic checking and analysing firms’ behaviour towards customers
- Taking a share in legislative process especially if it concerns the
- approval of legal norms with the impacts on consumers’ rights and interests.
- Providing the state bodies with information on knowledge acquired in practice
- including addressing the incentives in order to initiate appropriate proceedings.
- Providing information on the area concerning the subject of interest

#### 4. Providing information and their delivering to the consumer public

The current performing practice and activities of already existing civil consumer organizations have shaped into two basic directions. The first and most frequented area is consulting service. Consulting service serves to the consumer public

at solving the actual conflicting situations especially when it concerns reclaiming goods or services' defects.

The other significant area is information activity required by consumers in connection with certain products or services. This concerns information describing products or services' technological and economic parameters and product's useful qualities.

According to the recent experience and knowledge from practice it is desired that the activity and working of civil consumer organizations were based on the system approach, on the solid legal, economic and technical as well as psychological knowledge. Consumer information provided to the general consumer public can be considered by their significance as the attributes of prevention, training and education as well as strengthening of consumers' sound self-confidence. Information activities in the area of consumer education can be divided into three basic sectors:

The first and basic sector follows from the effective legislation that is from laws, operational rules and other legal rules associated with consumer policy. The other sector is the field of independent information about products and services that can be found in the offer of the actual market. Such information is extremely valid for a customer because it comes from the results attained by an independent and highly qualified testing and it comes from other principles than the tests of products carried out and published by producers or distributors.

The third sector is the field of education. Education and educational efforts associated with more systematic work and passing the information on to customers is materialised either by giving classical lectures or seminars or in the electronic way while educational efforts can be addressed not only to consumers but also to entrepreneurs and their employees as well as to civil servants in public bodies and institutions.

By deepening the position of consumer organizations a presumption arises that they have a chance to acquire useful information that, if published, can facilitate the consumers their decisions. Therefore, another from consumer organisations' numerous tasks will be presenting the public with needed information. The choice of communication channels will depend on what programme the organisation is aimed at because e.g. branch specialized organizations can use specific media typical for the given branch (e.g. journal dealing with the certain assortment of goods).

Anyway, mutually beneficial co-operation with means of communication should be a matter of course (with the exception of non-democratic and discriminating periodicals). Communication means should receive the required information always when they ask for it or if the important business is in question. A closer relationship with editors of social columns might then become one of the ambitions of consumer organizations.

A great current contribution is the Internet. Even though paper editorial activities and public meetings are not going to disappear, above all in the beginnings of consumer

organizations' activities because in the initial stage of shortage of finance the Internet plays an essential role.

While in the past organisations had to perform their own costly editorial activity (if they did not want to be dependent on intermediaries of information – pressmen), today – with a growing number of Internet users – it is possible by means of bright announce of web page to address not only a bigger segment of the public but simultaneously (at low costs) to make up quality and users-friendly presentations with the graphic support. Moreover, this all can be regularly updated and at the same time taken into account the existence of on-line feedback from the public through which the need of public meetings in rented halls or open spaces is overlapped.

### **Conclusion**

The situation on the market will be adequate to the willingness of customers to be agreeable. It will not improve spontaneously, that is why it is necessary for customers and civil consumer organizations to strive for their rights by all legal means.

Therefore it is necessary for the state bodies to support permanently and more intensively the development of civil consumer organizations initiatives aimed at increasing of consumer awareness and of consumer rights knowledge and their application on the free market. At the same time, however, with regard to the above-mentioned facts, it will be necessary to strengthen the powers and the overall influence of consumer organizations by taking legislation measures.

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# **Corporate responsibility standards and practices: Debates and challenges**

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## **Abstract**

Companies don't become model citizens overnight. Organizations that are learning pathways are complex and iterative. A goodwill and a lot of efforts are needed to follow the progressive practices of corporate responsibility. This paper deals with the practices and challenges of corporate responsibility standards. The main research question is how well do companies understand the economic impacts of their activities and take action to manage them so that they have the desired outcomes. That is why the role of corporate responsibility standards in measuring, reporting, and managing economic development is investigated. The implications of the implementation of corporate responsibility standards and practices for both public policy and business managers are outlined. The possible paths to corporate responsibility is further presented. The author presents also the possibilities for companies to develop and to apply responsible business practices.

## ***Introduction***

Concepts like stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984), corporate responsibility (Cannon, 1994), business impact on society in the EFQM model (Garvare and Isaksson, 2001; Hakes, 1994) have been around for more than two decades. Within the last decade "corporate social responsibility" (CSR) has been gaining momentum across the business community and it is seen to be increasingly high on boardroom agendas. Corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate governance (CG), corporate sustainability (CS), corporate citizenship, triple bottom line (TBL) are becoming synonymous with the emerging effort to determine the meaning of "ethical business". A consensus being reached defines "ethical business" as an ability to satisfy three bottom lines: economic, environmental and social.

## ***Corporate Social Responsibility***

CSR is rooted in the recognition that businesses are an integral part of society and that as such they have the potential to make a positive contribution to social goals and aspirations. Different organisations have framed a variety of definitions. The Commission for the European Communities (2001) defines CSR as "a concept

whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in the business operations and in their interactions with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis”. According to Wood (1991) “the basic idea of CSR is that business and society are interwoven rather than distinct entities”. More generally, a distinction has been drawn between CSR seen as philanthropy as opposed to CSR as core business.

A variety of factors are cited as being important in building the current momentum behind CSR. Ernst & Young (2002) suggest that five key drivers have influenced the increasing business focus on CSR, namely greater stakeholder awareness of corporate ethical, social and environmental behaviour; direct stakeholder pressures; investor pressure; peer pressure and an increased sense of social responsibility. The European Commission (2002) argues that CSR has gained increasing recognition among companies as an important element in new and emerging forms of governance because it helps them to respond to fundamental changes in the overall business environment. These changes include globalisation and the responsibilities companies feel the need to address as they increasingly source products and services in developing countries; the issues of image and reputation, which have become increasingly important elements in corporate success; and the need for companies to recruit and retain highly skilled personnel. Girod and Bryane (2003) adopt a strategic marketing perspective arguing that CSR is “a key tool to create, develop and sustain differentiated brand names”. It is widely argued that the business ethos generally speaking has started to subscribe to the principle “show me” rather than just “trust me”. Corporate social accountability and reporting is therefore seen as a key driver for engaging the wider community as an important stakeholder in business activity (Zairi, 2000).

### **CSR and Related Standards of Social Accountability and Reporting**

There is no single authoritative definition of CSR (ISO COPOLCO, 2002). The CSR agenda seems to be a loosely defined umbrella embracing a vast number of concepts traditionally framed as environmental concerns, public relations, corporate philanthropy, human resource management and community relations (Table I).

**Table I. Aspects of CSR**

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Aspects</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>External</b>	Social responsibility and new opportunities	Contributing to solving or reducing social problems
	Community relations	Extent of openness and support to people around the organisation and to (local or national) government, stakeholder groups, action groups, churches, educational institutes, health care institutes, and others

<b>environm ent</b>	Consumer relations	Extent of openness towards consumers; recognition of rights of consumers: safety, information, free choice, and to be listened
	Supplier relations	Extent of openness towards suppliers; recognition of rights of suppliers: information, participation in design
	Natural environment (e.g. pollution and packaging) and future generations	Execution of legal requirements, research into current and future technical and environmental developments, environmental issues regarding packaging (recycling). Respect for biodiversity and needs of future generations
	Shareholders relations	Extent of openness regarding social effects of the activities of the organisation (especially with regard to investment decisions)
<b>Internal environm ent</b>	Physical environment	Safety, health, ergonomic aspects, structure and culture
	Working conditions	Demands in relation to recruitment, selection, promotion, part-time work, working on Sundays, medical aspects, retirement aspects
	Minorities/diversity	Extent to which attention is given to minorities, diversity, multiculturalism
	Empowerment, involvement	Organisational structure and management style
	Communication and transparency	Top down and bottom up communication, use of information technology, review of information flows: relevance, timeliness, detail, accuracy
	Industrial relations	Extent to which communication takes place about expectations, needs, values and norms in society
	Education and training	Needs of employees, current and future knowledge and skills, review of training budget, personal development, quality assurance of training process, evaluation of training results
<b>Holistic</b>	Ethics awareness	Attention within development and training and communication for ethical subjects and aspects in relation to work and the business; involvement of employees in developing codes of behaviour, values, ethical codes, and the way employees are addressed to those aspects; stimulation of broad ethical discussion with all parties

*Source: Adapted from Kok et al. (2001) and Castka, R., et al. (2004).*

As Table I suggests CSR could be implemented successfully as a long-term strategy if a new relationship between corporations, communities and ecosystems has been developed. As a result a societal value-added could be achieved. Nelson (1998) proposes an approach based on three elements for building societal value-added. Table II illustrates how this can be carried out in practice.

**Table II. Basic Approaches to Creating Societal Value-Added**

Approach	Example of Area of Application
1. Efficient and ethical pursuit of core business activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Making environmentally and socially responsible decisions</li> <li>▪ Investing in the responsible sourcing production, distribution by taking into account access to the poor</li> <li>▪ Creating local jobs</li> <li>▪ Paying taxes and royalties</li> <li>▪ Implementing social human resource policies</li> <li>▪ Adopting international accepted business standards</li> <li>▪ Supporting technology co-operation</li> </ul>
2. Social investment and philanthropy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offering training programs to the community at large</li> <li>▪ Running employee volunteering schemes for social or cause-related initiatives</li> <li>▪ Business education projects</li> <li>▪ Community health projects</li> <li>▪ Sponsoring community development trusts</li> <li>▪ Resource mobilisation and civic improvement</li> </ul>
3. Contribution to the public policy debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tackling obstacles to private sector development and responsible foreign investment</li> <li>▪ Contribution to social and environmental policies and frameworks in areas such as education, training, local economic development, employment and environmental management</li> <li>▪ Supporting progress for good governance, including anti-corruption initiatives and human rights standards</li> </ul>

*Source: Adapted from Nelson (1998) and Zairi (2000)*

In order to translate the CSR agenda into organisational settings, there are currently several standards available. These standards deal with different aspects of the CSR agenda and offer (or are going to offer) a certification against specific requirements. The most referred ones are outlined in Table III.

**Table III. Overview of CSR Related Standards**

Name	Produced by	Description	Reference
AA 1000	Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability	Aims to improve the accountability and overall performance of organisations through management of the system, individual behaviours and the impact on stakeholders. AA 1000 is a basic standard of responsibility, aiming at providing quality to the accounting, auditing and ethical and social reporting process, in order to favour a sustainable development path	AA1000 (1999)
SA 8000	Social Accountability International	SA 8000 deals with workers' rights and working conditions, and child labour. This standard specifies requirements for social accountability to enable a company to develop, maintain, and enforce policies and procedures in order to manage those issues which it can control or influence and to demonstrate to interested parties that policies, procedures and practices are in conformity with the requirements of this standard	SA8000 (2001)
DR 03028	The Standards Australia Committee MB-004	DR 03028 provides essential elements for establishing, implementing and managing an effective CSR program within an organisation	DR 03028 (2003)
SII 10000	The Standards Institution of Israel	A draft standard on social responsibility and community involvement; requires organisations to comply with all rules and regulations of the Israeli government related to the employment of workers as well as those pertaining to health and safety; to fulfil all the requirements of SA 8000 and ISO 14001, to have in place an ethics code or have one in preparation and to publish a social report. It is also recommended that the report is in accordance with the GRI guidelines (GRI, 2002) and with the principles of AA1000	IQNet (2003)
ISO CSR management system standard	ISO	A draft standard under development	ISO COPOLCO (2002)

Source: Castka, R., et al. (2004).

It is clear that the overall distinction of the standards presented in Table III can be twofold. First, there are standards that focus on particular aspects of CSR. For instance, SA 8000 specifically focuses on working conditions and human rights. Likewise, AA 1000 is centred on stakeholder involvement. These standards provide a solid basis for organisations in these particular areas yet fail to provide the full picture of the CSR orientation of the organisation. The second group consists of more generic frameworks aiming at accomplishing social and ethical objectives of the organisation. For instance, SII 10000 is built around compliance with a multiplicity of industry standards (SA 8000, ISO 14001). It is advocated by ISO/COPOLCO (2002) that the general plan-do-check-act approach of ISO quality and environmental management systems standards (policy, planning, implementation and operation, performance assessment, improvement, and management review) should act as a useful template for the new standard.

Hodkinson (2003) states that the most of the aspects of the CSR agenda (Table I) are already covered by, for instance, ISO 9001:2000. Hence, the challenge of a corporate responsibility standard is not in compliance with the CSR issues, but in understanding how the culture of the organisation has to be changed in order to focus on a single business system that incorporates the CSR agenda (Ledgard and Taylor, 2002). Management experts and practitioners likewise strive to support the idea of integration of various management systems into a single business system (Bamber et al., 2000). CSR could be perceived from two different points of view. Some people see business as sitting in the middle with societal pressures and political pressures coming at it from the outside. This consists the “push” side of the CSR framework. The second point of view is to perceive the CSR as coming from the business idea (the “pull” side). Both of them are presented on Figure I.

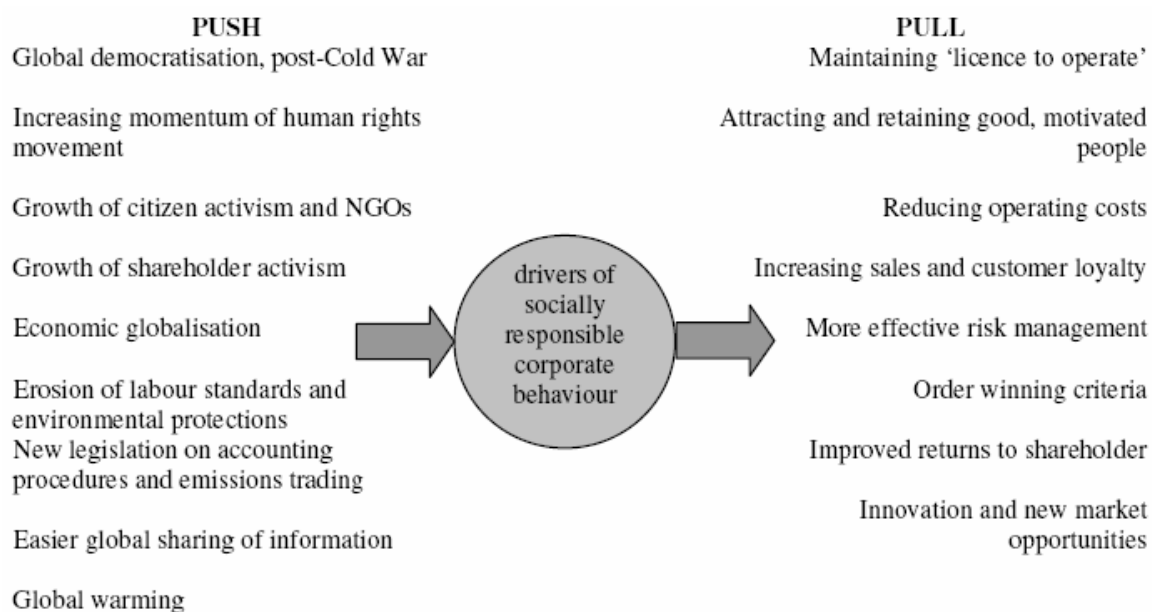


Figure I. “Push-Pull” Approach to CSR

There are various principles that the global business community has started to adhere to on a voluntary basis in order to keep a balance between those two sides presented on Figure I.. The CERES principle is a ten point code of conduct on companies' environmental performance and accountability (see Table IV).

**Table IV. The CERES Principles**

<b>1. Sustainable use of natural resources</b>	We will make sustainable use of renewable natural resources, such as water, soils and forests. We will conserve non renewable natural resources through efficient use and careful planning.
<b>2. Protection of the biosphere</b>	We will reduce and make continual progress toward eliminating the release of any substance that may cause environmental damage to the air, water or the earth or its inhabitants. We will safeguard all habitats affected by our operations and will protect open spaces and wilderness, while preserving biodiversity.
<b>3. Reduction and disposal of wastes</b>	We will reduce and where possible eliminate waste through source reduction and recycling. All waste will be handled and disposed of through safe and responsible methods.
<b>4. Energy Conservation</b>	We will conserve energy and improve efficiency of our internal operations and of the goods and services we sell. We will make every effort to use environmentally safe and sustainable energy sources.
<b>5. Risk Reduction</b>	We will strive to minimise the environmental, health and safety risks to our employees and the communities in which we operate through safe technologies, facilities and operating procedures and by being prepared for emergencies.
<b>6. Safe Products and Services</b>	We will reduce and where possible eliminate the use, manufacture or sale of products and services that cause environmental damage or health or safety hazards. We will inform our customers of the environmental impacts of our products or services and try to correct unsafe use.
<b>7. Environmental Restoration</b>	We will promptly and responsibly correct conditions we have caused that endanger health, safety or the environment. To the extent where this is feasible, we will redress injuries we have caused to the environment and will restore the environment.
<b>8. Informing the Public</b>	We will inform in a timely manner everyone who may be affected by conditions caused by our company that might endanger health, safety or the environment. We will regularly seek advice and counsel through dialogue with persons in communities: our facilities. We will not take any action against employees for reporting dangerous incidents or conditions to management or appropriate authorities.



<b>9. Management Commitment</b>	We will implement these principles and sustain a process that ensures the board of directors and CEO are fully informed about pertinent environmental issues and are fully responsible for environmental policy. In selecting our board of directors, we will consider demonstrating environmental commitment as a factor.
<b>10. Audits and reports</b>	We will conduct an annual self evaluation of our progress in implementing these principles. We will support the timely creation of generally accepted environmental audit procedures. We will annually complete a CERES report which will be made available to the public.

*Source: Adapted from Green Money Journal (1996) and Zairi (2000)*

Other principles and standards include: 1/ principles for global responsibility (benchmarks for measuring business performance); 2/ the CAUX round table (principles for business); 3/ the business charter for sustainable development (principles for environmental management); and 4/ social responsibility initiative by the Foundation for Ethics and Meaning.

### ***CSR and Organisational Learning***

According to Zadek (2004) while every organisation learns in unique ways, most pass through five discernable stages in how they handle corporate responsibility (see Table V).

**Table V. The Five Stages of Organisational Learning**

<b>STAGE</b>	<b>WHAT ORGANISATIONS DO</b>	<b>WHY THEY DO IT</b>	<b>CATCH-PHRASE</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>
<b>DEFENSIVE</b>	Deny practices, outcomes, or responsibilities	To defend against attacks to their reputation that in the short term could affect sales, recruitment, productivity, and the brand	“It’s not our job to fix that.”	Royal Dutch/Shell

STAGE	WHAT ORGANISATIONS DO	WHY THEY DO IT	CATCH-PHRASE	EXAMPLES
<b>COMPLIANCE</b>	Adopt a policy-based compliance approach as a cost of doing business	To mitigate the erosion of economic value in the medium term because of ongoing reputation and litigation risks.	“We’ll do just as much as we have to.”	Nestlé
<b>MANAGERIAL</b>	Embed the societal issue in their core management processes	To mitigate the erosion of economic value in the medium term and to achieve long-term gains by integrating responsible business practices into their daily operations	“It’s the business, stupid.”	Nike, the leading companies in the apparel and footwear industries
<b>STRATEGIC</b>	Integrate the societal issue into their core business strategies	To enhance economic value in the long term and to gain first-mover advantage by aligning strategy and process innovations with the societal issue	“It gives us a competitive edge.”	Automobile companies, food companies
<b>CIVIL</b>	Promote broad industry participation in corporate responsibility	To enhance long-term economic value by overcoming any first-mover disadvantages and to realize gains through collective action	“We need to make sure everybody does it.”	Diageo and other top alcohol companies

Source: Adapted from Zadek, S. “The path to corporate responsibility”, *HBR*, December 2004, p. 127

It is vital for the companies to be able to predict and credibly respond to society’s changing awareness of particular issues. The task is rather discouraging, given the complexity of the issues as well as stakeholders’ volatile and sometimes under informed expectations about business’ capacities and responsibilities to address

societal problems. Danish pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk created a scale to measure the maturity of societal issues and the public’s expectations around the issues (see Table VI).

**Table VI. The Four Stages of Societal Issues Maturity**

STAGE	CHARACTERISTICS
<b>Latent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activist communities and NGOs are aware of the societal issue.</li> <li>▪ There is weak scientific or other hard evidence.</li> <li>▪ The issue is largely ignored or dismissed by the business community.</li> </ul>
<b>Emerging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is political and media awareness of the societal issue.</li> <li>▪ There is an emerging body of research, but data are still weak.</li> <li>▪ Leading business experiment with approaches to dealing with the issue.</li> </ul>
<b>Consolidating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is an emerging body of business practices around the societal issue.</li> <li>▪ Sectorwide and issue-based voluntary initiatives are established.</li> <li>▪ There is litigation and an increasing view of the need for legislation.</li> <li>▪ Voluntary standards are developed, and collective action occurs.</li> </ul>
<b>Institutionalized</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Legislation or business norms are established.</li> <li>▪ The embedded practices become a normal part of a business-excellence model.</li> </ul>

*Source: Adapted from Zadek, S. “The path to corporate responsibility”, HBR, December 2004, p. 128*

Companies frequently resist accepting new responsibilities because they see how risk-taking organisations are criticized for their efforts to do just that. In order to prevent such a challenge companies should, firstly, determine the level of their organisational learning (Table V) and secondly, they have to find out the stage of societal issues maturity. The best way of doing this is to create a matrix where to position the company’s situation. The risky zone is a combination of defensive level of organisational learning and institutionalized societal issue maturity. The opportunity zone is a combination of civil level of organisational learning and latent societal issue maturity. This approach can help organisations figure out how to develop their future business strategies in ways that society will embrace. Additionally, organisations should take into account that events in one industry can affect companies in a different industry or organisations in the same industry that are facing different issues.

## Conclusion

In dealing with the challenges of corporate responsibility, companies should view the issue as integral to the realities of globalization and a major source of learning, relevant to its core business strategy and practices. As practice shows, often business benefits of corporate responsibility are hard-won and frequently, in short term, transient or nonexistent. Making business logic out of a deeper sense of corporate responsibility requires civil leadership, insightful learning and a grounded process for organisational innovation.

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# **Consumer – the main catalyst of changes in the perception of functional foods**

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## **Abstract**

The market of functional foods, and particularly of organic foods, is one of the fastest developing in the world. The main catalyst of its rapid growth and dynamic change – is the consumer of high quality, healthy and safety foods. Organic consumer profile is clearly determined as an individual with high level of citizenship - responsiveness, education and information, as well as an active performer in the process of changes of the food consumption model.

The assessment of consumer perception of organic products is providing valuable information for elaborating marketing strategies.

The findings could serve for working out research and training programs for consumers to be able to make informed choices and decisions in the purchasing process.

## **Introduction**

Never before have consumers had so strong concerns about the food quality and nutrient components affecting human health. In last decade health considerations as “self-care” (Hasler, 2000), as well as the well-being of whole family and young generation have become a main driving force in consumer behaviour and perform new patterns in their lifestyle. According to a survey (International Food Information Council, 1998) 95% of 1,000 consumers expressed the belief that certain foods provide benefits that could reduce disease risk or improve health. Driving for a wholesome life, consumers have formed their specific profile – as consumers of functional foods. The International Food Information Council (IFIC) defines functional foods as foods that provide health benefits beyond basic nutrition (Journal of The American Dietetic Association, 2004). In this paper, considering the main advantage of organic foods, they are presented as functional foods with favorable and stimulating influence not only on separate human organs but on the human constitution as one system, harmonizing its regular and healthy functions.

The conscious functional food consumer tends to be spread in the high developed economies, and emerging in the less developed societies. The new consumer has become a force which catalyzes changes on the market based on a huge variable range of information flows – campaigns for high quality, healthy, and safety foods.

According to data of the Price Waterhouse Coopers, the Bulgarian retail market will show a stable growth (average 4% annually) in the next coming years. This market trend will require a consistent goal-oriented market policy for determining and

satisfying the needs of already defined consumer segments by revealing the new market niche of organic products (Bioproduct BG, 2005). As the organic sector is a priority branch for the development of the Bulgarian Agriculture, Organic Strategic Program is worked out for the period of 2005-2013 which puts a solid base for establishing a consistent agrarian policy in the sector (National Plan for Organic Farming Development in Bulgaria, 2005).

### **Research goal**

Based on existing world-wide and European trends, the main goal is to study the state and characteristics of the Bulgarian consumer of organic and healthy foods, his profile, attitudes and preferences; to explore the concept of the Bulgarian consumer as catalyst of organic market development.

### **Material and Method**

The research is conducted by using the method of structured interview to obtain primary data. The questionnaire is organized logically in three thematic sections, including 17 questions. The inquiry is performed among 78 respondents, including consumers of different market channels: organic farms, regular supermarket chains with stands for healthy and organic foods, specialized stores for healthy and organic foods. The target group is located in the two biggest cities in Bulgaria – Sofia and Plovdiv. The survey is conducted in the period December '05 – February '06. The data is processed by using statistical functions and Excel Program.

### **Result and Discussion**

#### *1. Consumer profile of organic and healthy foods*

The data from the demographic sector shows, that the Bulgarian consumer of organic and healthy foods is fairly close to the clearly defined organic consumer profile from the industrialized countries. The main demographic features present the organic consumer as one who possesses high level of education (65% - high education, fig. 1), concentrated in the biggest cities (Sofia and Plovdiv), with constant high incomes (income more than 400 BGN/month – 48.68%), concerning that the average total income per household is 440.75 BGN/month, and the monthly income average per capita is 165.42 BGN (Statistical Year Book, 2004). The average number of household members is 3.4. The average age level is 39, as the youngest representative is 21 years-old, and the oldest is 75 years-old. The respondents are occupied in the next professions: lecturer, auditor, lawyer, agro-engineer, manager, agro-economist, philologist, doctor in veterinary. The predominant part of the interviewed is female (62%).

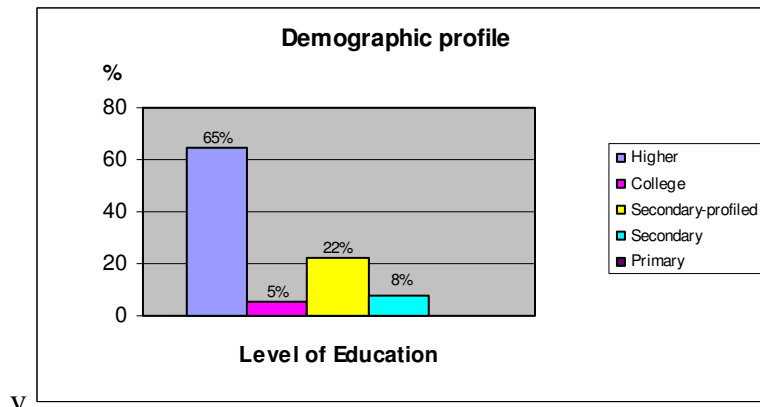


Fig. 1 Demographic profile – Level of Education

The increasing demand of these foods could be expected from the group of high social status, including high level of economic state, level of education, and living in the big city.

2. *Level of awareness, comprehension and cognoscibility*

The three most important characteristics (Fig. 2) defining consumer motives for buying organic products are:

1. Healthy and safety products (29%);
2. Environment friendly products (17%);
3. Products of higher quality and guaranteed origin (15%).

These characteristics approve the unique character of organic products, and present the high level of consumer motivation. The consumer is revealed as a strong and clearly defined market force, which could perform a pressure upon the producers who have to comply with him as a dominant factor.

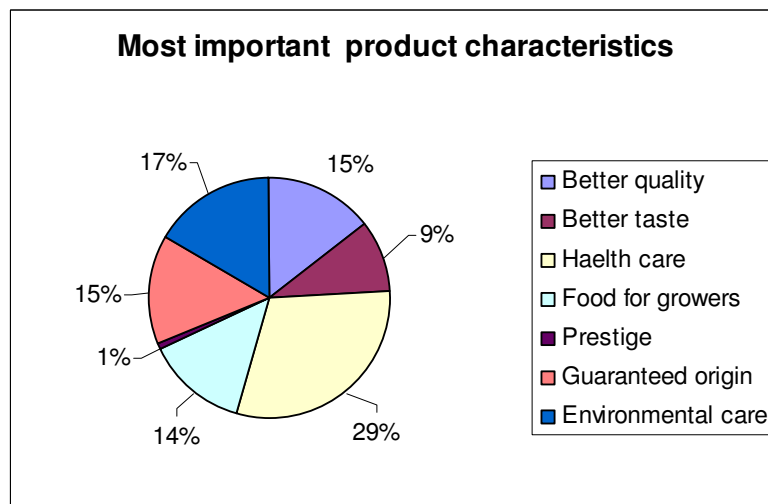


Fig. 2 Organic Product Characteristics

The survey data present that the available information concerning organic products is insufficient and there is a lack of organized information system. The evident approval is drawn by the given answers. Consumers require additional information about the product origin and content, as well as the product advantages and benefits.



The most preferred information sources are: 1) information from the point of sales; 2) specialized fairs and exhibitions; and 3) information from advertising materials and mass-media.

The organic products are defined in different ways: products produced under strict control, complying with certain standards, not damaging nature, favorable for consumer health. This definition is confirmed by the characteristics driven from the survey data. The entire interviewed are convinced that each organic product has to possess a recognizable logo. For more than half of the respondents (58.62%), the logo is the most trustworthy, easy and visible instrument for recognizing organic products. Around 17% of the interviewed consumers are willing to rely on the word of the seller, information which is not officially approved by stamps, signs and distinguished documents.

### 3. Consumer attitudes and preferences. Willingness to buy and level of satisfaction

The organic product range is still very limited and the offered products are highly affecting the human health, these features are pre-positioned in the consumer attitude oriented towards healthy products. This motive is efficient for the certain product group demand. This comprehension corresponds with the product structure shown on figure 3. Herbs (including herbal tea) are the most frequently purchased products, followed by fresh fruits and vegetables, milk and milk products. The organic food supply is insufficient on the domestic market. A big part of the respondents (app.28%) is willing to buy more kinds of products if they are available, and maintain high quality, considering that a sufficient part (21%) are not satisfied by the offered quality. At the same time the market segment of the organic consumers is recognized, and their number is constantly increasing. This trend shows that existing supply is not in conformity with the demand. The Bulgarian organic market has a big potential for increasing the range of offered products.

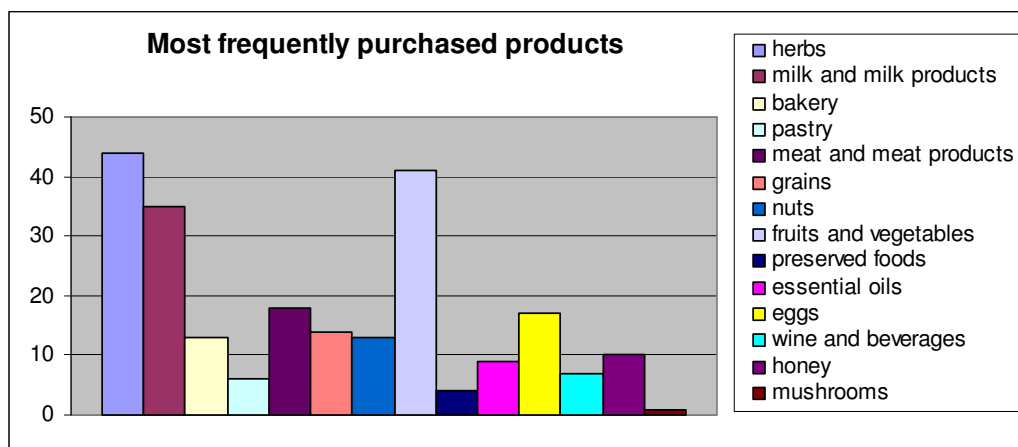


Fig. 3 Organic Product Range

The survey shows that the consumer, considering the higher quality, healthy and safety character of organic products, is willing to pay higher price than the conventional products.

About 62% of the asked consumers are willing to pay a price not exceeding 30% than the price of relevant regular foods. As increasing the price level of organic foods, the share of the organic consumer willing to pay is drastically decreasing.

The additional consumer requirements include the source of available information, the product labeling and design, and the level of product quality.

The specialized shops for healthy and organic products (Fig.4) are the mostly preferred sales stores for purchasing organic foods, which is complying with the required consumer information about product characteristics and properties. The market chains (Metro, Billa) are also preferred option, where organic products could be separated on distinguished plots or stands. The direct sales on farm are another powerful marketing channel for selling organic products, because consumers are more inclined to receive information directly from the producer. Bulgarian food consumers perform self-convinced market behaviour based on the traditional purchasing habits, and relying on the personal contacts, notwithstanding being on the farm or on the point of sales.

These two main channels (store chains and direct sales) are determining the most important sources of information and promotion and they should be systematically studied and developed, regarding the product characteristics.

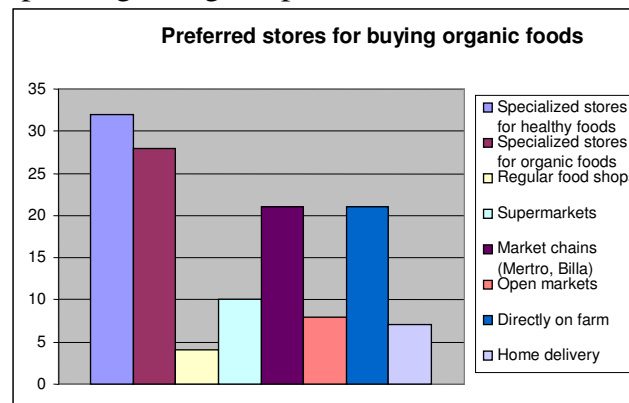


Fig. 4 Types of Organic Food Stores

## Conclusions

Based on the conducted survey the following conclusions could be drawn:

- There is a growing demand for healthy and organic foods;
- Organic consumer performs self-convinced market behaviour;
- Even slowly the organic consumer has become to determine his unique profile, preferences and behaviour in driving the food market in Bulgaria;
- The information is insufficient and there is a lack of mass promotion and information campaigns;
- There is a lack of feedback, necessary for all parties in the market chain;
- The connection between suppliers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers is insufficient, and some times interrupted.

**Bottlenecks and barriers** preventing the consumer inspiration for buying organic and healthy foods:

- Irregular and insufficient supply of products;
- Low product range;
- Inconstant and unsatisfying quality;
- Low level of available information;
- Incompetent sales staff;
- Higher prices compared to those of the regular foods;
- Confusing labels and logos.

**Suggestions** for improving the organic market and influencing the consumers to search and purchase organic and healthy foods:

- Providing information awareness and transparency through improving the existing information system;
- Using different promotional tools for consumer stimulation to provoke consumer conviction for buying organic and healthy foods (for an example, local mass media, open farm days);
- Increasing the role of point of sales to attract and influence the occasional consumers;
- Increasing the merchandising activities in the sales to facilitate consumer performance on the market place;
- Including additional forms of direct market channels (farmers' markets, using the box system, etc.);
- Strengthening and balancing the connection between the research institutions, NGOs, GOs, and independent farmers to examine and satisfy consumer needs and preferences.

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# Foreign corporations operating in Türkiye

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## **Abstract :**

In the globalization process corporations have been gaining power without engaging in the advancement of the common good for all stakeholders. In spite of the fact that we accept the positive effects of the globalization, the negative effects of the foreign investment in any kind to the different stakeholders such as the environmental damage, financial market instabilities, exploitation of employees, consumer's exploitation, erosion of traditional community life have increased the debates on the accountability of foreign corporations. It is obvious that it is no longer acceptable for corporations to violate the basic norms of worker, consumer or environment in less developed countries whereas they behave more consciously in the developed countries. This paper reviews corporate citizenship elements and presents the current findings of an empirical research concerning the situation of the American and European companies operating in Turkey in terms of Corporate Citizenship with the conclusions to stimulate the accountability of the corporations.

***Key words: Corporate Social Responsibility, Corporate Citizenship, Accountability, Ethics, Stakeholder.***

## **FOREIGN CORPORATIONS OPERATING IN TÜRKİYE**

### **INTRODUCTION :**

In the globalization process corporations have been gaining power, sometimes even more power than some states without engaging in the advancement of the common good for all stakeholders. In spite of the fact that we accept the positive effects of the globalization, the negative effects of the foreign investment in any kind to the different stakeholders such as the environmental damage, financial market instabilities, exploitation of employees, cultural imperialism and westernization,

consumer's exploitation, erosion of traditional community life (Matten & Crane, 2004, p: 20) have increased the debates on the accountability of foreign corporations. The latest example of these negative effects has been recorded as environment contamination with toxic waste barrels by a foreign multinational company in Turkey. (<http://www.thenewanatolian.com/tna-4789.html>). It is obvious that it is no longer acceptable for corporations to violate the basic norms of worker, consumer or environment in less developed countries whereas they behave more consciously in the developed countries. A global ranking report notes that even the world's 100 largest companies have a poor record of accounting for their impact on society and the environment. A range of measures that include strategy, governance and stakeholder involvement show these companies scoring an average of 24 out of 100 points with only five companies scoring more than 50 percent (Financial Times. June 23 , 2004). In a global economy all corporations have a responsibility to facilitate, demonstrate and promote corporate citizenship wherever they operate. -They need to engage in a much more proactive way with society and its citizens.- Corporate Citizenship (CC) functions as a new way of presenting existing concepts of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) further it applies to a wider set of issues .CC does not only deal with corporate social policies and programs that might be adopted in the same vein as CSR but also, according to Dirk and Crane (2005), deals with the administration of a bundle of individual social, civil and political citizenship rights conventionally granted and protected by governments. This study reviews corporate citizenship elements and presents the current findings of an empirical research about the situation of the foreign companies operating in Turkey in terms of Corporate Citizenship.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

Despite the fact that there is no single, commonly agreed definition, indicators and metrics of CC, in the study we have tried to develop a tool based on the Maignan and Ferrell C.C definition for the evaluation of corporate citizenship activities in foreign companies. Combining CSR and Stakeholder management theory, Maignan and Ferrell (2005) defined CC as the extent to which businesses assume the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities imposed on them by their various stakeholders including employees, shareholders, business partners and suppliers, customers, competitors, public authorities and NGOs representing local communities, environment. Table 1 presents the 33 elements of CC and sources of guidance used in the research. Some corporate citizenship elements are established from CSR indicators (Bondy, Matten, Moon, 2004, Welford ;2005), some of them selected through consideration of many voluntary or regulatory international, regional or local law, standards, codes of conducts, initiatives, declarations and conventions which represent the source and further information about each element and they are provided in the second column.

**Table 1: Corporate Citizenship Questionnaire**

	<b>Our company operating in Turkey has written policies, procedures and practices in the area stated below</b>	<b>Source of Guidance</b> (voluntary or regulatory ) International standards, codes of conducts , initiatives, declarations and conventions principles ext.	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>If Others Pls. specify</b>
	<b>INTERNAL ASPECTS</b>				
	<b>Employee</b>				
1	The protection of human rights within the company’s own operations	UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Global Compact, SA 8000, Turkish law			
2	Prevention on child labor and forced labor in the workplace	UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, SA 8000, CEPA, Turkish law			
3	Profit-sharing and share ownership schemes	EU Green Paper			
4	Non-discrimination in the workplace (Responsible recruitment practices, ext)	ILO Convention, SA 8000, Global Compact, CEPA, Turkish law			
5	Equal opportunities statements and implementation plans (Equal pay and career prospects for women, ext.)	ILO Convention 100,110 and 111, SA 8000, CEPA, Turkish law			
6	Statement on normal working hours, maximum overtime and fair wage structures,	ILO Conventions 1,30 and 47, Global Compact, SA 8000 CEPA, Turkish law			
7	The right of freedom of association, collective bargaining and complaints procedures	ILO Convention 98 OECD Guidelines CEPA, Turkish law			
8	Staff development, in-house education and vocational training, lifelong	UNESCO Project on Technical and			

	learning, empowerment of employees, better information flow throughout the company. (by providing apprenticeship places for less educated, less skilled workers)	Vocational Education (UNEVOC) EU Green Paper, OECD Guidelines			
9	Health and safety at work beyond the legislation	European Agency for Safety and Health at Work			
	<b>Investors</b>				
10	Maximizing shareholder value , focus on returns firstly	Classical Corporate Governance			
11	Publishing a ‘triple bottom line’ in the annual reports to shareholders that measures performance against economic, environmental and social criteria	Global Reporting Initiative, Corporate Governance, SVN's Standards			
12	Commitment to take place on responsible investment (SRI)	IMKB Corporate Governance Index, Dow Jones’ sustainability index, FTSE4Good, KLD social index			
	<b>EXTERNAL ASPECTS</b>				
	<b>Suppliers</b>				
13	Restrictions and control on the use of child labor and forced labor by suppliers	International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC)			
14	Labor standards adopted by suppliers	ILO international Labor Standards Convention SA8000			
15	Support for education and awareness-raising around labor conditions by suppliers	OECD Principles Social Venture Network standards of CSR SA8000			
16	Inspection of suppliers facilities for health, safety, and environmental aspects	ILO Working Environment Convention SA8000			
	<b>Environment and Local Community</b>				
17	Establish and develop a process of structured dialogue with various stakeholders about local health, stability and prosperity	Global Sullivan Principals UN Global Compact CERES Principles			

		EMAS, Forest Stewardship Council, ISO 14000			
18	Protection of indigenous environment and their rights, values	ILO Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention EMAS Forest Stewardship Council			
19	Commitment to local community protection and engagement	UNESCO World Heritage Initiative			
20	Direct support for local community for social and sustainable development related projects, initiatives.	EU Green Paper SVN's Standards EMAS			
	<b>Competitors, Public Authorities, Customers</b>				
21	Fair trade, equitable trade and end-price auditing	Ethical Trading Initiative, Fair trade Labelling AA1000			
22	Respecting and meet to national competition and taxation law.	Social Venture Network standards of CSR,Sullivan Principles ,UN Global Compact ,AA1000			
23	Protection of local Small-scale indigenous competitors	EU Green Paper			
24	Sharing experience and peer pressure, replacing the competitive approach of the past in health, safety and environmental areas.	EU Green Paper			
25	Fair prices, terms and expectations along with quality and reliable delivery for customers.	EU Green Paper SA8000			
26	Providing products and services in an efficient, ethical, environmentally-aware manner and usable by disabled consumers as well	EU Green Paper SA8000			
	<b>Transparency and Accountability</b>				
27	Commitment to auditing and reporting. developing code of ethics (including bribery and corruption)	Ethical Trading Initiative Base Transparency International,			



		OECD Anti-Bribery Convention The Cotonou Agreement EU Caux Roundtable Principles Global Reporting Initiative CERES Principles AA1000			
28	Development of standards in social and eco- labeling.	EU Green Paper EMAS Global Sullivan Principles ISO 14000			
29	Establish and develop a process of structured dialogue between company and various stakeholders.	AA 1000,Corporate governance Caux Roundtable Principles Global Reporting Initiative Global Sullivan Principles CERES Principles			
30	Responding to stakeholders including procedures for the resolution of complaints	Global Sullivan Principles Corporate Governance CERES Principles EMAS Corporate Governance			
	<b>Education and Awareness &amp; Involvement Rising</b>				
31	Training programs to ensure managers have the skills and competences necessary to develop and promote corporate citizenship	Global Sullivan Principles , Social Venture Network standards			
32	Educational programs, seminars, courses, works-shops, case studies for the promotion of corporate citizenship to all stakeholders	Global Sullivan Principles, Social Venture Network standards			
33	External campaign programs for raising social and sustainable development issues	Global Sullivan Principles , Social Venture Network standards			

In order to understand how many corporations adopt C.C elements, a ballot-type questionnaire has been developed. Companies were sent an e-mail asking them to complete the questionnaire which asked if they had policies, procedures, practices in each of the 33 areas listed in Table 1. Alongside each element they had to simply check a box stating “Yes” or stating “No” and specifying if there are others. As you can guess if a company has a written policy does not always imply that it is implemented. On the other hand, companies may be practicing the elements consistent with corporate citizenship that are not recorded in a policy document. Therefore the questionnaire stated that there had to be a written policy, procedures and practice. Since it is a long process to check all companies, a trust has to be given to respondents to tell the truth. This could be considered as a limitation of the study. We however tried to reduce this limitation and check respondent answers by communicating some of their stakeholders as much as possible or searching web sites if exist. Corporation web sites have been carefully searched to identify how and what information they presented, if any, on corporate citizenship elements we have questioned. We compared their answers with the information on their web sites on what corporations themselves said about, what corporate codes used in each company, what kind of report, policy or activities they were involved in, how they were engaging with stakeholders, and the results of these activities.

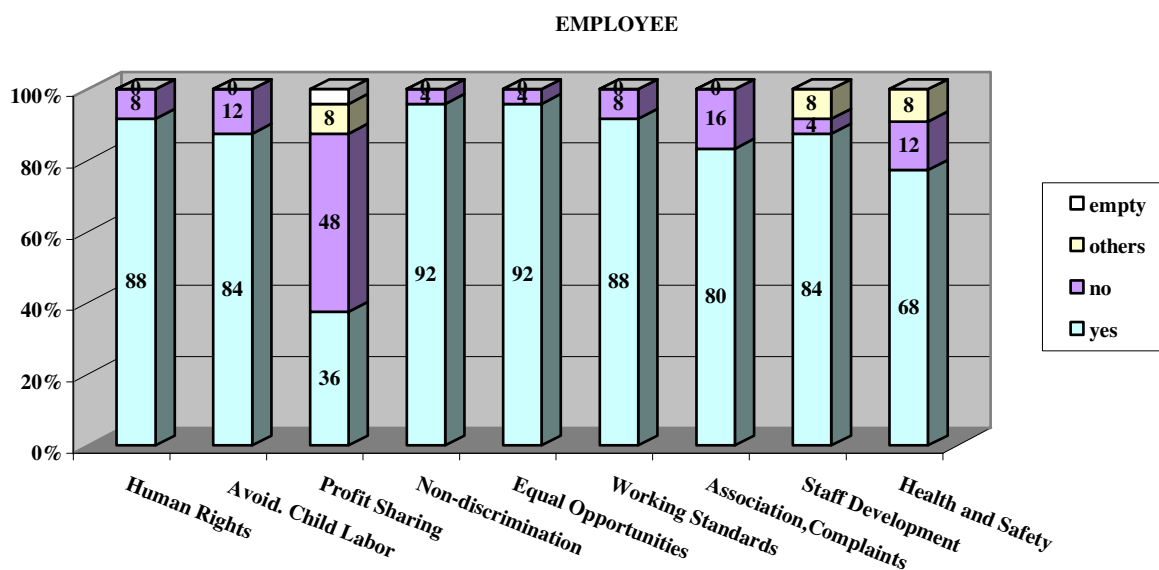
Survey scientific sample is established by collecting American and European company e-mail addresses and individual names in companies where possible, and selecting at random from Trade Councils of Consulates or Under Secretariat of the Prime Ministry for Foreign Trade. The questionnaires were submitted to 200 e-mail addresses of foreign companies in different sizes, forms and in different sectors in January 2006. But only 4 respondents completed the questionnaire by the deadline end of February 2006. Therefore, in order to increase the number of responses, approximately 90 managers at top and middle management levels were called to complete the questionnaire within two months.

Since some of the elements are open to wide interpretation, these were explained on the phone or face to face interview. It was interesting to note that 24 of the 90 companies have disclosed that they do not respond to any kind of questionnaire and ; 15 of the 90 have refused to complete the form by arguing that some questions in the form are inquiring inner confidential information and; 5 of 90 explained that their headquarters do not let them to answer. One might also put forward these answers might be considered as indicators themselves about the degree of transparency and accountability of the companies. This argument however does not have a scientific basis. In the research 14 of 90 companies explained that they have not enough information in this regard or do not have enough time to compare and check if they have written policies, procedures and practices ; 2 of 90 respondents said that they do not have a policy does not mean that they do not practice it. The number of respondents is 24. If the response rate is considered as a function of how important the concept of corporate citizenship is perceived, low response rate might imply that it is less of an issue. It is however encouraging to see that there is at least some activity in each of the 33 elements defined. The results in each elements and graphical summaries as follows;

## RESULTS :

**Employee :** Elements of employee rights within the company’s own operations all commonly found as policies in the companies surveyed except for profit-sharing and share ownership schemes. This can probably be explained by the fact that these policies are required by Turkish law as well . Figure 1 demonstrates the results as graphic.

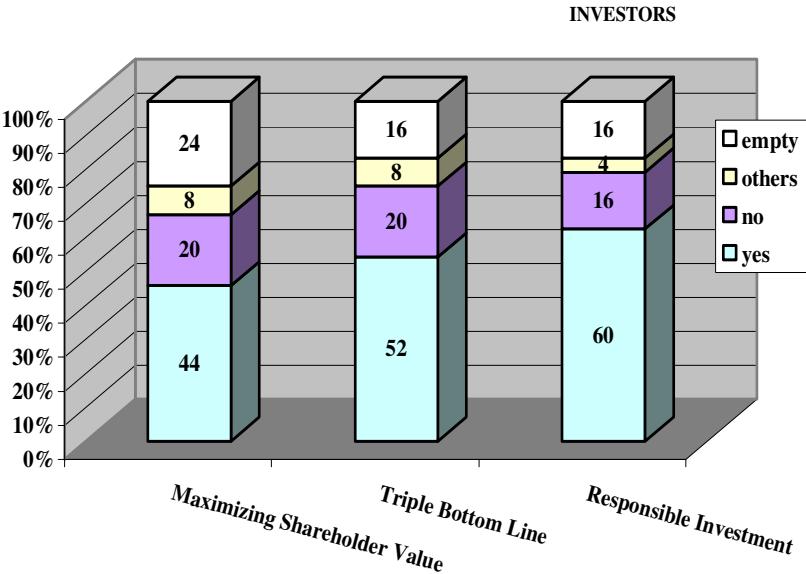
**Figure 1.**



The corporations in the sample were more likely to have policies about “the protection of human rights within the company’s own operations” (88 percent) , “prevention on child labor and forced labor in the workplace” (84 percent). It is not surprising that fewer companies have developed policies on “profit-sharing and share ownership schemes” (36 percent). Companies said they had policies on “non-discrimination in the workplace” (92 percent), “equal opportunity statements and implementation plans consisting equal pay and career prospects for women” (92 percent) . The rate about “working standards like statement on normal working hours, maximum overtime and fair wage structures” is 88 percent. The number of companies having policies about “the right of freedom of association, collective bargaining and complaints procedures” is 80 percent and “staff development, in-house education and vocational training, lifelong learning, empowerment of employees, better information flow throughout the company” is 84 percent. Regarding “health and safety” the rate 68 percent imply that there is also less of a commitment to guaranteeing health and safety at work beyond the legislation.

**Investors :** The next most important set of code characteristics found in sample is those related with shareholders (Figure 2) . It is perhaps surprising that in companies surveyed having policies about “maximizing shareholder value and focusing on returns only” is 44 percent.

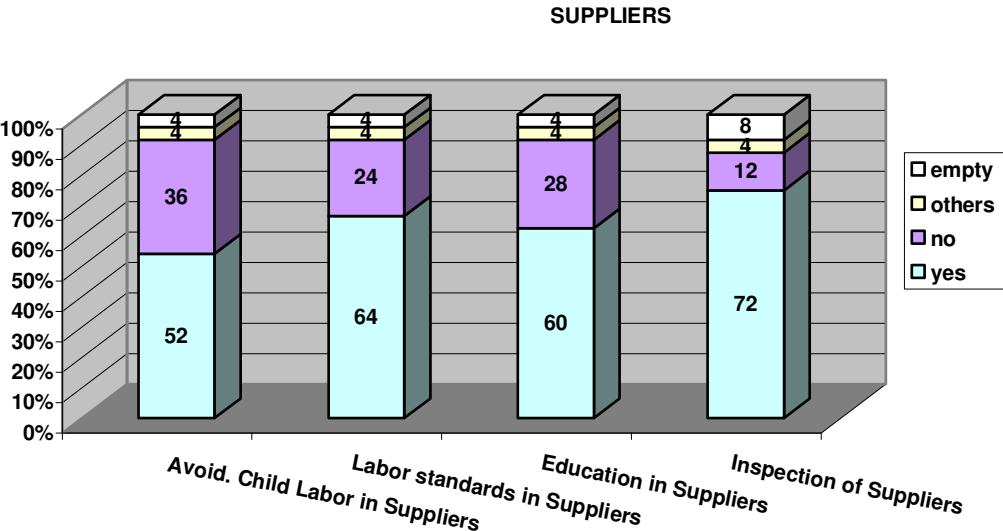
**Figure 2 :**



The rate of “publishing a triple bottom line in the annual reports to shareholders that measures performance against economic, environmental and social criteria” is only 52 percent and “commitment to take place on responsible investment (SRI)” rate is 60 percent.

**Suppliers :** Figure 3 shows that the elements relating to the management of supply chains that appear to be less common.

**Figure 3:**

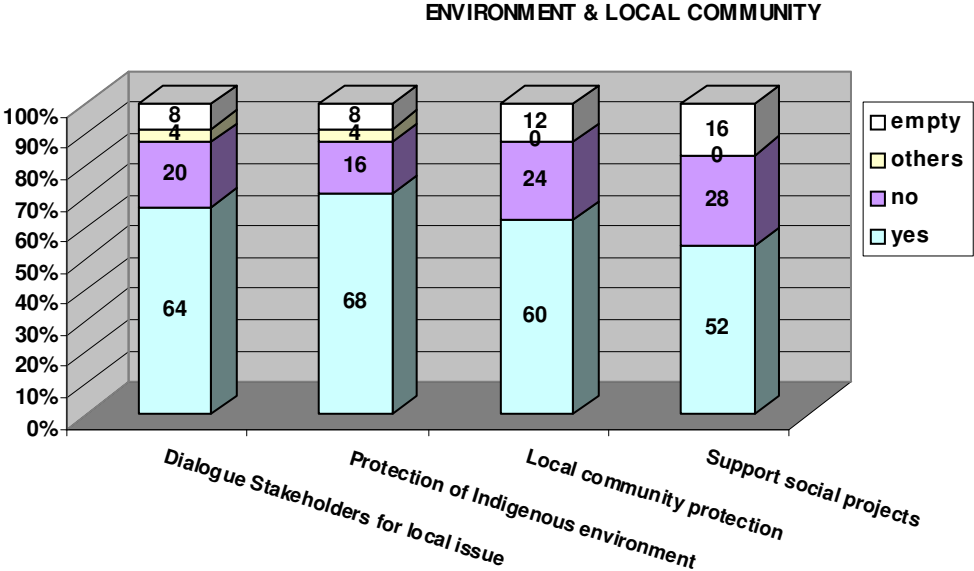


The lesser proportion of corporations provide the incidence (52 percent) of the policies about “restrictions and control on the use of child labor and forced labor in their

suppliers”, “labor standards adopted by suppliers” rate is 64 percent, support for “education and awareness-raising around labor conditions by suppliers” frequency is 60 percent. A policy on the “inspection of supplier’s facilities for health, safety, and environmental aspects” is commonly seen as 72 percent of the firms.

**Environment and Local Community:** Figure 4 demonstrates that policies on local community protection are not very well covered .

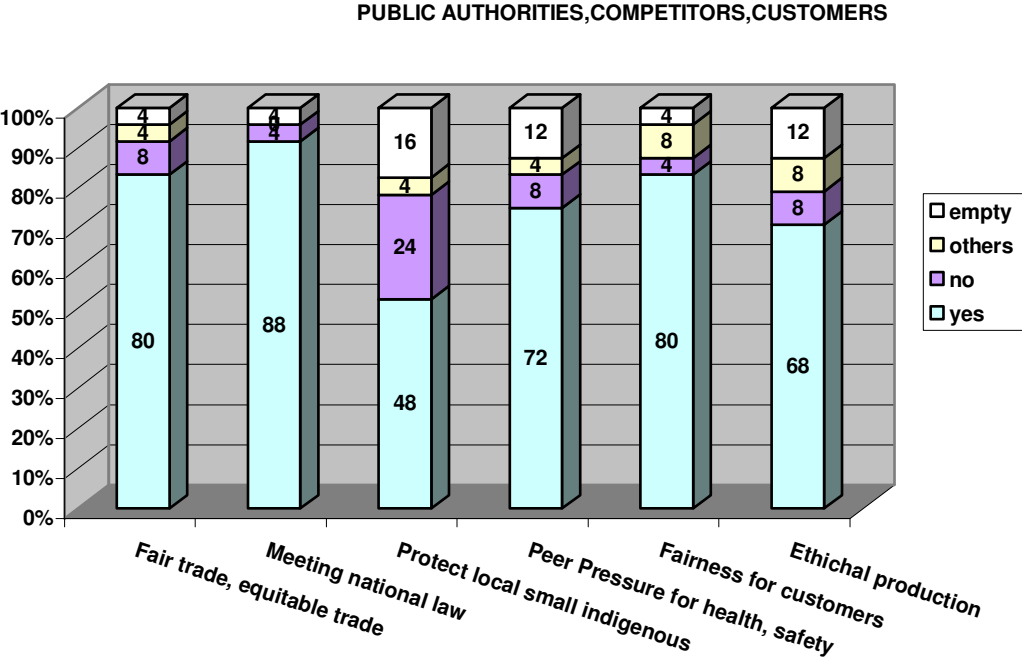
**Figure 4 :**



On the issue of “establishing and developing a process of structured dialogue with various stakeholders about local health, stability and prosperity” we see 64 percent of companies have policies in this area compared with 68 percent in “protection of indigenous environment and their rights, values”. Additionally we expected much higher incidences of “commitment to local community protection and engagement” higher than 60 percent. Policies on “direct support for local community for social and sustainable development related projects, initiatives” are even less common in companies responding, with 52 percent.

**Competitors, Public Authorities, Customers :** In terms of Competitors, Public Authorities, Customers, It has been found out that most of the companies are practicing policies. (See Figure 5).

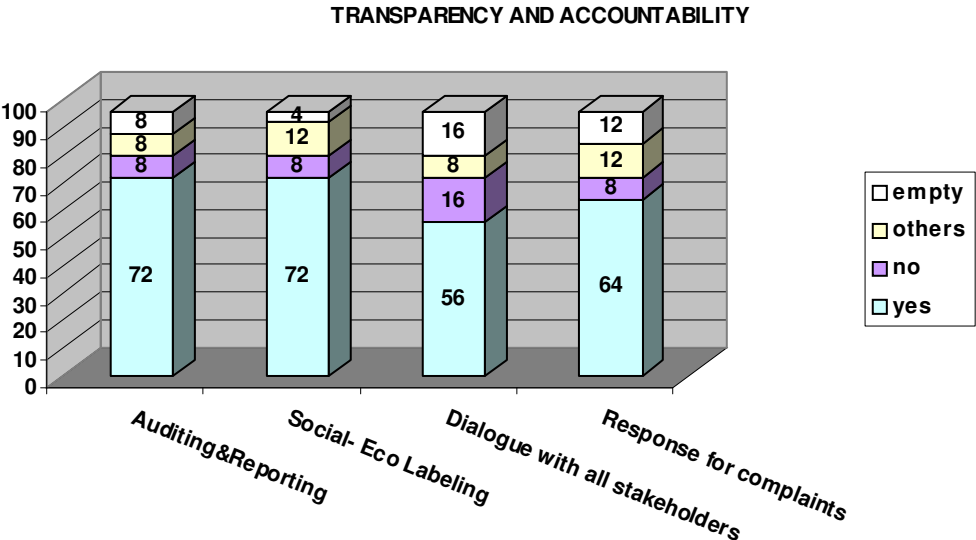
**Figure 5:**



We actually find a considerably higher incidence of policies on “fair trade, equitable trade, end-price auditing” (80 percent) and “respecting and meeting national competition and taxation law” is 88 percent. The rate 48 percent shows that a rather more mixed picture with fewer written policies in the area of the “protection of small-scale indigenous competitors”. In the area of “sharing experience and peer pressure with rivals, replacing the competitive approach of the past in health, safety and environmental areas” incidence is 72 percent. The elements relating to “the consumers consisting fair prices, terms and expectations along with quality and reliable delivery for customers” appear to be common with the rate 80 percent. But only 68 percent of companies have policies on “providing products and services in an efficient, ethical, environmentally aware manner and usable by disabled consumers as well”.

**Transparency and Accountability:** When it comes to an examination of transparency and accountability the same pattern of a lower incidence of written policies among respondents shows up again. (See Figure. 6)

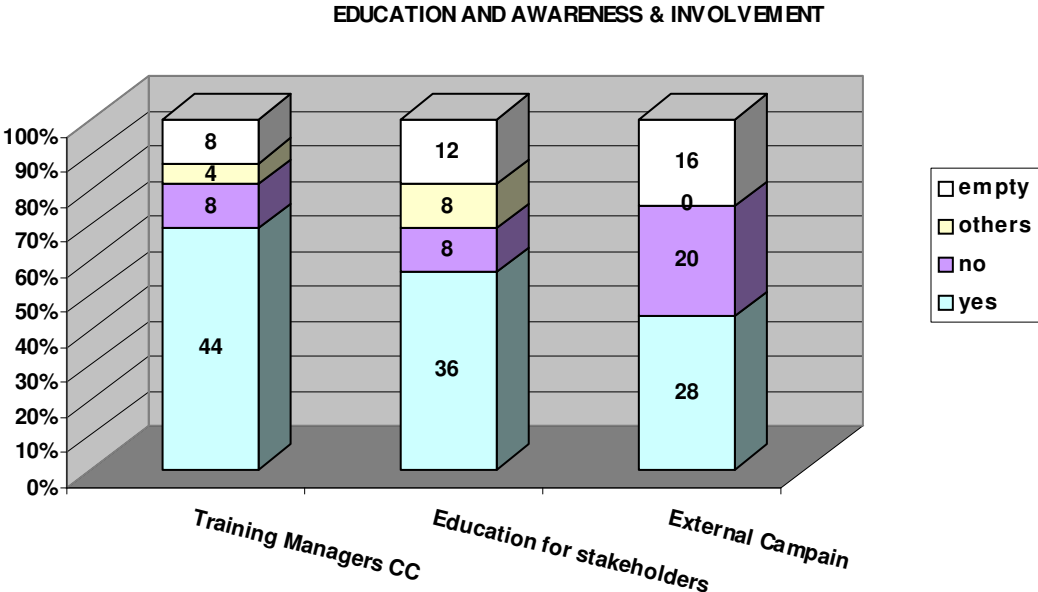
**Figure 6 :**



On the issue of “commitment to auditing and reporting, developing code of ethics (including bribery and corruption)” we see 72 percent of companies have policies in this area. The policies covering codes of conduct on ethics, bribery and corruption is relatively high. This may be a result of the numerous scandals relating to corruption among a number of large companies in the world. The elements of the accountability encompass “development of standards in social and eco- labeling” is 72 percent and “establishing and developing a process of structured dialogue between company and various stakeholders” is carried out by only about 56 percent of respondents. Policies on “responding to stakeholders including procedures for the resolution of complaints” are not very high among all companies (64 percent). It would seem that corporations should place more emphasis on the importance of codes as communication tools with stakeholders.

**Education and Awareness & Involvement Rising :** The education section of the elements is clearly the least developed element. (See Figure: 7) It is important to note that of the 44 percent companies that did have training programs to ensure managers have the skills and competences necessary to develop and promote corporate citizenship.

**Figure 7 :**



Policies on “educational programs, seminars, courses, works-shops, case studies for the promotion of corporate citizenship to all stakeholders” are low across all companies (36 percent). “External campaign programs for raising social and sustainable development issues” are even less common among companies responding with 28 percent. It is disappointing not to see more activity in these areas and certainly this is one area that companies need to think about developing in the future.

**CONCLUSION:**

As it can be seen on survey regulatory frameworks shape business behaviors more than voluntary processes and standards. (Employee, Competition and taxation, exc.). The term “corporate accountability” generally refers to the legally binding obligations on corporations imposed by governments and to the corporate governance systems, designed to hold management accountable to shareholders. But the term accountability also refers to moral obligations to answer on any operation to all stakeholders.

As it has been argued that today’s paradigm is of the conscientious consumer citizen who civilizes the market economy and contributes to sustainability. (Thoreseen, 2003). Sternberg (1998) puts it, if individuals have views as to how business should be conducted, they should ensure that their individual choices accurately reflect those views. When each potential stakeholder otherwise known as every member of society acts conscientiously in his personal capacity, and strategically bestows or withholds its economic support on the basis of its moral values, then the operation of market forces will automatically lead business to reflect those values. The conditions for consumer pressure is information about the social and ethical performance of companies. The paper suggests that accountability issue relates to the need of all stakeholders, especially consumers for independent verification of conformance with regulatory and also voluntary standards.

Regulatory approaches are frequently focused on securing compliance with minimum standards while voluntary initiatives exceed regulatory requirements. Since



laws and regulations frequently follow minimums they may not be always at a level or standard that is truly needed to protect various stakeholder groups. Additionally laws are often not kept up to date; As Thoresen (2005) refers to a timeframe acceleration - a legislative Doppler effect- in which there is a significant time lag between the public demand for legislation and the enacting and enforcing of such legislation that means current laws may not reflect the latest thinking, norms, or research that indicates the level or standard at which business should be operating to protect all stakeholders. Thus, regulatory and voluntary approaches should be paired and complimentary to correct companies' failure for the advancement of the common good. Responsiveness, transparency and trust between the producer and the consumer can be stimulated by the necessary regulations coupled with sound ethics and mechanism like advanced corporate governance systems that provide all stakeholders to observe companies and seek accountability.

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# Catalysing and impeding changes on Polish life insurance market

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## ***A retrospective assessment of life insurance***

Insecurity and risk have troubled humanity since time immemorial. Insurance against losses is hardly a modern invention, either. The first forms of insurance date back to ancient times, with offers of various types of mutual help put forth by members of professional or religious associations. The development of trade led people to consider the possibility of minimising the risk of losing their property. The first document which today would be called an insurance policy was issued in the year 1384. However, it was not until 1705 that the first association offering life insurance was established in England.

The evolution of insurance systems in Poland has taken a slightly different turn to those observed in the most advanced countries of the world though the beginnings were alike. The first forms of accident insurance and ways of organizing mutual help appeared in Poland at the medieval period. They were related to the activity of fellows companies operating in Silesia region. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries some elements of mutual insurances were involved in the firefighting regulations. Moreover, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century town dwellers from Bydgoszcz and Gdańsk insured their buildings in foreign insurance companies - English and Dutch. First insurance firms in Poland came into being after the partitions of Poland by the neighbouring countries in the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1803 *The Firefighting alliance for towns in South Prussia* was organized; a year later *The Firefighting alliance for villages in South Prussia* was created. Both organizations covered a large area of Poland, Warsaw and Poznań including. Both of them collapsed after a few years because Prussia got defeated in the war against Napoleon's army. After 1864 the insurance market was liberated. In the part of Poland annexed by Russia private insurance firms occurred only in the 70s of 18<sup>th</sup> century. After 1863 the insurance institutions were voided independence by the act of involving them into state administration. Alongside at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century other Polish private and public insurance societies began to function. According to some historians, the slowest development of the insurance market took place in Austrian sector of partitioned Poland<sup>68</sup>. In contrast to territories annexed by Russia and Prussia - obligatory insurance was not introduced there and the whole insurance market was

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<sup>68</sup> The development of Polish insurance occurred in Austrian partition in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first Polish company of this kind in the Austrian partition area was the *Cracow Insurance Company* established in 1868 in Cracow. Further evolution of Polish insurance business was hampered by the two world wars.

liberated. The outbreak of World War I reduced the activities of insurance companies in Poland and only after 1918 their activities began flourish anew. And the first large insurance companies came to existence. In 1929 - as a result of fusion of several firms - the biggest *Polish Insurance Concern* was created. Prior to the year 1939 there existed in Poland as many as 72 private insurance companies, 38 mutual insurance companies and 16 insurance institutions. Only two of them survived the war and the change of political and economic system in the late forties. The first, *State Insurance Company* (Państwowy Zakład Ubezpieczeń) – which formerly operated as *General Mutual Insurance Company* (Powszechny Zakład Ubezpieczeń Wzajemnych) – monopolised domestic property and personal insurance. The other insurance company to survive the war was Warta S.A., which dominated property and personal insurance (contracted and serviced in foreign currencies) as well as reinsurance. An integral part of the state administration, PZU remained, however, the major player on Polish insurance market.

The years 1952-1984 were characterised by a centralised state monopoly over insurance. The first break in the monopolised insurance market came with the Law of 20 September 1984 about insurance of property and persons, which allowed new insurance firms to be established in the form of state-owned, co-operative and joint stock companies, with State Treasury holding the controlling interest. The implemented changes were not significant enough to revolutionise Polish insurance market, though.

An amendment to the Law of 20 September 1984 passed on 17 May 1989 abolished all restrictions on the property structure of the emerging insurance companies, while preserving the general principles of insurance market regulation. What ensued was a far-reaching liberalisation, though no licensing criteria were introduced. The problem of efficient and professional supervision of the emerging insurance market remained unresolved. The Polish market continued to be closed to foreign capital, which impaired its efficiency through lack of competition. A critical assessment of the current situation as well as the future accession to the European Union prompted the Ministry of Finance to launch a thorough reform of the Polish insurance system. It aimed at developing a modern insurance services market, its latest result being the Law of 28 July 1990 with subsequent amendments.

The most important new solutions include:

- opening of the Polish insurance market to new insurance companies, both domestic and foreign
- further liberalisation of the insurance market based on the principle of international reciprocity
- abolishing statutory insurance
- adopting a solvency margin and guarantee capital as indices of proper financial management of an insurer
- establishing a guarantee fund to protect the interests of victims of accidents covered by obligatory insurance
- establishing of insured persons' protection fund to protect the interests of the latter in the event of the insurance company's insolvency
- imposing a ban on simultaneous operating in the field of life and other types of insurance

- establishing mutual insurance companies
- restricting the form of insurers' operations to joint-stock companies and mutual insurance companies
- restricting market activity in the insurance sector to insurance proper and related activity.<sup>69</sup>

### *The positive and the negative aspects of insurance reforms in Poland*

Abolishing the insurance monopoly of the state and paving the way for private insurance companies with domestic and foreign capital, the Law of 28 July facilitated the development of a modern Polish insurance market. Processes such as opening of the market, privatisation, adjustments to ensure compliance with EU regulations and, primarily, the impact of the pension system reform, made insurance one of the most dynamic sectors of the Polish economy of the 1990s. It was possible owing to changes in the insurance law but also due to low awareness of the issues involved on the part of Polish people who, following the period of state monopoly, found themselves on the new insurance market lacking knowledge of the subject. People in Poland did not exercise sufficient caution in signing agreements with foreign insurance companies, an opinion confirmed by a commentator of the *Gazeta Prawna*. To this day they know little about insurance, since no major initiatives have been taken in the field of social education.<sup>70</sup> Similar opinions are shared by the researchers from Warsaw School of Commerce such as A Dabrowska, M. Janoś-Kresło and I. Ozimek.. In their recent book "Ochrona i edukacja konsumentów we współczesnej gospodarce rynkowej"<sup>71</sup> they confirmed that the companies operating in insurance sector in Poland misused the liberalisation of legal system by creating situations not required or even not profitable for Polish consumers.

According to the quoted authors, a consumer on the Polish insurance market can not feel secure and his rights are not respected, an opinion confirmed by an increasing number of complaints and requests to intervene coming from policy – holders. In 2003 complains about life insurance took the second position in the total number of complaints brought to the Ombudsman of Policy – holders; there were 588 of them, which was 18% of the total amount. In comparison with the year 2002, the increase was only 3.5% ( the number of complains was 369, which made 14.5% of all cases) but it tends to be steady. It shows that there are some major problems in life insurance sector which demands explanation.

How do representatives of insurance companies explain the sources of the arisen problems? One of the sources – in their view – was that the insurance agents were improperly trained at the initial period of the transformation in Poland. As they

<sup>69</sup> Insurance market in Poland, [www.piu.com.pl](http://www.piu.com.pl)

<sup>70</sup> As confirmed by the results of market research commissioned by the National Insurance Supervisory Office and conducted in May and July 2000 and December 2001

<sup>71</sup> A Dabrowska, M. Janoś-Kresło and I.Ozimek, *Ochrona i edukacja konsumentów we współczesnej gospodarce rynkowej*, Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warszawa 2005, p. 85.

themselves admit, in the 90s motivating agents dominated over training them in dealing with insurance issues. Competent training seemed to be redundant as the very basic fight for the biggest possible part of the raising Polish market. The other factor responsible for the mistakes was the media, which informed that the policy equals an additional pension and that investing through an insurance policy brings better effects than using other financial instruments. Similar remarks were made by the Ombudsman of Policy-holders in 1997 –

*The major noticeable fault in the field of customer service is generally weak and one-sided information offered by insurance agents. They are experts in selling techniques, although they are often not able to inform the future customer about detailed rules and consequences of the agreements, which they only intend to sign. It might be understood, however the company which endeavours after a long term operating should not abuse their client' trust. Also the advertising directed to the general public contributes to the situation: the language used in advertisements is ambiguous, unclear and misleading. Instead of explaining, the media blurr the message. Such cases occurs even in credible and respected media. The companies have their share in the fault.<sup>72</sup>*

The Ombudsman's voice did not reach the right circles because two years later, while describing the insurance knowledge of Poles he noticed a set of negative phenomena, including:

- ✓ insufficient insurance education and the lack of legal awareness – professional literature is beyond the interest of an average receiver, no insurance information on the school curriculum, insufficient and superficial interest of TV and radio,
- ✓ unawareness of the insurers rights and authorisations resulting from the mutual agreements, and in consequence - inability to claim for insurance benefits,
- ✓ the lack of the habits of getting acquainted with the contents of the insurance policy and general insurance conditions,
- ✓ unreliable advertising and misleading information. Rules that govern the marketing and selling technics often prove unethical and do not avoid untrue and incomplete information.

The previous mistakes resulted in the fact that many sold policies should be considered as “misselling”. In market terms selling the most does not mean selling best and in life insurance it proved true. “Misselling” can occur in every country since everywhere dishonest sellers might be met. However, in Polish conditions it was the sell much as soon as possible that retarded the development of the insurance market. Terms of selling elaborated in such countries as as the UK or Germany where the insurers operating in Poland come from, impede misselling, contributing this way to well meant social benefits. Unfortunately, when operating in Poland, insurance companies and societies have not taken into consideration the social long-term advantage.

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<sup>72</sup> S.Rogowski ., Z teki rzecznika – PUSiG 1/97: Klient na polskim rynku ubezpieczeń, [http://www.rzu.gov.pl/vademecum/z\\_teki\\_rzecznika/z\\_teki\\_rzecznika\\_pusig\\_2\\_99.htm](http://www.rzu.gov.pl/vademecum/z_teki_rzecznika/z_teki_rzecznika_pusig_2_99.htm)

### **How to lose on life insurance as exemplified by Allianz Life Poland insurance company**

On 23 October 2003 Tygodnik Powszechny weekly ran an interview with Paweł Dangel – president of Allianz Poland insurance company and vice-president of the Board of the Polish Chamber of Insurance – entitled “Ethics in Business.” The transcript of the interview was also published on the Allianz insurance company website. Since the firm he represents is of German provenance, in the interview Dangel shares his insights on the German business culture, asserting that it rests on very solid ethical foundations. He implies that this culture espouses certain critical business values which Polish culture lacks, such as the cult of craftsmanship. Dangel writes that “respect for craftsmanship, for a job well done, is still an inseparable part of the German business culture”. He also reflects on business ethics in Poland.

What is President Danleg’s assessment of the level of ethics in Poland? He asserts that Polish employees are reluctant to share responsibility for the company. To support his claim he invokes the example of company cars. Many Poles, Danleg argues, still maintain the old attitude that “company car means no-one’s car”, that there is no need to take proper care of it, have it repaired, etc. In this respect, Danleg continues, Polish companies lag far behind those on the other side of the Oder. He also points to other behaviour patterns, typical of Polish company staff, such as when a group of people is working on a joint project and someone suddenly takes an unannounced leave, shifting the burden of unfinished work on their colleagues’ shoulders.

In the context of this criticism of Polish workers’ ethos it is worth taking a look at the company whose president makes such judgements and examining its products in order to determine how it contributes to the improvement of the ethical level in the economic life of Poland. The evaluation will begin with the history of the company’s activity on the Polish market, proceed to the presentation of one of its products and end with a legal assessment of the life insurance sector on the basis of the capital fund.

### **The Development of Allianz Poland Group<sup>73</sup>**

Allianz Poland S.A. insurance company was launched on 14 November 1996 under the licence of the Ministry of Finance. Some time later, on 28 February 1997, the Ministry of Finance granted Allianz Life Poland S.A. insurance company permission to operate. On 25 March 1999 the Pension Funds Supervisory Office issued a licence allowing Allianz Poland S.A. to create a common pension fund. On 23 June 1999 Allianz AG and the Italian bank Unicredito Italiano purchased a 52.9% stake in the Polish bank Pekao S.A. The contract was the highest transaction involving a foreign investor in the history of Polish privatisation. Following the merger of Allianz and AGF (Assurances Generale de France) the companies integrated also in Poland. On 29 June 1999 Allianz Poland purchased a 100% stake in AGF Poland, strengthening its position on the Polish market.

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<sup>73</sup> the information presented comes from the Allianz Poland S.A. website – [www.allianz.pl](http://www.allianz.pl)

### **Personal Life Insurance with partial payments of the Live Better capital**

Allianz Insurance Company professes to embrace various needs of the Polish society. One of the company's products, advertised on Polish TV, is personal life insurance with partial payments of the capital. The programme is called *Live Better* and, in the words of its creators, aims at enabling many people to fulfil their dreams of owning a flat or a house. It is a widely held belief that the housing situation in Poland is poor, and figures confirm it – out of 1000 marriages contracted in 1996 only 305 could afford a separate household.

*Live Better* is an insurance and banking product combining insurance protection (life insurance policy) with the opportunity to gather capital to obtain a building loan or a flat credit. The policy which is to protect the insured person's family from inheriting an unpaid flat credit is also supposed to help reduce the costs of the investment. The term of the contract between the Insurance Company and the client covers a period of 20 years. Under general insurance terms, a banking flat loan can be obtained after three years provided a cession of rights is made in favour of the bank granting the loan. In the event of a cession of rights the client pays the bank interest on the credit while Allianz Insurance Company makes payments of the capital parts of the credit on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the policy. The 20-year term of contract is long enough for unforeseen situations to arise, forcing the insured to terminate the contract prematurely. In the event of deterioration of the insured person's financial position or a change of their life plans (resignation from the flat credit for various reasons), the insured can buy out the policy. The purchase value – as it is vaguely stated by Allianz – amounts to a positive cash value in relation to the mathematical reserve. The amount may be paid following the client's written request. At the moment of the policy buyout a share in profits is added to this value. This encouraging information is particularly imprecise, though, since one cannot obtain a simulation of how large this amount will be in comparison to the value of the premiums contributed to date.

Attempting to examine the practical implications of the contract and unable to obtain more specific information concerning particular amounts of the policy purchase that the company client would buy this year and would like to buy out in e.g. 15 years' time, I used the case of a life insurance with partial payments of the *Live Better* capital purchased in the year 1999. The 1999 – 2019 contract between B.M. and Allianz Insurance Company stipulates an annual premium of PLN 8,890,00, calculating the insurance sum at 113,060,00, with a maximum flat credit of PLN 150,000,00. On paying her fifth annual premium B.M. asked the insurance company to quote the current value of the purchase of the policy and profits. To her disappointment, she learnt that having paid PLN 44,450,00, four years later she could merely regain PLN 29,845.48 (the policy value amounted to PLN 26,196,93, but the value of the due share in profits was PLN 3,648,54). By way of consolation she was told that the above amount was unusually high. If what the *Gazeta Prawna* printed can be believed, the sum was high indeed, since "if the insured pays annually ... PLN 4,000 and four years later decides to break the contract, its purchase value, that is, the amount which they



will obtain, will be closer to PLN 5,000 than PLN 16,000 – namely, to the sum of the premiums paid into the account of the insurance company.”<sup>74</sup>

In this light, the advantages of contracting Individual Life Insurance with partial payments of the *Live Better* capital listed by Allianz Insurance Company seem paradoxical and misleading. They include:

- Saving money in a disciplined and systematic manner, and
- Protecting the family.

It seems that the opposite is true, namely:

- Losing money in a disciplined and systematic manner, and
- Robbing the family.

What is certain is that Allianz applies a principle they would not happily adopt for their marketing campaign — “The more you pay, the more you lose”.

### ***Social and economical costs of insurance companies unethical operations on Polish market***

Insurance activity fulfills two functions: social and economical which could be called dimensions. The social dimension occurs in such operations as delivering security, setting stability for enterprises and households while economical dimension occurs in establishing economical continuity and in protecting the existence of policyholders and their families by diminishing the consequences of accidental damages. In terms of multiple “mis-selling” neither of them has been properly fulfilled.

According to the assessment of the *Gazeta Prawna* published in an appendix titled *Prawo i Życie (Law and Life)* of 7-9 November 2003, life insurance policies of the mid-nineties largely proved to be worthless. The opportunity to create a sound insurance market in Poland in the aftermath of the system transformation was not seized. The fault lies with the greed of the insurance companies entering the Polish market, including those of international renown. They are responsible for the bankruptcy of a legitimate idea – the rationale behind investing in insurance protection. Those companies unscrupulously took advantage of Polish people’s insufficient knowledge of insurance and for many years, practically until the end of the 1990s, continued to sell obsolete life insurance products. The victims are real people, deprived of all or part of their savings that were to safeguard their future. Over the last three years a few million Polish people have liquidated almost 4 million life insurance policies. The vast majority of the life insurance policies currently under liquidation are capital policies contracted for a specified period of time.

In this context, granting interviews about the state of business ethics in Poland and prescribing ways of improvement seems no less than tactless, while awarding prizes to those responsible for the current shape of the Polish insurance market appears a blunder and a mockery of all who put their trust in such corporations.

In 2000 Paweł Dangel received the Gold Cross for his merits in the field of insurance development in Poland.

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<sup>74</sup> *Prawo i Życie*, an appendix to the *Gazeta Prawna* No 218, 7-9 November 2003, p.5.

## **Some content of consumer rights and responsibilities as catalysts for changes in behavior**

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### **Abstract:**

The behavior of citizens of ex soviet block countries has changed rapidly in the last fifteen years, calling for responsibility in activities in personal life and on the social level. Have there been changes in consumer's behavior too? Analyzing the changes of consumer behavior was done by use of designed questionnaire. It included content designed on the bases of discussions in the Socrates/Erasmus 3 project Consumer Citizenship network 2003–2006 working group Consumer Rights and Responsibilities. Results identified differences and common tendencies in changes of consumer behavior in last ten years in Latvia, Poland, and Hungary.

***Key words: behavior changes, consumer rights and responsibilities***

### **Introduction**

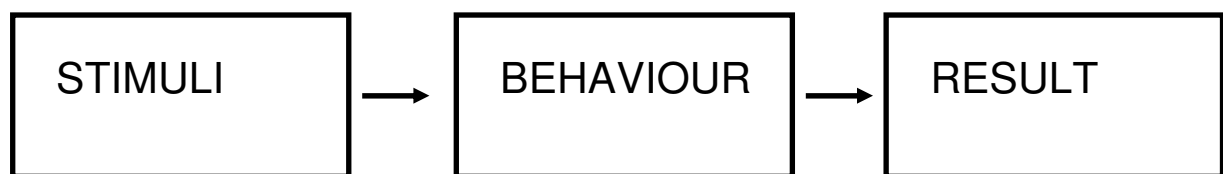
Many detrimental environmental effects can be noticed as a result of the contemporary technological and consumer societies'. Addressing the problem, the World Commission on Environment and Development (in the year 1987), presented the idea of sustainable development [Casimir, Dutilh 2003]. Education at all levels can shape the world of tomorrow, equipping individuals and societies with the skills, perspectives, knowledge and values to live and work in a sustainable manner. Education for sustainable development (ESD) is a vision of education that seeks to balance human and economic well-being with cultural traditions and respect for the earth's natural resources. ESD is what we need now, immediately, as it allows us to decrease the negative anthrop pressure (man's pressure) on the environment. Do we still have a chance to become responsible consumers of various goods of our world? This research is trying to look at some answers to these questions in the some regions of ex Soviet block system.

### *Changes in behavior*

Behavior is considered to be: (a) the actions or reactions of a person or animal in response to external or internal stimuli, (b) the aggregate of the responses or reactions or movements made by an organism in any situation.

This means that there is a certain amount of stimuli influencing the individual to make changes in his or her behavior. These stimuli can come from many sources. The knowledge, attitude and previous behavior gotten through experience are basic influences on future behavior. Stimuli can affect behavior to various extents, from significant to none at all. As a result, we make decisions from this moment for future activities (fig.1).

Figure 1: Action model



In our research the consumer is an individual with certain kinds of behavior.

A consumer citizen is an individual who makes choices based on ethical, social, economic and ecological considerations. The consumer citizen actively contributes to the maintenance of just and sustainable development by caring and acting responsibly on family, national and global levels

### *CONSUMER CITIZENSHIP NETWORK - The working group RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES*

Behavior changes for customers are determinate by stimuli. In our research stimuli com from the areas of Consumer's rights and responsibilities with in a consumer citizenship context. It includes such issues as... ethical, political, civic participation; business; local and international production and distribution, education, health and health policy, food and nutrition, travel and tourism, culture, leisure, housing, environmental, transport, financial services, social justice, self-management, information, policy and communications for consumer in connection of consumer's behavior.

It requires time and huge devotion to changes of at least 20% of the society but if that is achieved, further changes will take place automatically [Milczarska, Sikora-Szczygieł 2003]. It appears that the Agenda 21 formulated during the First World Summit on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro (1992) is not being spread effectively. This has been stated during The Second World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (2002). In order to alter that situation, to make the changes faster, UNESCO announced the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) [Pigozzi 2003, Kostecka 2006]. ESD will apply trans-

disciplinary educational methods and approaches to develop an ethic for lifelong learning; foster respect for human needs that are compatible with sustainable use of natural resources and the needs of the planet; and nurture a sense of global solidarity.

Do we consider ourselves responsible citizens of the World? How do societies change? Is the behavior of citizens of ex soviet block countries specific? Do citizens in Latvia, Poland, and Hungary act conforming to the new ideas and information? Does new information influence them? Does change depend on the age of the people examined?

These and other similar questions are considered in our research.

## **Method and Participants**

For our investigation, in the year of 2005, we used data from studies in three different countries based on a survey. Questionnaire (tab. 1) based on a list of consumers' rights and responsibilities, as defined by the Consumer Rights and Responsibilities working group of the Socrates/Erasmus-3 project Consumer Citizenship –Network 2003-2006, and from GUIDELINES FOR CONSUMER EDUCATION IN THE BALTIC. They were put into a set of 29 questions (table 1) with multiple choice answers (A-E):

- A). I do not have knowledge on that topic and I do not intend to change it.
- B). I do not have knowledge on this topic but I intend to change it.
- C). I am indifferent towards it.
- D). I have knowledge of this topic and I am negatively disposed towards it.
- E). I have knowledge on this topic and I have been positively disposed towards over a longer period.

269 randomly chosen students from Latvia University of Agriculture - Department of Education and Home Economics, students of agriculture at Rzeszow University in Poland, Faculty of Biology and Agriculture and Budapest Polytechnic, Faculty of Economics, Institute for Organization and Management took part in study about changes in consumer behavior in last ten years. Each of them were asked to answer questions listed in table 1.

Table 1: Questionary used for the research

<b>How you could describe your behavior in last 10 years after receiving information about</b>		A	B	C	D	E
1.	UN guidelines and realization in your country					
2.	EU legislation and realization in your country					
3.	Your country legislation and realization of that					
4.	Activities of your municipality					
5.	The direction of market economy in your country					
6.	International business activities in your country					
7.	Activities of local business					
8.	Political strategy of state					
9.	Economical level of state					
10.	Social processes in state					
11.	Human rights					
12.	Your country's label of ecologically clean products existence					
13.	Healthy eating habits					
14.	Healthy life style					
15.	Chances to attend cultural happenings					
16.	Skills for successful managing own finances					
17.	Separation of garbage					
18.	Sapid free time					
19.	Human skills in positive thinking					
20.	Supply for local traveling					
21.	Non visa regime in EU					
22.	Increasing prices in public transport					
23.	Advantageous leasing for baying a car					
24.	Changes in home inside design in world					
25.	Qualitatively better household technique supply in shops					
26.	Consumer rights protection organizations in state					
27.	Consumer rights and responsibilities (CRR)					
28.	The knowledge of other people in (CRR)					
29.	The skills of other people to use in practice CRR					

## Results

### *Analysis and comparison of dominating results and in different countries*

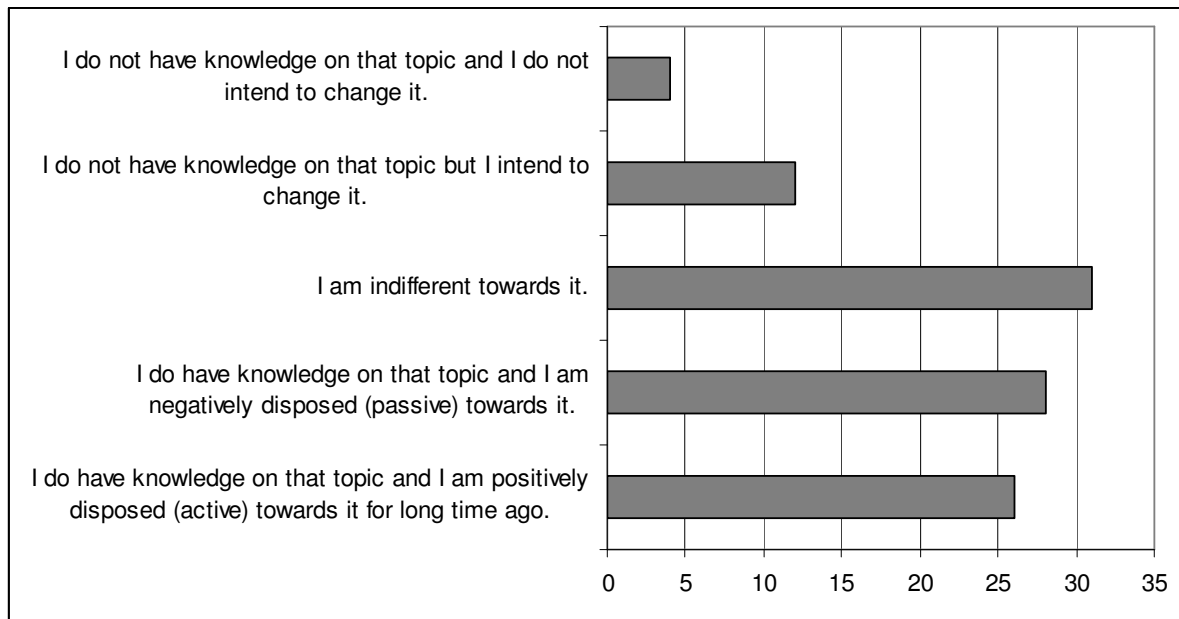
The analysis of the data obtained from surveys of students from Latvia, Poland and Hungary indicates significant indifference on the part of the respondents (more than 30%) (fig. 2).

The group of respondents claiming to have knowledge on the issues mentioned in the survey may be estimated above 50% but less than a half of those claim to have been putting that knowledge to action in life for a long time. The other half has passive

knowledge. This leads to the obvious conclusion that having the knowledge, even consolidated, is only a start on a path to the culture of using it in action.

Unfortunately, there were some among the respondents, who did not have the information important for a sustainable consumer. They were not interested in that information. Fortunately, they were scarce (less than 5%).

Figure 2. Primary data analyses independently on the country differences [%]



Source: own research

The ranging of primary analyzes helps to figure out the cognitive elements influencing and not influencing consumers' behavior. There were 4 dominating information which did not influence behavior such as UN guidelines and realization; Advantageous leasing for buying a car; Changes in home inside design in world; Activities of local business.

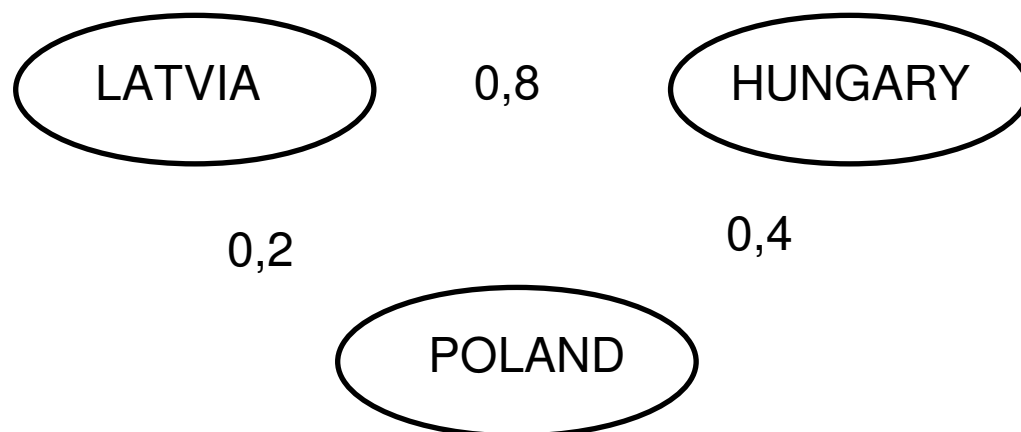
The information showing changes in consumer behavior conforming to give cognitive elements in total are; Increasing prices in public transport; Economical level of state; Social processes in state; and Human rights. We can find some similarities and some differences in information showing changes in consumer behavior conforming given cognitive elements by countries.

In Latvia the dominating information are Separation of garbage; Qualitatively better household technique supply in shops; Social processes in state; Chances to attend cultural happenings; Skills for successful managing own finances. In Poland they are Increasing prices in public transport; Economical level of state; Political strategy of state; Social processes in state; Sapid free time. In Hungary they are Skills for successful managing own finances; EU legislation and realization in your country; Non visa regime in EU; Separation of garbage; Chances to attend cultural happenings.

Results of correlation show a very interesting picture (fig. 3). Comparing our correlation coefficients with the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient  $r =$

0.81 we can make conclusions that there is very strong positive relationship between variables in Latvia and Hungary. It means the cognitive elements in one country tends to reflect cognitive elements in other country or there are similar information values influencing consumers behavior in Latvia and in Hungary. The strongest correlations  $r = 1$  exist for these cognitive elements UN guidelines and realization in your country; EU legislation and realization in your country; International business activities in your country; Political strategy of state; Separation of garbage; Advantageous leasing for buying a car.

Figure 3. Results of correlation



Source: own research

The Correlation Coefficient between Latvia and Poland is  $r = 0.21$  and it means that there is weak positive relationship between variables in Latvia and Poland. It shoves the cognitive elements in one country weakly tends to reflect cognitive elements in other country or there are very little similar information values influencing consumers behavior in Latvia and in Poland. The strongest correlations  $r = 0,85$  exist for these cognitive elements Social processes in state; Sapid free time; Human rights; Healthy life style; Advantageous leasing for buying a car.

The Correlation Coefficient between Hungary and Poland is  $r = 0.42$  and it means that there is moderate positive relationship between variables in Hungary and Poland. It shoves there are certain amount similar information values influencing consumers behavior in Hungary and in Poland. The strongest correlations  $r = 0,75$  exist for these cognitive elements Activities of local business; Advantageous leasing for buying a car; Changes in home inside design in world; Supply for local traveling; The knowledge of other people in consumer rights and responsibilities.

## *Analyses by gender*

*Women:* Taking into consideration the answers of men and women independently of their age and nationality, the total number of answers of A+B together was by 6% higher than for men. A is decisive, B answers are more or less the equal for men and women. Although the difference is not so big, but perhaps it shows the higher level of consciousness of women. We got by 7% more C answers from men. The changes of the last ten years seem to have weaker influence on their behaviour. D and E answers express a kind of opposition of the existing rules. All in all, the proportion of D+E answers was the same for men and women, but the ratio of Es were the double for men.

The ratio of A, which shows high level of self-consciousness was around 30% for all the women, while in case of the youngest category (18-25 years of age) Polish women gave by 4,5% more, Hungarians of the similar age by 6% and Latvians by 8% less A answers.

The ratio of B answers for all the women was a bit higher than 28%. Polish and Hungarian women of the age of 18-25 years gave by 6% less B answers.

The number of the representatives of the age category 26-35 years was very low. We did not have answers from the Hungarians at all. The ratio of A answers of Polish women of this age was by 7% above, in contrary in case of Latvians by 7% under the total average of women. As far as the B was concerned, it was in both countries by 5% lower than the total. It is very interesting that the number of A answers of Polish women were by 10% higher than the total average of this age. The ratio of A+B answers of 26-35 years old Polish women was extremely high, more than 70% !

As far as the age category 36-45 years is concerned, the difference between the statements of the representatives of the two nations is outstanding. Half of the Polish women stated that they have been acting according to the new rules for a long time, and other 25% have already started to act so. The same percent for the Latvians were 16 and 37.

The behaviour of the women over 46 years was quite different from the one of the previous age category. From Polish women we have got 29% of A and 31% of B answers, while Latvians gave 39% A and 46% B answers.

C answer represents a kind of golden mean. The proportion of C answers in the total sample was 26,5%. Although they are underrepresented in the whole sample, Hungarian women in the youngest category gave nearly 50% C answers! Latvian women between 26-35 years were not too much influenced by the changes of the last 10 years. 43% of them gave C answers. This ratio for Latvian women of the next age category is a bit lower, 41%.

Women over 46 years gave relatively few C answers. From Poland we got 14% and from Latvia 13% of C answer.

The proportion of D answers for women is a bit above 12%. It is not very much worth analyzing the attitude of different age categories, because Latvians practically did not give D answers. There is only one fact we have to mention. The youngest Polish women resign much more. 21% of them gave D answer.



E answer expresses the firmest opposition of the rules. 2,5% for all the women is not much. The only exception are Polish ladies over 46 years. Their 8,5% is far above the average.

*Women by questions:*

Q1., For this question the proportion of C answers of all the women is high and D is also outstanding (30%). We have to pay attention for the youngest Polish ladies. 57% of their answers is D, while Latvians did not give D answers at all !

Q2., The distribution of answers is more or less equal, except E (2%).

Q3., Proportion of B is high (36,7%), but D is also much higher (23%) then D's total proportion.

Q4., A+B together are above 2/3. Perhaps in local problems consciousness is higher.

Q5., Interesting that for a question concerning market economy, we got only less then 5% A, while ladies gave 43% C and 21% D answers.

Q6., It is also strange that in post soviet countries for more then 40% of women (C answers) the activity of international companies did not give too much influence. It is also true that they gave 21% D answers.

Q7., Local economy did not get much attention in the last ten years from ladies in Latvia, Poland and Hungary. 46% of them said that new information they got about it did not influence their activity.

Q8., The policy of the state is a bit less neutral for women (33% of C), 41% started to behave according to the new rules.

Q9., As far as economic position of the state is concerned, A+B together got 60%, while D+E 10%.

Q10., Although the question is basically different from the previous one, the distribution of answers is almost the same.

Q11., Women seem to be very sensitive for the human rights. A+B answers together reach 83%.

Q12., Labeling of ecologically clean products is also important for the ladies. 51% gave A answer and an additional 25% B.

Q13., Healthy nutritional habits got even higher values. A=66%, B=20%.

Q14., For healthy life style we got the highest A value. It is 70% !

Q15., Cultural events got also high proportions of A and B. They are 50 and 25 percent respectively.

Q16., The majority of women have been managing their financial affairs according to the new rules.

Q17., 60% of women states that they act according to the new rules for a long time and other 25% have started to do so.

Q18., We got 34-34% for A and B answers.

Q19., Positive thinking is high priority for 60% of the women. (A answers).

Q20., Relatively high percentage of women is not very much satisfied with local transportation possibilities. D=15%, E=5%.

Q21., Visa free movement in the EU is highly appreciated by women. 55% gave A answer.

Q22., Increasing tariffs in public transport generated 58% B answers.

Q23., 10% of the ladies seem to be very much against leasing of cars.

Q24., 38,5% of C answers is a bit surprising from women.

Q25., The distribution of answers is approximately the same as for the total.

Q26., It is really shocking that 20% of women started to act just opposite the new rules concerning the consumer protection associations.

Q27., For consumer rights and responsibilities we got 34% of A answers and an additional 30% of B. On the other hand 12% gave D and 4% E answers.

Q28., As far as other people's knowledge about CRR is concerned, only 10% of the ladies gave A answer. It means, in comparison with the above question, that everyone has much better image about herself then about others.

Q29., The ratio of C answers is very high (43%). Only 10% stated (A answer) that she had for long been acting according to the new rules.

*Men:* Comparing the total distribution of answers of men with the ones of women we can recognize some differences. A+B answers together were by 8% less then the same answers of women. In case of A answers this difference was 6%. Men gave by 7% more C answers then women.

If we take the youngest Polish generation (18-25 years), their case is very special. The proportion of their answers differed significantly on the two ends from the average. In case of A answers they were above the average by 7,5%. Their attitude on the other end seems to be quite revolutionary. They gave 30% D+E answers! In neutral C they were by 14% below the average. It is also interesting that the „oldest” generation of Polish men was by 5% over the average in D+E answers and they were even more definite in A answers. Hungarian men over 46 years were quite different. The proportion of their A answers was only the half of the average, in B they were slightly above average, but the ratio of C (43%) was high. The attitude of the oldest Latvians was significantly different from the other two nations. Their A and C ratio was around average, but they were by 13% over the average in B, while practically they did not give D and E answers.

In case of the youngest Hungarians the ratio of A was markedly low.

*Men by questions:*

Q1., The „average men” was quite neutral as far as UN guidelines are concerned. The average ratio of C answers was 70%. The Latvians and Hungarians were around the average, but in case of Polish men we have got only 20%. They, mostly the youngest, very much oppose. 50% of D answers were the firmest opposition among all the questions.

Q2., EU legislation was also considerably opposed. 20% of the men gave D+E answers, while 60% said A or B. Again the differences by nations were quite big. Polish men between 18-25 years have nearly 50% of D+E. The youngest Hungarians have 48% of C and 42 of B. It is almost unbelievable that Latvians over 46 years were absolutely supportive. Nobody said D or E. The proportion of B was 70% !

Q3., It was strange that the total division of answers was similar to the above, which means that men's attitude towards EU's and their own country's legislation is almost the same. The level of opposition was exactly the same for the two questions for the total, and the differences by nations were also the same.

Q4., The division of A, B and C answers was even, the proportion of D+E is lower than above. Hungarian C answers were the double (50%) of the average, while Polish men were quite supportive (A+B=63%) and in the same time rather opposite (D+E=33%). Latvians again do not oppose at all.

Q5., The direction of market economy got 40% C from the average men, while only 15% said A. Polish young men's attitude was again interesting. 30% gave D+E answers! Their opposition was the triple of the Hungarian's.

Q6., International business activities did not make deep influence on average men. The proportion of C answers was 46%, D+E together 17%.

Q7., For local business activities we got almost the same answers.

Q8., Political strategy of the state is quite neutral for men. The division of answers was rather similar to the above few questions.

Q9., Quite surprisingly economical level does not too much influence the behaviour of men in the different countries.

Q10., Social processes were also less influential for men. Only 15% stated that he started to behave for a long time according to the new rules.

Q11., Human rights seem to have much more impact on our men. More than one third gave A answer and 30% B, although they can not keep up with women.(38+45%)

Q12., Ecologically clean products labeling was important for men investigated, but again their behaviour was not comparable with women.

Q13., Although reality does not seem to support the substance of answers, 42% of men said to start to behave for long according to healthy eating habits.

Q14., In case of healthy lifestyle's importance we can say almost the same as above: picture given by the answers was better than in everyday life. Less than 2% opposes it basically.

Q15., The 55% of A+B answers showed us that changes in the cultural and political system brought something new in lifestyles, too.

Q16., One third of men, a bit less than women, started to start managing his financial affairs long time ago differently. For ten percent it was not important at all even now.

Q17., In separation of garbage A in case of women is even double than of men !

Q18., Behaviour in spending free time was not too much important for men.

Q19., In positive thinking men were again well behind women, but 43% of A answers was not too bad.

Q20., Local traveling supply had not much influence on men's behaviour, but at least in this case they were more ready to change their habits than women.

Q21., Non visa regime in EU naturally changed the traveling habits, but not so much as we expected.

Q22., It is very interesting and from the viewpoint of sustainable development very sad that for 23% (D+E answers) of men increasing prices in public transport does not have any impact.

Q23., Advantageous leasing for buying a car has less influence on men's behaviour than we expected. Only 13% gave A answer.

Q24., Changes in home inside design in the world caused of course less behavioural change for men, but all in all 80% started to alter behaviour.

Q25., Qualitatively better household technique supply in shops was a bit more important for men than women.

Q26., Consumer rights protection organizations in state have much to do in the future. Their influence on behaviour of men was rather limited.

Q27., Consumer rights and responsibilities(CRR) have long been influential for one fourth of men, but almost 20% seems to be against them.

Q28., The knowledge of other people in CCR was estimated to be very low, although men were a bit less hostile then women.

Q29., The skills of other people to use in practice CRR got almost the same evaluation as their knowledge.

The primary data analyzed there were by total sums, after data have been put under correlation analysis.

## **Conclusions**

The increasing influence of man in the natural environment on the turn of the 20th century caused the persistent global degradation of this environment. Fortunately, the idea of sustainable development has been introduced. Acting accordingly to this idea, we accept the superiority of ecological demands, which must not be destroyed by the development of the civilization.

We face a crucial question: Shall we continue to use the natural resources irresponsibly or shape the future in a sustainable way? [Thoresen 2004].

The rules of pro-ecological behavior are in force not only in agriculture, industry, trade, transport or architecture but also in any other domain of human's life. One should remember about the environment in everyday life - at work, at home and on holidays. In order to educate the citizen of the future we have to invest in the education of children and youth, not forgetting about teaching the adults.

The information from our research concerns the private aspects of changing the behavior of consumers.

As can be seen, changes in consumer behavior in different countries are different, but there are some similarities. Trans-disciplinary educational methods and approaches to develop an ethic for lifelong learning, fosters respect for human needs that are compatible with sustainable use of natural resources and the needs of the planet; and nurtures a sense of global solidarity

Much has been done [European Module... 2001; Consumer Citizenship Education ...2005; Borbas, Szabo 2006; Dislere, Liepiņa-naula 2006], but there is still much left to do and we hope the results of our research will prove helpful.

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# **Consumer's participation in catalyzing changes in the Hungarian Insurance Market**

**Richard Szabo**

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## **Introduction**

Previous years we have examined the consumers' attitudes to the financial services provided by Hungarian banks.

The financial services included three large fields: banks, insurances and securities services. The consumers' attitude can be analyzed from different aspects: the consumer itself, consumer's interest groups or unions, and "institutional help". "Institutional" help can be organized as bottom-up (liberal approach) for example the Association of Conscious Consumers (ACC), or top-down (authority). The top-down organized "institutional help" is for example the Hungarian Financial Supervisory Authority (HFSA). HFSA defined – from 90's to 2005 period development – four types of Financial Organizations: Banks and bank types, Insurance, Brokerage, and Pension & Health Funds.

As second stage element of the project, this year we turn to services in the field of insurance. Insurance services are offered for all strata of society and are used by many people.

## **The Insurance Sector**

### **Short Historical Background**

The Hungarian Insurance Sector is more than 100 years old. After World War II, two concentrated state owned insurance companies existed : Állami Biztosító (ÁB) (State Insurance) – for personal, – and Hungaria Insurance – for property insurance. After the 90's all these were privatized : ÁB's new owner is Aegon, and it keeps the name : AB Aegon, and Hungaria's new owner is Allianz, it changed the name to Allianz after 2000.

New companies (ING, Winterthur) came in with new products and restructured the market and the supply. Now we have a modern insurance sector with life and non life market segment. (This is a change from the old structure of the personal-property groups)

Insurance services are offered for all strata of society and are used by many people.

### **The largest non life market**

One of the most important sectors of insurance is the compulsory insurance for cars. This is a responsibility insurance. Now 5-8 main actors rule this segment, mostly multinational companies, Allianz has the largest market share. They are continuously attacked by competitors .

Consumers are able to control the actors and the choice of services of the insurance market through choosing between the companies and Hungarian Financial Supervisory Authority. (Ezt nem értem)

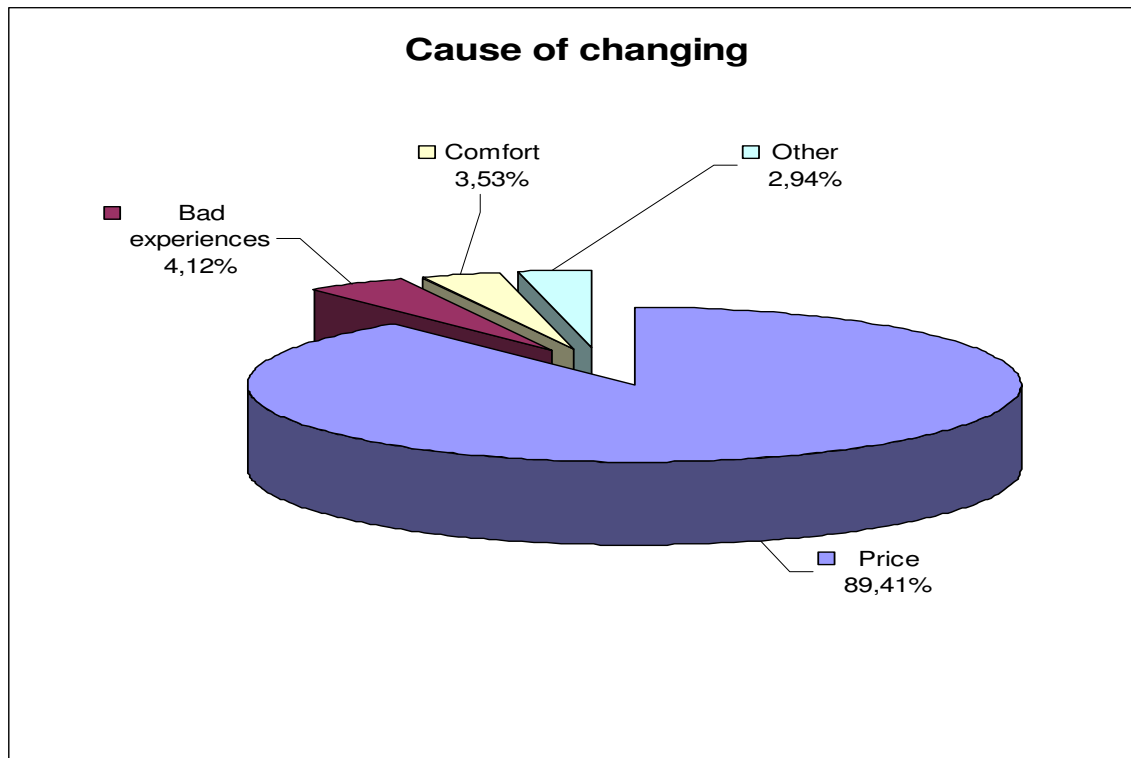
### The Research

Each year until the first of December everybody has the opportunity to quit the contract made for compulsory car insurance with his former insurance company and turn to another one. In our research we asked 170 out of the clients who decided to change and 170 out of those who stood by his insurance company. We were curious about their motivations in choosing between companies and our questions are focusing on their willingness in participating public discourses.

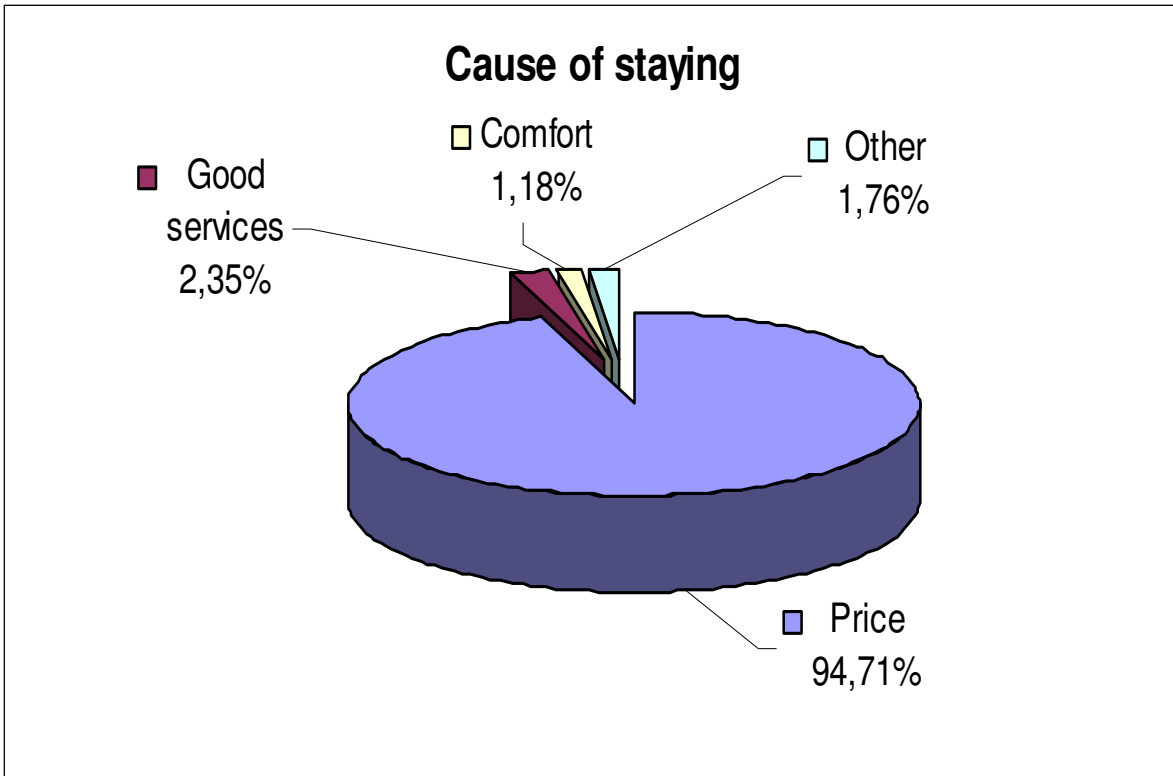
It was a very quick process, and included only three elements of basic questions:

- Why did people choose another company, or why did they stay by their old? (Cause of changing and staying)
- What was the motivation (Motivation of changing and staying)
- Was the decision self made, or pressed by outside factors? (The type and source of the decision)

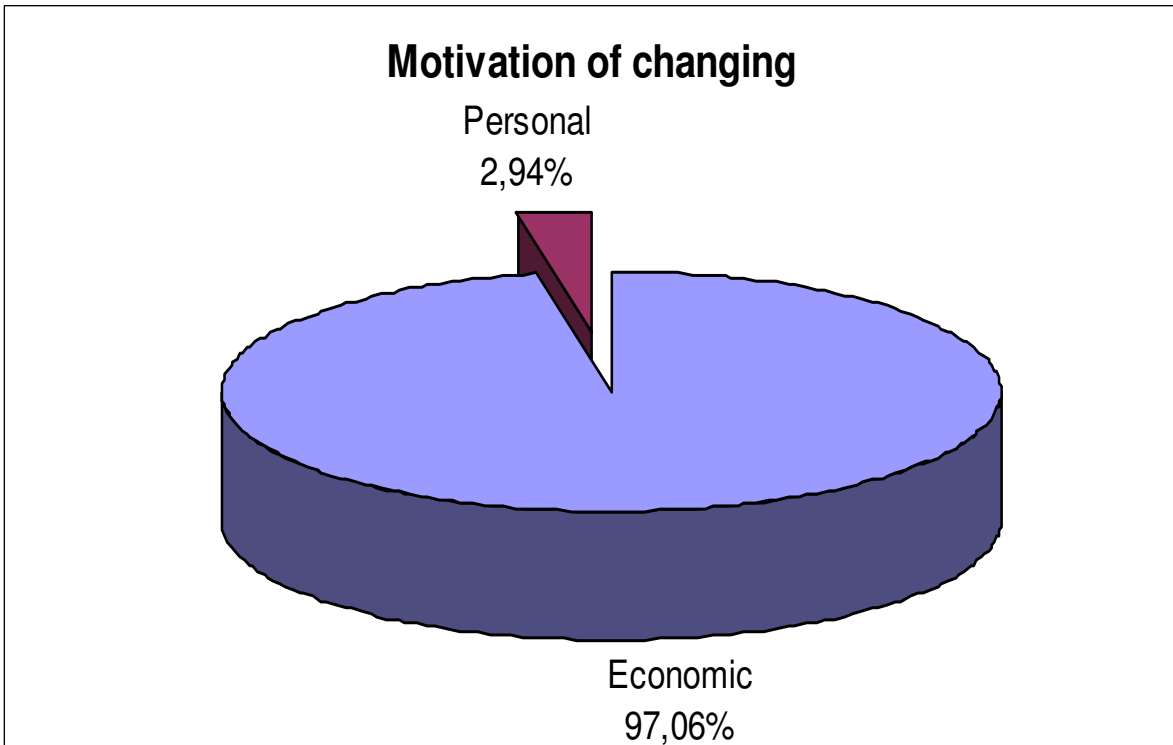
The answers were the personal impressions of the people! The answers are figured on the following sheets:



The majority 89,41 % factor of changing is the price sensitivity. Appeared factors are the bad experiences 4,12%, Comfort 3,53% and the not nominated other 2,94%

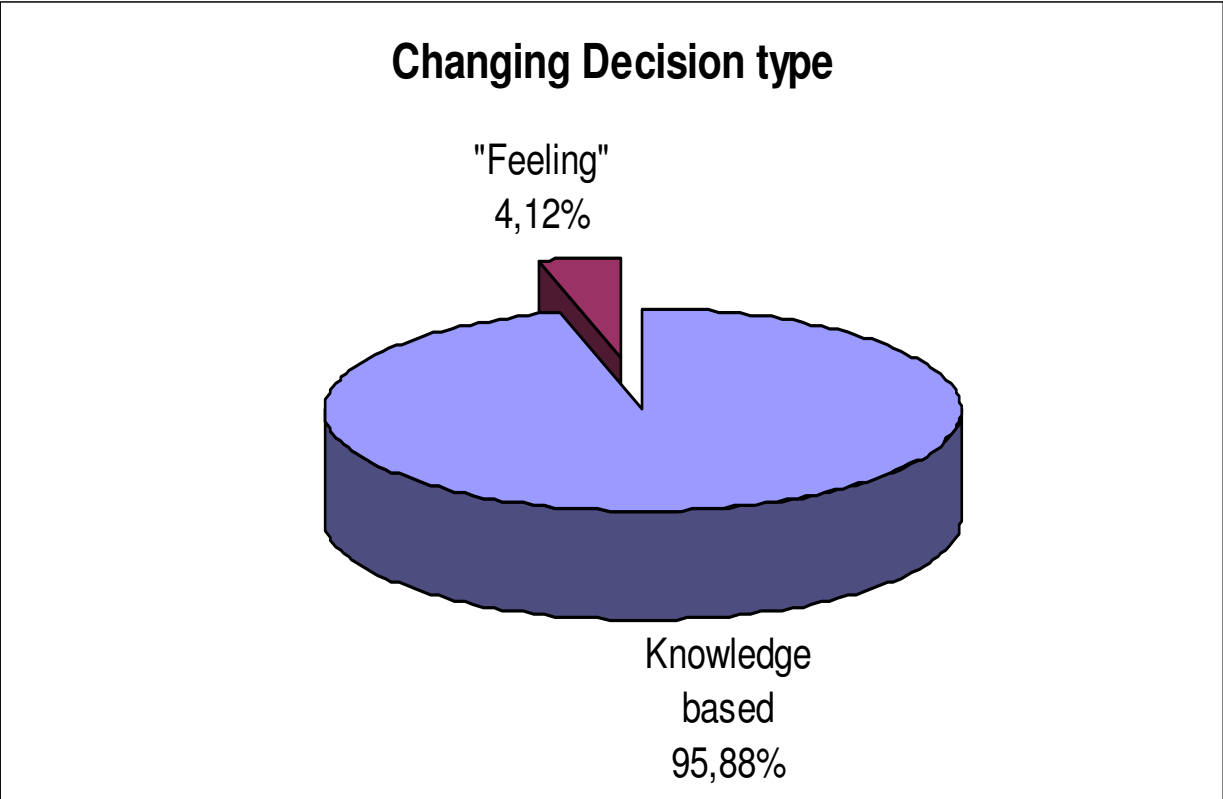


As far as the causes of changing are concerned, the decisive factor is again price sensitivity . 94,71%. Other factors are the good services 2,35%, the comfort 1,18% and 1,76% is the not nominated other factor.

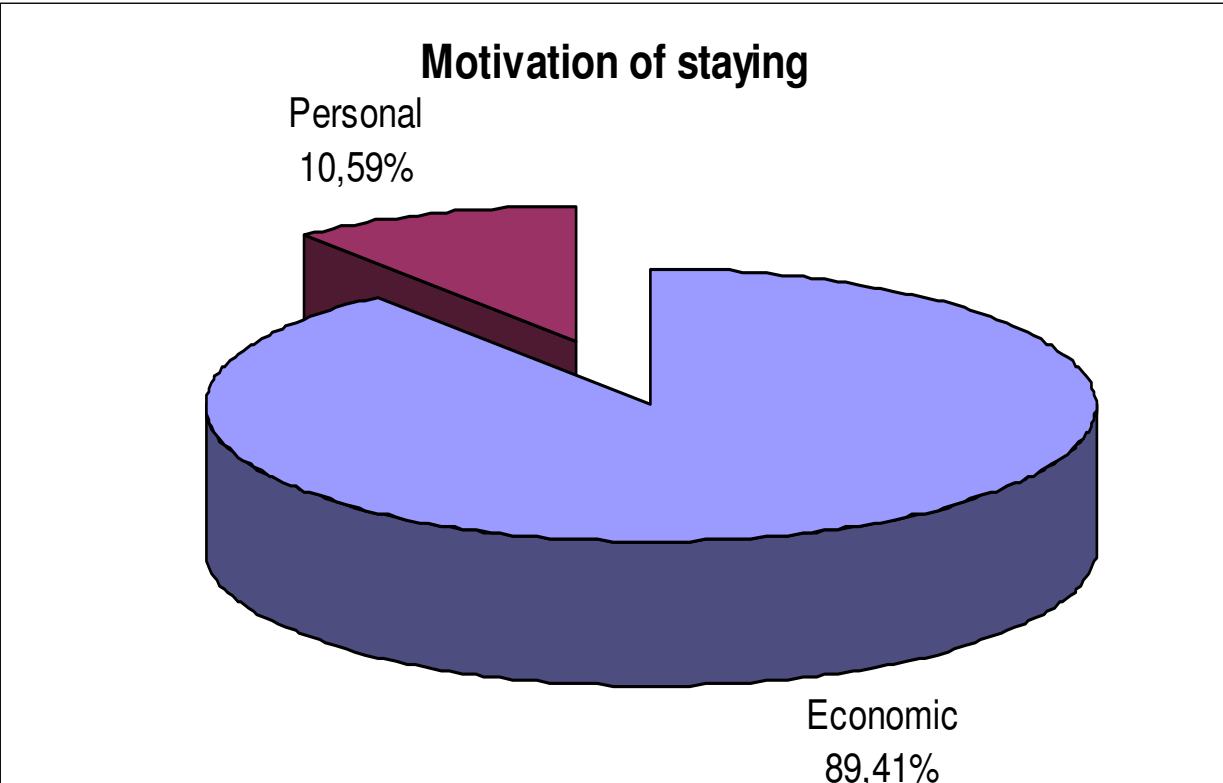


Motivation for changes has two causes: Economic 97,06% and personal 2,94%.

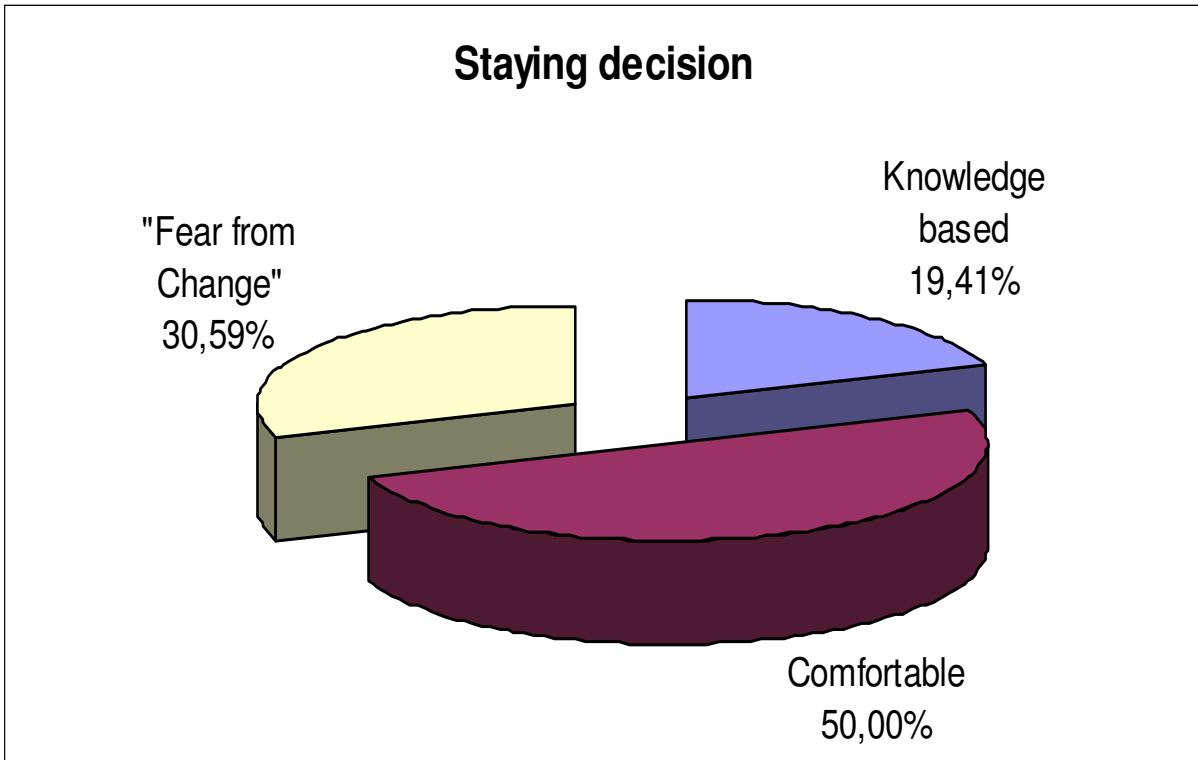




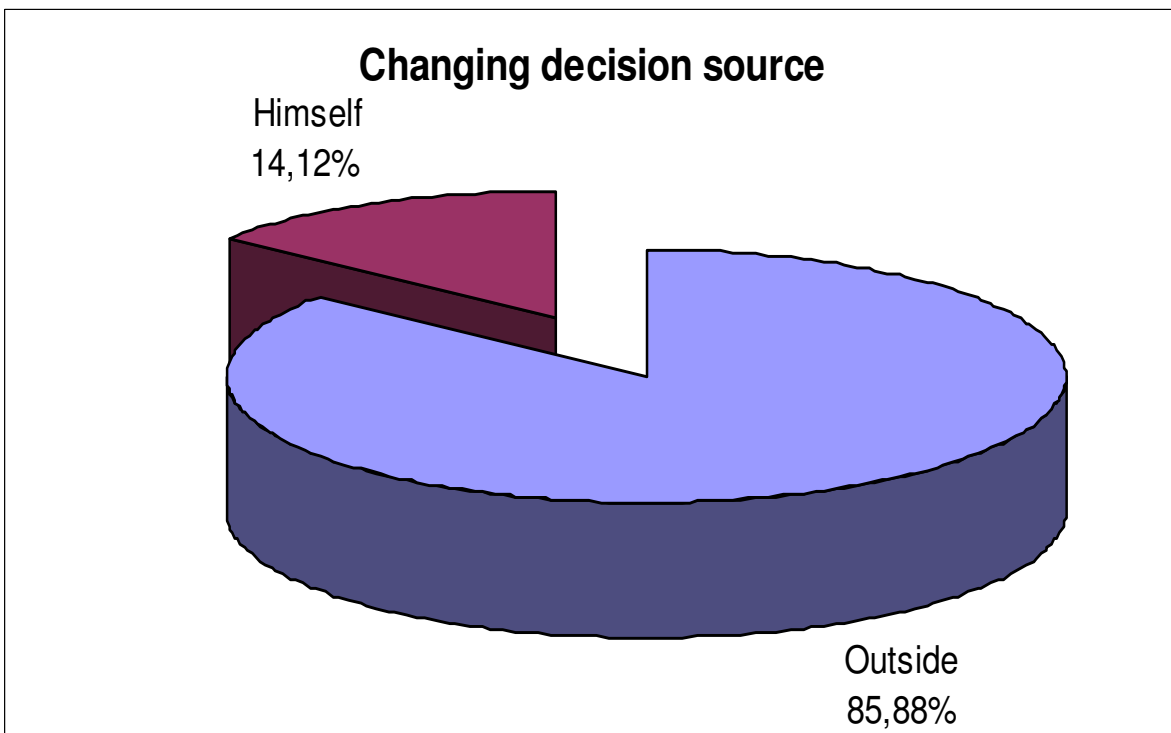
The type of changing decision are 95,88% knowledge based, and 4,12% feeling based.



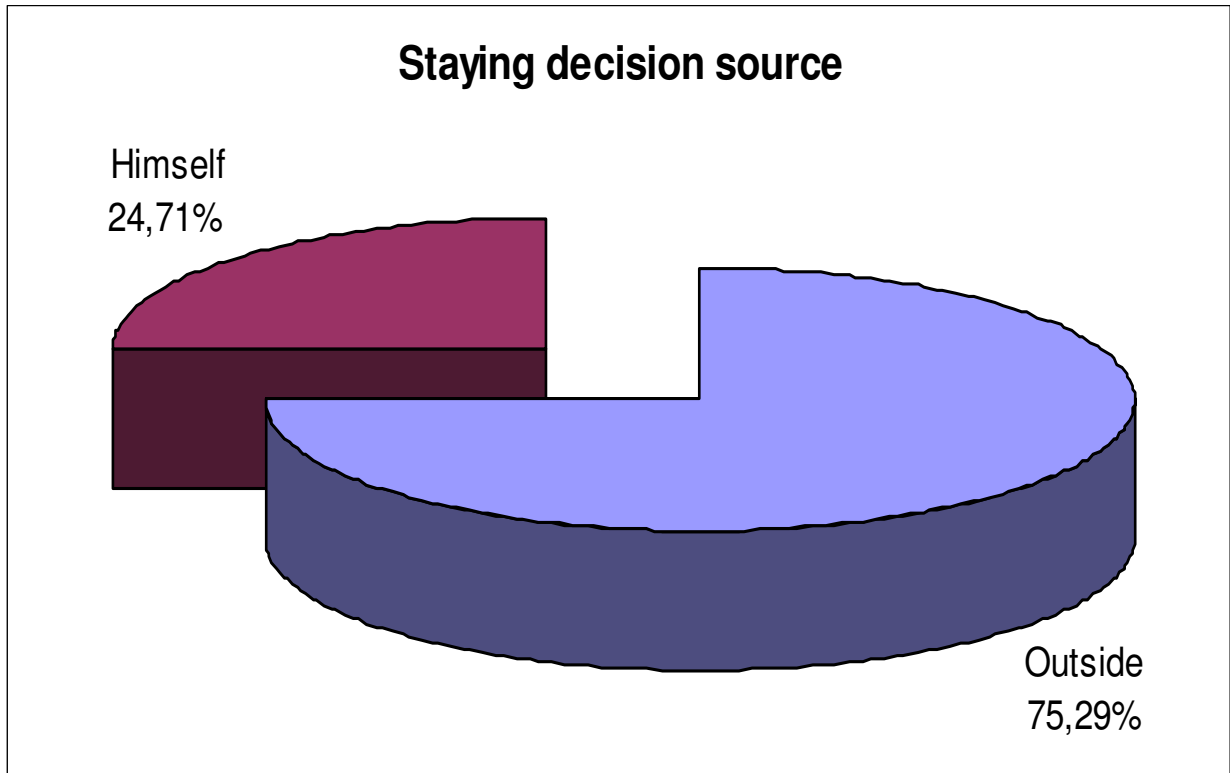
The origin of staying motivation has two causes: Economic 89,41% and personal 10,59%.



The type of staying decision has three factors. The largest is the comfortable feeling 50,00% (consumers are lazy), the fear of change factor has 30,59 %, and the consciousness is the weakest factor 19,41%.



The source of the changing decision came from outside, from advertising, partner information 85,88%, and the other part is from inside (Himself) 14,12%



The source of the staying decision came from outside, from advertising, partner information 75,29%, and the other part is from inside (Himself) 24,71%

The cause of change seems to have basically financial (price) background. This fact is interpreted by customers as economic based decision. A less important cause of change was bad experience. The major motivation is money, which is influenced by advertisements.

We assume that most of the consumers just punish the company by turning to another one, but not ready to take part in time consuming debates.

### **Conclusion**

The majority of consumers are conservative, and economically motivated. The people, who changed, are more flexible, and more conscious than the other group. In both groups the role of advertising and environment is very high. The consciousness appeared by the changing group.

The hungarian consumers are Price sensitive.  
 Their decision can be influenced by outside information.  
 Knowledge based decisions are growing!!!

## VI. SYMPOSIUM.

### FOSTERING COMMITMENT AND CONSISTENCY

Organized by International Environment Forum

#### **Scientific foundations for commitment and consistency**

**Arthur Lyon Dahl**

*International Environment Forum*

The science of sustainability has long faced a major communications challenge because of the long time lags between damage done to global environmental systems and the evident consequences in terms of changed systems behaviour or lost services. Scientists trying to bring their observations to the attention of the public are too often seen as either crying wolf or playing Cassandra. For instance, from the early Club of Rome report on the *Limits to Growth* (Meadows et al 1972) to its sequels *Beyond the Limits* (Meadows et al. 1992) and the thirty year update (Meadows et al. 2004), the message has become ever more pressing and the impact on political and economic processes just as marginal. Only recently has the evidence of accelerating climate change, and the imminent threats of energy, health, water and food crises begun to produce significant reactions, at least in some forward-looking countries. However the major centres of power and population have perspectives that are too parochial and short term to take any notice. Public education on these issues has either fallen behind, or never begun.

It is no wonder that motivating individual consumers to commit to new forms of behaviour, and to build those commitments into a more sustainable lifestyle consistent with their beliefs, is an even more difficult challenge than getting governments to adopt declarations and action plans for sustainable development. This is one reason for launching the UN Decade of Education of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014). For commitment to be lasting, it needs to be founded in both an intellectual understanding and an ethical, emotional or spiritual motivation, with each reinforcing the other.

One of the challenges to changing behaviour is the attitude fostered by the consumer society that we can have anything that we want and that we should be free to do anything that we like, provided only that it does not obviously hurt other people (and that we can afford it, if necessary on credit). Advertising tries at great expense to encourage us to consume without limit. Yet sustainability will require fundamental changes in life-styles, making choices, refusing temptations, and voluntarily sacrificing some things in order to preserve other, perhaps less tangible, values or possibilities. If we are to outgrow the mentality of spoiled children always wanting new toys, a significant transformation will be required, and that is the goal of consumer citizenship.

To motivate change founded on commitment and consistency requires two kinds of knowledge, which might broadly be labelled scientific on the one hand, and ethical, religious or spiritual on the other (Dahl 1996; Dahl 2004). The latter provides a framework of values and a definition of our individual and collective purpose as human beings and members of society, and is the subject of a separate presentation. The rest of this paper assumes that this ethical dimension is adequately developed to balance and give an interpretive framework to our scientific understanding.

Scientific knowledge gives us an understanding of the world around us. That world is our physical environment, and provides the requirements for life and the resources for our economic development. It also defines the physical limits to that development and the risks that environmental damage can represent to our health, well-being and future survival. The place given to scientific knowledge in society and the way scientific understanding is viewed and valued are critical to its impact on behaviour.

The modern paradigm of science, since Western civilization gave up the concept of the "renaissance man" able to do everything well, is one of specialization bordering on elitism. Scientists are "men in white lab coats" (female scientists are rarely acknowledged in the popular image) who use inaccessible language that needs to be translated for the general public. Admission to this fraternity requires a lengthy initiation ritual called a Ph.D. where one learns the arcane language of one's specialization, with standards maintained and the purity of the field ensured by processes of peer review for publication and promotion. The concomitant of this image is the tendency to leave science to the experts, and to see it as something beyond the reach of "normal" people. This also accentuates the challenge of translating scientific knowledge for popular consumption, and raises a barrier to the use of science to change values and behaviour.

This was not always the case in human societies, and there is no reason why it has to be this way. Many traditional cultures and indigenous peoples accumulated wisdom about their environment and resources over generations, including explanations of natural phenomena like weather and disasters, the uses of plants and the behaviour of animals and fish, particularly those used for food, kinds of knowledge that are today the realm of science (Dahl 1989). Often this knowledge was held by

village or tribal "experts", the master of the yams, village healer or master fisherman, and was added to and passed down from generation to generation much as science is today. Unfortunately since this knowledge, although based on close observation and understanding of nature, was often interpreted in a cultural or intellectual framework very different from our own, it was labelled by missionaries and colonial administrators and educators as "magic" or "superstition" and discredited, if not actively stamped out. This process of "modernization" unintentionally deprived many people and their cultures of their sense of connection with and responsibility for the environment, and interrupted the maintenance and transmission of this valuable knowledge accumulated over many generations. However the example shows that there is a much wider human potential to understand and use science than is developed in Western society.

Today people have spread to every corner of the planet and are trying to live in a great diversity of local environments. Change of all kinds is accelerating, requiring a variety of approaches to adaptive management in different environmental situations. The "expert" approach to science will never be able to respond to all the present needs of humanity, and only the wealthy few have access to scientific solutions to their problems. Even in those countries with a strong scientific establishment, science is too divorced from daily life to have a significant impact on behaviour. Many people lack the powers of critical scientific thinking, and believe in, or are sometimes manipulated by, very unscientific or unsubstantiated forms of knowledge. There are even movements against science in some industrialized countries. For both these reasons, the approach to science and its role in education for sustainable development must change.

The solution lies in freeing the essence of science from the unnecessary detail and making the scientific method available to everyone. Skills such as understanding experimentation and cause and effect, thinking in terms of process and systems, evaluating evidence objectively, questioning hypotheses and assumptions, and more generally investigating truth rationally and independently, should be available to everyone at an appropriate level of understanding. For example, people such as resource users can easily learn to do their own local environmental monitoring, observe changes taking place, and adjust their behaviour or resource use accordingly, perhaps with some outside scientific assistance in the interpretation of the results. Even for complex systems such as coral reefs, simple monitoring methods have existed for more than 25 years (Dahl 1981) and are a well-established part of global scientific monitoring programmes (<http://www.reefcheck.org/>). In Australia, for example, school children take part in local water quality monitoring (<http://www.waterwatch.nsw.gov.au/>, <https://www.streamwatch.org.au/>). Giving people a direct personal experience of scientific reality and methodologies opens them to a better understanding of scientific evidence and explanations at all levels, and provides a basis for science to have a real impact on values and behaviour.

To make science accessible to everyone will also require new kinds of scientific institutions in every community, able to support this new model of participatory

scientific investigation and use. Fortunately the revolution in information and communications technology is eliminating one traditional barrier to the generalization of science: the limited access to the store of scientific knowledge. Whereas before one had to have access to a good academic or research library with the necessary books and journals, today access to knowledge is limited more by the complexities of technical language and by concerns over intellectual property than by physical access. The day will soon come when everyone will have ready access to as much scientific information as they can absorb and use. The challenge is more how to present and structure scientific knowledge in new ways that make it more accessible and useful in meeting global, national and local challenges of sustainability.

One important element of this process is the rapid development of environmental observing systems, data collection mechanisms and statistical services able to generate and deliver indicators of the multiple processes at work affecting all the dimensions of sustainability. Building on the planning of the Integrated Global Observing Strategy Partnership ([www.igospartners.org](http://www.igospartners.org)), governments are now assembling a Global Earth Observation System of Systems at the planetary level (<http://earthobservations.org/>). This is already beginning to deliver near-real-time information on the state of the planetary environment. At the same time, work is progressing to develop indicators of sustainability useful to guide policy-making, management and action at the national, local and individual levels (Moldan et al. 1997; Hak et al. 2006). These information tools give simplified representations of data, trends and thresholds that can increase understanding of sustainability challenges and measure progress (or the lack thereof). The ecological footprint, for example, gives individuals, communities or countries an immediate measure of their relative impact on the earth (<http://www.footprintnetwork.org/>). There are a number of new composite indices that help to compare most nations' environmental vulnerability (<http://www.vulnerabilityindex.net/>), environmental sustainability (Esty et al. 2005) and environmental performance (Esty et al. 2006) and thus to raise awareness of the effort needed to move in a new direction. Indicators are one way to communicate scientific information quickly, widely and effectively, as these few examples show.

The goal of this process of scientific education and information delivery should be to provide all consumers with an objective scientific representation of the world environmental situation in its dynamic interaction with human society and the economy. It should also enable each community to self-determine its own local environmental situation and sustainability, and thus reinforce the local sense of responsibility for its management. Together these should support the capacity to think globally and act locally. There should also be scientific information on the linkages between consumption patterns, lifestyles, consumer choices, and social and environmental sustainability.

Empowering consumers with science is one essential component of commitment, as it demonstrates the necessity for action in objective terms. The continuing reinforcement of that scientific understanding through participation in scientific processes, whether local environmental monitoring or investigation of consumer choices, will also reinforce consistency. When scientific knowledge is

combined with the emotional commitment that comes from an ethical or spiritual framework of sustainability values, people will become effective change agents for sustainability.

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# **Institutions for commitment and consistency**

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## ***Introduction***

If we assume that young and old in our societies have been educated, provided with the knowledge they need to make scientifically informed choices and the values they need to make ethically informed choices, an important question is: Are knowledge and values enough to transform our consumption patterns into more sustainable directions and make us remain committed to act as responsible consumer citizens, to act consistently in different situations and over time? In this paper I argue that the answer is no for at least five reasons. Each of these are linked to the role that institutions play in society. In the first section of the paper I will briefly discuss the role of institutions in society. In the second section I look at institutions in relation to consumer citizenship and outline the five reasons for answering the question raised above negatively. In the third section I discuss aspects of how designing and changing institutions, before making some brief conclusions in the last section.

## ***The role of institutions in society***

An institution in the way that I use the term differs from the everyday language where it refers to an organization like a government agency. I use the term as it has been used by many in political science and economics, referring to those formal and informal *rules* that communities, corporations, organizations and governments establish for their own decision-making processes and to influence behaviour. One of the countless more formal definitions state that institutions are those:

*“systems of rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that give rise to social practices, assign roles to the participants in those practices, and guide interactions among the occupants of the relevant roles”*(Young 1999:14)

Institutions range from the informal, invisible codes of conduct among people in communities on what is accepted and desired consumer behaviour, national consumer laws with sanctioning systems, labelling criteria developed by governments or NGOs, to international free trade agreements. This means that the concept ‘institution’ covers the whole range from rules of behaviour in families, classrooms and communities to national and international soft programs, codes of conduct and formal law.

There are widely diverse opinion on what role institutions play in society. A central question in the debate has been: Do we explain the behaviour of individuals by the institutions that surround them or do individual action explain the design of institutions? The dominating academic position has been to consider the role of institutions as marginal, arguing that most decisions are made based on rational self-interest calculations by states and individuals. Adherents to various directions of the 'new institutionalism' instead lean towards that institutions and deeper lying structures explain part of human behaviour. Still they acknowledge the apparent paradox of institutions being formed by human actors and then that the same institutions act to constrain those very actors (Peters 1999). Institutions can affect human behaviour through various mechanisms. One example is that they change incentives through favouring certain actions — by giving financial or reputational rewards for example — or disfavouring others — by giving financial or legal sanctions. Another example is that they can reduce the 'cost' of decision-making, by in many cases reducing the information needed for decision-making.

In summary, institutions in a society can be viewed as the permanent manifestations of the values it holds but in turn they contribute to internalising values in society, specially if they are perceived as just and legitimate (otherwise there may be resistance).

### ***Institutions and consumer citizenship***

The main question for this paper is: Are the knowledge and values of individual consumers enough to transform our consumption patterns in more sustainable directions and make them remain committed to act as responsible consumer citizens, to act consistently in different situations and over time? The negative answer to this question I motivate with five different reasons.

Firstly, the answer is no because our decisions are not only influenced by the knowledge and values we have, but they are also influenced institutions of what is considered desired, acceptable or allowed consumer behaviour in our families, communities or countries. Consumer citizenship by itself can be seen as an institution of acceptable behaviour which we are trying to encourage through education.

Secondly, the answer is no because it is very difficult for individual consumers to acquire sufficient and appropriate information so that they could act on their values. The institution of labelling schemes are all designed to reduce the need for consumers to obtain such detailed information by themselves. But labelling may not be the appropriate institution in countries with a lot of illiteracy. And in a situation of increasing complexity and globalisation of our production systems it will be challenging even for labelling organizations to obtain all relevant information about, for example, the long-term environmental and social impact of production processes, because not even science has all the answers.

Thirdly, the answer is no because for individuals to be able to consume sustainably there needs to be options to do so. There needs to be alternative products

which are less unsustainable. These options are made available (or not) depending on the institutions and structures in society, such as: market system (financial incitements, competition rules etc.), trade rules (allowing concern and labelling for production processes etc.), R&D policy (for cars, housing, appliances), urban planning (land management), infrastructure development (transport, electricity grid).

Fourthly, the answer is no because even if there are alternatives, how attractive and available those alternative options are for the consumers also depends on institutions, such as tax systems (which can be targeted towards taxing use of natural resources rather than labour), and subsidies (which can be used to support either sustainable or unsustainable products). With the appropriate type of institutions sustainable products could become so attractive that they attract a substantial share of the market even before we have all become responsible consumer citizens.

Fifthly, the answer is no because many of the sustainability challenges require consistent incremental decisions and policy over many years, even decades to affect change and this can be difficult to accomplish through the aggregate pressure of individual consumer choices only. This is particularly the case for what has been called long-term policy problems (Sprinz 2005). These types of problems are characterised by displacement over time between driver and environmental impact; over one generation (counted as about 30 years) or at least over multiple election periods. Displacement into the long-term future poses particular challenges for our societies, especially when short term sacrifices are necessary for long term gains (Sprinz 2005). Decision-making in governments and other sectors of society tends to be biased towards much shorter time horizons than sustainable development requires.

Taken together, these five reasons make it clear that institutions have a significant role in transforming our consumption patterns in more sustainable directions and make consumer citizens committed and able to act. Institutions have a certain robustness within them, making them slow to change. If society manages to create stable institutions which are effective in influencing behaviour, they may thus encourage certain patterns of behaviour which could facilitate consistency over time.

### ***Designing and changing institutions***

It is obvious that many of the institutions in our current society are influencing consumer behaviour in the wrong direction. This means that it will be difficult to bring about a society of responsible consumer citizens without changing such institutions. The change or transformation of institutions can be a conscious deliberative process in democratic societies, families or schools. Alternatively it can be left to a more centralised process where certain groups, such as the government, experts, or corporations change institutions with less involvement from those whose behaviour they are intended to influence. The deliberative process have many advantages if the institutions created are to be perceived as legitimate and thus be more effective in eliciting compliance.

A central question in a deliberative process about institutional change is: What do institutions look like which take our societies in the right direction towards sustainability and what can we base them on? Institutions informed by ethical values are not enough, many of the best intended institutions have unintentional effects. But institutions informed by available knowledge also are not enough as they do not guarantee the absence of unintentional effects because the human-nature system is so complex. Much of environmental degradation are unintended by-products of activities endorsed by institutions in society, so they are culprits and potential solution at the same time. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly important to integrate governance, and thereby institutions which are one of the major tools of governance, across the vertical scale; the local, national, regional and global governance level. However, what could constitute such a framework of multilevel or multilayered governance and how to design the institutions to build it is more difficult to establish.<sup>75</sup> Despite this complex challenge of institutional design and the need for continuous experimentation and learning, there is enough knowledge about the type of institutions that are leading to unsustainable consumption to know the direction of change that is needed. When we have some reasonable notions of what institutions should look like to support consumer citizenship, making this knowledge usable requires some guidance on what is required to create such institutions or change old ones into more effective ones.

A central question in this context would be: Which institutions are most important to change, and which ones would be the fastest — and thus most effective — to change? Answering this would help prioritize and focus efforts of institutional change. One partial answer can be found in the efforts to classify institutions into the following three types; constitutional type institutions, collective-choice institutions and operational institutions (Karlsson 2000; Kiser and Ostrom 1982; Ostrom 1990).

Operational institutions provide structures for “day-to-day decisions made by government officials and citizens interacting in a wide diversity of operational situations” (Gibson *et al.*, 2000:234). These are thus institutions which most directly affect the innumerable consumer choices of individuals such as labelling schemes, prices etc. Collective-choice institutions are those institutions that indirectly affect operational choices, they are rules that are used to make the operational rules. These encompass national policies and laws which influence the availability and affordability of sustainable products. Constitutional-choice institutions determine “the specific rules to be used in crafting the set of collective choice rules that in turn affect the set of operational rules” (Ostrom, 1990:52). In the context of consumer citizenship these can consist of the deeply rooted norms and principles of acceptable behaviour which pervade a society as well as the underlying structures of the current world order in terms of trade regimes, global inequity etc.

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<sup>75</sup> See Hooghe and Marks (2003). Karlsson (2000) defined the concept of ‘multilayered governance’ as a system of coordinated, collective governance across governance levels that would involve a nested hierarchy of mutually supportive policies and institutions.

It has been argued that in the context of institutions for managing common natural resources that the most time-consuming process of change is for constitutional rules which change more slowly than collective-choice institutions which again change more slowly than operational institutions (Ostrom *et al.*, 1999). This indicates that in order to achieve rapid change, a focus on changing operational institutions would be fruitful. However, the real challenge is to embark on a process of changing the collective-choice and constitutional institutions which will take years and decades. If the concept and practice of consumer citizenship becomes wide-spread this in itself can create a fertile ground for changing these more deeply rooted institutions and structures.

### ***Conclusions***

Institutions create incentives for behaviour and, if effective, can greatly influence the actions of individuals and collectivities. The values underpinning the concept and practice of consumer citizenship is a concern for the whole planet and humanity today and concern for future generations. Clearly these values are not what underlines most actions of individuals and societies. Most institutions today help to entrench spatially narrow and temporal short-term thinking, whether it is free trade rules or three to five year election cycles. The major challenge for society is to institutionalize wider concerns so that global and long-term thinking are made more permanent.

The crunch point is of course that in order to change the institutions to encourage these kind of values, we need to change the values. Ultimately, if we want democratically elected governments to take sustainability seriously and create formal institutions which enable e.g. consumer citizenship, we need to make societies as a whole, including the electorate and the private sector, expand their time horizons and encourage the consistency of commitment in society for the well-being of future generations as reflected in the decisions made and institutions adopted in our ministries, schools, corporate boardrooms, and families.

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## VII. POSTERS

### A common law for Europe?

#### Consumer protection in the future: Legal and political development

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The exchange of goods and services is governed by contract law. Problems in relation to using, agreeing, interpreting and applying contracts in cross-border transactions may therefore affect the smooth functioning of the internal market, therefore there is necessity to standardize European contract law. The European Parliament and Council have consistently affirmed the need for greater coherence in order to ensure the proper functioning of the internal market.

Hereafter, the European Commission's undertakings:

- **The “answers” of the European Commission**

The European Commission has undertaken a series of initiatives aimed at increasing the overall coherence of European contract law.

**The Communication 2001\***

\*Communication From The Commission To The Council And The European Parliament On European Contract Law Brussels, 11.07.2001 COM(2001) 398 final

The Communication aimed at gathering information on whether there is a need for EU action in this area.

The Communication set out four possible options for improvement:

- Letting market forces deal with any problems that may exist.
- Envisaging the development of common principles of European contract law via research.
- Improving existing EC law in the area of contract law.
- Adopt a new instrument at EC level.

**The Commission's Action Plan of 2003\*\***

\*\* Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council A More Coherent European Contract Law An Action Plan Brussels, 12.2.2003 COM(2003) 68 final

The Commission's Action Plan of 12 February 2003 presents the conclusions drawn from the first round of consultation on European contract law. The Action Plan seeks to launch a second round of discussion by proposing three measures. The measures suggested include both regulatory and non-regulatory actions. This action would be taken in concert with the current sector specific approach and intends:

- to increase quality and the coherence of the EC acquis in the area of contract law;
- to promote the elaboration of EU wide general contract terms;
- to examine further the opportuneness of non-sector-specific solutions such as an optional instrument in the area of European contract law.

### **The Communication 2004\*\*\***

\*\*\*Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council European Contract Law And The Revision Of The Acquis: The Way Forward Brussels, 11.10.2004 COM(2004) 651 final

The Communication of October 2004 sets out the Commission's follow-up to the 2003 Action Plan, in the light of the reactions from EU institutions, Member States and stakeholders. It outlines the plan for developing the Common Frame of Reference, which will provide clear definitions of legal terms, fundamental principles and coherent model rules of contract law, drawing on the EC acquis and on best solutions found in Member States' legal orders. The adoption of the Common Frame of Reference is foreseen for 2009 following extensive consultation and it will be used in particular as a "toolbox" for the Commission when presenting proposals to improve the quality and coherence of the existing and future acquis in the area of contract law. The Communication also sets out the plans for further work on the other measures mentioned in the Action Plan: promoting the elaboration of EU-wide standard contract terms and reflection on the opportuneness of an optional instrument.

### **The Review Of The Consumer Acquis - Possible outcomes\*\*\*\***

\*\*\*\* First Annual Progress Report on European Contract Law and the Acquis Review - Report from the Commission Brussels, 23.9.2005 COM(2005) 456 final

If, during the diagnostic phase, the Commission finds evidence that the acquis needs to be revised or completed, the Commission could theoretically choose between 2 options:

a) a vertical approach consisting of the individual revision of existing directives (e.g. revision of the Timeshare Directive) or the regulation of specific sectors (e.g. a directive on tourism, including provisions of the Package Travel and Timeshare Directives);

b) a more horizontal approach, adopting one or more framework instruments to regulate common features of the acquis. This framework instrument(s) would provide common definitions and regulate the main consumer contractual rights and remedies.



- **The “answers” of science of law**

The debate on European contract law has been awakening law operators, who have made important contributions, especially within the Universities.

To understand the way we are going to, it is important to highlight that the most accredited works are the ones based on contract justice, which is intended as equity principles, good faith, solidarity and fairness at the stage of conclusion of a contract.

**A new age of *Jus commune*?**

The medieval term *Jus commune* means a large law application and dissemination work made by interpreters and judges in comparison with the lawmakers' role.

Over the last few years, some authors have been identifying a similarity with the present time because of the major work of contemporary judges and interpreters are making, in order to find a possible common European law.

Hereafter, some significant experiences:

**The Principles of European Contract Law (PECL)**

[http://frontpage.cbs.dk/law/commission\\_on\\_european\\_contract\\_law](http://frontpage.cbs.dk/law/commission_on_european_contract_law)

**The European Civil Code Project**

<http://ecc.uvt.nl/frames.html>

**The Acquis Group**

<http://www.acquis-group.org>

**Common Core of European Private Law in Trento - Italy**

<http://www.jus.unitn.it/dsg/common-core/home.html>

**Study Group on Social Justice in European Private Law**

[http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=605141](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=605141)

- **Health and Consumer Protection Programme 2007-2013 of the European Commission\*\*\*\*\***

\*\*\*\*\*Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions Healthier, Safer, More Confident Citizens: A Health And Consumer Protection Strategy Brussels, 6.4.2005 COM(2005) 115 final 2005/0042 (COD)

On 6 April 2005 the Commission adopted a Health and Consumer protection Strategy and a proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision creating the Community Programme for Health and Consumer protection 2007-2013.

## **Consumers goals**

- Ensure a common high level of protection for all EU consumers, wherever they live, travel to or buy from in the EU, from risks and threats to their safety and economic interests.
- Increase consumers' capacity to promote their own interests, i.e. helping consumers help themselves.

## **Four strands of actions are foreseen:**

- Better understanding of consumers and markets
- Better consumer protection regulation
- Better enforcement, monitoring and redress
- Better informed and educated consumers

# Teaching technologies in profile education

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## **1. A TIME FOR ACTION: LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

As the 21<sup>st</sup> century unfolds, educational environment becomes a new supercomplex system with a constantly changing pattern. The demands of the external world are changing bringing about new educational goals, evolving new relationships, enhancing responsibilities of both the teacher/lecturer and the learner for the purpose and need of education and a guaranteed high standard of it.

In the persistence of this pervasive influence on the educational system, the movement from the learner as a receiver of education determined by professionals, to the learner as a customer taking *ownership* of his own learning poses a huge challenge to learning providers, demanding a similar flexibility and imagination.

Ownership does not always mean that the learner decides the content of the curriculum, but his assent to it might be revealed in his informed choices.

The idea of the learner as customer with control over what he/she buys into has not hitherto been attractive to learning providers. Still, we have to recognize that we are rendering a service by accepting the student into our institution and providing the opportunity and the facilities to learn in the first place.

The learning is the subject of an accord between the teacher/lecturer and the student, and it is the mentor who has to make some effort to justify to the student the need for a particular content, the insights and new knowledge it will give, and the ways in which it will be learnt.

Such mutual solidarity contributes constructively to motivation on both sides, and gives the learner a clear idea of how to diagnose his own learning requirements and styles and take action to satisfy them through conscientious participation in the educational market and further on to ensure the sustainable employability in the job market. Being engaged in this environment, each of us performs tasks strategically using our specific competences to achieve a certain result. Although these tasks might not be always language-related but they are mostly accomplished through language relationships. These relationships form a spectrum of intelligent socio-language consumer system. [5-7].

In our view, an educational 'system' – is an organized wholeness of interactive objects with constant reverse ties within an integrated learning environment, which

presupposes the appearance of new integrative qualities in the process of intellectualization and, eventually, leads to restructuring of both the single constituents, and the system as a whole.

## 2. INTELLIGENT SYSTEM STRUCTURAL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

Systems, management, intellectuality and their interrelation – these are the issues without a clear understanding of the essence of which it is not possible to study neither any problems, nor dynamic or developmental processes in any domain. In our case the educational system has an organizational structure that carries all the peculiarities characteristic of a complex system. We can single out the following:

- Objects (learning system – mentor/managerial system);
- Elements (aims–content/educational information-methods/means/strategies - resources - forms of education, training, development) ;
- Attributes (properties of constituent objects);
- Interactions or attitudes;
- The presence of direct and reverse ties;
- The presence of levels and their hierarchy.

We can present the organizational structure of the educational system in the following way:

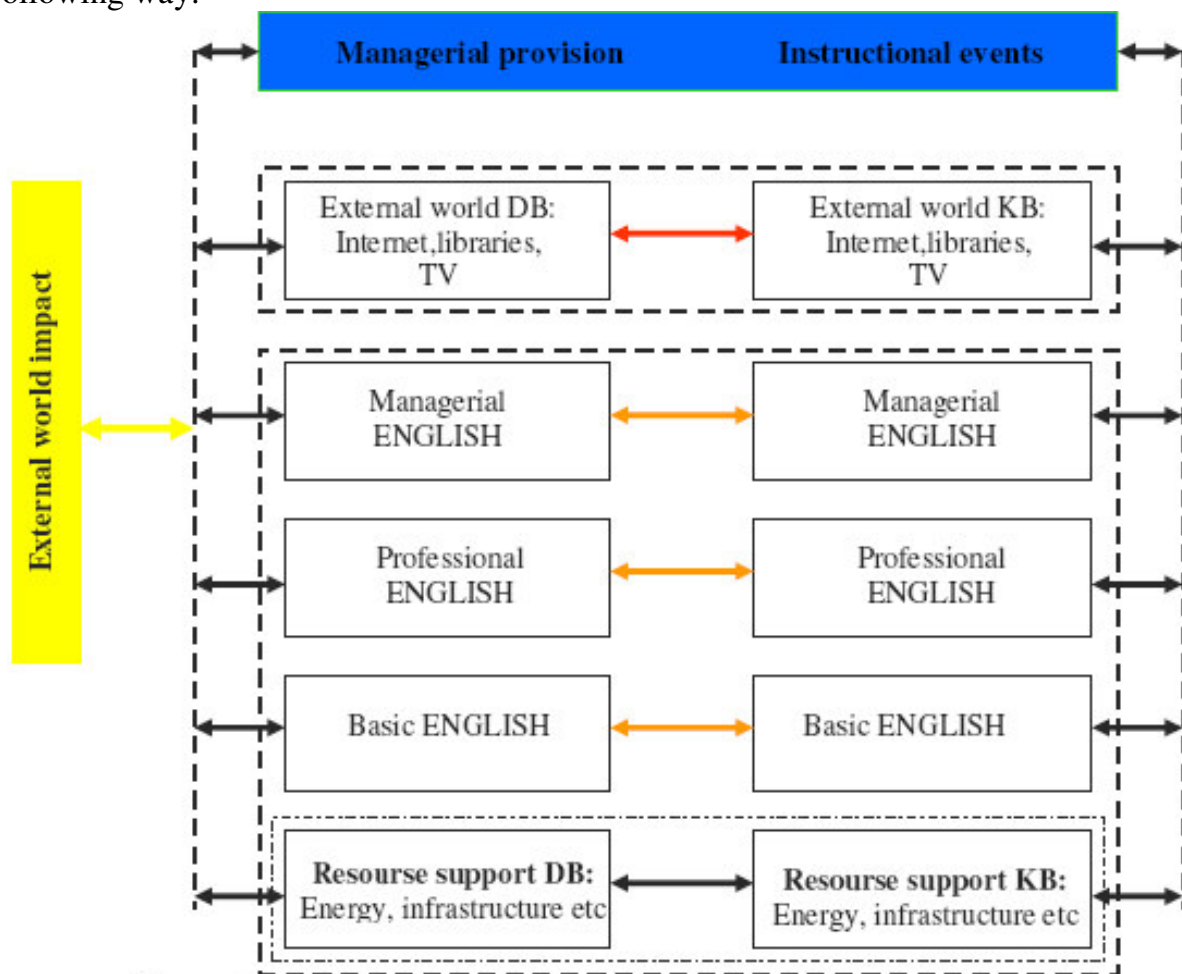


Figure 1. The organizational structure of the educational system

### 3. LEVELS OF MANAGERIAL LANGUAGE DECODING VIA EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION AMOUNT AND COMPLEXITY

Our system approach to language acquisition takes into consideration both managerial language complexity and educational information amount as the means of ascending intelligence levels by a group of learners [2].

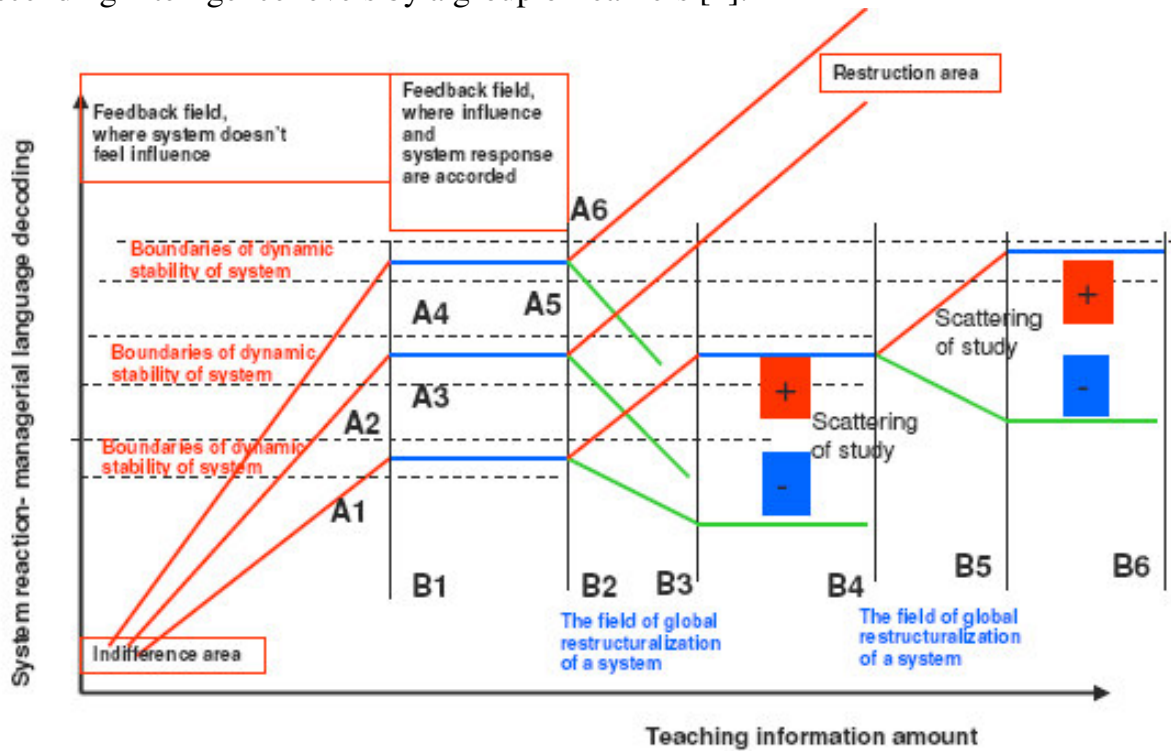


Figure 2. Homeokinetic plato model for language acquisition system

Since intellectualization of the learning system goes on as a process, the system at every moment of its existence experiences a state of ‘disbalance’ – homeokinesis (from Bertalanfi).

The language of intelligent management (i.e. communication of educational information) is the factor that ensures a relatively stable equilibrium of the plato – (i.e. the intelligence level) from the beginning of a study course to its end. (Feedback fields B1 – B2, B3 – B4, B5 – B6.) To the left of B2 and B4 are the areas where the system shows signs of losing its former properties having acquired new ones.

These new properties – knowledge, skills, abilities, competences – cause ‘global inner restructuralization’ and transform the system into a new state of intellectuality.

In other words, the appropriate managerial language which is adequate to the learners’ decoding abilities, aims at keeping the learning system within the boundaries of the information *homeokinetic plato*. (Boundaries of the system stability A1 – A2, A3 – A4, A5 – A6.

This is the area where managerial functional elements can be amended in case the system endures any deflections from the purposeful goals.). As a result of the acquired knowledge and the outcomes of global restructuralization, the learning group

is able to mount onto a higher intelligence level, onto a higher level of language proficiency.

Uncoordinated managerial influence will remove the learning system from the boundaries of dynamic stability, leading to a functional disbalance and, eventually, to information collapse. In such circumstances the learners will not be able to adapt or change the purposeful function of the total system. As a result, the whole system might be destroyed. In some cases the scattering of the learning system is observed (Feedback fields B3 –B4, B5 – B6).

Some of more successful students due to self-management skills can acquire a reasonable amount of knowledge and move upwards to a higher intelligence level. Less successful ones will just become marginal candidates. To the left of A1 there is an ‘indifference’ area, where the students do not perceive the mentor’s educational message in case the input language is not adequate to the learning group.

The reasons of uncoordinated managerial influence might include a mentor’s low tone of voice which is impossible to hear in a large auditorium, or the language abounding in specific terminology which is incomprehensible, it might be an excessive amount of educational information within limited boundaries of a lecture which is physically impossible to comprehend or if a mentor shows disinterest in students as personalities, he is just ‘doing his job’, etc.

A study course can be implemented intensively within a limited time frames, ensuring a rather fast transition from one level of *homeokinetic plato* onto another. It presupposes a fast in-training professional profile course generally considered as English for Specific (or Occupational) Purposes (A1–A6).

If we speak about a pedagogical process, we assume an extensive course with much wider time limits, significantly increasing educational information amount as well as far-reaching purposeful goals. (The field of global restructuring B1–B6).

The process presupposes not only the development of communicative language competences but the general competences of language learners, including their knowledge, skills, existential competence (the sum of individual characteristics, personality traits and attitudes which concern self-image, and one’s view of others and willingness to engage with other people in social interaction), and also their ability to learn. These personality traits, attitudes and temperaments are parameters which have to be taken into account in language learning and teaching.

We can judge about the efficiency, effectiveness and success of the whole educational system only by the final result, by the students’ level of attainment, for whom the whole system has been created. If one of the individual results is lacking behind, it will pull backwards the success of the whole group and, eventually, show a lower functional level of the learning system.

The educational system is distinguished by its functional mobility and flexibility, which allows at *any* time to introduce a regulating component by changing *any* functional element of the system. Comparing a predetermined purposeful goal with the real interim result, the system can redesign its activities at any stage to amend individual intermediate deflections or any deviations of the final result from the initially set goals to avoid the destruction of the whole system.

#### 4. SYSTEM INTELLIGENCE INDICATOR AS A REGULATING FUNCTIONAL COMPONENT

The Systems Theory offers a set of characteristics reflecting complexity and intellectuality of a system, which are of vital importance for a pedagogical process. These characteristics are defined (according to Boulding [3]) by the system's reaction to the flows of incoming information. The indicator of the auditorium readiness for the educational process is comparable with the indicator of intellectuality in The Systems Theory, hence the necessity to define the intelligence level of a learning group, first of all. In our case, as we have already pointed out, the intelligence level corresponds to the communicative language competence level of the learning group.

The proposed **Intelligence Level Indicator (ILI)** is made up of the three basic components:

- 1) System complexity according to Boulding = **B**;
- 2) Learners' communicative language complexity = **C**;
- 3) Managerial language complexity = **M**.

$$\text{Intelligent Level Indicator} = ILI = \sqrt{(B^2 + C^2 + M^2)}$$

(1)

The parameter **B** is a fixed constant and, similar to Boulding's scale (B= 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9) [10], it might correspond to a natural number **7** in reference to a human individual, or to a natural number **8** in reference to a social group/learning group.

The parameter **M** can be either very simple or very complex. On the analogy of Boulding's parameters, **M** might present a constant number, showing different levels of mentor's language complexity. (E.g. **1** = the level of simple orders and explanations during a lecture = Intermediate Professional Level; **2** = the level of solving problems, reasoning and drawing conclusions, showing logical thinking = Pre-Upper Intermediate Professional Level; **3** = the level of high-order skills - problem solving, case study, generating new ideas, etc. = Upper Intermediate-Advanced Professional Level).

The parameter **C** can be calculated as the *logarithm of Word-stock & Linguistic Items Amount* in conventional logarithm scale or might correspond to a fixed number, reflecting the level of language proficiency.

This formula is supported by various language proficiency tests. It can be applied at the beginning of an academic year and at the end, or at the beginning of a certain study course and while finishing it. It can also be used in case of any deviations from the predetermined objectives. The ILI is applicable both for individuals and groups.

We can also present a system's intelligence in a certain intellectuality space.

The most important parameters for us are those of **C** and **M**, since **B** is a fixed number. As it can be seen from the model, alongside with the increasing parameters **C** and **M** (learners' communicative language complexity and mentor's language complexity respectively) the intellectuality space of the learning system will expand.

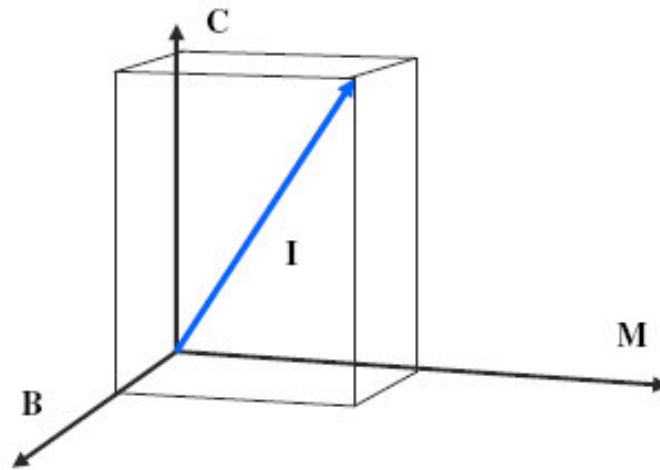


Figure 3. Intellectuality of a learning system (learning system means learning/social group)



Figure 4. Time of thinking and time of fulfillment ratio

Teaching Efficiency Indicator:

$$TEI = \frac{T_{thinking}}{T_{thinking} + T_{fulfillment}} = \frac{1}{1 + \frac{T_{fulfillment}}{T_{thinking}}} = \frac{1}{1 + \tau}, \quad (2)$$

where  $\tau = \frac{T_{fulfillment}}{T_{thinking}}$ .

The formula makes it obvious that reduction of time for task fulfillment will result in the increase of efficiency. A line graph showing a typical behavior of **TEI** was drawn up.



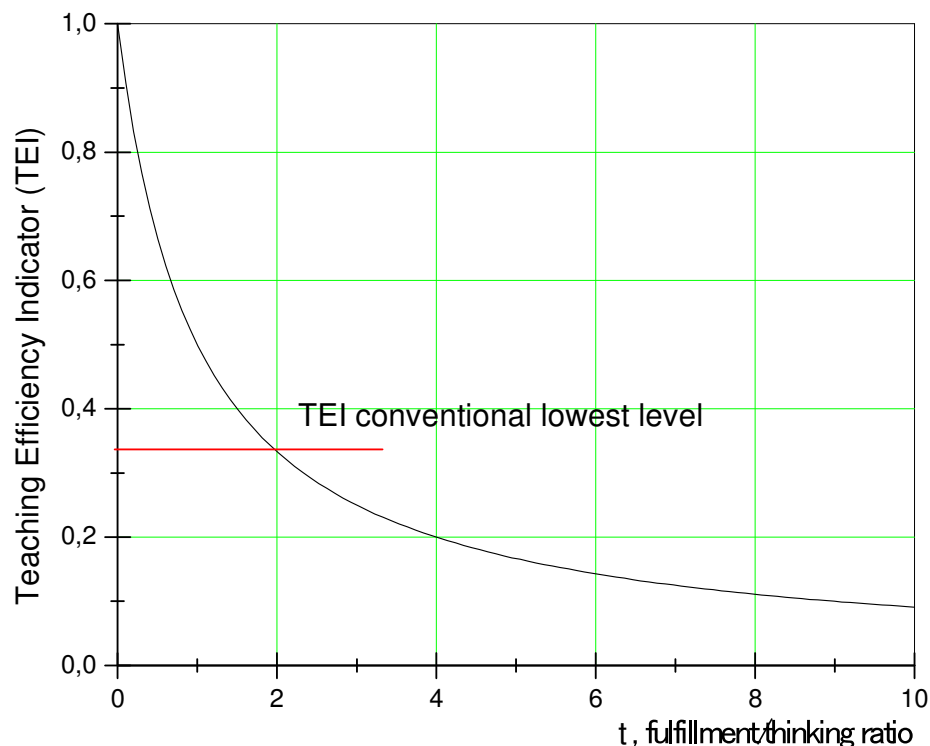


Figure 5. A typical behavior of **TEI**

As we can see, the curve of efficiency goes steadily up with the shortening of time for task fulfillment. However, it is obvious, that we can not reduce the time infinitely. It will be just absurd. The critical point shows the lowest level of teaching efficiency.

### **5. AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL AMOUNT AND ITS OPTIMIZATION**

Our task was to investigate what amount of educational material will be optimal with the maximal efficiency in a limited time. An empirical study was used to analyze the material of the final qualification exam in Business English, and particularly, the professional vocabulary. According to the proportion factor we accepted: *30 words as – 1; 60 words as – 2; 90 words as – 3; 120 words as – 4*, respectively.

The normative time for task fulfillment was 30 minutes. With the increase in the task amount, the time for thinking was increased. A graph of the expected efficiency was built:

TABLE 1. Normative teaching time distribution

Teaching Information Amount	T <sub>thinking</sub> , min	T <sub>fulfillment</sub> , min	TEI
1 (30)	5	25	0,165
2 (60)	10	20	0,33
3 (90)	15	15	0,50
4 (120)	20	10	0,67

30 min – normative learning time

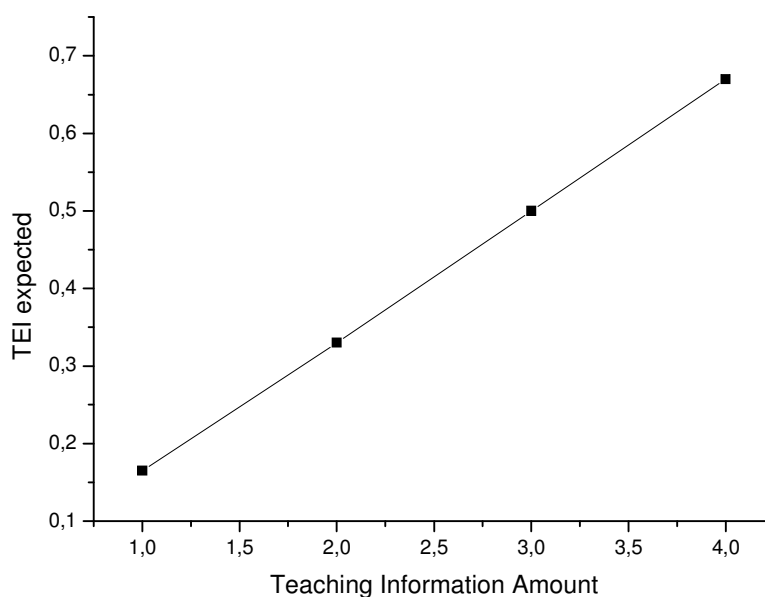


Figure 6. Expected TEI via teaching information amount

Four groups of ten learners were formed and each learner received the tasks. The tables below show the empirical results of the students' performance. The dashes ( - ) in sections for Time-fulfillment in blocks 3 and 4 indicate that the results were not counted. The student's production was either less than 75%, or there was not enough time to cope with the task, or some other reasons.

TABLE 2. Fulfillment analysis of conventional teaching task

Conventional Teaching Information Amount: 1				Conventional Teaching Information Amount: 2			
Student's code	Student's code	T <sub>thinking</sub> , min	T <sub>fulfillment</sub> , min	TEI personal	T <sub>thinking</sub> , min	T <sub>fulfillment</sub> , min	TEI personal
1	1	10	15	0,4	5	10	0,33
2	2	10	15	0,4	5	15	0,25
3	3	10	10	0,5	5	8	0,385
4	4	10	15	0,4	5	12	0,295
5	5	10	18	0,357	5	15	0,25
6	6	10	20	0,3	5	15	0,25
7	7	10	20	0,3	5	10	0,33
8	8	10	25	0,28	5	20	0,2

9	9	10	25	0,28	5	20	0,2
10	10	10	20	0,3	5	20	0,2
				3,517			2,69
				0,3517			0,269

TABLE 2. Fulfillment analysis of conventional teaching task (continuation)

Conventional Teaching Information Amount: 3				Conventional Teaching Information Amount: 4			
Student's code	Student's code	T <sub>thinking, min</sub>	T <sub>fulfillment, min</sub>	TEI personal	T <sub>thinking, min</sub>	T <sub>fulfillment, min</sub>	TEI personal
1	15	20	0,43	1	20	10	0,67
2	15	15	0,5	2	20	15	0,57
3	15	28	0,34	3	20	20	0,50
4	15	20	0,43	4	20	20	0,50
5	15	25	0,375	5	20	35	0,36
6	15	30	0,3	6	20	-	0
7	15	25	0,375	7	20	-	0
8	15	-	0	8	20	40	0,33
9	15	30	0,3	9	20	35	0,36
10	15	-	0	10	20	-	0
			3,05				3,29
			0,305				0,329

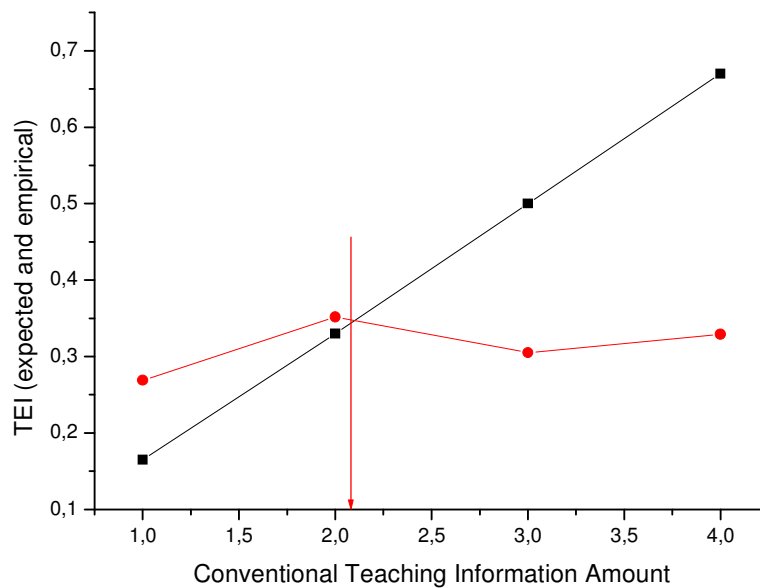


Figure 7. Optimal teaching information amount searching

On the basis of the empirical results a graph was drawn up and matched with the graph of the expected efficiency. The adjustment point shows that within the given time with maximal efficiency the optimal amount of words will constitute approximately **60-65** items. This parameter was observed in the forthcoming

examination task in Business English. The results of the examination were different, but it proved that there were no failures, at least in the vocabulary part.

The empirical results show that student’s achievement is dependent both on the time of thinking and the time for the task fulfillment. These findings are supported by the results of the examination content analysis.

**6. LEARNING INFORMATION AMOUNT AND TIME DISTRIBUTION**

The model below shows how a definite amount of learning material can be distributed in different groups with various indicators of intellectuality and efficiency.

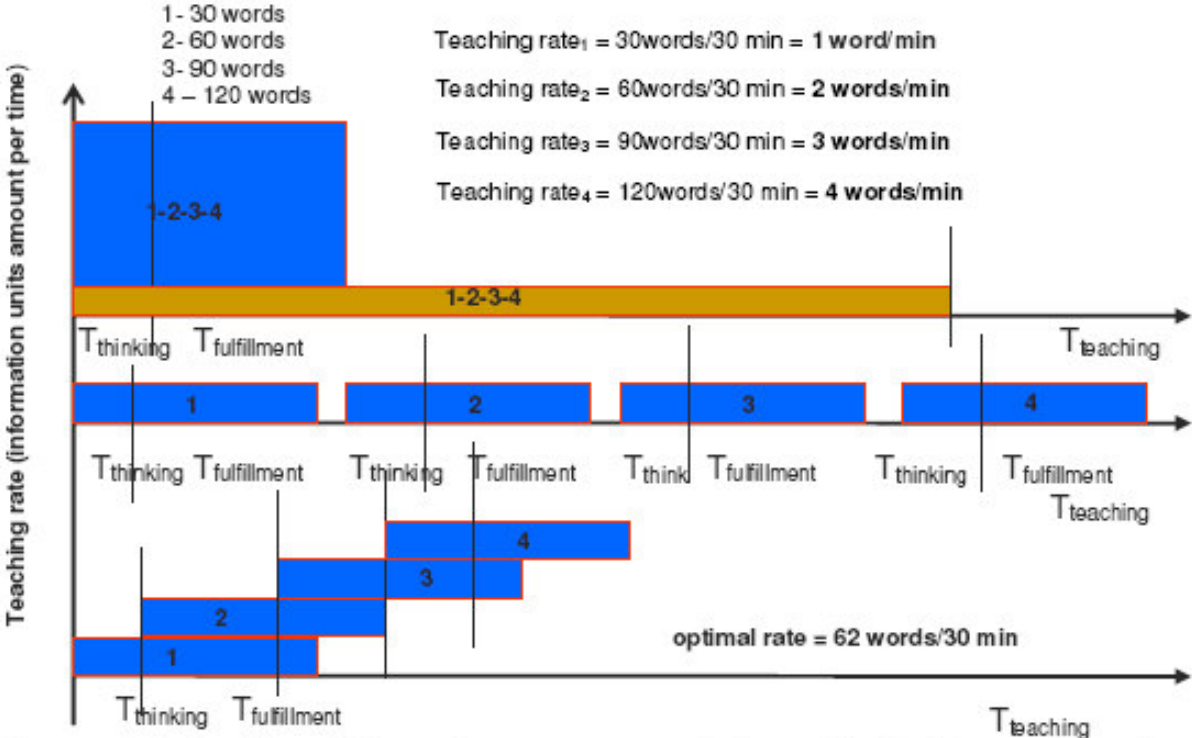


Figure 8. Teaching information amount and time distribution optimization model. Integrated Skills Module. 1-2-3-4. Module 1 – Reading; Module 2 - Listening; Module 3 – Speaking; Module 4 – Writing. Complex Moduling.

Practice proves that very often the difficulty is to condense into a very short time of a lecture some course of a subject and to cover as much as possible within a very limited period of time. Bringing The System Approach into class, we have the way of managing our time and resources. In more knowledgeable, advanced groups the learning material can be given in a whole block within a definite limit of time. In less successful groups it can be divided into separate tasks in various contexts, or these can be logically sequenced contexts following each other according to the degree of difficulty. The aim is to attain the maximum result with the minimum losses (in time, personal energy waste, interest, knowledge, etc.). The resources have to be deployed to their maximum effect.

## CONCLUSION

The system approach to language acquisition allows to implement all the elements of the educational process most effectively, enabling to manage human resources, time resources and to attain the maximum efficient results in the process of students' intellectualization.

During the stage of professional education, the system approach to language learning allows to enhance not only the development of communicative language competences, but also professional and general human competences focusing upon developing professional mindset, mentality, professionally significant qualities such as insight, intuition, self-management, self-esteem and self-knowledge, purposeful introspection and self-criticism in judging what is acceptable and what is not, ability to differentiate what is quality and what is not, from the evidence put before them.

The injection of a management component into a higher educational institution is a necessary feature today, since the latter is transforming from a small-scale adjunct of industrial infrastructure into a large-scale – a mega – enterprise at the centre of the economy and the civilized life [5-7]. A strong management function is crucial to this making-public of the higher educational institution, to its coming into the attention of public view and being a part of the modernization of the whole society, hence the importance of working out a model of **Intelligent System Structural Organization and Management**.

*Homeokinetic plato* in language acquisition reflects qualitative and quantitative characteristics in learners' communicative language competences and, ultimately, the level of their intelligence. It presupposes an intensive way of language acquisition, allowing a rather fast transition from one intellectual plato onto another within a restricted educational information amount and time limits – (English for Occupational Purposes). The intensive way presupposes a vast pedagogical process which is expanded in time and educational information amount, when alongside with the development of communicative language competence a whole gamut of professional competences, general human competences, professional and generic skills and different kinds of thinking are developed, thus, enabling the learners to attain the highest level of the *intellectual plato* and the purposeful goal of education.

The way of imparting educational message by a mentor is of a crucial importance in this process, since the level of complexity of language input has to be adequate to the level of students' comprehension and, yet, constantly enhancing their achievement in language acquisition. As Polanyi (1958) put it 'Existing human experience has a continuous character, it is not disjunctive, and therefore the application of formal *linguistic* rules to it requires of the applier the same kind of *art* as the application of any other kind of technology' [4].

It seems undisputed that the mastering of memory skills is important in educational development, still, the memorized information is no substitute for understanding, knowledge and insight – nor is it a reliable indicator of intelligence. Therefore the offered **Intelligence Level Indicator** takes into consideration not only a student's level of language proficiency, but also the comprehensible level of a mentor's language complexity as well as a regulating parameter (B) reflecting an individual as an intelligent system.

The suggested **Intelligence Level Indicator (ILI)** and **Teaching Efficiency Indicator (TEI)** permit to define the optimal amount of the learning material and the time for task fulfillment both for a particular individual and for a certain group as a whole. It can be recommended to any study domain, not obligatory language-related. In addition, due to its mobility and flexibility, the System Approach allows to implement these corrective factors (**ILI** and **TEI**) at *any* stage and at *any* time of the educational process to amend *any* elements in the educational system, hence its importance.

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## Active lifestyle – a basis of higher life quality

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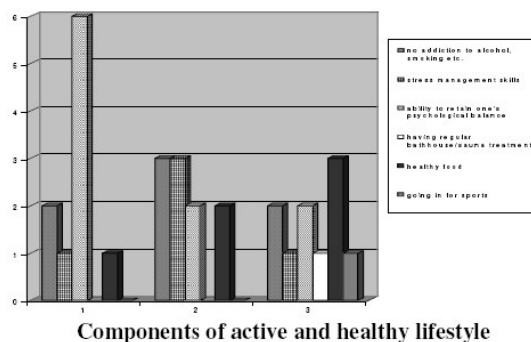
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Rapidly changing society demands new knowledge, skills, habits and approaches in various branches of life. Poor socially economic environment, an easy access to addictive substances and adverse contact dominate in the society. On the individual level there are a disposition to searching for extreme feelings, inability to solve problems, inability to fulfill requirements of the society and inability to integrate into the society. Latvia is a multinational state, therefore when speaking about higher life quality, we solve questions concerning mutual understanding and cooperation of the representatives of different ethnic nations living in Latvia supporting possibilities of the participants involved into the process of facilitating integration of the society to acquire knowledge about life skills that include an active way of life, health and to implement them in practice fully.

Every member of the society is supposed to possess not only professional, but also emotional and social competence and have an active way of life, i.e. the ability to understand, to express and to lead his/her



<p>emotional and social life in the way making it possible to adapt himself/herself to changes in complicated daily life, to fulfill his/her work duties successfully, to be an active society member and to have a happy private life. The most essential part of this process is acquisition of life skills. Life skills appear to be an ability to tackle adaptively and positively the requirements put forward by daily life. Life skills are either an educational goal or a tool for a society member to socialize successfully, to have good health; they create positive changes in life and improve life quality.</p>	
<p><b>Results</b></p> <p>Popularization of active lifestyles and life skills education in Latvia:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The cooperation among Rezekne Higher Education Institution, NGO Educational Centre “Socialization” and Vilani secondary school has been taking place; it gives an opportunity to raise the quality of life skills education in resident groups of various ages (adults, students, schoolchildren) and to popularize the importance of life skills education in creating skills and abilities in order to prevent residents from involving into risk groups (HIV, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, etc.)</li> <li>2. The cooperation agreement has been signed with DHF (USA); the realization of the PSBH® program has been started, its mission is to stimulate searching for solutions for certain problems in health care as well as ecology and social welfare being based on efficient disposition of existing resources.</li> </ol>	<p><b>References:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mana skola Eiropas Savienībā// Latvijas Izglītības vadītāju un pedagogu forums.- R.: SO Latvijas Pedagogu federācija, 2004.</li> <li>2. Aktīvs dzīvesveids – pilsoniskās sabiedrības veidošanas pamats// LSIF finansēts projekts, 2005.</li> <li>3. Skolēni un narkotikas: Rokasgrāmata skolotājiem.- Rīga, 2004.</li> <li>4. Rubana I. Mācīties darot.- Rīga: RAKA,2000.</li> <li>5. Danilane L. Values and their meaning for the formation of lifestyles// CCN 1.Scientific conference “Using,choosing or creating the future” in Paris UNESCO, 2004.- <a href="http://www.hihm.no/concit">http://www.hihm.no/concit</a>.</li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;">Faculty of Pedagogy of Rezekne Higher Education Institution Atbrivosanas aleja 115, Rezekne, LV -4601, LATVIA <a href="http://www.ru.lv">http://www.ru.lv</a></p>	





**DREYFUS HEALTH FOUNDATION (USA)**  
**PROGRAM „PROBLEM SOLVING FOR BETTER HEALTH**  
**(PSBH)”**  
**IN LATVIA AND ITS IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS**

Agreement of cooperation  
 Rezekne  
 Higher  
 Education  
 institution  
 (Latvia) and  
 Dreyfus  
 Health  
 foundation  
 (USA)



The mission of the PSBH® program lies in the stimulation of search of solving of concrete small problems in the field of health protection, and also environmental and social well-being, based on rational use of already available resources. Realization of the program envisages carrying out preparatory organizational work with representatives of Educational Institutions and Health Protection Services; carrying out a workshop on methodology of identifying, addressing, and solving concrete health problems through preparation of the appropriate projects by the participants; and providing consulting services to the program's participants at the stage of the projects' realization.

Dzidra Dukšta “Information on eco-libels and ability to act according to it”




Nellija  
 Kivkucāne  
 “Impressions  
 of flavour in  
 healthy  
 food”

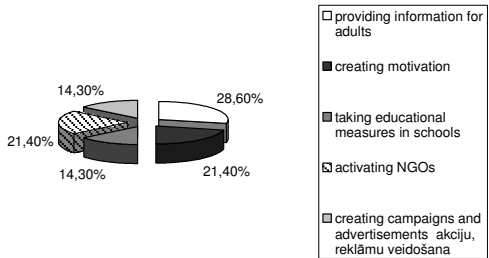




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 Atbrivosanas aleja 115, Rezekne, LV -4601, LATVIA  
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## EDUCATIONAL CENTRE “SOCIALIZATION”- POPULARIZATION OF ACTIVE LIFESTYLE IN ACTIVITIES OF NGOs IN LATVIA

<p><b>The goals of the Centre:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to facilitate strengthening of the democratic and civil society by means of educating the society (including disabled, retired and low-income people) within carrying out seminars, courses, creative workshops, summer camps, etc. thereby social development of the person ( in the branches of education, culture, ecology, health, etc.) being insured;</li> <li>-to carry out research in the sphere of education, culture, ecology, health, etc.; to analyze, publish and popularize the results been received implementing the information technologies, mass media, etc.;</li> <li>-to facilitate communicating within our country and in the international level by means of projects and other kinds of co-operation with the Latvian and foreign social partners, as well as to raise funding, grants and undertake other activities for attracting funding, realising the goals of the society, developing of the society and ensuring its activity been allowed by the law of the Republic of Latvia.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Project memberstates:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Latvia, Rezekne</li> <li>- Portugal, Lisbon</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Project</b> <b>Active lifestyle – a basis of creating the civil society</b></p> <p><b>General aim:</b> strengthening of the civil society by facilitating cooperation and involving a non – governmental organization (society) into the existing networks of the EU in order to realize the role of the civil society effectively by popularizing active lifestyle as a life skill of the citizens of Latvia for ensuring higher life quality.</p> <p><b>Specific aim:</b> To increase the capacity of the organization by effective collaboration on the EU level, acquiring experience for further popularization of active lifestyle among citizens of Latvia.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Measures for improving public health</b></p>  <table border="1"> <tr> <td>□</td> <td>providing information for adults</td> </tr> <tr> <td>■</td> <td>creating motivation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>▒</td> <td>taking educational measures in schools</td> </tr> <tr> <td>▣</td> <td>activating NGOs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>▤</td> <td>creating campaigns and advertisements akciju, reklāmu veidošana</td> </tr> </table>	□	providing information for adults	■	creating motivation	▒	taking educational measures in schools	▣	activating NGOs	▤	creating campaigns and advertisements akciju, reklāmu veidošana	<p style="text-align: center;">   Izglītība un kultūra  <b>Socrates</b>  Grundtvig </p> <p style="text-align: center;">   <b>Project memberstates</b>  -Slovak Republic, Bratislava;  -Greece, Athens;  -Greece, Thesaloniki;  -Belgium, Zwegen;  -Latvia, Rezekne. </p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Grundtvig 2 project</b>  <b>“ European dimension in learning and memory training of seniors”</b></p> <p><b>The aim of the project:</b>  To develop cooperation in Europe in the field of educating and teaching seniors (including people of this age having special needs ) applying memory training methods.</p> <p>Project activities are focused on information exchange, theoretical knowledge, practical experience and experiments with new pedagogical approaches in project memberstates.</p>
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