

Building Bridges

Building Bridges

Proceedings of the fourth international conference of The Consumer
Citizenship Network, Sofia, Bulgaria 2007

Dag Tangen and Victoria Thoresen (eds.)

"New multi-stakeholder processes have emerged as important new features of global power and decision-making... These new processes reach inside nation states to involve local communities and affected people. They also reach beyond governments and transnational groups, alliances and experts. Equally important, the new multi-stakeholder processes stretch beyond mere consultations to a more active role for non-state actors in setting agendas and formulating and monitoring policy."

- UNDP, The Human Development Report 2002, p.108

Høgskolen i Hedmark
Oppdragsrapport nr. 2 – 2008

Fulltekstutgave
Utgivelsessted: Elverum

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Rapporten kan bestilles ved
Henvendelse til Høgskolen i Hedmark
bibliotek.lunah@hihm.no

This report can be ordered from the Hedmark University College
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Acknowledgements

This book is a selection of the presentations given at the fourth Consumer Citizenship Network Conference, *Building Bridges*. The contents include some of the key note speeches and all the working papers. Not all the presentations included here have been thoroughly edited in terms of language proficiency.

The CCN steering group and the editors would like to express their appreciation to

- all who contributed to the conference
- the CCN editorial committee
- Hedmark University College, The Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality Affairs and the Ministry of Education for financial and other support of the programme, conference and publication
- The SOCRATES programme and personnel of the European Commission Department of Education and Culture for their support

Oppdragsrapport 2/2008
© Forfatterne (The Authors)
ISBN: 978-82-7671-653-5
ISSN: 1501-8571

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I. INTRODUCTION

Dag Tangen and Victoria W. Thoresen

Hedmark University College, Hamar, Norway

Building bridges brings two separated points into contact with each other. Bridges facilitate communication and cooperation. The Consumer Citizenship Network¹ conference for 2007 dealt with bridge building in two contexts: stakeholder involvement and transdisciplinary cooperation. The conference examined what characterizes stakeholder involvement and how it can contribute to stimulating sustainable development. It analyzed some of the challenges to the process of bridging the gaps between educational and professional disciplines. In a concrete effort to bridge gaps, the CCN joined with the Comenius E-cons network for the first part of the conference. 221 persons from 33 countries attended.

The CCN annual conference focused on:

- How can stakeholders contribute to “humanizing good governance”?
- Is it possible or even desirable with stakeholder consensus?
- What incentives can stimulate stakeholder involvement in decision making which affects consumers?
- How can research and concept development be linked with action?
- How can transdisciplinary education deal with the issue of overconsumption in industrialized countries?
- Which topics of consumer citizenship education are best dealt with from an interdisciplinary approach and which from specialized subject specific approaches?
- How can transdisciplinary education be stimulated in higher education?

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.

32 presentations and posters were made at the conference dealing with such topics as:

- Communication and corporate social responsibility
- Websites and consumer information about businesses
- Global versus local knowledge
- Political consumer behaviour as solidarity with the third world
- Environmental labelling
- Consumer protection and overconsumption
- Hands-on education for sustainable development
- Healthy schools and healthy pupils

¹ For more information on the Consumer Citizenship Network (www.hihm.no/concit) see page 18

Several short films served as introductions to topics which were discussed in plenary at the conference, such as forms of stakeholder involvement, and how to teach about online gambling. Panel debates, exhibitions, a hearing, a symposium, and even a live presentation of clothes made entirely of recycled plastic bottles were all parts of the conference program.

Teachers who participated in the E-cons² contact seminar provided the CCN partners with displays of teaching materials and local food from each of their countries



E-cons exhibition

The Building Bridges conference was organised by The Consumer Citizenship Network. The conference was coordinated by the Hedmark University College, Norway and hosted by Sofia University, Sofia, Bulgaria. The conference was made possible with the support from the SOCRATES programme and the Norwegian Ministry of Family and Equality and Ministry of Education. The conference chair was Victoria W. Thoresen and the conference manager was Dag Tangen, both from Hedmark University College. The conference coordinator was Bisserka Veleva, of the Sofia University St Kliment Ohridsky. The conference committee consisted of: Declan Doyle, peer review committee chairman; Bjørg Quarcoo, financial secretary; Valentin Petroussenko; Miroslav Nikolov; Fani Uzonova; and Eva Hoyos (E-Consum, coordinator of the contact seminar for teachers).

² The E-Cons Network is a Comenius 3 action within the Socrates programme. The aim of these networks is to promote cooperation and educational innovation in school education. The fundamental theme of this Network is consumer education. Thus, the ultimate objective of the E-Cons Network is to boost the training of consumers so that they may behave in a manner which is conscious, critical, socially aware and committed to the environmental surroundings; so that they may know their rights and assume their responsibilities.

The plenary sessions

The conference opened with speeches from Bisserka Veleva, conference coordinator and greetings from Rector Bojan Biochev, Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski; Valentin Petrussenko, Plovdiv University; Mayor of Sofia City, Mr Borrisov; Jivka Staneva, EU Directorate for Consumer Protection; Bjørn Erik Thon, Norwegian Consumer ombudsman; and Rubén Mendiola Erkoreka, Director of Consumer Affairs and Industrial Safety from the Basque Government, Spain.



Valentin Petrussenko and Jivka Staneva



Conference participants

During the conference there were 7 key note speeches, 28 research and development papers presented in the 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



Gregory Dahl

“Globalization: transforming our world”

Globalization and its impact are of foremost concern in today’s world. The media reports that planet Earth is rapidly becoming smaller and more interconnected. Many government policies, ideas, and institutions of the past are weakening in the face of the new challenges of globalization. Gregory Dahl studied economics at Harvard and worked for many years as an economist and senior official of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) working with top-level government officials in different areas of the globe to try to resolve economic problems and promote development.

Bjørn Erik Thon
“Building Bridges”

Bjørn Erik Thon is the Norwegian Consumer Ombudsman. The Consumer Ombudsman is an independent administrative body with the responsibility of supervising measures in the market and seeks to exert influence on traders to observe the regulatory framework. The CO considers cases upon complaints from consumers and traders, but will also at his own initiative examine marketing measures. Thon presented a unique project dealing with cooperation between stakeholders, the CO and mobile phone companies.



Victoria W. Thoresen
“Stimulating Stakeholder Involvement”



Victoria W. Thoresen, CCN project manager, spoke about how stakeholder involvement is stimulated. She examined why there is an increase in stakeholder involvement and how social responsibility is the ideological foundation for this involvement. Thoresen discussed how civil society organizations are the facilitators and voluntary codes, the instruments, of stakeholder involvement. She also emphasized the necessity of educating individuals so they can acquire knowledge, and critical thinking skills as well as practical experience in stakeholder involvement.

Hideki Nakahara
“Students: stakeholders in sustainable development”

Nakahara is professor of Faculty of Environmental & Information Studies of Musashi Institute of Technology, Japan. Nakahara’s current research is on subjective sustainable consumption & quality of life. He is Chairman of the Green and has numerous publications such as: “Wither Human Ecology”, “Sharing the World”, “Eco-label and Green Marketing(1998)”. Nakahara also is the executive director of Academy of Environmental Management and teaches consumer citizenship education and environmental education. He spoke of the core issues related to consumption and climate change from a global perspective.



Jeppe Læssøe

“The challenge of public participation”

Jeppe Læssøe, from the Danish University of Education, called for a radically new form for politics, one in which the public more actively participates and where individuals realize that one’s own actions have wide-reaching consequences not only on oneself and one’s nearby surroundings but on others, other places and in other times, even generations later.



Nieves Alvarez Martin

“Climate change and consumers”

Nieves Alvarez Martin has been director of several international projects as well as leading the European School of Consumers whose objective is to promote and stimulate consumer education inside and beyond education centres, implementing active methodology, use of new technology and data bases and hands-on material for training. The school also develops training courses for teachers in consumer related issues. The school also aims at enabling unemployed persons to develop a professional activity in the field of consumer education and information, both in public and private organisms which are responsible for consumer information, education and protection, and also information services for consumers from European businesses

Susanne Stormer.

“The mutual advantages of stakeholder involvement”

Susanne Stormer represented Novo Nordisk and presented stakeholder involvement from the point of view of businesses. She stated that you can engage with, but never manage, stakeholders...Stakeholder-oriented business means working through organized partnerships with specific stakeholder groups. She also described a number of initiatives taken by NovoNordisk together with stakeholder groups in relation to issues of health and diabetes.



Other speakers and professional events

Panel and plenary discussions

“The user revolution – stakeholder involvement as a constructive force”

Following a video presentation entitled, “The Fish Market—building bridges between business and the customer”, a panel and plenary discussion was held about stakeholder involvement. Monika Schroder, of Queen Margaret University, UK; Victor Manuel Dordio, from Evoraconta; and Heiko Steffens, Member of the European Social and

Economic Committees discussed what legitimizes stakeholder involvement, who actually represents the stakeholder and to what extent business is obligated to consider the opinions of the stakeholders.

“Dealing with gold and fire”

This panel discussion also started with a short film by Gustavo Moralez which reflected some of the consequences of online gambling. The panel dealt with aspects of interdisciplinary teaching of financial literacy. Kaija Turkki, of Helsinki University; Nkosi Ndlela, from Hedmark University College; Bistra Vassileva, of Varna University of Economics; and Lewis Akenji, Association of Conscious Consumers, Budapest composed the panel.

”Bridging the gap between disciplines”

Yoshiaki Takahashi, from OECD; Silvi Piriz, from Uruguay; Sjöfn Gudmundsdottir and Steinunn Anna Gunnlaugsdottir, both from Iceland provided examples of various approaches to interdisciplinary teaching. Takahashi presented the ongoing OECD survey on consumer education.

“Engaging young people in sustainable development— A contribution to the north-south dialogue”

CCN task group five focuses on consumer citizenship education from global perspectives. In this symposium, the group provided examples of ways of involving students in education for sustainable development through interdisciplinary, active learning, practical approaches. The symposium participants were: Dana Voukonova, University of Economics, Bratislava; Soren Breiting, The Danish University of Education; Ingeborg Schrettle and Andrea Scheer, Pädagogische Akademie der Diözese Graz-Seckau.

Parallel workshops

On the second afternoon of the conference, participants had the opportunity to attend one of the following parallel sessions:

- “Hands-on ESD learning”**. Miriam O’Donoghue and Mella Cusack
- **LOLA (Looking for likely alternatives)**, Sara Girardi
- **Preparing a joint masters in consumer citizenship education**, Kaija Turkki, Joao Fernandez, Bistra Vassileva



Work shop presentations and discussions

Work shop presentations:

Author	Country	Title
Sevgi Kalkan and Yesim Cakti	Turkey	Analysis of institutional websites of European and American companies concerning corporate social responsibility.
Ulf Schrader and Silja Halbes	Germany	Communication about CSR as a prerequisite for consumer citizenship - the role of consumer policy actors in Germany
Peter Daub	Netherlands	Consumer and Argument
Fani Uzunova	Bulgaria	Can rich & poor build together a bridge to a sustainable future?
Lone Pålshaugen	Norway	Using social innovation and dialogue as a tool in creating a more sustainable society – the introduction of Fairtrade towns to Norway
Barbara Mazur	Poland	Making Bridges over Cultural Differences
Nadezda Klabusayova and Marie Mikusova	The Czech Republic	Education of Consumers in the Czech Republic
Leena Graffe and Taina Männistö	Finland	Network of consumer educators in Finland
Jørgen Klein	Norway	Global versus Local Knowledge. Comparing environmental narratives in Africa.
Ellin Unt and Hindrek Lootus	Estonia	Efficiency of environmental labelling as expressed through consumer awareness in Estonia
Irina Liokumovica	Latvia	Some Aspects of Consumer Citizenship Education
Helen Theodoropoulou and Petros C. Kosmas	Greece	An investigation of immigrant consumer behaviour in Athens
Leena Lahti	Finland	The Finnish forestry and FSC standards. A case study to teach sustainable development
Līga Danilane, Velta Lubkina and Gatis Lubkins	Latvia	Implementation of elements of critical thinking within teaching content integrating
Miriam O'Donoghue and Mella Cusack	Ireland	"Hands-on" ESD learning
Kaija Turkki, Joao Fernandez, Bistra Vassileva		Preparing a joint master
Sara Girardi		LOLA (Looking for likely alternatives)

Marino Melissano	Italy	Concept of interdisciplinarity in Consumer and Sustainable Education
Tove Brita Eriksen	Norway	Healthy schools, healthy pupils
Joanna Kostecka and Barbara Mazur	Poland	Recognizing differences in understanding of Sustainable Development by different social groups in order to build bridges for educational activities
Jarmila Tkacikova	Slovakia	“Building Bridges by sharing experience on the 5 roads communication model. Using by Consumer Institute
Posters		
Liga Danilane and Velta Lubkina	Latvia	Integrating the content of primary education in Latvia
Stoyan Tanchev	Bulgaria	Curriculum for Master of Science degree for consumer protection in food
Leena Lahti	Finland	Environmental sciences. Multi disciplinary studies i the university of Joensuu



LOLA exhibition



Video about online gambling

A new and improved exhibition of the project, Looking for likely alternatives, (LOLA), was mounted at the conference. 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. 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. The LOLA ambassador program was also launched at the conference.



Conference registration

The Consumer Citizenship Network

The Consumer Citizenship Network 2 (CCN2) is an interdisciplinary network of educators, researchers and civil-society organisations, (including UNESCO, UNEP and Consumers International) who recognize the pressing need for constructive action by individuals in order to achieve sustainable consumption and global solidarity.

The Consumer Citizenship Network has, since 2003, developed interdisciplinary approaches to central issues dealing with the balance between material and non-material well-being and with how one can translate ethical values into everyday practice through conscientious participation in the market. CCN2 also brings together expertise in the fields of citizenship-, environmental- and consumer education to further develop research and good practice for teaching and accessing consumer citizenship education. The Network consists of 98 institutions in 30 European countries.

The project targets lecturers, researchers and teacher trainers in higher education; students, professionals working with children and young people, public authorities, and associations dealing with citizenship training, sustainable development and consumer issues.

The main outputs are: the further development of dialogue and debate; research; competency analysis; teaching materials and learning guidelines; annual conferences; research publications; reports; exhibitions; database of relevant literature; newsletters; web-site; courses; and dissemination of the results to a wide audience.

By focusing on social responsibility, the CCN2 addresses the growing international concern for implementation of norms and behaviour which support sustainable development and cooperation.

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 2007 the Network consisted of 121 institutions in 31 countries in Europe. The network has also 9 associated partners from America, Asia and Africa. Approximately three quarters of the partners are universities and colleges. The fourth part consists of consumer organizations and international organizations

The network is based upon the principle of consultation, research and frank evaluation. The CCN steering group and Core Unit has managed to provide general direction, while the task groups coordinate the diverse interests within the specific areas of focus and work to creating the concrete output their group has taken on. The Core Unit has daily contact between itself with regular weekly meetings and has contact with CCN members on a regular basis via email, fax, post and telephone. The CCN Newsletter, website news and calendar function also as a means of communicating with the partners. The steering group and task groups have met face-to-face three/ four times, and communicate mostly via email, fax, post and telephone. The minutes of each task group and steering group meeting are placed on the CCN website available to all. One of the annual meetings of the task groups has been held in a common location with a plenary updating session to begin with. This has been very successful. There are also various committees (such as the peer review group for selection of abstracts and papers; the editing committee, etc). The CCN2 members at large collect data, do research, write reports, present findings at the conference, and give each other constructive feedback on work done via email or via questionnaires distributed at meetings and conferences. The structure of the network, with an advisory board, a steering group and task groups representing over 50 institutions appears to have created a system where partners can actively contribute to decision making and monitoring.

The CCN2 has achieved the following so far:

1. CCN2 has *strengthened cooperation between institutions of higher education (HEI)* in Europe as well as between HEI's and civil society and research organizations. This cooperation has taken the form of research, development work, debate, dialogue, and collaborative preparation of pedagogical materials. Institutions from Central and Eastern European countries, particularly institutions from the newest EU member states, have been very active. Staff and student exchange between CCN2 partners continues.

2. CCN2 has *contributed to the harmonizing of courses in higher education* in Europe. This has occurred through the inclusion of common elements about consumer citizenship education in existing courses and modules; by creating courses on consumer citizenship education based on common guidelines, literature, competences and learning outcomes; and by preparing for an application for a Joint European Masters.

3. CCN2 has *created interdisciplinary approaches to teaching sustainable development* in general and responsible, *sustainable consumption* in particular. This has taken place at the conferences and meetings on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and related topics; by research and development work connected to ESD; by translating and spreading the CCN Teaching and Learning Guidelines into Portuguese, Latvian, Slovakian, Norwegian, Italian, Turkish, Bulgarian; by contributing to the translation and increased use of the YouthXchange teaching materials; by beginning to compile new handbooks for teachers on consumer citizenship education and ESD; by holding a series of teacher training seminars in different European countries about consumer citizenship education and ESD; by making numerous presentations at international conferences on these topics; and by facilitating cooperation between national ministries which represent different aspects of ESD as well as cooperation between different departments at HEI's.

4. CCN2 has *attempted to inspire innovation and reform on a wide scale*. The CCN2 has systematically begun approaching authorities in EU countries about consumer citizenship via letters, and meetings. In close collaboration with the UN Marrakech Process Task Force, CCN2 has encouraged and facilitated creative practices related to education for sustainable consumption at international conferences and teacher training seminars. The CCN2 has also further developed and systematically spread the use of the LOLA toolkit (Looking for likely alternatives) by which students identify, evaluate and document examples of social innovation. CCN2 has contributed to the OECD project on consumer education and the EU, UNDP and OECD's process for redefining life quality entitled, "Beyond GDP". And within the CCN2 use of films and digital art presentations as well as theatrical techniques have acquired a significant place at CCN conferences.

5. CCN2 has *attempted to stimulate civic involvement*. This has been done by focusing through research and teacher training on active citizenship-- its characteristics, forms of expression and how it best can be taught. Understanding consumer citizenship involves developing insight into new methods of stakeholder involvement and this was the central theme of CCN2's last conference. CCN2 has continued to participate actively in the international process creating guidance standards of social responsibility for organizations (governmental, civil and commercial).

6. CCN2 has *developed the use of ICT and information exchange* both in the project and in teaching. The CCN2 website provides links and news. CDs with reports and other materials have been made and distributed. Teaching and learning Guidelines for consumer citizenship education have been modified for digital use and made accessible online in hypertext format. Digital links to pdf formatted files of CCN2 publications have been made available. The Software "Think Tank" has been used to develop online learning materials for distance learning based on the CCN2 Consumer Citizenship Education Guidelines. The LOLA project continues to use ICT an essential element of this teaching methodology and the LOLA website is continually manned. CCN2 partners have created several online arena for discussion and debate within their task groups.

7. CCN2 has *increased cooperation with institutions of higher education outside of Europe*. The Consumer Citizenship Network has had a tradition of inviting experts

from outside of Europe as keynote speaker to CCN's annual conferences in order to ensure perspectives which might not otherwise be presented. This tradition has been continued and this year, in addition to visitors from South America with extensive experience in consumer citizenship education, Japan was also represented. CCN2's associated partners, particularly from Africa, have been involved in the work of several task groups, participating actively in discussions and contributing to publications. As mentioned previously, CCN2 has had close collaboration with UNECO and UNEP in relation to the Decade for ESD. The CCN2 has established links and planned cooperation with comparable networks in the USA (ACCI) and international teachers organizations such as the International federation of Home Economics teachers.

8. The CCN *has published* newsletters, conference proceedings from the first four annual conferences, general brochures, CD's with all the speeches and papers from the conferences, two editions of the Nice mail journal, conference reports, annual illustrated reports, the Consumer Citizenship Guidelines, vol 1. Higher Education, the LOLA (Looking for likely alternatives) teaching material and a series of books entitled in which the first was Promoting New Responses, vol 1. Taking Responsibilities; the second was vol 2. Catalyzing Change and the third was Promoting New Responses vol 3. Building Bridges.

9. The *CCN materials are distributed free of charge*. Requests for materials have come from Europe as well as South Africa, India, South America, and the USA. The CCN2's cooperation with UNESCO, UNEP and the Marrakech Task Force for education for sustainable consumption has provided unique opportunities for the CCN2 to disseminate its results amongst educators, educational authorities and others interested in responsible, sustainable consumption.

10. The CCN has been *cooperating with many international 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.



Dag Tangen and Bjørg Quarcoo



Workshop session

The following task groups function during this second cycle of the CCN project:

In the first 3 year cycle CCN had thematic groups which both discussed broad issues and accomplished concrete tasks. In this cycle, the CCN2 has modified these groups and they are now 8 task groups with specific work packages to do.

Task group 1.

Inclusion of consumer citizenship education themes in existing courses and modules

Task group 2.

Speeches and articles about consumer citizenship at conferences and in journals and other relevant publications

Task group 3.

Compilation of Consumer Citizenship Education Guidelines (vol. 2) for elementary and secondary school

Task group 4.

Development of LOLA project

The *Looking for Likely Alternatives* project is a pedagogical tool for teachers and students which assists them in the process of identifying, evaluating and documenting cases of social innovation for sustainable lifestyles.

Task group 5.

Preparation of a resource toolkit on education for sustainable consumption which can be used globally and contains cases from around the world.

Task group 6.

Further development of indicators of responsible consumption

Task group 7.

Preliminary actions towards the initiation of a Joint European Masters in consumer citizenship

Task group 8.

Preparation and carrying out of teacher training seminars on education for sustainable development

II. KEY NOTE SPEECHES

Greetings to the conference from Commissioner Meglena Kuneva

EU Directorate for Consumer Protection

Меглена Кунева
Член на Европейската комисия

Уважаеми г-н Ректор,
Уважаеми дами и господа,

Радвам се, че тъкмо най-старият университет в България е домакин на конференция, която ще обсъжда връзките между бизнеса, потребителите и организацията, които ги представляват. Ангажирането на Софийския университет с тази тема и бих казала – с тази кауза – е знак, че образованието се отваря към практиката, че се обръща към бизнеса, интересува се от пазара и увеличава шансовете на младите хора, които са избрали да учат и да остана в България. Защото им предлага европейски перспективи. И уроци по европейско гражданство.

Мина времето, в което университетите бяха един вид Касталии, ако използвам хубавата метафора на Херман Хесе, и настояваха върху чистия академизъм. Днес те знаят отговорността си да бъдат агенти на динамиката, на прагматиката и да удържат отвореността към съвременното във всичките му измерения. Затова и университетите канят работодателите в своите управи, съобразяват с тях програмите и учебните си планове, а студентите разчитат на този тип контакти за реализацията си. Защото голямата поука на XXI век е разбирането за необходимостта от изграждането на мрежи и възли, от взаимна обратимост и обвързаност на партниращите си страни.

Днес вие ще поставите в центъра на вашето внимание ролята на информацията и образованието, на знанието и културата на всекидневие при формирането на активни граждански сдружения, които да отстояват политиките за устойчиво икономическо развитие и защита на потребителите. Ще изведете ролята на диалога за разширяването на териториите на личната свобода, за постигането на консенсуси между бизнес, потребителски организации и

гражданите като цяло. Приветствам този опит да се градят мостове. И най-вече приветствам идеята да мислите отношението пазар-потребление граждански, т.е. да го мислите не като статистика и абстракция, а като основа на либералния граждански модел на развитие, който доминира в днешна Европа. Думата ми е за разбирането на потреблението в широкия смисъл – като потребление не само на стоки, но и на административни и публични услуги, на вид управление дори. Иначе казано, потреблението е онзи граждански модус, който формулира дневния ред на демокрациите и с идеите, които ще наложите тук и сега, вие – сигурна съм – ще допринесете за по-бързото приобщаване на България към този модел и за по-бързата ни интеграция в крайна сметка. Защото членството ни в ЕС се случи на 1 януари 2007, но интеграцията ни предстои всеки един ден.

Успех на конференцията и на клаузата!

Меглена Кунева,
член на ЕК

Some comments from Meglena Kuneva, European Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, to the CCN conference in Sofia

“It has been a long time since universities were a kind of Kastalias, if I may use the beautiful metaphor of Herman Hesse, and insisted on purely theoretical academism. Today they know they have responsibilities as agents of dynamic change and of pragmatism and that they have to remain open to modernity in its all dimensions. Thus universities ...have understood the main lesson of the XXI century which is the need to build up networks and teams, on the basis of mutual compatibility and commitment of the partners on all sides.

Today (at the conference) you will center your attention on the role of information and education, of knowledge and everyday culture in connection with the formation of civic activities, which are to assert policies for sustainable economic development and to protect the consumers. You will take up the dialogue about expanding the territories of personal freedom, in order to achieve consensus among business, consumer organizations and citizenry as a whole. I praise the idea of thinking of consumption in a civic way, i.e. not only to consider it as statistics and abstractions but as the foundation for a liberal civic model of development which is dominating Europe today. I speak of understanding consumption in its wider sense – as consumption not only of goods, but also of administrative and public services, and even as a kind of management. In other words, consumption is that civic modus which formulates democratic agendas.”

I wish success to your conference and cause!”

Secure use of mobile phones and the use of roundtable discussions as a working method

Bjørn Erik Thon

The Norwegian CONSUMER OMBUDSMANN

The overall topic of this conference is building bridges. And that is also what I want to address in my opening speech.

Hopefully for you inspiration, I want to tell you how the Consumer Ombudsman in Norway enter into partnership with business in order to improve the situation both for consumers and for business - in other words, to create a win – win situation.

But first a few words about the CO. We are an independent public body. Our mandate is to monitor marketing activities and negotiate standard contract terms with business. We can impose sanctions to companies that are breaking the law. Our sanctions also involve fines or enforcement charges, that can be up to 100 000 Euros.

I will now elaborate how we work with the business side. At present time we are involved in several projects with the business side, among them something called Anti Fraud Network involving more than 40 partners. The aim is to work together in order to prevent consumer fraud in banking, for example phishing, fraudulent lotteries etc. Similar projects are running in Canada and Finland.

The second project I will tell you about today is something we have called A Plan for Safe use of mobile phones for children and teenagers.

Why is this important to us?

It is, of course, because we see that young people are using this sort of services to a very large extent – in Norway, close to 100% of kids between 12 and 15 have a mobile phone, almost 100% has access to Internet at home. In many ways this is very positive, but there are some big challenges when it comes to safe use, meaning absence or at least limited access to illegal and harmful content, and of course the economic side of this problem; we have received many complaints from teenagers and their parents having received very high bills, mainly because the kids have bought content like games, ring tones or participated in competitions or chats by using their mobile phone.

When we first contacted the business side, in this case the telephone operators, addressing this problem, they were not very enthusiastic. So, in order to lift the case

higher on the agenda, we needed partners. And we were lucky, because the Minister of Consumer Affairs was very interested in this issue. I have to add that several times over the last year, media has covered cases where childrens mobile phones had been misused, either due to negligence or theft.

Together we invited to a round table conference. The invitations simply said (a bit simplified): “ Do you want to take part in a project to make the use of mobile phones more secure for young people”?

You should really have a nerve to say NO to something like that. And no one did.

The operators, their organisation, the companies selling content, other public bodies, different NGSs among others all accepted the invitation. All in all I believe around 40 partners participated in the first meeting. The three factors; a unity between the CO and the Minister, pressure from the media and the fact that we invited to a round table conference was in many ways perfect for good achievements.

And that was exactly what happened: Prior to the first meeting the biggest mobile-operator, Telenor, launced a new, consumer and children-friendly idea. The rest had no choice but to follow it up. In addition we managed to create a common atmosphere that “we will do good things for the children, and doing good for the children is very important”. By doing this the whole project got its own dynamic, and at the end of the day stakeholders tried to surpass each other in good will and activities in order to protect children. The round table ended up in a common commitment to work together towards Safe use of Mobile Phones.

This happened in December. Since then, a lot of things have happened. We created a special steering group consisting of members from NGOs, the ministry, mobile operators and business organisations to coordinate all the activities. We have worked really hard, and many good ideas have been put forward on the way. On symbolic break through came when the phone operators supported our suggestion to broaden the scope and instead of calling it Plan for Safe use of Mobile Phones, we should address Safe use of Media, including also the Internet.

We will launch the plan June 12th this year, and today we are looking at a whole range of activities:

- Improved technical security – hopefully also the possibility for subscribers to block their phone if the bill is getting to high
- More specific information from each operator
- General information from the business as such – both on the use of mobile content and use of internet
- More public information to be used in the teaching
- In November each year primary and secondary school focus on a specific topic in their education – and this year the focus will hopefully be Secure use of Mobile phones. This will off course be of great importance, and I’m sure the business side will take part in activities in schools.
- Manuals to be used for discussions in parental meeting etc

- New contracts
- And possibly also new legislation

This is not the first time we have managed to achieve very good results in our cooperation with business. I will share with you a few reflections about what have been the main reasons for the success:

- We need to create a common understanding of the problem.
- Or, we have to make them “see the light”
- Sometimes it is necessary to put pressure, like using the media
- Using a round table is also very efficient. We have done this several times with great success.
- When many stakeholders sit together and you manage to create an environment of engagement, it’s very difficult to be the one not accepting to go along.
- It’s important to engage the business side – and of course make sure they get good publicity for their actions.

Stimulating stakeholder involvement

Victoria W. Thoresen

Hedmark University College, Hamar, Norway

How is stakeholder involvement stimulated?

War is without a doubt the most effective means of stimulating stakeholder involvement. But paradoxically, war brings destruction and death to those very things the stakeholder tries to maintain. War does not contribute to the building of bridges. Could it be the fear of losing that which one has a vested interest in which drives the individual to accept being drawn into armed conflicts? Fear is definitely a strong motivating factor. Both the “fear of losing” as well as the “fear of not being able to have” forces people to get involved. The majority of wars have been and still are, being fought over possession of natural resources despite ideological excuses.

The modern concept of stakeholder involvement is, however, not based only on concern for negative consequences although the lessons we are learning about destruction of the environment and climate change are serious and clearly colored with anxiety about the future. Stakeholder involvement is per definition, proactive rather than merely reactive. It is constructive and cooperative rather than merely accusative. It is like a bridge which brings two distinctly separate points into contact. Stakeholder involvement is civic action in areas previously restricted to owners, producers, legislators and scientists. It is founded on the idea of universal social responsibility.

Why is there an increase in stakeholder involvement?

There are several reasons for the growth of stakeholder involvement in recent decades. The significant increase in the number of democracies in recent years has strengthened the role of the active citizen. (1) The growth of digital communication as a means of expressing one’s opinions has provided activists and interest organizations with powerful tools. Media have even begun to referring to “the user revolution”. The fact that corporate actors have such a dominant position in determining priorities and maintaining power in society has highlighted the need for improving the balance between freedom for commercial endeavors and the safeguarding of consumer rights, social development and environmental quality. (2) The inbuilt sensitivity of the global market to consumer decisions has transformed the consumer into a strategic economic force to be reckoned with. There is increased public interest in assuring that firms, governments and organizations behave in a more balanced, socially responsible manner and report publicly on their behaviour. There is also heightened sensitivity to information about how the consequences of production and consumption affect not only one’s nearest family, friends, or colleagues but also human beings all over the globe. Concepts such as

“needs”, “contentment” and “development” have altered their meaning. No longer does one only look at GNP to define growth. Issues of well being, life quality, choice and participatory governance fill international declarations and guidelines for the human development of nations. The consequences of our lifestyle choices are being measured in many ways such as by ecological footprints. The marginalized and helpless are increasingly more visible and being heard to a greater extent than ever before.

Social Responsibility—the ideological foundation

The ethical and ideological foundation for much stakeholder involvement is the concept of social responsibility. Social responsibility, though connected to the concepts of justice and caring, is not something constant, solid, set and stagnant. It is in a state of continual transformation and dependent upon individuals being able to identify values and recognize patterns and processes. 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.

History gives us succinct examples of governments, markets, civil society organisations and individuals who have conscientiously transgressed established rules and initiated new ways of thinking and dealing with challenges. The boundaries of social responsibility now encompass spheres of influence not only immediate and familiar but also regional and international. New concepts exist today such as human development, sustainability, corporate social responsibility, bioethics, global security, consumer citizenship, and world citizenship. The fact that institutions grow slowly, adjusting to situations rather than existing as perfect ideological models, has led to the adoption of many “soft-laws” or voluntary codes of behaviour as instruments for social responsibility. These spring in part from what some researchers refer to as 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.

Social activism and volunteerism are in many communities the foundations of a new kind of involvement resulting in greater stakeholder participation in development and even opening the way to new approaches to policy making. The demand has come from individuals on the grassroot level (stakeholders, clients, consumers) who have in recent years requested to be involved in two-way dialogue on public concerns. Those closest to where changes are happening want to be included in the decision making process. “Humanizing of governance” or “bottom up governance” as the multi-stakeholder involvement is often referred to, provides new opportunities for stakeholders/consumers to apply their knowledge to stimulate social responsibility. Stakeholder involvement has traditionally either been restricted to complaints and redress in the context of consumer issues. In the context of civic activism it has meant jury duty in a constitutional government. Today stakeholders are still “lay judges” but in new contexts. Such participation opens for a more multilateral system empowering those on the bottom, allowing “functions (to) be carried out at the level closest to the people affected” (Strong, M.P. 1995). In addition to representing the user perspective (children, pupils, students, adults, disabled, marginalized, elderly), stakeholders can provide alternative, locally and culturally solvent solutions.

Of course, many ask “why should I care?”, “what can I do?”, “what will it cost me to be involved?”—in other words: “what’s in it for me?” Such questions are a way of analyzing the risks and benefits and are answered in different ways by different actors who are trying to motivate stakeholder involvement. Incentives for stakeholder involvement are often money, services, goods or intangibles like information, status, or love. In many cases it stems from the will to cooperate and a deep sense of commitment. “This business of development in the world is our business” some stakeholders even claim.

Civil Society organizations—the facilitators

The individual stakeholder has opportunities for functioning independently yet researchers have registered two types of individual behaviour which seem to be on the rise: participation by protest (activities such as signing petitions, boycotting products, demonstrating, staging sit-ins, etc, aimed at giving signals to those in command without necessarily going via the elected representatives.) The second type of behaviour is participation by association (where citizens come together to lobby and further their ideas, opinions, interests directly without going through the normal decision making channels) (3) Both of these types of behaviour contribute to the need for interest organizations which can coordinate initiatives. Non-governmental civil society organizations provide “the demand side voice”, “the leveraged influence”. (4) Often enhanced by Internet, they facilitate, network, translate, champion causes, raise the profile of issues which might otherwise be ignored, advocate changes, and lobby for legislature. They have increased collaboration with research and education for example by pressing into the mainstream research topics on consumer issues related to sustainable human development. Many struggle to maintain the delicate balance between autonomy and cooperation with government and market. Civil society interest organizations have also participated in the creation of many voluntary codes of socially responsible behaviour for individuals, organizations and particularly corporate enterprises.

Voluntary codes—the instruments

Contributing to increased social responsibility in society is the ideological motivating factor for stakeholder involvement and civil society interest organizations are the facilitators in many cases, while voluntary codes can be seen as particularly useful instruments for achieving social responsibility. Stakeholders are, to an ever increasing extent, being involved in the processes of the creation of laws and legislation, but this arena remains the specialty of politicians and courts of law. Voluntary codes, often created by a coalition of representatives from stakeholders, government and corporate interests, have been created to act as catalysts for social responsibility and as supplements to officially approved legislation. “*There is a hybridization of law and market, a blurring of the distinctions separating public and private spheres*” (5) Conventions and voluntary codes have evolved in an attempt to identify indicators of social responsibility for governments, corporate enterprises and civil society organizations.

Voluntary codes are “*commitments not required by legislation or regulations. They are agreed upon by one or more individuals or organizations and are intended to influence or*

control behaviour. They are to be applied in a consistent manner or to reach a consistent outcome.” (6). Voluntary codes have, as Benjamin Cashore explains, pragmatic, moral and cognitive legitimacy. They tend to be innovative and serve as a new framework for expressing policy rules based on multi-stakeholder opinions. They are characterized by having either information-oriented approaches, dialogue-oriented and participatory approaches or a combination of these. While not obligatory, codes can provide a means of identifying the commitments of a company, government or organization and can even provide a competitive advantage. In many cases voluntary codes build upon the recognition of the diversity of existing national legislation, the interdependence of the global community and the essential unity of mankind.

Education – the prerequisite

Concern for a just and caring global society and consequently stakeholder involvement to achieve this does not happen on its own. Education is a prerequisite for stimulating stakeholder involvement. To use the metaphor of bridge building once again, there are parallel processes between that and the educating of young people to become socially involved.

Strategic planning is necessary when constructing bridges otherwise there is the danger that the two sides may not even meet in the middle. This requires the use of common measurements and language. In educational terms this means a solid foundation in social and natural sciences including social economy, for all students. It demands interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary teaching which focuses on modern dilemma on micro as well as macro levels. In other words, it requires education dealing with the problems individuals encounter in their daily lives. This is often referred to as “holistic” education.

Good handiwork and solid construction are essential for bridges that will last. In pedagogical contexts this means that students need to develop communicative competences, to be trained in conflict resolution methodologies and to nurture their aesthetic sense (beauty is an element of bridge building just as emotional involvement is a part of stakeholder activism). Several standards for stakeholder involvement identify essential elements of the stakeholder consultation process. These can be summarized as such (7):

- ❖ stakeholders have the right to be heard
- ❖ the organization is obligated to respond to the stakeholders’ concerns
- ❖ stakeholder engagement should be principles-based, using an open source framework for stakeholder engagement
- ❖ there should be systems and processes available to ensure constant improvement in the quality of stakeholder involvement

- ❖ there should be the opportunity for stakeholders to be involved in issues ranging from the micro-level of specific engagements to macro-level involvement in major societal concerns

- ❖ stakeholder involvement should be practiced by businesses, civil society and labour organizations, public bodies and multi-stakeholder networks and partnerships.

Finally, bridge building requires quality control. In educational terms this means not only being able to test students on their theoretical knowledge but to let them experience in practical, real life situations. It demands that learning situations be relevant and encourage reflection on the part of the learner.

The satisfaction of seeing a bridge finally built and used is in itself a significant motivation to the builder. Experiencing the process of social involvement and being able to identify concrete results of stakeholder participation may be the most essential elements motivating the individual.

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Active citizenship, climactic change and responsible consumption

Nieves Álvarez Martín

European Network for Consumer Education

A thought

I don't know in which corner of our hectic daily lives, in which technology, in which compulsive purchase, in which sad moment... we have given up the ambition of BEING (BEING people, BEING happy, BEING true). Neither do I know when we started thinking that what was important was HAVING, HAVING things, HAVING power., HAVING what nobody could HAVE... and in order to HAVE, we have been led astray by illusions that have not brought happiness and that are threatening to destroy our lives, the lives of others and the life of the planet itself. Many lives have already been lost. The reason: the lack of an appropriate answer to one question: What is more important for being happy: being or having? This lecture only seeks to confirm my doubts and correct assumptions and to try to answer this question.

My only correct assumption in this area is this: if we don't know how to HAVE, we cannot BE. But ... Do we know how to BE? Do we know how to HAVE?

The facts speak for us:

- “We have adapted technologies thousands of times more powerful than anything our ancestors could have had” (...) “Every day we emit 70 million tons of pollutants that cause global warming into the earth's atmosphere.” Al Gore

And these are not words, the effects can be seen. We have been able to see them in his documentary “An Inconvenient Truth”, we have seen alarming images: melting icecaps, floods, drought, and so forth.

But we also have proof

I am sure we remember the torrential rainfall which linked to the melting icecaps caused the river Kabul to breach its banks. The flood destroyed 170 homes in the capital of Afghanistan, and affected 25 thousand people. The storm that killed 51 people is an example of the climactic upheavals that are threatening the world.

I could give many examples, however, just in case this last example seems far away, let's just remember the heatwave that affected Europe in 2003 and caused the death of 20,000 people.

What is the technical cause of global warming and climactic change?

The greenhouse effect gases; water vapour (H₂O), carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), ozone (O₃), chlorofluorocarbons (*artificial*) CFC's.

Where are these greenhouse effect gases to be found?

- 80% of the emissions of human produced CO₂ are to be found in the supply and use of fossil fuels
- Oil, natural gas and coal (which emits the greatest amount of carbon per unit of supplied energy) are the sources of a large part of the energy used in generating electricity, transport, household heating and industrial energy.
- That is to say these gases are in industries, power stations, cars, petrol, heating and air conditioners, refrigerators, aerosols, in the rubbish, in all gas emissions, in energy, and so on.

But ... what are the real causes?

There are chiefly three causes:

- The economy and the unsustainable development it has led us to.
- The lack of interest of Governments to listen to the experts and to adopt specific measures that will lead us to sustainable production and consumption.
- The lack of information given to the citizens, their individual convenience, their inactivity.

The Kyoto Protocol:

In an attempt to remedy this utter disaster the Kyoto Protocol was created seeking to “combat climactic change through international action lowering emissions of certain greenhouse effect gases responsible for global warming.”

Governments agreed in 1997 the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations framework Convention on Climactic Change (UNFCCC). The agreement came into force on **16 February, 2005**, only after 55 nations counting for 55% of the emission of green house effect gases ratified the agreement. Today 166 countries have ratified it.

The objective of the Kyoto Protocol is to manage to lower by 5.2% the emissions of greenhouse effect gases on 1990 levels for the period 2008-2012. This is the only international mechanism for starting to combat climactic change and to minimize its effects. To do this it contains legally binding objectives so that industrialised countries lower the emissions of 6 greenhouse effect gases of human origin such as carbon dioxide

(CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O), as well as three industrial fluoride gases. Hydrofluorocarbons (HFC), perfluorocarbons (PFC) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆)

But has the Protocol fulfilled its aims?

Not all countries have signed and some of those who initially signed the Kyoto Protocol have not ratified it (for example, USA, Alaska, Australia) and global warming continues.

The United Nations Organisation warns. "Global warming will be faster and more destructive."

The second report from the panel of experts predicts that the temperature will increase between 1.5 and 2.5 degrees, which increases the sea level by half a metre and which will extinguish 30% of species (Brussels 06/04/2007)

In 2005 we emitted 53% more greenhouse effect gases than in 1990.

It is clear:

- The provisions of the Kyoto Protocol have not been fulfilled.
- Not only has the emission of greenhouse effect gases not been lowered, they have risen
- For example, the emissions of carbon monoxide in developed nations that should have diminished have increased by 8.4% compared to levels of 1990.
- In 2005 we emitted 53% more greenhouse effect gases than in 1990.
- **Energy is synonymous with consumption, pollution and climactic changes**

The proof

We have clear proof:

- Heavy rainfall linked to the effect of melting ice caps caused the river Kabul to breach its banks.
- The flood destroyed 170 homes in the capital of Afghanistan and affected 25 000 people.
- The storm that killed 51 people is an example of the climactic upheaval that is threatening the World.

We have more proof:

- The heatwaves that affected Europe in 2003 killed more than 20, 000 people.
- Drought
- Floods
- Natural disasters and others

Are we still in time to make a choice?

Are small measures effective?

Let us be optimistic:

“We can change the pattern of time to save the inhabitability of the Earth” (...) “If we manage to remedy the problem of the hole in the ozone layer, I do not see why we are not going to be able to do something with the heat problem” (...) it is necessary to boost “the creation of ecological products and services”. Al Gore

Some people are taking action- we are still in time to take action. The situation is serious and before it is too late we have no alternative other than to save the Planet.

What can we do?

- Be informed and educated in order to know how to play our individual and collective role.
- Strive for efficient solutions from governments.
- Save energy (maximize natural light, switch off lights, moderate the use of heating and air conditioning, etc.)
- Acquire energetically efficient products (low consumption light bulbs or efficient household appliances).
- Consume energy derived from renewable sources.
- Reduce the use of the car. Go on foot. Use public transport.

We are in time to make a choice. LET'S WORK TOGETHER

- Our networks (CCN, E-CONS) can and must generate a new social conscience through information and education.
- It is possible to push for an active citizen body that is aware, critical, socially committed and responsible, and that knows it can influence climactic changes by being responsible consumers.

If we really wish to educate citizens we must start with ourselves:

- We have to learn how to HAVE in order to BE happy.

III. PRESENTATIONS

Consumer Citizenship as a form of stakeholder involvement

Using social innovation and dialogue as a tool in creating a more sustainable society – the introduction of fairtrade towns to Norway

Lone Singstad Pålshaugen

The Ideas Bank Foundation, Oslo, Norway

Do local communities have a role to play in dealing with global inequalities? In Britain the social innovation of a local group of activists has resulted in a lot of activity and focus on fair trade. Five years after Garstang was declared the world's first Fairtrade town there are more than 250 towns that have achieved this status and about as many working to achieve it.

In 2006 the Ideas Bank foundation gathered relevant stakeholders in a dialogue workshop to explore whether this work was interesting and relevant in a Norwegian setting. The workshop contributed to a greater focus on fair trade and a "competition" between local communities in becoming the first Norwegian Fairtrade town. The same year the first Norwegian town got its status. In 2007 about 30 other towns are working towards the same goal.

This paper focuses on the potential of using good examples when involving relevant stakeholders in transdisciplinary cooperation. It will explore how the Ideas Bank used the example of Fairtrade towns to raise a dialogue about whether this work could play a constructive part in creating a more sustainable society. The dialogue workshop is a method developed to involve relevant stakeholders in a quality control and dialogue

based on practical examples made through local action. Through dialogue they explore how local action can be linked with a national and international level and how this work can be used to influence the public agenda.

Social innovation and sustainable development

There is a growing awareness of the need to change our unsustainable production and consumption patterns. With the immense challenges we face today it is easier to see and criticise what is wrong than to know what to do about it. This is also often a problem amongst movements who want change. Often, their strengths are more in “protests than in new ideas, more in critical analysis than constructive changes.” (Dahle 1997: 193) To meet this challenge there is a need to connect the examples of innovative work being done with the debates on what challenges we are facing. Practical examples of social innovation can work as *signals of hope* show that change is possible. (Jungk: 1988) They can be a productive starting point for dialogue on sustainable change. The goal of using good examples is not to find one right answer, but to use them keep the debate on these issues continuing and focused on what can be done, and to inspire action for a more sustainable development.

Læssøe has examined the experiences from the work that has been done locally on sustainable development in the Nordic countries. (Læssøe: 2006) This was a part of the preparatory work for the Nordic conference on sustainable development held in Oslo 2006. He saw that there is a potential in a stronger focus on and extended use of good examples in this work. This was also one of the main conclusions in the report from the conference. (Miljøverndepartementet: 2007)

Searching for paths towards a more sustainable development

The ultimate intent is to understand the world, not bits and pieces of the world. (McGregor: 29)

The road to sustainable development requires the participation of all sections of society, and the responsibility for assuring a balance between environmental, social and economic demands rests not only on the shoulders of politicians, governments and administration, but with all inhabitants of the planet. However, in practice this responsibility can not be shared without effective instruments to make such participation possible.

(Knowles 1999: 62)

Just as the challenges of sustainable development generally cut across sectors and disciplines, so must the solutions. To develop new knowledge about opportunities for action, we need to draw on experiences from a range of fields and disciplines and bring them together. This is a challenge in our compartmentalised society, in which we are almost programmed to define and delimit. Efforts towards sustainable development will always confront a dilemma, between the need to gain an overview of the field and the specialisation needed to do constructive and efficient work. In order to rise to this challenge, we must develop new ways of working.

Læssøe emphasises that there is a strong need to open for a creative thinking around different paths towards a more sustainable society. The starting point is that there is not

one correct path. There is a need to start thinking about how different actors can play together in dynamic constellations. To achieve this it is important not to try to fit everybody into one mould, but to inspire involvement and creative thinking about how to make this a process that concerns everybody. (Læssøe 2006: 9)

Transdisciplinarity is learning and problem solving that involves cooperation among different parts of society (including academia), in order to meet complex challenges. Solutions are devised in collaboration with multiple stakeholders, with a focus on mutual learning. Our work with sustainable development has a lot of similarities with this strategy. Using carefully chosen practical examples as a starting point for the dialogue can help facilitate such a dialogue. Opening a dialogue by focusing on a practical example can help create a more “neutral” or open space into which different stakeholders can bring in their experiences or competencies. Practical examples put different stakeholders on a more equal level. It is something that everybody can relate to whether they come from a theoretical or practical background. In this way it can help facilitate a transdisciplinary dialogue. Our experience is also that social innovation used in this way can help to keep the focus on action and possibilities. As mentioned before, it is very important that the examples are used and presented as starting points for dialogue, not the “one right solution”. Framing the work in this way is essential, otherwise the good examples can be perceived as simplistic suggestions for solutions instead of openers of dialogues for mutual learning.

From practice to politics – development of the dialogue workshop

The dialogue workshop is a method that has been developed by the Ideas Bank foundation as a part of their work to connect practical examples with national policies. The starting point is one or more good examples of social innovations. These are the focus of dialogue between the participants. The participants are hand-picked and represent different relevant expertise. The aim of the dialogue workshop is to do a quality check – both in the professional and political sense – of the good examples as useful contributions to the national debate on a sustainable future and to inspire action for sustainable development. Relevant stakeholders representing different professions, groups and organisations from civil society, the political sphere, private and public sector are invited to a dialogue around good examples.

The good examples are exposed to constructive criticism in the workshop. The participants are divided into groups that examine the examples in relation to different thematic perspectives. They systematically examine strengths and weaknesses with the work that has been done and are encouraged to share their experiences. This is followed by a dialogue about the potential for this type of work on a bigger scale. There is also a focus on how to get public and political attention around this topic and the possibilities for action. The workshop itself lasts from one to two days, but the process is much longer. It involves choosing a challenge and relevant practical examples, identifying the relevant stakeholders and what are the most interesting perspectives and dilemmas. As we have experienced, the process leading up to the workshop itself has been important strategic networking.

The dialogue workshop is focused on linking local action with national politics, and is an attempt to meet some of the challenges that have arisen, like connecting work done

locally with national and international politics and further learning about how they relate to each other. (Lafferty et al.: 2006) It is also an attempt to meet some of the challenges that have arisen in some of the consensus-driven sustainability work where it has been felt that dilemmas and structural issues have not got enough of a focus. (Læssøe: 2006)

A dialogue workshop on Fairtrade towns

In 2000 the northern English town of Garstang declared itself the world's first Fairtrade town. This was an innovation born out of frustration, as a group of activists had for years tried to get different groups in the community to purchase Fairtrade goods without much success. The work was lifted to another level when the community decided to make this a priority. The Fairtrade foundation helped create criteria for what a Fairtrade town is. It entails involving the local council, civil society and local business, and having an information strategy. This work and concept has since spread around the country and beyond. There are more than 250 towns in the United Kingdom (UK) that have achieved this status, and about as many working to achieve this goal. When Garstang started, the choice and range of products were on the level that Norway has today. Only six years later, there are about 2000 goods for sale in Britain and a turnover of around 200 million pounds.

There were in other words a lot of things that made it an interesting case to base a dialogue workshop on. It showed the potential of a good example spreading and making impact. The work had met great enthusiasm from a lot of different actors, and had led to a lot of interesting work. The criteria were very concrete, yet there was a lot of potential for further work. It is also a type of work that has the potential to raise a lot of interesting perspectives and dilemmas.

After working systematically for almost a year, with exploring the example and its context, identifying relevant focus areas and stakeholders, the dialogue workshop was held in March 2006. We cooperated with Fairtrade Max Havelaar Norway, and invited 30 participants. They came from municipalities, NGOs, the trade sector, educational institutions governmental organisations and the church. They met to hear about the experiences made in the UK and to discuss the relevance of this work for sustainable development and for a Norwegian setting.

Bruce Crowther was invited as a representative and spokesperson for the Fairtrade towns in Britain. He is one of the main innovators behind this movement, having led the work in the first Fairtrade town, and now coordinating the work in Britain through Fairtrade Foundation. The Norwegian sister organisation had made a first draft of what Norwegian criteria could look like, and a representative from one of the local municipalities that had come with us on a study trip to Britain to explore the phenomenon told about her experiences and what her reflections on the topic were, seen from a local perspective.

This formed the basis for a dialogue amongst the participants. They were divided into groups on the different topics and discussed the experiences from Britain critically, but constructively. After discussing strengths and weaknesses, possibilities and dilemmas, the groups discussed what the possibilities were in this field in Norway. The focus then turned to how one could create national interest for this topic. How could one get politicians to be interested and how to get the medias' attention. What would this type of work look like in Norway? The topics that the groups related the example to were: a

sustainable agricultural policy, as a pedagogic tool, in relation to the local communities, how it worked as national campaign and in relation to the dynamics of supply and demand. The stakeholders were divided into groups, each focusing on one of these topics. They were asked to keep that focus to examine the strengths and weaknesses, possibilities and dilemmas. In the dialogue that followed a lot of questions were raised, like: What roles can this play in the work for a sustainable development? Is this an example of something that can show ways forward and renew this work in Norway? Does it contribute constructively or is it a wrong approach to achieving global justice in trade? It is the participants that perform the quality control as it is not the role of the Ideas Bank foundation to be the expert on all the issues in the topics that arise. Our expertise lies in facilitating the dialogue on sustainable development between the different stakeholders and possible change agents.

Outcomes of the dialogue workshop

The strength of Fairtrade towns is that they represent a simple and straightforward way to get important issues on the agenda

Mauricio Deliz, Change the World, participant on the dialogue workshop.

As everyone who has been involved in dialogue work knows, it is a type of work that plays a part in a long process. It can represent the beginning of opening up some issues, but there is a long way to go, and it can be hard to judge the exact results.

What follows are some reflections on what can be seen as outcomes from this dialogue. The example created a lot of enthusiasm, and seemed to inspire a belief that it is possible to make a change. It also seemed to be an example that worked as an inspiring meeting point between stakeholders with a lot of different experiences and backgrounds. In the dialogue it was pointed out that whilst it might not be the solution to all the challenges, the experiences made could provide useful learning on a lot of areas. It gave insight on how to create new partnerships, and it was debated how farmers in the North also could learn from this approach. The issue of what is a sustainable price for food arose. Food security and growing for the home market versus exports were topics that were discussed. The potential of sending signals to governments and the place of this work in relation to international negotiations on WTO were also on the agenda. The issue of how to keep the edge and not just end up as a “nice” project without a political edge was raised. The role of schools and the question of how to involve young people in these issues were also discussed. Does this have the potential to involve new groups in this type of work? Questions were also raised on about whether there is a risk of ending up selling a “good conscience” or a “trend” instead of creating real changes. The participants also stated that they had found the example and the mix of participants useful.

On the action level, the competition over who was going to be the first in Norway seemed to start at the workshop. The local municipalities were eager to start working. Already in August Norway had its first Fairtrade town. By April 2007 30 municipalities are working towards this status and two have achieved it. In Sauda they have measurable results. After half a year, they could report a tenfold increase in sales of Fairtrade coffee. The Fairtrade Max Havelaar organisation, which is coordinating the campaign, expects 10 Fairtrade towns by the end of the year. Using the first town as a basis for calculation, they

see a potential for a nationwide increase in sales of Fairtrade coffee of 50 percent, with similar projections for the other products on offer. The towns have been focused on challenging others, and Sauda also challenged the Ministries to serve Fairtrade coffee and tea, which they now do. The work done so far has also opened for different types of connections and strategies. Sauda saw a parallel to their strong labour and solidarity tradition and linked the work to their focus on basic rights for workers. Lier, the second Fairtrade town, is a community with strong farming traditions and are focusing on a sustainable strategies for farmers in the North and in the South.

The example of Fairtrade towns was not chosen because we thought it was a panacea for justice in trade and more global equality. It represented an interesting potential for dialogue and a possible way to create action. The work that has now started represents interesting steps on the way. This is a type of work that has the potential to contribute to a more global focus in local campaigns for sustainable development –efforts that have sometimes ended up focusing too much on local environmental issues and less on the big challenges. The work is based on the hypothesis that everybody can help somebody. What might be just as important is learning and raising consciousness about these issues. It seems to be a type of work that has the potential to increase knowledge through action.

Lessons learnt

Learning to change our world was the title of an international consultation on Education for Sustainable Development held in Sweden May 2004. The title reflects some of the main challenges we are facing. We know a lot about the problems, but we need get the competence to create change. The Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) calls for a re-education of society as a whole. This type of learning needs a specific approach that focuses on combining practice, pedagogics and politics. (Balanseakten: 2007) Through the dialogue workshop we are exploring ways to do this. This is a continuing learning process. The experiences from this and the other workshops are in the process of evaluation and further development as this article is being written.

When it comes to the practical results, Norway could have got Fairtrade towns without a dialogue workshop, although it might not have happened at the same time. After following the process we see added values by introducing the concept to Norwegian stakeholders in this way. Bruce Crowther stated that he wished this was the way it had happened in Britain, as it would have saved a lot of problems.

This approach allowed more voices and a broader dialogue from the start. It did not just become a Fairtrade Foundation project. The municipalities that were invited have worked for a long time with sustainable development, and have connected this with their work on Fairtrade towns. By involving a broad range of stakeholders, important views got aired and a broader knowledge base was jointly created around this work. The network that was created connected the local municipalities with representatives from the biggest Norwegian trading enterprise, a connection that helped solving some of the challenges with becoming the first Fair Trade town.

The workshop gave some people concrete ideas of what they could do, while others took new impulses back to their work. As mentioned above, the aim was not to squeeze

everybody into the same campaign, but to use this example as a point of dialogue and inspiration in the work for sustainable development.

This work has also received attention from the national political level. The president of the Norwegian parliament (Storting), speaking at the launch of the second Fairtrade town, pointed out the importance of such a movement in creating a public awareness and pressure for fairer international trade, and recognised that this is a challenge to national politicians. The debates on what to do on sustainable development often focuses on whether this needs work at a national and international level or whether it is the individual that has to change. We see that all levels of society have their role to play. The example of Fairtrade towns show some of the potential that lies in involving local communities.

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"Bridge over the river why"

Consumer, arguments and producers

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Introduction

Every decision starts with arguing! Why should we do this or why should we buy that? And every time we also want to know if we are on the right ethical track. So that varying circumstances allow us to decide differently if necessary, but without too many bad feelings! *To be really motivated every time that we make a decision, it is important to know exactly what lies at the basis of our arguments!* It to which basic arguments all the ethics and all the emotions relate. And in the end to which facts these arguments are pointing!

The last factor is of course always the human being him/herself! Why should we decide one way or another? And to make all choices visible we always have to look to both extreme possibilities and see how these two extremes interact with each other. Before we make a decision we therefore have to think first about "black" and "white" and all colours in between! In fact we visualise the bridge and walk a few times to the other end and back to where we came from. Over and over again. Until we know exactly WHY we should decide to do this or to buy that.

Arguing from A to Z and back

If you put the consumer/citizen in the centre of your thinking, and look from a helicopter/cosmic view from the complete 360 degrees of producing possibilities, you are already thinking from one extreme to the other. And then you are already envisaging two piers for the starting point of possible bridges which people can build and walk over - and back! In the same way as there is a rainbow of colours between light and darkness to choose from! *And when we know how we can build bridges in our thinking, we are better equipped to build bridges between people. Between different points of view, between social differences, and between different economic parties.*

For instance the environment, the generations to come, and health are hot issues to talk and think about. These three items are very fundamental today for our motivation in the long term.

- The environment vs. the human being

When we are for instance discussing the environment, it is in the end not nature but the human being himself, the consumer, who will succumb to environmental disaster! Because nature is ten times stronger than the fragile creatures we are! When we look for instance one year after the eruptions of Mount St Helens or Mount Pinatubo, where no one survived under the ashes, but plants were growing in all colours. So we can conclude that taking care of the environment is by definition taking care of our OWN survival.

- The next generation vs the present generation

What is our responsibility for the next generation? If that is the main question, I could start thinking about the meaning of life for myself first! If life is a game taking place between birth and death and no more, then...what is the meaning of it at all? Perhaps an easy question, but not for those who have staggering problems most of their life. The is the only way to survive through faith, or the conviction that we live more than once? If so, then it becomes clear that it is not only important for our children and grandchildren, but also in the end for OURSELVES!

- Our health vs our joy

When you're becoming emotional about your health, most of the time you will be going to argue in the same way that every smoker or other addict does. Why should I stop or why should I change? When I only live ten years less but have a lot more fun, it's okay, isn't it? In that case you need to go a step further to get to the basics. Because every addiction is an answer to what I do NOT want, a kind of fleeing from all kinds of problems or responsibilities. So the first question to be asked is what I really DO want! Otherwise you might stop smoking and end a negative way of living, but you still would have to start thinking in a positive direction. If I first decide about what I really want to live for or to fight for, then all other questions become a lot easier! (From my own experience I can tell that from 40 to zero cigarettes per day took me only three days with only a few cold turkey reactions, without any tricks or help! That is now more than ten years ago (PD)).

In search of basic arguments

All different questions and arguments in our "consumer governance" have to be more and more related to the most basic facts of life if we want to keep motivated for a sustainable future. *As we mentioned already, in the end it is all about ourselves, about what we really want, and even about how we think about our future in the long term, and then and only then the other questions of how to go forward are much easier to understand.* Main factors in every transaction between consumers and producers of products and services in our daily life are for instance quality, quantity and price.

- Quality: sustainability vs income

How can we get more quality and more sustainability if everybody - consumers and producers - have to struggle because of their income? Is there a relation between quality and the system of sharing the things we make together? What is fair trade at all? What is quality?

- Quantity: myself vs the other

What do we really need? What is enough to meet our needs? And isn't it reasonable that everybody has the human right for a REASON-able income for a reasonable way of living?

- Price: consumer vs producer

And what is price exactly when environmental damage has to be paid for by future taxes? Which we pay ourselves! Perhaps we have to take more time to make things financially transparent, to find the right arguments. To make better decisions and buy better products.

- Guarantee: Quality of life

In the end we have in our own bookkeeping the mirror of our decisions where we can look back and plan forward. What does quality of life mean to us?

Intermezzo

So far an introduction on arguing which might give us an opening to an animated discussion! How can we give direction to and be creative in all our decisions? Joseph Beuys said over and over again: everybody is an artist! (Jeder mensch ein Kunstner). And what about reincarnation, projective geometry, more-dimensional mathematics, or last but not least the inner quality of all things? How can they help us to visualize our arguments? *Building bridges is an art, a social art. Only when we are deeply interested in the other "side" can we hope that a bridge can be built in between!* Between consumers and producers (fair trade and transparent bookkeeping). Between all parties involved in production. Between parents and teachers, citizens and politicians, north-south, east-west, between rich and poor consumers worldwide!

Looking further

But where do the origins of the gaps for which we have to build all those bridges and think up all those arguments lie? For that we have to go back to the Genesis of mankind (or to the big bang for dummies). Where out of the wholeness, more than 6 billion humans appeared, with an equal number of individual viewpoints. Plus all the different careers by dividing all the jobs to be done in the world economy! From here, we can get an overview of gaps, bridges, arguments and decisions in general.

Bridging points of view

In the vast sea of knowledge, opinions, and points of view in general it takes a lot of energy to search for the right answers to all our questions. Although a tremendous amount of information is available there is also a lot of disinformation. Especially in the fight for survival, in other words income, it is a struggle to look beyond surface appearances. Just as producers are haunted by stockholders' value, the consumer fights for a basic income or just shops around for the lowest price.

Therefore the endeavour to look further to the real (inner) quality of products and services is not readily taken up! That is also the reason why so little research is done outside the field of natural sciences! The world consists of more than its physical aspects. To really understand the laws of plants, animals and human beings, Goethe paved the way for new ways of research: the breathing principle of all plants, the characters of animals and the biography as basis of the individual human being. These three areas form the bridge to the higher levels of knowledge in strengthened thinking, feeling and willing (head, heart, and hands) called imagination, inspiration and intuition. So there are seven steps to go in understanding the world around us. *Science must undergo a metamorphosis! ALL questions need to be asked!*

But lucky as we are, the process of consciousness is by definition irreversible. When consumers keep asking questions the answers will come from the other "side", whether from producers, scientists or by surfing the internet or getting insight through one's own research. Then and only then can we really take a further step in the development of sustainable agriculture, medicine, education, architecture, etc.

Bridges between people

Do unto others as you would have others do unto you! That is the basic rule of the world of justice and all kinds of international laws and regulations. Although it sounds so simple, it has been fought throughout the centuries! In relations between two or more people, between nations and between all people worldwide in two great wars and now in the struggle about climate change, debt release, fair trade, and the right for clean drinking water.

What do we really need, what is a REASON-able income for a reasonable way of living? That's the question that should be asked again, and is has been at the centre of attention for two years now. Discussions about basic income but also about (extreme) top salaries are the beginning of a new era where we have to decide how we could and should divide all the products and services we make (during the time when we are in our role of producer).

These questions are so important because all the struggles for goods, and even wars for commodities and materials, are based on the idea of some two hundred years ago that maximal egoism leads to economic prosperity, also promoted by Adam Smith the great

economist. Although it helped to build up the economy it is now getting out of hand. In the world of economics it is clear that a new "life cycle" of economic insights has to come about. Ethical and sustainable ways of producing are recognised more and more as profitable, just as the ways of thinking about fair trade can bridge the financial gaps between all peoples.

Bridging the division of labour

Thousands of years ago we lived in a do-it-yourself world, where we were consumers and producers as well. After forming villages we decided to divide the labour in such a way that everybody could specialise and become a producer (from nine to five). When life became more complex, trading and banking emerged for bridging the gaps we ourselves had invented. So we are still making gaps every moment when we split up companies, tasks, services, departments, new combinations of organizing our work. Every moment there are new roles as consumer or producer, even between companies (business to business).

In the 1950s, consumption was necessary to revive and experience freedom of all sorts, in food, architecture, travelling, cars, and enjoying life in all ways. In the 1960s, we realised things had become too unsustainable and started protesting. In the 1970s and 80s, we realised that we also had discuss things and make them financially possible. Consumer associations and new ethical banks emerged. The human being as individual and as citizen also became an active consumer! The 21st century is all about maturity!

And that means that we have to learn to turn the old marketing concept of supply and demand into a conscious marketing concept of question and answer. The consumer has to build the bridges together with producers and should ask the best questions to get the best answers. Consumer governance means that the consumer has become a manager until that point where he/she asks the questions including the financial aspects of subscription, contract or prepaid. The personal influence of the consumer is only one salary per month. But together with six billion other consumers we're talking about the total world budget! Aren't we?

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Communication about corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a prerequisite for consumer citizenship – the role of consumer policy actors in Germany

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The Importance of CSR Communication by Consumer Policy Actors (CPAs)

Consumer citizenship means essentially to make consumption “choices based on ethical, social, economic and ecological considerations” (CCN 2005, p. 7) which support sustainable development. This implies the recognition of “The World Behind the Product” (De Leeuw 2005), i.e. the behaviour of producers and suppliers of goods and services. By means of (non-)purchases, word-of-mouth, and political activities consumers can reward or punish more or less socially responsible corporations (e.g. Hansen and Schrader 1997; McGregor 2002; Stolle et al. 2005). To do this, they rely on credible information (OECD 2007), since corporate social responsibility is a credence quality, which cannot be assessed by consumers directly (Nelson 1970; Darby and Karni 1973). From a quantitative perspective, companies themselves are the most important providers of consumer oriented CSR information (Schrader et al. 2006). However, they usually concentrate on positive information and – since their self-interest is obvious – they sometimes lack credibility (Morsing and Schultz 2006; Schuler and Cording 2006). In addition, consumers have difficulties to compare corporate CSR information as the companies use heterogeneous CSR-criteria. Here, consumer policy actors (CPAs) can step in as trustworthy communicators who can filter, compare and edit CSR information. Thus, they can play a pivotal role in enabling consumer citizenship by engaging in CSR communication (Harrison 2003; Thøgersen 2005). In this role, they do not only act as the typical countervailing power which fights irresponsible corporate behaviour, but they also pursue a co-operative approach in favour of socially responsible corporations (Müller 2005).

During the last three years, we conducted a research project (funded by the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection) to learn about the readiness of German CPAs to adopt this role, which is new for traditional consumer policy institutions (Hilton 2005). Therefore, we questioned CPAs about (i) their assessment of current CSR communication activities, (ii) their aims and obstacles, and (iii) their future plans, especially with regards to their willingness to build bridges to

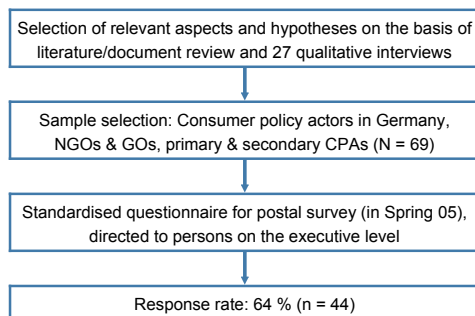
other partners. This paper will present selected answers to these questions after a clarification of the methods used.

CPAs as CSR Communicators – An empirical study from Germany

The Method

The quantitative study to be presented is based on a literature and document review as well as on 27 qualitative interviews with experts from CPAs, corporations and academia (Schrader et al. 2005) (see Fig. 1). This preparatory study was necessary for the generation of hypotheses and items since the literature on CPAs as communicators of CSR is – at best – very scarce.

FIGURE 1: The survey process



The survey was planned as a census of all German CPAs. In our understanding this covers all governmental and non-governmental organisations which act in the interest of consumers. Governmental organisations include ministries and state owned consumer institutes. Non-governmental organisations consist of consumer organisations with a primary consumer focus (initiated by governments or consumers themselves), and other NGOs with a secondary interest in consumer issues (especially environmental organisations). In total we identified 69 CPAs.

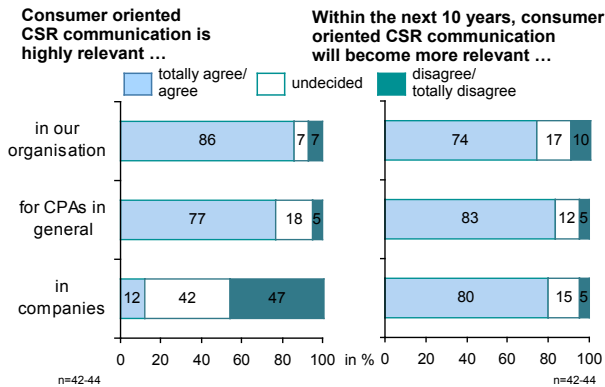
Each CPA received a standardised questionnaire, addressed personally to a managing director. 44 of them returned a completed questionnaire, which results in a very good response rate of 64 %.

Most items in the questionnaire were statements which had to be assessed on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from “totally agree” to “totally disagree”.

Significance of CSR Communication

Most CPA representatives in our study consider consumer oriented CSR communication as highly relevant for CPAs in general and for their organisations in specific (see Fig. 2).

FIGURE 2: Present and future relevance of consumer oriented CSR communication

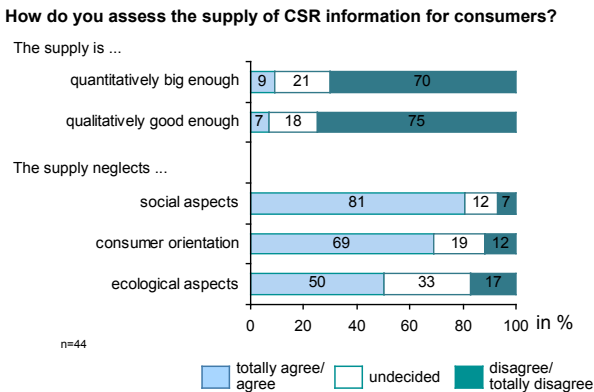


An analysis of the respecting organisation types reveals that consumer initiated NGOs are significantly more likely to assess CSR information as relevant for them than governmentally initiated CPAs (100 % agreement in relation to 79 %). This finding supports Hilton's (2005, p. 11) observation that the traditional consumer institutions often have "shied away" from the issues of consumer responsibilities.

In contrast to the overall high relevance for CPAs, only 12 % perceive a similar relevance in companies. This differentiation dissolves when it comes to future prospects. Most respondents expect a growing importance of consumer oriented CSR communication over the next 10 years for both CPAs and corporations.

Nevertheless, CPA representatives' view on the current supply of CSR information for consumers is very sceptical (see Fig. 3).

FIGURE 3: Assessment of the supply of CSR information



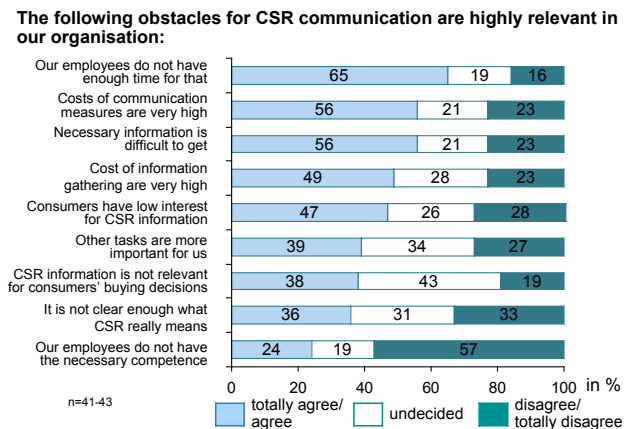
Only 9 % consider the quantity of information as sufficient and even less are satisfied with the quality. Most important shortcomings are perceived with regard to the social aspects of CSR, followed by a non-satisfying consumer orientation and a lack in ecological aspects. This ranking is not surprising since many German consumer organisations have a long tradition in supporting consumers' environmental behaviour whereas the social aspects are rather new to them.

However, the difference between the declared high relevance of CSR information and the negative assessment of the current situation seems to be contradictory. If CPAs really consider CSR information as important, one could expect them to provide the missing information. However, as we will show, important obstacles hinder them to do so.

Obstacles for CSR Communication

Our survey shows that, above all, a lack of resources prevents CPAs from a deeper engagement in consumer oriented CSR communication (see Fig. 4).

FIGURE 4: Obstacles for CSR communication by consumer policy actors



Most respondents identify a lack of time and high communication costs as highly relevant. The other most important obstacle is the limited accessibility of information about corporate behaviour, which is often difficult and costly to obtain. Possible lacks of interest or buying relevance for consumers are less important and only one quarter of the respondents identifies shortcomings in competences of their employees.

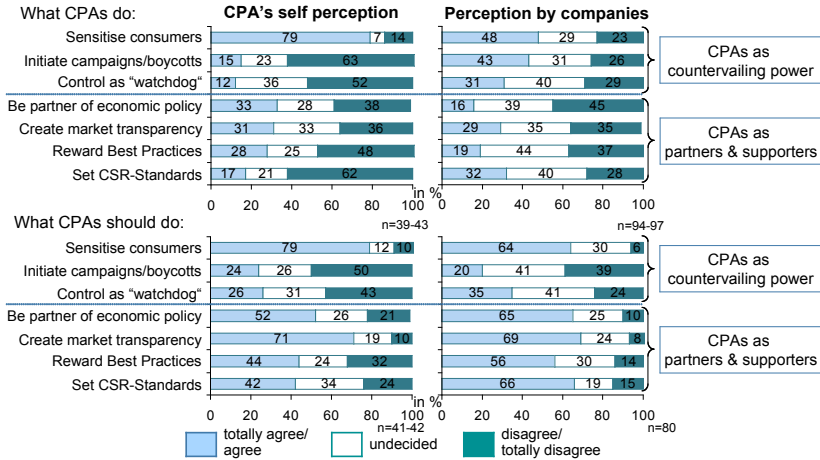
Thus, if provided with the necessary resources, CPAs seem to be willing to supply consumers with CSR information. This intention is also confirmed by the following presentation of respondents' understanding of the present and future roles for CPAs as CSR communicators.

Present and Future Roles of CPAs

An explorative factor analysis identified two dimensions for the role related items we used: "CPAs as countervailing power" and "CPAs as partners and supporters".

According to their representatives, CPAs' current performance is limited in both dimensions (see Fig. 5, left side). Only with regards to the sensitization of consumers for issues of sustainable consumption a majority of respondents confirms that their organisations play a significant role.

FIGURE 5: Present and future roles of consumer policy actors as CSR communicators



Being asked what CPAs should do in the future, the respondents stress the role as partners and supporters. All items of this dimension obtain more approval than rejection. Especially the creation of market transparency is demanded, followed by a self perception as a partner of economic policy. By rewarding best corporate practices and by establishing CSR standards CPA representatives also request their organisations to support responsible corporations.

In order to verify the self-perception of CPAs and to assess the potential for co-operative action we also questioned representatives of corporations about CPAs' current and future role. As part of a larger survey about corporations as CSR communicators (Halbes et al. 2006), a representative sample of 977 executives from the food and the energy industry was asked via an online questionnaire. In total, we received 137 responses, resulting in a fair response rate of 14 %, though not all questionnaires were fully completed. In the realised sample the CSR oriented companies are overrepresented.

The corporate perception of CPAs' current role slightly differs from the self perception of the CPAs: From the corporate respondents' point of view, CPAs rather use their countervailing power by engaging in campaigns and boycotts and controlling companies as a kind of "watchdog", than they appear as supportive partners (see Fig. 5, right side). But as regards the future role, the representatives of CPAs and (mostly CSR oriented) corporations nearly agree: A majority in both parties believes that CPAs should act as partners and supporters of responsible corporations and economic policy and might additionally sensitise consumers for sustainable consumption. Campaigns, boycotts and watchdog activities earn even more scepticism among CPA representatives than among executives of the surveyed companies. On the whole, these results reveal a promising potential for future co-operative action on the topic of CSR.

Summary and Conclusions

Our study has shown that consumer policy actors are willing to play a crucial role in making CSR transparent for consumers. They consider the current CSR communication as non-sufficient but have – for the time being – problems to supply consumers with more adequate information. The most important obstacles for a deeper commitment are a lack of resources and the limited accessibility of necessary information about companies. CSR communication presents an extra task to the CPAs while not replacing others at the same time. As a result, the chronically underfunded CPAs are often just not able to bear any extra burden.

When providing CSR information, CPAs see themselves more as partners and supporters of responsible companies than as a countervailing power against corporations in general. This offers potential for building bridges. However, a stronger role for CPAs as providers of consumer oriented CSR information depends on additional resources, companies' willingness to co-operate – and consumers' demand for independent CSR information, since in the long run the engagement of CPAs only adds up if CSR information is really used by consumers. Therefore, accompanying measures in the field of consumer education (for matters of why and how to use and where to obtain the information) and legal protection (e.g. for implementing information rights) are indispensable to achieve consumer citizenship.

Acknowledgements

We thank the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection for the funding and Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Ursula Hansen for the supervision of the research project, which provided the background for this paper.

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Analysis concerning corporate social responsibility in institutional websites of European and American companies

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Introduction.

In spite of the fact that there are many voluntary or regulatory international, regional or local declarations, conventions, standards, codes of conducts and initiatives, there is no united global law system so far (Mutlu, 2005; 394) that could provide binding and enforceable legislation. There are no effective international institutions to enforce regulation of corporations, especially the activities of multinational corporations (MNCs) and transnational corporations (TNCs), to set minimum standards. The establishment of institutions such as the United Nations Environment Program represents an attempt to develop a global rule-making and rule implementation infrastructure. The long term objectives of this infrastructure can be seen to include the protection of human (including worker) rights, the eradication of poverty, environmental protection, encouragement of democracy and free elections around the world, economic development and trade development, including the free flow of goods and services across borders. In a way, the fact that these long term objectives remain very much a “work in progress” is a major explanation for why the concept of corporate social responsibility has risen to prominence. Corporate social responsibility attempts to address most of these same objectives through non-state, private sector actors and approaches (Working Report on SR; 2004, p.8).

CSR is a concept which is closely linked to the ethical manners of the companies towards all the stakeholders. The company should be socially responsible as well as economically responsible by improving the standards of living in the local community. The Strategic Advisory Group on CSR of International Organization for Standardization (ISO), describes it as “a balanced approach for organizations to address economic, social and environmental issues in a way that aims to benefit people, community and society” (ISO, 2002).

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has determined (<http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/poiteiitm21.en.pdf>) that privatization, deregulation, and liberalization create more space for firms to pursue their corporate

objectives. Multinational and transnational corporations are the principal forces for advancing globalization. They are also seen to be the most important beneficiaries of the liberalization of investment and trade regimes, with rising influence on the development of the world economy and its constituent parts. This expansion of action, space and rights of corporations unfortunately did not lead all companies to have and implement CSR in the advancement of the common good for all stakeholders. The more corporations' activities are delocalized, the less they are open to democratic control by the affected stakeholders. Transparency can be defined as the degree to which corporate decisions, policies, activities and impacts are acknowledged and made visible to relevant stakeholders. Companies should disclose social and environmental information and include social issues as part of their strategic goals and plans wherever they operate. From the perspective of stakeholders, websites are seen as the easiest tool for them to be better informed and occasionally involved in corporations. Coupland (2003) declared that the corporate website, as an example of a genre of organizational communication, is recognized as social action on behalf of, or in the name of, the members of the community of stakeholders.

Websites function as a communication tool to indicate the nature of the corporation in a manner which is easily accessible to the stakeholders who would like to contribute to humanizing good governance. It can be argued that the most informative channel where stakeholders can get fast and legal data about the company activities is websites. An investor can analyze the reports of the company and look through the social or environmental activities to evaluate the social performance of the company as well as the economic performance of the company. A customer can decide on the accountability of the company, can read about the production process and decide on the purchase. According to Wellford (1997), the corporate website, as a genre of communication, is unusual in that its visitors have diverse interests. Groups of people who are concerned with ethical issues would actively search the website to investigate the company stance.

According to Dirk and Crane (2005; 188-190), there are certain fundamental differences in the way in which business ethics and governance are practiced and studied in Europe as compared to the USA. These differences can be classified as:

- The Anglo-Saxon model: It focuses on the stock market as the central element of the system of governance. The Anglo-Saxon model is predominantly in evidence in the UK, Ireland, the USA, and Australia.
- The Continental European model: European corporations view multiple stakeholders as opposed to individual shareholders as the focus of corporate activity. Throughout most of Europe, most notably France, Italy, Germany and Spain.

For instance, in German companies up to half of the members of a corporation's supervisory board (which oversees the management of the firm) have to be appointed by the employees of the corporation. Companies have a two-tier structure, a supervisory board and a management board, and the duty of directors to the company is more widely

expressed to participation were introduced as an optimal alternative to the traditional single board.

In contrast, in the Anglo-Saxon model, employees have no say at all in the control of the firm. From an ethical perspective, the continental model of capitalism is to some extent a European manifestation of the stakeholder theory of the firm. With the most important stakeholder next to shareholders in this model being employees, a corporation in continental Europe is seen more as a member of a certain community which has to serve wider goals than just those of a small group of investors. As R. Mullerat (2003) pointed out, there are those who maintain a pluralist approach whereby “the ultimate objective of maximizing shareholder value will not achieve maximum prosperity and welfare, companies are required to serve a wider range of interests, and the interests of shareholders should not override those of the company’s stakeholders”.

Based on the hypothesis that there are differences between the attitudes of the Anglo-Saxon and the continental European companies, this paper investigates CSR attitudes of such foreign companies operating in Turkey. Websites provide the approved, formal, and official perspective on Corporate Social Responsibility within the company (Chambers; 2003). The paper presents analysis of the Turkish (native language) websites of those companies that they have them. We used seven criteria to evaluate the use of CSR in corporations; codes of conduct, workers’ rights, information to consumers, social projects, environmental projects, training activities to the local community and reports and information to the investors. We searched for these issues on the websites to see whether these criteria are included or not.

Methodology

According to the National Statistics Institute the use of the Internet in Turkey is 14%, which means that it isn’t as widespread as in Europe or the USA. For instance, the use of Internet in the Europe is 41% after the integration of the new countries. A website enables us to analyze companies in a comparative way. It represents an official presentation of companies’ policies and practices, providing information which we can rely upon when analyzing companies in terms of their websites.

The survey sample was established by taking into account American and European company names from a list that has been published by Secretary of Turkish Treasury and Foreign Trade in 2005. In the list there were 306 companies from continental Europe (Spain, Italy, France, Belgium, Australia, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Luxemburg and Finland) and 218 Anglo-Saxon companies (USA, UK and Ireland). All the American and European companies operating in Turkey were considered and analyzed if they had Turkish websites. We were able to find out that 129 companies from continental Europe and 73 Anglo-Saxon companies had Turkish web sites at the time of research.

The CSR activities were classified according to seven criteria: codes of conduct, employee relations (in terms of training and development), social projects, environmental

projects, community involvement (in terms of training activities to the local community), shareholders relations, and customer relations (in terms of product information).

Results:

According to the Secretary of Turkish Treasury and Foreign Trade, there were 306 foreign corporations from the continental European countries including corporations owned by Spain, Italy, France, Belgium, Australia, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Luxemburg and Finland. We discovered that 129 of these companies had Turkish websites. In other words, 42% of 306 companies had Turkish websites.

On the other hand, the Anglo-Saxon countries, including USA, UK and Ireland had 218 corporations of which 73 had Turkish websites. That means 33% of all companies from the Anglo-Saxon countries had Turkish websites.

1. Codes of conducts:

One of the criteria we have investigated in the websites was the code of conducts of the corporations. A code of conduct is defined by the Institute of Business Ethics as a management tool for establishing and articulating the corporate values, responsibilities, obligations, and ethical ambitions of an organization and the way it functions. It provides guidance for employees on how to handle situations which pose a dilemma between alternative right courses of action, or when faced with pressure to consider right and wrong.

These are the rules to regulate the profession and are often declared by the institution to set out the organization's values on certain ethical and social issues. Some companies set out general principles about an organization's beliefs on matters such as quality, employees or the environment. Others set out the procedures to be used in specific ethical situations - such as conflicts of interest or the acceptance of gifts.

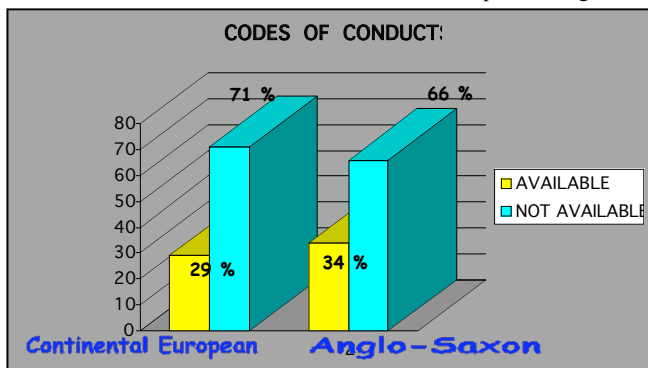


Figure 1: Code of conduct

We have tried to find out the declaration of values, the definition of the profession, the mission, and the rules for the employees and the general principles on the websites. As can be seen in Figure 1, 29 % of the foreign corporations from continental Europe had clarified their codes of conduct. However, 71 % of them didn't cover the code of

conduct; some didn't even have the mission or the vision of the company. On the other hand, 34 % of the Anglo-Saxon companies mentioned the codes of conduct, although 66% of them didn't have any codes on the Internet.

Companies should declare their code of conduct to inform customers about the overall understanding of the institution. The company can then be regarded as accepting the customer as a stakeholder. Consumers in the process of purchase would particularly like to be able to find out information about the company. It is expected that consumers turn to the website to evaluate the company and its accountability.

On the basis of the data in Figure 1, it can be argued that foreign companies in Turkey do not believe think it is important to better inform the public and the stakeholders by stating their codes of conduct on the Internet.

In addition, stakeholders employees also wish to know about the company rules, the principles, and the main values. This is also essential to build teamwork and the spirit of culture. Above all, employees should be informed about how to act in a regulated way while they are working. Finally, codes of conducts are legal documents, which have to be easily read when needed. But most of the companies from both models did not include codes of conducts.

2. Employees

CSR is meant to provide enhanced employee commitment. That is why the second criterion that we have analyzed concerned the employees' rights to develop. As people become more aware of their rights in professional life, they tend to ask for more even if they do not work in that company. And it is accepted that today's companies can achieve sustainability only by the help of continuously developing and empowered employees. Such employees can play important roles while giving decisions or putting ideas forward about issues which affect consumers.

A company has to respect the dignity and rights of all employees by providing equal opportunities for all. Moreover, it is essential to establish a healthy and safe working place. However, we have primarily tried to discover whether these companies had tools to encourage employees to develop skills and progress in their careers. We tried to find out whether companies arrange programs to let workers improve their skills. We have only looked if the corporations gave information about staff development, in-house education and vocational training, lifelong learning and empowerment of employees.

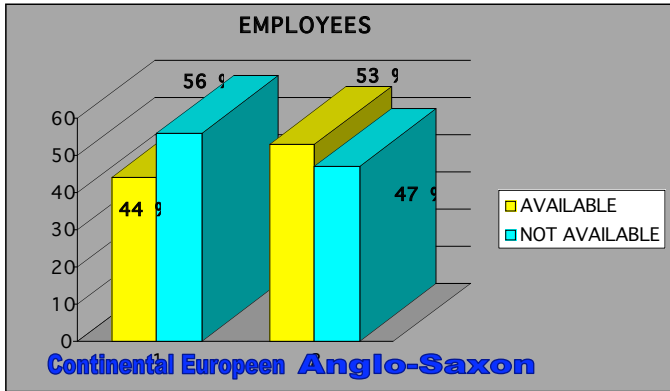


Figure 2: Employees

As can be seen in Figure 2, 44% of foreign companies from continental Europe had training programs to let their employees work in a life-long learning environment. In addition, 53% of all Anglo-Saxon companies had such programs.

Today, learning does not end in school and people want to develop both their professional and academic skills. Therefore, if the corporation accepts employees as stakeholders, they have to achieve a balance between company goals and individual's goals. The best way to in which to do so is through a philosophy of human resources based on empowerment of employees where they can find suitable and reasonable training programs or courses. In spite of this, we have to admit that few companies pay enough attention to employees' development. We have found out that 58 out of 129 continental European companies stated this criterion on their Turkish websites while 39 out of 73 Anglo-Saxon companies included it.

3. Environmental Projects

One of the key issues in CSR is environmental protection or, in other words, all the actions to save nature and to remedy damage to the environment. CSR includes all the voluntary activities done by companies to respect and protect the interests of stakeholders while also contributing to a cleaner environment. A cleaner environment is vital for the sustainability of the global resources as well.

Moreover, on some occasions when natural disasters do occur, immediate action to protect the environment is essential. Stakeholders feel closer to those companies which try to provide aid in urgent cases.

The Green Paper presented by the European Commission called "Promoting a European Framework for Corporate Social Responsibility" defined CSR as "a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis as they are increasingly aware that responsible behavior leads to sustainable business success." Today, however, acting responsibly towards the environment does not seem to be sufficient for the

stakeholders who push companies to put environmental projects into practice. Stakeholders push companies not only to prevent possible problems but also to create projects for a better society. These projects are not expected to help the company financially, but would help the sustainability of the company in terms of the benefits of CSR.

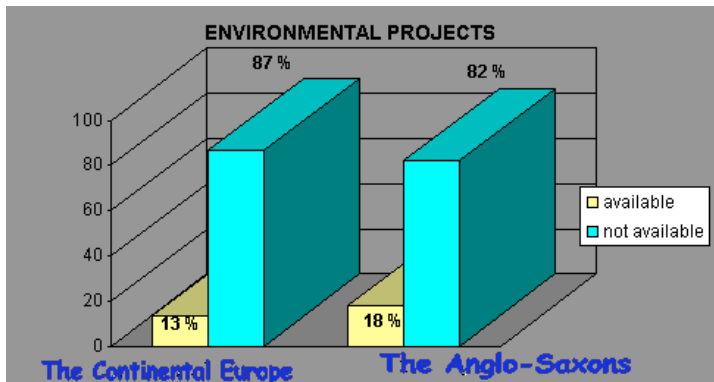


Figure 3: Environmental Projects

As can be seen in Figure 3, only 13% of the continental European companies and 18% of the Anglo-Saxon companies had environmental projects declared on their Turkish websites.

4. Social Projects

CSR mostly appears with projects related to the sector where the company operates. Most of the companies execute projects which are related to their field of work, especially social projects which are also beneficial for the community. Some companies establish a foundation; some cooperate with NGOs to carry out these projects. Some companies contribute financially to the projects instigated by NGOs.

It can be argued that having social projects has direct consequences on the accountability of the trademark, its popularity and on the augmentation of preference. Additionally, when employees take part in the social projects they tend to feel more closer to the workplace, making their job seem to mean more to them. Social projects are not only good for the community but also good for the company. Social projects can be for charity but also have further importance. Companies should feel responsible for cultural, social and economic problems. This type of responsibility is also needed for the sustainability of the companies.

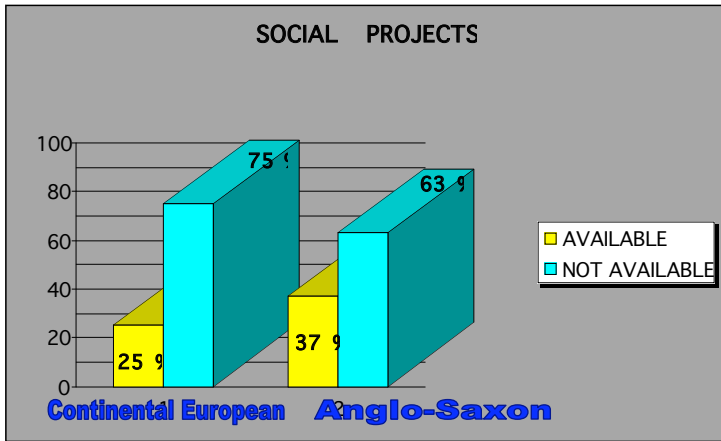


Figure 4: Social Projects

If we consider social projects as tools to reflect companies' sensitivity towards CSR, neither continental European nor Anglo-Saxon companies seem to give them much importance. Only 25% of the continental European and 37 % of the Anglo-Saxon companies had information about social projects on their websites at the time of the research.

5. Contribution to the Local Community

One of the criteria we looked for was about the contribution of the companies to the local community. Local community refers to a group of people living close to each other. We tried to find out whether these concerned companies had any training programs or educational activities for the local community. These activities may be related to the products or the service of the company. Or they may organize some educational activities to raise the conscience of the local people about topics like healthy living, global warming and energy saving, or birth control.

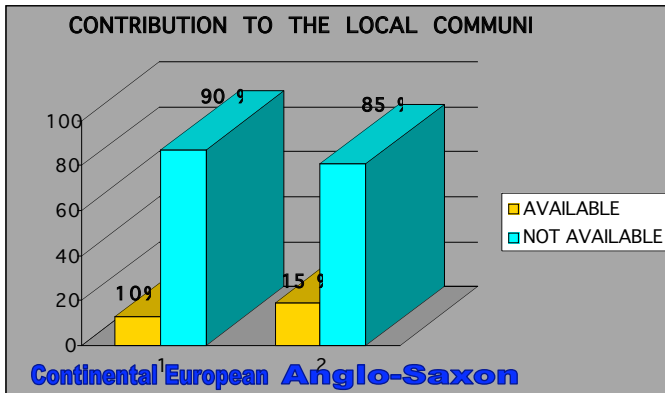


Figure 5: Local Community

We had hoped that companies were willing to give some courses, for instance professional training programs related to their field of work or some general courses about hobbies or self-improvement. But only 10% of the continental European companies and 15% of the Anglo-Saxon companies offered such activities for the people in the local community. In other words, 17 continental European and 14 Anglo-Saxon companies mentioned such programs on their websites.

This number seems too little compared to the vast size and profitability of these companies. When taking their size into consideration, it seems clear that these companies have enough technological tools and sufficient workforces to organize fruitful and beneficial programs.

6. Consumers

Consumers are individuals or groups of people that purchase and use goods and services. In this context, consumers are vital for a company. That is why some of the modern theories put consumers at the heart of the corporate sustainability. Today however, consumers mean more for the companies if they want to be sustainable in the long term. Consumers are accepted as one type of stakeholder in the company and they become involved in decision-making in many ways. To decide on the company issues, consumers gather information from the Internet or from other visual media.

Some companies even create platforms on their web page for their clients to design the products. These customers are called “the co-producers”, which means consumers who become involved in the production process (the “co” from the word “consumer”). At the same time, they are called as co-producers because as they are cooperating with the company by giving advice or feedback (the “co” from the word “cooperation”). This is an example of customer involvement in decision-making.

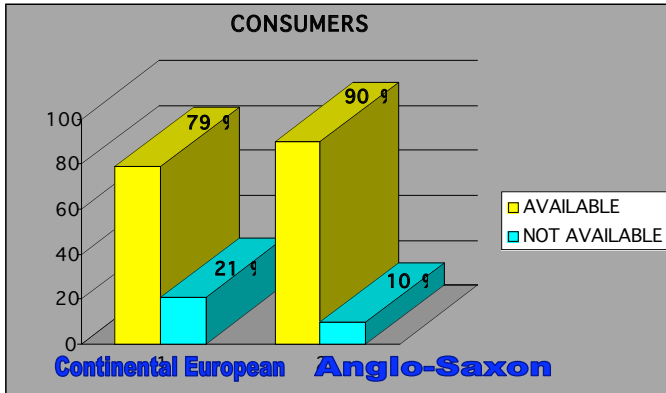


Figure 6: Consumers

As can be seen in Figure 6, companies had product information on their websites. 79% of the continental European companies and 90% of the Anglo-Saxon companies had clear and sufficient information about their products, which can be useful for the consumers.

It can be argued that companies pay attention to informing their customers about the product. The Internet is the best tool to launch or offer a product. However, this creates a dilemma because same companies were analyzed as being insensible in regards to the other criteria of CSR such as social and environmental projects. This is why it can be argued that their priority is selling their products without creating any value to the society where they operate and make profit.

7. Investors

With the CSR, companies take more responsibility for managing their social and environmental relations. But they also declare their accountability to all their stakeholders, including investors and shareholders. Investors are people and companies that regularly purchase equity or debt for financial gain in exchange for funding an expanding company. That is why investors often need to know about the financial situation of the company with the help of some reports. They also need to know if the company makes ethical investments.

Investor relations is a set of activities that relate to the ways in which a company discloses information required for regulatory compliance and good investment judgment to bond and/or shareholders and the wider financial markets.

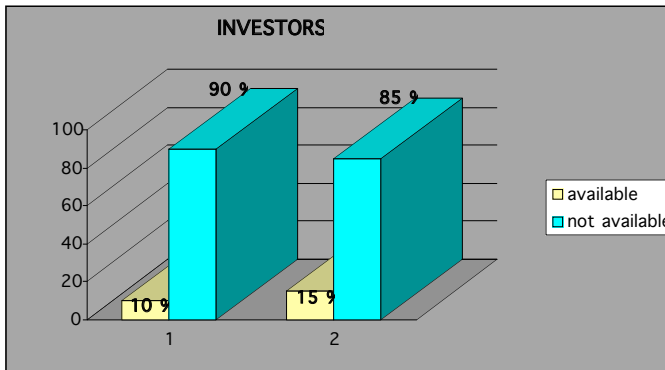


Figure 7: Investors

As can be seen in Figure 7, 10% of the continental European companies and 15% of the Anglo-Saxon companies offered information for the investors and the shareholders such as financial reports, updates, stock information, and corporate governance. It can therefore be argued that a customer will have difficulty learning about the company's financial situation, because it is not reported on the Web.

CONCLUSION:

The formulated hypothesis was that are differences between the corporations of American and European origin operating in Turkey. Websites provide the approved, formalized, and official perspective on Corporate Social Responsibility within the company. Moreover, we have also estimated that companies from continental Europe were more sensitive to the issues of CSR. However, the numbers showed us that these companies were less sensitive in applying CSR than the Anglo-Saxon companies. The following reasons may account for our results:

- Companies from continental Europe are bigger than the Anglo-Saxon companies. It can also be argued that only the largest companies had Turkish websites whereas small companies had only representatives. And it can be argued that these Anglo-Saxon companies are large corporations which practice CSR in all the countries in which they operate.
- The Anglo-Saxon companies have been implementing CSR for a longer time than the continental European companies. It can also be argued that this difference is because of the difference in sectors. For some sectors, a useful website in the local language of the country of operation is a must. On the other hand, some sectors do not need to produce a website.
- The continental European model is partly changing towards the Anglo-Saxon model in order to compete with the more powerful Anglo-Saxon rivals on a global scale.

We have also looked for the correlation between the capital of the companies and their sensitivity to the application of CSR tools. If we look at those companies which mention all or at least 6 of the total 7 criteria, we can see that almost all these companies have more than 1,000,000 (mio TL) . However, if we look at the companies, which have none of these 7 criteria have a capital less than 500,000 (mio TL) except for Baymina Energy with 27,055,000 (mio TL) but didn't have all criteria on its website.

Finally, we have concluded that Anglo-Saxon and continental European companies did not have enough tools to implement CSR in Turkey, at least not if we take only the information available on their websites into account. When one takes into consideration the fact that corporations from developed countries are leading the way in achieving stakeholder involvement in decision-making, this study proved to us that more incentives have to be taken to ensure it.

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“Political” consumer behaviour and organisation as solidarity and value-sharing with the third world

Trends, possibilities and problems in a governance perspective

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Introduction:

New channels of values and politics, new bridges of solidarity

Acts of solidarity and acts articulating common values relating to third world development and crises-handling, as well as global environmental challenges, have traditionally taken the form of state policies or formally organized voluntary work, both relative stable organised tasks. Even the voluntary “third sector” solidarity work are traditionally channelled through state and interstate institutional networks. The key role for the individual in this system was that of a nation-state citizen and the link is from parties and organized politics via parliaments and governments to implemented politics. To observe, understand, participate in, and influence politics of solidarity and global challenges; the main tools of political science was theories of stable patterns on state levels. This paper will point to important and fast growing different kinds of actors and patterns, needing new frames of understanding, and using consumers as the typical example of a new kind of political role

As in other policy areas this pattern is partly dissolving, giving way for political acts, solidarity and value expression and sharing through other mechanisms. Ad hoc organisation, new and plural citizenship, more floating organization patterns, media events and value-expression through markets are becoming more relevant. Gradually we can see the formation of new patterns of nonstate or mixed governance that cannot be seen or understood in the traditional institutionalist framework

The consumer privilege of expressing values

One important privilege of consumers is the possibility of selecting and acting on any value or mix of values. Of course this is constrained by the purchasing power and the diversity in market supply. But it is a freedom that is of a different quality compared to the other side of the market: the producers. They have a structural obligation to see only profit as their basic goal, and money becomes the measure and a way of comparing all goods and services to each other,. Such comparison cannot be done by consumers, they have unique and different needs that cannot be compared and cannot be measured by one measuring unit (like money). They have also a unique freedom to apply political values and symbols to their consumer behaviour, linked to environmental values, fair trade or certain producers, countries or distribution systems. their that is possible, given purchasing power and market at the market.) The general development of citizen values becomes market relevant. Even if values might fall outside the menu of presented by standard suppliers they might open alternative channels, give way for new alternatives, tilt competition and even create de facto and state-backed standards. These mechanisms

may be seen as part of new governance behind the back of mainstream market structure and mainstream state policies, with possibilities of adjusting and forming both.

The consumer values: weak, nice and consensus-oriented

Values like peace, environment, health, development, abolishing of child labour and abuse of women, human rights as well as basic social justice and are among typical political values that may trigger consumer demand or behaviour and twist them away from the simple price-quality road. The contrast is the traditional interest-based political organisations that centre on economic claims for a group or sector. Most political parties and most of the strong interest organizations are rooted in classical and simple production-side interests: workers, owners, occupational groups and production sectors. This production/economy focus is also very easy to see at the international level. Interest politics are organised in well-aligned conflicts over territory, money and other kind of privileges and resources. These conflicts are also strong in ideological content and can mobilise and create disagreement in a strong way. The values that tend to arouse consumers are less ideological, less specific in economic terms and mostly consensus. Peace, health, environment, justice and equality are difficult to arrange disagreement around and will seldom organize people in strong opposing parties with ideologies that set them apart. Consumer values tend to be “soft and nice” : acceptable for most people, but without strong mobilising and conflict power.

With such a strong consensus-orientation, one might think that the state apparatus might have taken such values to a high and strong level. But these institutions are the result of interests politics and are deeply embedded in systems interest organisations and influential economic actors. Modern states have even some special restraints. They cannot interfere with the free market in a way that seems to twist it; the state must be relatively passive, protect the market and ensure terms of fair and equal competition, respect freedom of trade. Consumers do not have to..

From vague uneasiness to articulated politics

Modern western consumers tends to be drawn in the direction of authenticity and “good” values inside products, in a dynamic opposition to marked pressure in the direction of anonymous commodified goods and services. Alternatives that have a high and known content of acceptable ingredients and labour tend to be preferred. Examples may be hand-made items of known origin, chocolate with high cocoa content from known regions, cosmetics with few chemically produced ingredients or just a product or service that comes from a chain of acceptable conditions. The Slow Food initiative represents also here an interesting blend of gourmand interests, “authenticity” as principle, and international global responsible acts as result.

Consumer political “action” will consist of elements than may be only diffuse and unconscious feelings of like and dislike, via individual reasoning to organised and formalised actions. Many young women are vegetarians and this may often be a mix of reasons including health, animal welfare, distaste of industrialised food and global responsibility for energy efficiency, as well as a personal distaste for meat and blood. All the elements have political impact, but may differ in degree of articulation. Often may

consumers just choose a “nice” product and only after some reflection and discussion decide that the reason was linked to “political” distaste for a certain country or company.

New patterns and organizations

There are several kinds of more or less formally expressed consumer trends and movements that exemplify this trend. The Fair Trade movements are rapidly growing and are clear in their focus on third world products, trade conditions, workers welfare, local development, environment and price developments. Such movements focus clearly on solidarity and some of them have influenced mainstream marked suppliers on the one hand and established direct cooperation lines between north and south on the other, establishing new elements and techniques of governance.

The Slow Food Movement has a special origin and social base centred around wine tasting and gourmet food, but is rapidly developing into a large and influential organization focusing more clearly on sustainability and solidarity. Their history, purpose and structure underlines how different new settings for political responsible consumer citizenship may be from traditional politics.

Both direct and indirect kinds of value-infusion into products represent arenas for acceptable and responsible values and acts in many forms and mixes, with solidarity, humanitarian help, global environmental responsibility, human rights and fair trade as highly relevant examples.

What is new ?

We have the feeling that we move from an old political system to a new one, the new system is both supplementary, partly replacing and sometimes openly different and hostile the the old one. The old system have keywords like formal political citizenship based on nation and class interests, political parties and interest organizations, nation states and international systems built around those nation states. The new system is more marked based, media centred, value oriented, places the individual in a set of more open, fluid and activist, consumer and “alternativist” organizational setting. Seen with traditional perspectives they are irregular, weak and disorganized. But they may create strong political realities and may be central in important political processes. The anti-nuclear and peace movements, women’s liberation, environmental values are all examples of strong changes without strong formal organizational backing. And consumer activism are often unnoticed or regarded as undemocratic (working behind the back of “democratic government” and/or expressing irresponsible individualism). This only seems undemocratic or paradoxical if viewed through models of governance built around the old system. We need concepts, theories and models that can see and understand the emerging new systems of changing and regulating the world.

These trends gradually create more or less stable organisations, including state and new cooperative bodies. These should be analysed as emerging new governance supplements, growing from citizens via consumer roles into organised and state-including forms. Consumer agencies, trade organisations, foreign help bodies are among the classical governance bodies that will be drawn into this field in a way that might be explained by the “nodal governance” perspective. It will also be one example of a way of thinking governance that is not growing from stable organisations, national bodies and

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Efficiency of environmental labelling as expressed through consumer awareness in Estonia

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Introduction

Environmental labels are used in many countries, including Estonia, with an aim to decrease negative environmental impact originating from consumption and thus help consumers to make decisions more favourable to the environment. Efficiency of environmental labels is to a great degree determined by consumers' awareness, their trust and purchasing behaviour. The labels cannot be effective without need and demand for them. One indicator of the effectiveness is definitely a total sale of labelled products, which is actually only the outcome of consumers' purchasing behaviour. Being informed of consumer awareness, it is possible to predict and also characterise their further behaviour as well as the future of environmental labels. Knowing the level of consumer awareness and behaviour practice, one is able to understand whether environmental labels as so called "soft" tools of environmental policy have any potential as marketing tools at all (European Chemical Industry Council 2002).

Turning attention to environmental labels is usually not an aim in itself, but tool for achieving an objective of more general nature – protection of the environment. Thereby people have to perceive that consumption of environmentally friendly products is an effective tool for achieving that general objective. (Stern, Dietz, Abel *et al* 1999) But purchaser may have more individual objectives as well, not connected to the environment, for instance to consume quality products or save health. Naturally there are other factors that influence consumers' attitudes to the eco-labels. The availability of labelled products from the stores as well as circumstances connected to the personality have particular importance.

Methodology

In order to determine efficiency of environmental labelling, a survey on consumer awareness and purchasing behaviour, as well as marketing of eco-labelled products, has been carried out in Estonia in spring 2005. It included questioning of randomly selected consumers, as well as a number of interviews with marketing managers of the main retail sales (supermarket) chains.

The objective of consumer survey was to get an overview of awareness on eco-labels and, to some extent, purchasing behaviour of Estonian consumers. The results made it possible to determine a grade of efficiency of environmental labels, and to predict future behaviour of consumers and attitudes towards environmental labels.

A quantitative methodology was used. The survey was performed between March 10 and April 10, 2005, while 400 consumers were questioned by post. Respondents were chosen randomly from all areas of Estonia. Composition of the questionnaire originated from international rules of performing marketing and social studies of ICC/ESOMAR (Esomar 2001). A structured questionnaire was used. Data were processed by statistical data processing system SPSS.

Representatives of 10 bigger total sales market chains were contacted for questioning about total sale and marketing of environmentally labelled products. Only 2 bigger market chains agreed with an interview. The interviews were performed as eye-to-eye short interviews; the representatives to be interviewed were able to rely on list of labelled products widespread at Estonian market. The questioning was based on a non-structured questionnaire, where only the main points were listed. For the sake of clarity and better understanding, in the following sections the two interviewed market chains have been marked as A and B.

Results and Discussion

Feedback was received from 90 consumers, which make 22.5% of all consumers questioned. A demographic profile of the respondents was determined by background questions, and the analysis indicated that certain group was dominating. More than 70% of the respondents were female. The age group of 41-50 dominated, the most passive were people between the age of 26-30. In terms of level of education, the people with special secondary education dominated, while the group of people with elementary education was least represented. In terms of place of residence, the most active respondents originated from small towns and villages.

Consumer awareness on environmental labels

Consumer awareness on environmental labels was characterised by 5 consecutive general questions. The first question asked about names of the environmental labels the consumer had heard about, without any connection to visual picture. The best-known environmental label was “Mahemärk” and the second was “Öko”. About 15% of the respondents had not

heard about environmental labels at all. The second question asked which environmental labels consumers had seen on the products. From the visual side, “Mahemärk” and “Öko” were best known as well. Still, one may conclude that information received from audio-communication sources is more available and more easily remembered, as 27% of the respondents had seen no environmental labels at all. Studying the connection between the answers to the first and second question indicated a strong correlation (the Kendall correlation coefficient was equal to 0.724). Consequently, the more environmental labels consumers had heard about, the more environmental labels they also had seen.

The results of survey also indicated that most of the respondents were moderately aware of the aims of environmental labels. They offered miscellaneous opinions, all of these could be considered as correct: labelling of environmentally friendly products, delivery of information to consumers, health protection, and environmental protection in particular. More than half of the respondents had heard something about the criteria that were set to labelling systems. The last question was about the necessity of advertisement and propaganda of the environmental labels. Again, more than half of the respondents found more advertisement to be necessary, while 33% found that the labels needed much stronger propaganda.

Purchasing behaviour of consumers

Purchasing behaviour of consumers was determined by the next 4 questions. Responses to the question whether consumers follow the existence of environmental labels on the products and services indicated that almost 39% of consumers usually did not do so, while some 30% did it sometimes. Compared to the author’s 2004 study (Unt 2004), the percentage of people who did not follow labels had been decreased, while the percentage of people who did so had been increased. As one could expect, the percentage of those who always followed the labels was the least represented. Among Estonian consumers, still, deliberate purchasing of environmentally friendly products was not yet very common. Among women a wish to purchase labelled products was noticeably more popular. This phenomenon has been explained by some researchers by the fact that women are in average more environmentally conscious, and think more on their own and their family’s health.

Most of the respondents were not able to say how available the labelled products were for consumers. One may conclude that it was the same share of respondents who did not follow the existence of labels by their purchases. Probably therefore they did not know how widespread the labelled products were on the market.

Willingness of consumers to pay more for labelled products had been indicated as one of the most problematic areas by foreign studies of the same topic. In Estonia, environmental label does not always necessarily mean a higher price. On some occasions, such products may be in the same price class or even cheaper than competing products in Estonian market. At the same time, however, some other labelled products are more expensive, and even more such products may appear to the market in the future. Therefore, consumers should be ready to pay more, if necessary. A relevant question was included in the survey. As a result, it appeared that slightly over 50% of the respondents were ready to pay 10% higher price for labelled products. At the same time, considerable

share of respondents were not ready at all to pay more for labelled products, compared to competing non-labelled products. Equally a very little percentage of respondents were ready to pay more than 21% over the “normal” price. In case of Estonia it is understandable, as living standard of consumers has not yet increased to the level where one should not think about the price. In case of following questions many respondents stressed that the price was most important for them and environmental friendliness and quality were following only later.

Cognisable usefulness of environmental labelling to the consumers

Cognisable usefulness of environmental labelling to the consumers themselves is important as well, as this is prerequisite to the use of labelled products. Therefore, a following question had been asked in the survey: “Do you feel any direct usefulness from environmental labelling systems to the consumers (yourselves), and if yes, then what exactly?” Most of respondents replied to feel no use from the environmental labels at all, while others pointed out that such products were healthier and caused no allergy. Also, the argument that the labels were informative and helped to choose products that were environmentally friendly was considered important. By saving the environment the respondents saw use to themselves and following generations. All these views described fact that usefulness to the consumers resulted from the aims of creation of environmental labelling systems.

The respondents were also asked about the sources from where they would prefer to get more information about environmental labels. Most respondents preferred the option where the information was situated together with labelled products, i.e. in shops and stores. Only a very little percentage of respondents did not have wish for more information. Most consumers were somewhat interested in the subject and indicated the need to forward more efficient and voluminous information.

A questionnaire of consumer survey involved an additional question that offered respondents a possibility to express their own opinion about the subject or the survey. The consumers were not concise and offered several solutions how to increase the popularity of labels, e.g. to designate for them a special section or corner or add directing signs in the stores. As well, the respondents were concerned about considerable lack of information, and mentioned that educating people on the environmental issues, including environmental labelling, should be started in early childhood. Most of consumers stressed their concern about the environment and found that protecting the environment was justified with no matter what means. At the same time they recognised that - due to difficult economic situation - the realisation of aims of environmental protection was not possible through environmental labelling. Some sceptical respondents thought that it was not possible to trust such environmental labels. Altogether, still majority of respondents was positively disposed towards environmental labels and interested to get further information about these.

Marketing and total sale of environmentally labelled products

As of 2005, altogether 127 different environmentally labelled products were available in Estonian retail sale chains (Kokkota 2005, Vahter 2003). Most of them (68) carried

Nordic Swan Sign, followed by “Mahemärk” and “Öko” with 13 and 12 products, respectively. The share of other eco-labels was negligible. A bigger amount of environmentally labelled products were on sale in special stores, best known of them being “Ökosahver” (Eco-Larder). Such specific stores remained out of the scope of the current study.

In order to get information about total sale of labelled products, interviews with marketing managers and directors of retail sale chains were foreseen. Unfortunately, the representatives of only two chains agreed to reply, therefore the results cannot be generalised for the whole of Estonia. According to the manager of retail sale chain A, about half (63) of the listed products with environmental label were available in their stores. The selection of retail sale chain B was even less: only 28 environmentally labelled products. These numbers made only a very little percentage of the whole selection offered in the stores. According to managers of both retail sale chains, all product groups were more or less equally represented, however, detergents, soft paper products and milk products were slightly more common than other product groups.

Regarding the turnover of labelled products, the representative of chain A found that the level of turnover had remained the same during the last 3 years. It had neither increased nor decreased. The manager pointed out the reason, that for Estonians the price was still decisive factor. Also, many labelled products came from foreign countries, for instance from Germany, and could contain more preservatives than local products. In such situation, Estonian consumers often preferred domestic products. They used to make their choice rather after the properties of the products (e.g. to choose the ones which did not cause allergy) than the environmental labels.

The representative of chain B found that it was better to observe the turnover of labelled products by comparing the total sale of 2005 with the one of 2004. For some products, the basis for comparison was missing (as the products came to the market only in 2005), while for the others the turnover had increased. The difference between chains A and B could be explained by the fact that the selection of chain A was wider than of chain B, and differed from the latter. Probably the products offered by chain B were more necessary for the consumers than the products of chain A. Otherwise, the turnover of the stores situated in the same town could not differ so drastically. At the same time, the turnover of products could also be affected by different campaigns and introduction activities.

The study also tried to find out what the retail sale chains had done so far to propagate consumption of eco-labelled products. The chain A even had a separate conception of eco-labels, they had signs directing to natural products in their stores. In principle, this chain had not wanted to follow different campaigns, as they found that consumers were not yet ready for that. Their principle was that the campaigns should take place only for informing the consumers and not directing them. They had even no intention to follow any bigger campaign in the future, at least not before the living standard of consumers has risen drastically. About the chain B, it was only known that they participated in the campaign of Nature-Friendly Product, organised by the Estonian Green Movement.

Summary and conclusions

As visible from the results of above-referred surveys, the consumer awareness is a key problem in respect of effectiveness of eco-labels. Consumers behave according to their knowledge; at the same time demographic characteristics definitely have their influence. One conclusion from the consumer surveys as well as interviews with representatives of market chains is, that the price is still a decisive factor for Estonian consumers in purchasing situation, but availability of environmentally labelled products also plays an important role. Only 127 different environmentally labelled products were available in Estonian stores at the time of concluding the study, at the same time most of these products were not available in all stores. Therefore, it was not yet possible to count eco-labels as effectively operative in Estonia.

The analyses of consumer survey indicated that many consumers were still somewhat environmentally conscious and sometimes had heard about eco-labels and/or seen them. It was related to the availability of labelled products: the most common labels (Mahemärk and Öko) were also the ones that people had seen more. The study of Thøgersen (2000) also indicated that most of consumers took at least some notice to eco-labels. The present study also indicated that rural people were not able to find environmentally labelled products, as these were not for sale in smaller places. Most of respondents were female, in the age group of 41 – 50, and originated from smaller settlements. One can say that this group was most interested in the subject, but not necessarily most aware of environmental labels. It was not possible to create a profile of “green consumer”, as the demographic data of respondents broke up non-proportionally and were not congruent. Strong correlation was detectable between hearing about eco-labels and seeing them. This might motivate to speak more about eco-labels using audio communication tools, when propagating them. When the name of label has reached the mind of consumers, they might subconsciously start searching it in purchasing situation. There was no correlation detected between other questions, even though in some cases it was indicated by the calculated correlation coefficient. However, divergence diagrams did not confirm it.

It was not possible to make adequate conclusions about changes in total sale of eco-labelled products, as only two bigger retail sale chains (out of ten) agreed to respond. In case of one, the total sale remained at the level of previous years, while the total sale of another retail sale chain increased remarkably. This was controversial, as the chains originated from the same town. The reasons may be miscellaneous; it was difficult to determine them, as there was no possibility for comparison. “Thanks” to the passivity of representatives of retail sale chains it was not possible to obtain desired information about total sale of labelled products, however, it was possible to characterise briefly change in total sale at the example of two retail sale chains.

As the labelled products were poorly available at Estonian market, and consumer awareness and readiness to consume these products was low, effective operation of environmental labels was not possible either. It could only be achieved by propaganda and information work during several years. It was visible that such campaigns had already had some effect, as the awareness of labels and readiness to use them had risen, compared to the earlier study (Unt 2004). However, this does not decrease the need for continuous information. The consumers themselves also pointed out the need for more

information. Therefore, as one solution, we suggest advertising labelled products in consumer newspapers separately from other goods, as well as to make discounts and beneficial offers to such products. One option could be to target future campaigns particularly to women, as they seem to be more conceptive to the subject of environmental protection.

Even though Estonia may also use several other tools of environmental policy in order to save the environment, there is no doubt that environmental labelling is one of the simplest and most effective of these in conditions of rising living standard. The performed studies indicated some positive trend in growth of consumer awareness and reaching the same level with other European countries.

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The socio-economic characteristics, consumer behaviour, and social integration of economic immigrants in athens, greece

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Introduction

Immigration is the temporary or permanent movement of people from one place to another. According to the neoclassical economic theory the reason for this movement is based on the supply and demand for labour force. People living in places where the labour supply is larger than the labour demand move to places where the local population cannot meet the labour demand in these places. On the other hand, according to the Marxist theory, immigration is due to the abject socio-economic conditions prevailing in a labour's country of origin. In any way, immigrants move in search of better living conditions. Following the crumbling of the economies in the former Soviet block countries many immigrants moved to Western parts of Europe in search of jobs.

Many studies have shown concern with the processes through which societies and cultures are transformed as a result to immigration and with the reasons why people migrate to different areas. These studies have also been concerned with the role of the political conditions, climate, geography and religion as compared with social and historical circumstances of immigration. Generally, most studies report that the main reasons for immigration are the unemployment levels, the social discrimination and the poor quality of life that many people face in their countries (Iredale et al, 2003; Spencer, 2003; Edwards, 1989; Bade, 1987; Thomas, 1985; Castles and Kosack, 1985; Boehning, 1983).

Some nations are affected significantly by immigration because of the concomitant social and economic changes that come with it. Specifically, demographic changes increased the social and cultural diversity of many areas causing an expansion in the cultural and economic horizons of residents and also producing conflicts in interests, values and lifestyles. On the other hand, the economy of many countries is becoming more diversified as the service sector grows significantly because of the immigration. The dynamics of regional change and the uneven development observed in many countries have been the subject of many studies for immigration policy formulation and program implementation (Haug et al, 2002; Simon, 1999; Holmes, 1996; Jones, 1990).

Devising an immigration policy involves making political choices to ease community adjustments to structural economic changes. The development of these policies requires information on regional trends in economic and social conditions. This information can be drawn from appropriate indicators describing the immigrants life and the conditions of their adjustment in the areas where they settle (Castles and Miller, 2003; King and Black, 1997). More specifically, Greece was the place of destination for many immigrants especially from the Balkan countries (Siadima, 2001). Many of these immigrants seeking a better future, they collectively abandoned their homelands and came to establish themselves in Greece, creating new realignments in its economy. Thus the need for a study of their consumer behaviour is imperative.

Immigrant consumer behaviour is an important research area in a number of fields including marketing, geography, and ethnic studies. While the distinct consumption patterns within an ethnic minority group have always been noticed, it has not until recently received significant attention from either academics or market practitioners. The catalyst for the increasing interest in immigrant consumption is the fast changing ethnic landscape in many metropolitan areas due to accelerated international migration. The size, geographical concentration, and purchasing power of many ethnic populations offer both opportunities and challenges to market practitioners. In academia, recent studies have examined the distinct characteristics and consumption patterns of ethnic minority populations, of which a large proportion are immigrants. Much attention has been focused on the relationship between ethnicity, ethnic identity, and consumption (Donthu and Cherian, 1992, 1994; Venkatesh, 1995; Hui et al., 1998; Rossiter and Chan, 1998; Laroche et al., 1998; Chung and Fischer, 1999), and the impact of acculturation and assimilation on consumption practices (Webster, 1994; Lee and Tse, 1994; Eastlich and Lotz, 2000; Laroche and Tomiuk, 2001). Under the primordial view ethnicity is seen as a static demographic classification based on last name, common origin, race, language, or religion (Stayman and Deshpande, 1989; Webster, 1994). The focus of the academic research examining the consumption patterns and consumer behaviour of immigrants is either the relationship between ethnicity and consumer expenditure patterns for broad categories of consumer goods such as food (Wagner and Soberon – Ferer, 1990) and transportation (Paulin, 1998; Fan and Zuiker, 1994) or the relationship between ethnicity and family budgeting for typical household product categories (Fan and Lewis, 1990). Combining of literature concerning consumption and ethnicity, ethnic economies and consumer spatial behaviour offers a new conceptual framework to describe and analyse immigrant consumer behaviour. The meaning of researching the consumer behaviour of economic immigrants is an important question since economic immigrants constitute also a respectable part of Greek society and for this reason, the determination and the recording of their behaviour are judged necessary.

The objective of the present study was to examine the economic and social characteristics of economic immigrants in Athens, Greece, as well as the factors that influence their consumer behaviour and integration in the Greek society.

Data and Method

A questionnaire survey of economic immigrants living in Athens, Greece was carried out during 2005. Investigators visited randomly 957 economic immigrants in the areas where

they were working and completed the questionnaires on location. A total of 273 responses were collected.

The composition of the questionnaire was based on international studies (Deshpande *et al.*, 1986; Douthu and Cherman, 1992, 1994; Venkatesh, 1995; Hui *et Al*, 1998; Rossiter and Chan, 1998; Laroche et Al, 1998; Chung and Fischer, 1999; Wang 2004). The questionnaire comprised five sections namely demographic, educational, employment characteristics, reasons for immigration, and living conditions. 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 factors that influence the social integration of economic immigrants in Greece studied, by using logistic regression, while for the investigation of consumer behaviour of economic immigrants in Athens - Greece this study developed least squares models (OLS).

Results

Personal Characteristics

The sample of immigrants was made up of 273 individuals among whom 122 were women and 159 were men. The average age of the respondents was 34.9 years ranging between 19 and 80 years of age. The ethnic composition of the 273 respondents was as follows: 48.3% were of Albanian origin and constitute the overwhelming majority of the sample, 11% were from Arab countries, 7.7% from Romania, 7.4% from China, 6.6% from Bulgaria and 4.7% from Africa. In addition, 4.4% were from Russia and the Ukraine, 4% from the Philippines, 3.7% from Georgia, 1.5% from Poland and just barely 0.7% were from Serbia.

The religious composition of the sample was as follows: The largest segment of the whole sample was Orthodox Christians (55.3%) and 28.6% were Muslims and only 7.7% Catholics. Seven percent of the respondents were Buddhists and on the whole a very small percentage 1.1% were Protestants and Confucians.

The geographical distribution of the immigrants according to their place of residence was as follows: 50.5% of the respondents resided in Central Athens, 30.4% in the Southern Suburbs, 7.7% in the Northern Suburbs and 5.1% in the Western Suburbs. The remaining 6.2% of the respondents resided in the remaining area of Attiki prefecture.

The educational level of the immigrants was mostly high school (50.6%), while for 25.1% was high education and for 16.8% was elementary school. Most of the individuals were not married (56.6%) and the number of children per responder was mostly two (27.5%), while for 14.7% from the total sample was one and for 8.4% was three. 43.2% of the total sample were sending their children to school.

From the entire sample of economic immigrants 43.2% send their children to school. From that portion 78.8% send them to public schools and 5.5% to private schools. Eighty percent declared that they send their children to a Greek school, while just 6.0% send them to a school of their ethnic origin.

Social Characteristics

Most of the individuals of the sample used their mother tongue at home. Ninety seven percent of the responders watch television and from those 90.8% watch Greek programs, while almost half of them (40.7%) watch also foreign programs. Eighty eight percent listen to Greek radio and 37.7% of them listen also to radios of their ethnic origin. Eighty four percent of the sample declared that they read newspapers. Sixty one percent answered that they read the Greek press and 63.4% of them read also foreign papers.

Most of immigrants (70.3%) keep up the traditions and customs of their country of origin and 74.5% follow the traditions and customs of Greece. Sixty two percent of the total sample felt integrated in the Greek society. From the total sample 37.7% answered that they participate in cultural activities, 45.4% in social activities, 22.0% in political activities and 41.4% religion activities. To the question if they have Greek friends 82.8% answered that they have. To the question if they consume or cook Greek traditional food 89.7% answered that they do. To the question if they feel satisfied by the general behaviour from the natives towards them 89.7% answered positively.

Cross tabulation analysis (χ^2) showed that the more immigrants spoke the Greek language the less they reported problems in their social integration, unemployment, or economic exploitation ($p < 0.00$).

Economic Characteristics

The average monthly income per capita of the respondents was €756.3, while the average monthly family income was €1.053. Immigrants considered their monthly income non satisfactory (55.0%). Eighty three percent save up to 500€ per month. Most of the individuals were employed in construction activities (36.6%) and in household activities (39.9%). Furthermore, 93.8% of the respondents worked an average of 8.3 hours per day and 6.0 days per week. Most of the immigrants answered that they were in the same job for the last 10 years (84.0%). The percentage of the respondents who have national health and retirement coverage was 66.3%. Thirteen percent were homeowners, 75.8%, were in rent, and 11.4% were guests in relatives and friends. Sixty five percent had deposit accounts and 8.8% had loans. From those who have taken loans, 45.8% had taken a loan to buy a home and 54.2% had taken a consumption loan. The percentage of the immigrants who answered that they invest their money was 19.4%, out of which 21.2% invest in the bond market, 11.6% invest in the stock exchange and 92.3% invest in real estate.

Cross tabulation analysis (χ^2) showed that immigrants' satisfaction with their income level depended on how long they had worked in Greece. The longer they worked in Greece the more satisfied they were from their income ($p < 0.00$).

Table 1 shows the average expenditure of immigrants. Expenditure for food was 228.50€ which was the 21.71% of the average family income. According to the survey of the National Statistic Service of Greece, 13.2% of the family income goes for food expenditures, which is less by 8.5 units than that of the immigrants.

Table 1. Expenditure averages

Categories of Expenditures	N	Average Expenditure (€)	(%) of Income per Family Sample
Food	273	228.50	21.71
Education	176	142.79	13.56
Clothing	273	92.03	8.74
Transportation	273	62.02	5.89
Entertainment	273	87.19	8.28
New Technologies	273	76.13	7.23

Social integration in the Greek society

Initially, a binary logistic regression was analyzed to investigate the direct effects of immigrants characteristics variables on the social integration in the Greek society. The dependent variable was measured based on the sample's responses to a 2-point scale: yes, no to the following statement: " Do you feel integrated or not in the Greek society". The independent variables included the sex of individuals, ethnicity, length of residence in Greece, education, usage of mother tongue, usage of TV, friendship with Greeks, use of the customs of Greece and satisfaction from general behaviour from the natives towards the immigrants.

The equation for the effects of immigrants characteristics variables on the social integration is the following:

$$\text{Ln}(\text{Social integration}) = -7,114^{***} + 0,524\text{Sex} + 0,997^{**} \text{Nationality} + 0,724 \text{Education} + 0,043 \text{Residency} - 0,366\text{Mother tongue} + 0,851\text{Greek TV} + 1,481^{***} \text{Greek Friends} + 0,989^{***} \text{Customs of Greece} + 2,515^{***} \text{Greek Attitude} + e_i$$

Where: (***) P-value < 0.01 and (**) P-value < 0.05)

Table 2. List of variables used in the social integration logistic regression model

Variable	Type	Description
<i>Sex of immigrants</i>	Nominal	1 if respondent are men; 0 if they are women
<i>Nationality</i>	Nominal	1 if they are from Eastern European Countries; 0 otherwise
<i>Education</i>	Nominal	(1 if they have bachelor & above; 0 otherwise
<i>Residency</i>	Scale	Years of Residence in Greece
<i>Mother tongue</i>	Nominal	1 if immigrants use of mother tongue with family; 0 otherwise
<i>Greek TV</i>	Nominal	1 if there watch Greek TV; 0 otherwise
<i>Greek Friends</i>	Nominal	1 if they have Greek Friends; 0 otherwise
<i>Customs of Greece</i>	Nominal	1 if immigrants follow and adapt the traditions and customs of Greece; 0 otherwise
<i>Greek Attitude</i>	Nominal	1 if immigrants are satisfied from the general behaviour from the natives; 0 otherwise

The analysis of the regression model showed that 90,6% of the variance of *Social integration* was significantly explained by the immigrants characteristics variables. Specifically, *Social integration* was significantly associated with *Nationality* ($p < 0,05$), *Greek Friends*, *Greek Attitude* and *Customs of Greece* ($p < 0,01$). *Nationality*, *Greek Friends*, *Customs of Greece* and *Greek Attitude* were associated with 0,99; 71,481; 2,515 increase of *Social integration* respectively. These results suggest as *Nationality* exerts significant statistical influence on social integration. Immigrants from Eastern European countries show higher percentage of integration than all the others. The personal relationship with the Greeks, which includes both the adoption of the Greek lifestyle and also the positive attitude of the Greeks towards them, exerts significant statistical influence on social integration.

Expenditures on Food Product

In the current model the method of Ordinary Least Squares Estimators (O.L.S.) has been used. Expenditure on food product is the dependent variable. It is a variable containing the amount of household expenditure for food products from immigrants. Independent variables include the age of individuals, education, income, children in the family, evaluation store quality, evaluation store price, choice of Greek shops, choice of street markets (Plath and Stevenson, 2005).

The equation for the effects of immigrants characteristics variables on the expenditure on food product is the following:

$$\ln(\text{Expenditure on food product}) = 1.619*** - 0,002\text{Age} + 0,037\text{Education} + 0,375*** \ln \text{Income} + 0,361***\text{Children} + 0,325***\text{Quality} + 0,315**\text{Price} - 0,185*\text{Greeks Shop} + 0,176*\text{Street Market} + u_i$$

Where: (***) P-value < 0.01; **P-value < 0.05 and * P-value < 0.1)

Table 3. List of variables used in the expenditure on food product equation

Variable	Type	Description
<i>Age</i>	Scale	The age of responders
<i>Education</i>	Nominal	1 if they have bachelor & above; 0 otherwise
<i>Income</i>	Scale	The logarithmic monthly income per capita
<i>Children</i>	Nominal	1 if the family have children; 0 otherwise
<i>Quality</i>	Nominal	1 if immigrants buy higher quality products; 0 otherwise
<i>Price</i>	Nominal	1 if immigrants buy from low prices stores; 0 otherwise
<i>Greek Shop</i>	Nominal	1 if immigrants buy from local stores; 0 otherwise
<i>Street Market</i>	Nominal	1 if immigrants buy from street market stores; 0 otherwise

The analysis of the above model showed that 27% of the variance of *Expenditure on food product* was significantly explained by the immigrants characteristics variables. Income exerts a positive influence on food expenditure. When income increases by 1%

then food expenditure increases by 37%. Families with children spend more money on food than families without children. Also, immigrants who prefer high quality products, or choose to shop in low price markets, or choose local shops and street markets tend to spend more on food products than those who do not.

Expenditures on Education

Also, in the current model the method of Ordinary Least Squares Estimators (O.L.S.) has been used. Expenditure on education is the depended variable. It is a variable containing the amount of household expenditure for education. Independent variables include the level of education, religion, income, number of children and manual work.

The equation for the effects of immigrants characteristics variables on the expenditure on education is the following:

$$\text{Ln}(\text{Expenditure on education}) = 1,326^* + 0,464^{***}\text{Education} + 0,255^{**}\text{Religion} + 0,333^{***}\text{In Income} + 0,301^{***}\text{Children} - 0,202\text{Manual Work} + u_i$$

Where: (***) P-value<0.01; **P-value<0.05 and * P-value<0.1)

Table 4. List of variables used in the expenditure on education model

Variable	Type	Description
Education	Nominal	1 if they have bachelor & above; 0 otherwise
Religion	Nominal	1 if they are Christians, 0=other;
Income	Scale	The logarithmic monthly income per capita
Children	Scale	Number of children
Manual Work	Nominal	1 if immigrants are manual worker; 0 otherwise

The analysis of the above model showed that 23% of the variance of *Expenditure on education* was significantly explained by the immigrants characteristics variables. Immigrants with higher educational background invest more money on the education of their children than those who have a lower level of education. Christians spend more on child educational purposes than immigrants from other religions. When income increases by 1%, the educational expenditure increases by 24%. As child numbers increase in a family, educational expenses also increase. Manual immigrant workers spend less on child education than those working with their intellect.

Conclusions

Greece was the place of destination for many immigrants especially from the Balkan countries during the 1990s. Unfortunately, the legal framework regarding immigration to Greece at that time was inadequate to confront the flux of immigrants and many immigrants lived in Greece illegally. Appropriate law measures were taken in 2001 that specified the requirements for the entrance and the establishment of immigrants in Greece.

Factors related to the immigrants' characteristics such as the knowledge of the Greek language, the better educational level, the length of residence and the personal

relationship with the Greeks, adoption to the Greek lifestyle were found to affect the social and economical integration of the immigrants in the Greek way of life.

Apparently, immigrants with a good knowledge of the language, longer residency, and better education achieve a better treatment from the Greek society. Therefore, immigrants of low skills and educational level will not be able to integrate in the Greek society. For that reason, it is significant for the immigration policy to take into account those weaknesses and to help these people to adapt to their new life for the sake of a good and productive Greek socio-economic life through special vocational courses mainly to teach the Greek language.

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Global versus local knowledge in Africa. What can we learn from environmental narratives?

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1. Introduction: Indigenous knowledge and local knowledge

In this paper the focus is on the relationship between global knowledge, often defined as Western knowledge, and local knowledge, often referred to as indigenous knowledge. These concepts might also be classified as dominating knowledge or hegemonic knowledge versus marginalised knowledge. In contemporary Africa there has been a growing critical voice which questions the devaluation of African indigenous knowledge in relation to development, education and the environment (see Mah 2000; Dei *et al* 2000). This paper will focus on environmental aspects such as deforestation³ and land degradation. By analysing environmental narratives from various parts of Africa the paper considers how well the dominating global perspectives employed by media, environmental NGOs and the donor community fit with local perceptions and realities of environmental change.

According to UNESCO (1999) the term indigenous knowledge (IK) refers to a large body of knowledge and skills that has been developed outside the formal education system, and that enables communities to survive. Indigenous knowledge is closely related to survival and subsistence and is therefore especially important in relation to food-security, health, education and natural resource management. The concept might be defined as:

‘The unique, traditional, local knowledge existing within and developed around the specific conditions of women and men indigenous to a particular geographical area
(Grenier 1998, 1).

Or as defined by Boven and Morohashi (2002):

‘Indigenous knowledge is the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. It is the basis for local-level decision-making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities.’ (Boven and Morohashi 2002, 12)

³ Deforestation has been classified and defined in several ways; the best-known definition is probably: ‘Temporary or permanent clearance of forest for agricultural or other purposes’ (FAO 1982)

According to UNESCO (1999) the most important characteristics of indigenous knowledge are:

- IK is generated within communities
- IK is location and culture specific
- IK is the basis for decision making and survival strategies
- IK is not systematically documented
- IK concerns critical issues of human and animal life: primary production, human and animal life, natural resource management
- IK is dynamic and based on innovation, adaptation, and experimentation
- IK is oral and rural in nature

Indigenous people are usually classified as the original inhabitants of a particular geographic location, who have a culture and belief system distinct from the international system of knowledge. The term local knowledge is a broader concept which refers to the knowledge of any group living off the land in a particular area for a long period of time. In this concept the important thing is not if the people in question are the first inhabitants of the area, but rather how they interact with their environment (Langill 2007). These two concepts are often used interchangeably, and to simplify things this is how they will be applied in this paper as well.

The dominance of Western knowledge systems has in many cases lead to a condition in which indigenous knowledge is ignored or neglected. Thus, local people's knowledge and strategies that have enabled them to live and survive in different environments over centuries tend to be regarded as inferior to Western scientific knowledge (Mah 2000). However, Langill (2007) writes that indigenous knowledge is creative and experimental, constantly incorporating outside influences and inside innovations to meet new conditions. Thus, it is often a mistake to classify indigenous knowledge as 'old-fashioned', 'backwards', or 'static'.

In Africa there is a shared history of colonial and imperial imposition of external ideas and knowledge, and thus, a marginalisation of its indigenous knowledge (Mah 2000). Le Grange (2001) writes that Western knowledge is in itself an indigenous knowledge which has become the dominant knowledge through colonialism and imperialism. Colonisation is in this context understood not only as colonisation of land but also of the minds of people. Thus, due to European imperialism, Western science has gained the status of universal truth and rationality, superior to African indigenous knowledge. This notion is especially visible within the areas of environment and natural resource management, as these fields have been dominated by Western knowledge and science and neglected the existing local knowledge.

In this paper I will use the angle of environmental narratives to show how Western discourses of environmental degradation often overlook and ignore the knowledge local people have on their environments, and some of the consequences a Western-biased knowledge might have. This research is embedded in questions arising from social constructivist approaches to environment and development which have gained influence during the past decades. The next part will elaborate a bit further on these issues.

2. Theoretical considerations

The so-called post-modern turn in social sciences has led to an increased interest in how environmental problems have been framed, perceived and constructed to the wider audience. Within this framework several names or tags have been used for the representations of environmental problems. Received wisdom, dominating discourses, orthodoxies, myths and narratives are but a few.

A narrative is linked to the broader concept discourse. A discourse can be identified as a shared meaning of a phenomenon, and a discourse analysis may involve an analysis of regularities in expressions, the actors participating in the various discourses as well as the policy outcomes of discourses. The focus on claims and the claim-makers related to specific phenomena can make discourse analysis important in relation to analysing how powerful actors frame the objects of which they speak as found in classic contributions by, for instance, Michel Foucault (1972, 1980). Some limit the analysis to the study of linguistics in narratives. However within geography and development studies it has been common to compare the narratives of various actors to what recent research tells us to identify correspondence or divergence.

The message within discourses is communicated through narratives, stories, metaphors and other rhetorical devices. In this paper the focus is on narratives. A narrative has a beginning, middle and end and is often presented in a dramatic structure revolving around a sequence of events or positions in which something is said to happen from which something is said to follow (Adger *et al* 2001). A narrative has its premises and conclusions, and the archetypes of hero, villain and victim are often included in the 'cast'. Emery Roe has become well known in the development literature for his critique of narratives concerning Africa. He defines development narratives as stories, scenarios or arguments that form the basis or the assumptions for decision-making (Roe 1991). These narratives are based on 'received wisdom' which in the environmental field can be understood as "common assumptions that are made about ecological changes" or as "an idea or a set of ideas held to be 'correct' by social consensus, or the 'establishment'". This 'received wisdom' is used e.g. to support environmental policies and when it is transformed into a 'story' with a specific message it is called a narrative. Roe (*ibid.*) argues that the narratives are often constructed to simplify a complex reality. A narrative can be seen as a generalised abstraction rather than a specific case or a story. One of the best descriptions of how these narratives relates to environmental policies is found in Hoben (1995):

The environmental policies promoted by colonial regimes and later by donors in Africa rest on historically grounded, culturally constructed paradigms that at once describe a problem and prescribe its solution. Many of them are rooted in a narrative that tells us how things were in an earlier time when people lived in harmony with nature, how human agency has altered that harmony, and of the calamities that will plague people and nature if dramatic action is not taken soon. (Hoben 1995, 1008)

African environmental narratives have in common that they are often crisis narratives. Roe (*ibid.*) suggests that crisis descriptions of African realities are the primary means whereby development experts and the institutions from which they work claim rights to ownership over land and resources they do not own. By appealing to a crisis narrative, technical experts and managers can claim rights as stakeholders in land and resources they say are in a crisis. This notion is particularly strong in relation to deforestation and biodiversity loss because biodiversity has through the Rio convention been termed a global common resource, which makes us all stakeholders in tropical forests. Even when confronted with new research that points out several problematic assumptions and outdated facts the narratives persists due to their compelling storyline and usefulness in gaining public support.

Within contemporary environment and development studies two main categories of narratives can be identified: the dominating narratives, which are the hegemonic ones, the ones that form the basis for standard approaches and generalised application, often called the blue-prints for action. The other type of narratives is what Roe (1991) calls the counter-narratives. Counter-narratives are stories that show how the dominating narrative often proves wrong in the encounter with contextualised studies. The counter-narratives draw on historical accounts, empirical fieldwork at the local level, and various research techniques from both the social and natural sciences to establish an as accurate as possible account of environmental history. Important in this respect are the stories and narratives of local people and how environmental change is perceived at the local level. This way the counter-narrative has provided a platform for indigenous knowledge to be heard. Thus counter-narratives claim to be more grounded and represent the perceptions of the people affected by environmental changes as opposed to dominant generalised narratives which build more on Western perceptions.

Lyotard (1984) writes that grand-narratives are the modernist way of looking at the world, while post-modernists are sceptical to such grand schemes of thought. According to Lyotard (1984), meaning is negotiated locally and the dominating narratives fall apart when confronted with the particularities of different places and different people. Thus, epistemologically we can also identify a difference between the dominating narratives and the counter-narratives. Where the modernist search for grand truths and generalisations is the focus the dominating narratives, the counter-narratives open for a plurality of truths, and the importance of contextualising the narratives historically and spatially.

3. Dominating deforestation narratives: Western knowledge

The Indian Ocean nation of Madagascar has been identified as one of the world's "biodiversity hotspots" (Myers *et al.*, 2000), because of its rich and endemic biota. It is also portrayed as a degraded and deforested island, where unique biodiversity is at risk due to the unsustainable production systems of the local population. The Madagascar central highlands, with their species-poor grasslands and extreme gully erosion, are often used by media and environmental NGOs as a shocking example of the consequences of deforestation. The island is believed to have gone from being totally forested before human entrance some 2000 years ago, to a situation of only 10-20% forest left now. This can be read in many of the publications from the island, from colonial times onwards:

Forests covered nearly all of Madagascar before human settlement. Now only a few natural forests remain; by studying these one can see the alarming progress of deforestation, which is caused by tavy (shifting cultivation), logging and grassland fires (...). The degradation of old pastures pushes the natives to create new ones at the expense of the remaining forest. To avoid the disappearance of the native flora and fauna we must create nature reserves (Humbert 1927, 77-78).

This text, written in 1927, forms the foundation for the deforestation narrative in Madagascar. As we can see the story has a beginning, a middle and an end, which includes a solution to the problem. It had great influence in its time and continued to be repeated nearly word by word. The narrative became established during French colonial rule by the leading French botanists Humbert and Perrier de la Bathie in the early twenties and thirties. The Perrier-Humbert island wide-forest hypothesis rested on both empirical observations and inherent assumptions. In the east they saw tavy eating away the rain-forest, and concluded that the fire-prone grasslands of the highlands and west must also once have been forested.

This narrative has shaped the understanding of press and agency documents as well as environmental policies. For instance in the national environmental action plan one can read that:

Most of Madagascar was initially covered with in natural forests. But now these forests have been totally destroyed in over 80% of the country. Deforestation has been particularly severe on the high plateau (World Bank 1988, 26).

This case is similar to western Africa where a dramatic forest loss is perceived during the twentieth century, accelerating the last few decades. The World Conservation monitoring centre has produced country by country figures which aggregate to show that West Africa now has less than 13 % of its original forest cover. Other international surveys Gornitz and NASA (1985) showed countries to have lost between 69 and 96 per cent of the forest area the past 100 years.

As in the case of Madagascar the presumed deforestation rates are largely attributed to the activities of the local people. For instance from Guinea one can read that:

The trigger of degradation is the farming systems and the fragility of climate and soils in tropical regions. The forest island demonstrates the existence of a dense forest which is today replaced in large part with degraded secondary forest. All the stages of degradation are represented: wooded savanna, bush savanna and grass savanna. (Kan 2 1992, 6-7, quoted in Fairhead and Leach 1996)

By analysing the dominating narratives from Africa focusing mostly on Madagascar and West Africa, some common features can be identified. The narratives of shifting cultivation and tropical forest decline follow a well know trajectory of a Paradise lost story, which are very powerful in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. This storyline begins with a state of stability and harmony between forest cultivators and forests which is

disrupted by events that lead to degradation, just like the fall from grace in the biblical story. Poor agricultural practices such as slash and burn combined with population growth lead to the fall. In Madagascar, which is an island relatively recently colonised by humans (2000 years ago) it seems like the harmonious Eden-like paradise existed before humans entered. When humans set foot on the island the downward spiral of deforestation started (Klein 2004). In mainland Africa, which has been populated by humans since the very beginning of human life, the fall from grace started a little later. For instance in West-Africa the narrative describes how hunter-gatherers lived in harmony with nature and had only a benign impact on the forest, but this was replaced by serial crop growing iron technology population around year 1500, and from that time and onwards the harmony was disrupted (Fairhead and Leach 1998).

The root causes in the dominating deforestation narratives is based on a neo-Malthusian understanding of the relationship between population growth and deforestation. This implies that a growing population leads to clearing of more land through the farmers' slash and burn agricultural methods. This explanation is regarded as an almost universal truth in Africa and can be read in almost all publications within the deforestation narrative, from the early 20th century colonial writings and onwards to the World Bank financed national environmental action plans of our time (World Bank 1988; Marcussen 2003). The proximate causes are mainly related to overgrazing, cutting of trees, setting of bush fires and extension of cultivated land through slash and burn. Fire is almost exclusively regarded as an unsustainable agricultural tool often used by ignorant peasants.

The scientific theory that underpins the deforestation narrative is based on an equilibrium ecology thinking that dates back to the dominant theories of Clements (1916). In this view the nature of the vegetation of an area is climatically determined and it is assumed that in the case of most moist climate types forest would be the predictable vegetation. In the absence of disturbances –human or natural –forest is the equilibrium end point of a succession that vegetation progresses through after physical or biotic disturbance. This Clementsian concept of a single vegetation type, unchanging in time and space, provides a baseline from which deforestation can be measured. In Africa in the early 20th century the botanist Chevalier compiled a general description of West Africa's vegetation zones and divided it into a series of bio-climatical zones which encompass the higher rainfall coastal belt, ceding to dryer forest forms and then savannas further north. Dominating studies of forest-cover change assume that at origin these zones support their climax vegetation. By assuming that a zone used to carry its potential vegetation foresters and botanists deemed savannas to be bio-climatically capable of supporting forests, and thus assumed that forest had once existed, having been savannized by the inhabitants farming and fire setting practices. This particular deforestation narrative can be read in analysis from Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Benin and Ghana (Fairhead and Leach 1998). In Madagascar the French botanists Humbert and Bathie launched the island wide-forest hypothesis on the very same assumptions (Klein 2002).

The influential work of French colonial forester Auguste Aubreville (1949), who correlated specific climates to specific forest types across Africa helped to formalise these speculations and to give a precise limitation of the deforested zone. Aubreville described the process of degradation on two fronts. The first was occurring in the tropical

forest area, which was undergoing a process of savannaization as farmers cleared the forest for cultivation, and uncontrolled burning prevented trees from re-establishing themselves. The second front, he argued, was advancing in the semi-arid and humid savannas where open deciduous forests had become degraded wooded savannas. According to Fairhead and Leach (1998) Aubreville's views formed a pan-west African forest orthodoxy in which British and French foresters shared a common set of ideas on African forest history and environmental change that linked deforestation with desiccation. Elements of this orthodoxy included the notions that forests positively affected climate, that indigenous customs destroy forests and need to be regulated by the colonial foresters and administrators to protect remaining vestiges of forest creating reserves and better policing. Notions such as climax, equilibrium, and succession are central in the construction of the narrative. When vegetation does not occur according to such estimates it is commonly constructed as a disturbed or degraded form, with the disturbance generally attributed to people. The images of original forest cover are linked to central suppositions in the way ecological science has conventionally treated vegetation change.

If we consider the cast of roles in the dominant narrative, the local people are described as ignorant degraders of the environment due to their lack of knowledge and primitive techniques. They are the antagonists of the environment and the villains of the story. The heroes are the western foresters who come to save both the people and nature from destruction. Later the local people are given roles as both villains and victims of circumstance, as poverty and population growth drives them to such actions and not necessarily ignorance or primitiveness.

4. Counter-narratives: local and indigenous perspectives

Recently, the dominating deforestation narratives in Africa have been strongly challenged by several counter-narratives. The counter-narratives aim at grounding the assumptions about deforestation in the local realities of the African people and incorporate the indigenous knowledge of the local people in the analysis.

By giving weight to this factor the problems of deforestation are framed in a totally different manner. One of the best examples of this is Anthropologists Fairhead and Leach's studies in Guinea, Benin, Sierra Leone and Togo. While doing fieldwork among the local people they repeatedly heard the opposite story than the dominating narrative: the areas that now were forested had been savanna in living memory.

Villagers describe how forest patches, far from being relics of destruction, have been created by themselves or their ancestors in savanna (...) Villagers consider forest islands as intrinsically linked with settlement and sociality. They consider many local farming and fire setting practices such as early burning to have enhanced the progressive expansion of forest into savanna the last century (Leach and Fairhead 2000, 43).

Air photographs confirmed the accuracy of the oral evidence; the forests of Kissidougou, Guinea, were actually expanding into the savannas. As a result of human intervention

forest islands grew around each settlement within a generation or so of its creation. This was attributed to intended and unintended consequences of the indigenous land management practices. For instance silk cotton and other species of trees grew from seeds in rubbish heaps. Green tree cuttings were used to make fences around household compounds; these cuttings formed roots and some of them grew into trees. Crops such as legumes and beans enriched the savanna soils and facilitated a transition from grassland to forest. And by burning vegetation relatively early in the dry season farmers were able to prevent later fires when the vegetation would be extremely dry. As the forest aged it became denser, taking the appearance of a mature 'natural' forest (Fairhead & Leach 1996).

It is interesting in this context that settlements in the area relocated occasionally, and once the human communities that created and sustained the forests left, the forest gradually reverted into savanna. The most densely populated parts of the district have the greatest density of forests islands. Further, the most densely populated parts of the district have the greatest density of forests islands.

Further north in Western-Africa, towards the sahelian zone, urban demand for wood-fuel has been assumed through a dominating narrative to contribute to permanent deforestation in dry land forests and wooded savannas. For instance, woodfuel shortages were projected in the 1980 to arrive in the 1990s, and projections from the 90s were to arrive in the 2000. Recent projections tell that there will be woodfuel shortages in another 25 years time. Ribot (1999) has challenged this view with extensive fieldwork from Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal and Mali. He proclaims that the dominating narrative does not hold in any of the investigated cases, and describe the history of predicted woodfuel shortages as a history of fear and imagination. The fears of woodfuel shortages are however not those of the local people affected by the environmental changes; rather the narrative comes from the outsiders, the foresters and the western experts that project the crisis.

Cameroon in Central Africa is perceived through a dominant narrative to have the highest rate of forest cover-loss in Central Africa, and the forest of Cameroon is estimated to be completely depleted in 130 years. The causes are mainly related to shifting cultivation (Sunderlin *et al* 2000). However, also in this country a counter-narrative is developed that questions the dominating crisis narrative. In the Adamaoua region of Cameroon Basset and Boutrais (2000) find evidence of an increase in forest coverage at the expense of savanna over the last few decades. Through interviews with herders and historical records they conclude that cattle grazing has resulted in widespread invasion of trees. The herders that were interviewed view this as a negative process since it makes feeding their cattle more difficult. Trees have become so dense that they prevent grasses from growing and lead to impoverishment of the pastures. Most likely it is the process of burning early in the dry season, combined with grazing pressure that suppresses grasses and allows fire-tolerant trees to survive. As in the case of Guinea, this process of afforestation of the savannas can be seen clearly by comparing sets of aerial photographs and satellite images and appears over a large area of over 1 million hectares (Basset and Boutrais 2000)

In Madagascar the narrative of an island-wide forest is also questioned. In the counter-narrative, which is based on oral histories of the local people in addition to historical,

paleoecological, demographic and archaeological sources Madagascar highlands vegetation is seen as dynamically changing in pre-settlement times as a response to climate changes. Fires are seen as an important aspect of the ecosystem, which consisted of a mosaic of woodlands, scrublands and grasslands before human arrival. In the eastern rainforest where considerable deforestation has taken place, a counter-narrative point out that the rainforest disappeared in a period in the first 30 years of colonial rule, a period when the population was stable or even declining. Deforestation in this period in the rainforest was mainly caused by logging concessions and agricultural displacement for cash-crop production.

The counter-narratives aim at being grounded in local realities and knowledge of the African people which makes them more difficult to compare. However some features seem to be in common. In the counter-narratives the environment is regarded as being in a state of continuous change, both as a response to human action and climate changes operating on various scales. In Madagascar this has led to an understanding of the highlands as consisting of a mosaic of woodlands, shrublands and a savannah-type grassland before human settlement. In west and central Africa the counter-narratives open for various landscape forms before humans started to impact, ranging from forests to woodlands to savannas. Human activities are seen as impacting on landscapes that are in flux, and the outcome of this interaction is different in different localities.

The crisis scenarios are drastically challenged. In the counter-narratives of west Africa the estimates are about one third of the dominating estimates as seen in table 1.

Table 1. Deforestation (in million hectares) in West Africa.

Country	Orthodox figures	Suggested figures
Sierra Leone	0.8 - 5.0	c. 0
Liberia	4.0 - 4.5	1.3
Côte d'Ivoire	13.0	4.3-5.3
Ghana	7.0	3.9
Togo	0.0	0.0
Benin	0.7	0.0
Total	25.5-30.2	9.5-10.5

Source: Fairhead & Leach (1998).

In Madagascar the narrative of a 80-90% deforested island is strongly challenged and discredited by the counter narrative, but unfortunately reliable statistics of whole islands deforestation rates since 1900 are unavailable. In Cameroon there is strong discrepancy as to whether the forest is actually shrinking or growing.

Another characteristic of the counter-narratives is that they in their refutation of the neo-Malthusian argument of the dominant narrative tend to go in the direction of a neo-Boserupian explanation instead. In this scenario more people can stimulate technological and other changes that intensify land use so that a higher population per. land unit can be supported without overall resource decline. In Madagascar this can be identified in Kull's work which proclaims that population growth in the highlands has transformed them from monotonous grasslands towards diverse cultural landscapes of irrigated rice, orchards and woodlots. For instance in Manjikandira region, east of Antananarivo, private eucalyptus woodlots now cover 70% of a landscape previously described as barren hills of grass. Further, the *Tapia* forests of the highlands show that indigenous management techniques have kept this forest stable and even increasing, contrary to the dominant belief that the forest is degraded and in a state of rapid decline (Kull 2000). This is similar to the counter-narratives of Western Africa as we have seen where the savannas have been transformed into various kinds of forest formations due to population pressure in a neo-Boserupian way.

The role of fire as a proximate cause of deforestation is also discredited in the counter-narratives. In the counter-narrative of the highlands of Madagascar fire is seen as a natural part of the ecosystem which pre-dated human settlement, and which is used as a powerful agricultural tool at the hands of local people. Fire is even described as aiding forest maintenance as in the case of the *Tapia* forests of the highlands, since burning favours the dominance of the pyrophytic *tapia* and protects valuable silkworms from parasites. This resembles several narratives of the mainland as well: for instance in Cameroon the process of burning early in the dry season, combined with grazing pressure that suppresses grasses and allow fire tolerant trees to survive is described as key to afforestation. Also in West Africa the processes of afforestation of the savannas are linked to anthropogenic fire regimes.

Cutting fuel for fire-wood is likewise discredited both in Madagascar and in several parts of Africa. In Madagascar Kull (2000) writes that the woodfuel crisis that has been prescribed has never materialised, instead the situation has improved and new zones of woodfuel production, feeding the local demand, are scattered throughout the island. In West Africa Ribot (1999) writes that the natural regeneration of trees in these areas occurs at a much higher rate than previously noted.

In relation to scientific theory the counter-narratives of both Africa and Madagascar apply the new non-equilibrium ecology or the flux-paradigm as the scientific theory. This implies regarding the human-ecological relationship as non-equilibrium, historically contingent and constantly shifting. Within such a view, the complex relationships between forest, woodland and savannah on the one hand, and climate and fire (both natural and anthropogenic) on the other, are put into focus (Klein 2002).

In relation to the cast of roles the counter-narratives from both Africa and Madagascar casts the local people as victims of for instance forest policies that cut them off from their resources. In the rain forests of central Africa, as Brown & Lapuyade (1999) describe from Cameroon, and eastern Madagascar as described by Jarosz (1996), the counter-narratives emphasises the activities of governments, logging companies and the trans-national interests. The villains are thus higher up in the socio-political hierarchy than in the traditional narrative. For instance consumption in the North drives the trade in

tropical timber and the exploitation of tropical forests. In drier regions, such as the Madagascar Highlands and the west African forest-savannas, local people are the heroes that transform landscapes to a richer resource base than was originally the case, as seen in the neo-Boserupian narratives.

5. Conclusion: Indigenous knowledge and environmental conservation

It is clear that in many places there exist real problems related to deforestation in Africa. However, the rate of deforestation and the causes are more uncertain as shown in this paper. By including indigenous knowledge in the analysis a more accurate picture of environmental change might emerge. Along with this a critical questioning of the values related to landscapes and conservation is in place. One must not forget that degradation is indeed a value-laden concept. The local farmer that clears the land of forest and bush and develops it into field is in his own eyes upgrading the landscape. He is making it more useful in relation to feeding himself and his family. However, Western environmentalists interpret the same process as degradation of land and erosion of biodiversity. By using the concept 'deforestation' a negative connotation is given to an activity that for the local people is a matter of working the land. Language is indeed power as Michel Foucault (1972) among others so strongly has pointed out. In the dominating narratives local people's interaction with nature leads to disturbances and degradation of natural vegetation. However, from both west Africa and Madagascar farming and other indigenous land-use practices have interplayed with climate-driven processes in ways that have both enhanced as well as reduced forest cover.

The dominating narrative of deforestation and biodiversity erosion in Africa reflects one view of the environment with a strong bias towards 'natural' landscapes and forests, and a view of local indigenous people as ignorant degraders of their environment. These have been the underlying understandings upon which decisions have been based. In view of this it is no wonder that conservation and management of nature in Africa has been a symbol of colonial oppression and bureaucratised administration, reflecting the economic realities, values and knowledge of urban Western elites. Lately there has been a move towards including indigenous perspectives on environmental change in conservation approaches, at least in the rhetoric of the big environmental NGOs and development agencies. If this rhetoric is successfully transformed into action both people and the environment stand a better chance of a sustainable future.

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How can education bridge the gap between the rich and the poor on the road to sustainable future?

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INTRODUCTION

Mankind failed to prove that another driving force of economic activity is possible other than aspiration for higher income. Hand in hand with this force goes aspiration for ‘consuming’. Together, these two forces represent the basis of market economy. This reality inevitably leads to the division of people into different groups, with the two extremes being very rich and very poor. The question here is not how to achieve equality in income but can we avoid the situation the degree of poverty to reach a point of inhumanity. There is no simple answer to this question and that is not a one sided task. Both the rich and the poor have to go out of their ways in order to bring sustainable development into being.

This paper is aiming to further the discussion about the challenge to education as a means of facilitating the process of bridging the gap in consumer behavior between the rich and the poor and creating conditions for bringing sustainable development to life.

THE LESSON OF GENERAL SYSTEMS THEORY

According to the General Systems Theory the behavior of any complex system can be described through the following very well known simple model:



The feedback could be of two kinds – negative and positive. The negative feedback maintains the stability of the system. The price which regulates the market is a perfect example of the negative feedback. Through the negative feedback, however, the system is able only to maintain its state - not to change it. Any change is possible only through the positive feedback which reinforces system’s behavior in the same direction. Market economy is a very good example again. The Gross National Product (GNP) which represents nation’s total output normally consists of goods for consumption and investment goods (i.e. people sacrifice immediate consumption to increase future consumption). Investment goods are playing a role of positive feedback and providing that the transformation process is efficient the next year GNP will be higher. In that case positive feedback reinforces positive economic development. It is possible, however, the positive feedback to reinforce negative economic development. If the process of transformation is not efficient and the current GNP is not enough even to satisfy the immediate consumption, no investment goods will be produced, next cycle input will be

less, and consequently the next GNP will be smaller. Exactly the same cyclical downturn in the economy has been present for years in underdeveloped countries. So, according to the General Systems Theory economic development is possible only through the increase of consumption. Having in mind that more and more countries are taking the direction of economic development there is no any hope for the world to limit the consumption. And this is not the purpose, of course. On the contrary, sustainable development is aimed at the development of all countries and regions, but under one very important condition – the society should find the solution of the distribution problem.

DIMENSIONS OF THE DISTRIBUTION PROBLEM

Market economy inevitably leads to the division of people according to their income into different groups, with the two extremes being very rich and very poor. As it was mentioned before, consumption, playing a role of positive feedback, stimulates economy and produces more and more income. This process, however, as everything else, has both a bright and a dark side. It is good, of course, that society as a whole is getting wealthy and gains the opportunity to escape the limits posed by Nature on human life. But along with that, we are facing a distribution problem which is the biggest test of humanity both for individuals, and for society. Being one of the most complex systems ever existed, world economy had passed through the incredible development to arrive today at the point where all achievements should be reassessed against the background of two ultimate necessities of society:

1. The necessity to find such a way of wealth distribution which doesn't allow the degree of poverty to reach the point of inhumanity but does not harm market efficiency as well
2. The necessity to reach such a degree of non-renewable resources' utilization which guarantee opportunities for future generations

The perfect solution to the distribution problem could have been individuals 'to forget' the aspiration for higher income and to discover a new driving force of economic activity. Mankind, however, failed to prove this is feasible. People living in post communist countries had already gone through a difficult period of centralized economic system aiming to build such a society. The main result of that experiment was the recognition of the fact that the lack of economic incentive for individuals makes economy inefficient. So what we need is to find the best possible balance between the requirements of market efficiency and requirements of humanity. That is not a one sided task however. Starting from their very different backgrounds both the rich and the poor have to go out of their ways in order to bring sustainable development into being.

THE CHALLENGE OF WEALTH DISTRIBUTION

Wealth distribution has always been the arena of strong ideological, political, and ethical discussions. And they will be further intensified. But society is running out of time already and can't simply stay and wait the result of such talks. We need immediate actions at all levels – individual, organizational, and global.

What the rich can do?

Let me start with the term 'the rich'. I like very much the definition of Epicurus who says:

"Nothing is enough for a man for whom enough is just a little" (Peter,L.J; R.Hull 1981)

But as you can suggest this understanding of 'being rich' is only for personal use. Normally we name 'the rich' people with income well above average. And because in different countries average income is different, this concept turns into very 'fuzzy' individual feeling. Having in mind the challenge society is facing, under the term 'the rich' we should understand all individuals and countries that have access to or provide their citizens with enough civil rights, income, and education in order to sustain their living. I realize it's very difficult to accept that even if you don't have extra money or private jet you are rich. The degrees of 'having' are very important, of course, but we shouldn't forget that there are no degrees of 'have nothing' and near 2 billion people fall into that category. It is not easy to hear out the speech of the Nobel Peace Prize holder for 2006 Muhammad Yunus and to remain intact. This paper is in fact a response to his ideas.

Now, what the rich can do? It is very strange but charity has been seen almost the only way for rich individuals, organizations, and countries to contribute in solving the side social effects of market economy. But how efficient and acceptable is that way? Even if a lot of money flows from different private funds to help the needy, is it realistic to believe this will save their lives? Charity is good but it in itself raises some ethical questions:

- Is it good or bad for society some people or institutions to play God?
- Is it ethical to hold people and nations dependent on the good will of someone or some institution?
- Is it ethical to put socially sensitive people in a situation to feel guilty that they can't help all who need help?

And one vary rational question:

- For how long the world would be able to survive only through charity?

In market economy there is only one way to turn an idea into being. To invest. What the rich can do is to view the distribution problem as a strategic investment opportunity.

- (1) To support economically poor countries means to invest in future profits by creating conditions for their future market development. There is no such thing as a country doomed to be poor. Even if there is no petrol under its surface. Everything depends on the ability to foresee market opportunities and to start creating the conditions for these opportunities to become profitable.
- (2) To support poor people and countries is an investment in social stability. People who don't have anything 'to live for or to loose', because their lives, and the lives of their children seem predestined and miserable are potential source of aggression and easily can become victims of manipulation. And in the words of Muhammad Yunus:

"I believe terrorism cannot be won over by military action. Terrorism must be condemned in the strongest language. We must stand solidly against it, and find all the means to end it. We must address the root causes of terrorism to end it for all time to come. I believe that putting resources into improving the lives of the poor people is a better strategy than spending it on guns."(Yunus 2006)

- (3) And of course, to support poor people and countries is an investment in human capital. Not only because of the demographic problem in rich countries, but because of the pace of technological development the world needs increasing amounts of educated and motivated work force to maintain the rate of economic

activities. The only available sources of such work force are people from poor countries.

All these investments can be made in different forms: direct money investments in schools, hospitals, and other social services or investment of personal time and efforts in solving such problems. The main issue here is not to see such activities as a charity or in the worst case as an advertisement or 'buying a clear conscience', but as a social business. And let me use again the ideas of Muhammad Yunus:

“Once social business is recognized in law, many existing companies will come forward to create social businesses in addition to their foundation activities. Many activists from the non-profit sector will also find this an attractive option. Unlike the non-profit sector where one needs to collect donations to keep activities going, a social business will be self-sustaining and create surplus for expansion since it is a non-loss enterprise. Social business will go into a new type of capital market of its own, to raise capital.”(Yunus 2006)

This understanding will change dramatically the way these activities are performed and will create new challenge to all socially engaged people and especially to young generation.

What poor can do?

If you don't have enough food, education, or even a chance to believe the situation may change, would you think you can do something? Hardly. That's way in the worst cases in the beginning poor people should be educated and supported by the society. That is to give them a chance. But it is their responsibility to take this chance. The best possible example comes from Bangladesh where 7 million people took the opportunity to get a credit of less than \$100 for starting a small business or building their own house. And the bank offering these micro-credits is founded by Muhammad Yunus as a social but profitable business. It's difficult to imagine how this amount of money could be enough to start a business but for those people that was a risky decision. Now let's take a look at people in Bulgaria. A lot of them have very low income and claim they are very poor. But even if they have opportunities to receive initial education and financial support they prefer to stay unemployed and live on social security instead of trying to start some economic activity. So they don't take responsibility for their own lives. Reasons for that are many and complex but facts are these.

Another important thing the poor can do is to give their children the chance of better life. Many poor parents deprive their children of education insisting that children should work and help them. It's not acceptable always to label that as children' exploitation because in some cases the alternative could be children died of hunger. But especially in situations when free education is available parents should recognize the necessity to give their children this opportunity.

THE CHALLENGE OF BETTER RESOURCES' UTILIZATION

This again is the distribution problem. But in that case the distribution of resources between generations. And again the responsibility could be traced to both sides – the rich and the poor.

What the rich can do?

First and foremost, they must change the amount of consumption and consumption patterns. Step by step they have to move their choices from "What I want?" to "What I need?" and to "What is sustainably responsible?" And that really is not easy. Secondly, they must teach their children the same values. In that way, behaving as responsible consumers they will force the behavior of businesses into responsible direction.

What the poor can do?

Of course, they should increase their consumption. But it is very important that getting richer they don't repeat the wrong consumption patterns of the rich. And this is not easy as well. And may be the most difficult problem for the poor will be to hold consumption aspirations of their children within normal limits. Unfortunately, in Bulgaria, we already can observe the consequences of that problem.

THE CHALLENGE TO EDUCATION

Sustainable development is a strategic purpose of the mankind which will require very long time to be fulfilled. And the most appropriate and effective means for that is education, of course. But not the education as understood today. We need a revolution in our understanding of educational goals and methods. Two years after the launching of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development we still didn't even started the

discussion on the kind of education we need. At least in Bulgaria. We speak about sustainable development, of course, and about the requirements stemming from the unification with the EU as well. The main result of the Lisbon meeting in 2000 was the decision till the middle of 21st century Europe to become the knowledge economy. The Bologna process then came to announce that education should be directed at the development of competences and educational institutions should work together with businesses in order to fulfill the requirements of labor market. But did we even raise the question of how education institutions will manage to teach new values and consumption patterns in an environment dominated by business needs? And if sustainable development depends so strongly on individual behavior what kind of subject we need in order to teach ‘what does it mean to be human?’ Humanistic psychology states that our ‘Self-concept’ is solely a result of social influences (Rogers 1959). How we understand, indeed, that we are humans? Through other people, of course, and in the very beginning, through our parents and first teachers. As the German writer Karl Bjerne wrote: (In Borov 1971)

“A man can do without a lot of things, but not without at least one other man”

So what the education must do?

Primary school education. We discuss now, in Bulgaria, if it is necessary to offer religion education in primary school and how to do it. But no one even mention the necessity to teach children some basic ethical issues as the value of life, respect to diversity, the importance of community, the importance and effects of individual choices etc. And this is happening against the background of one sociological research showing that in Bulgaria parents spend only five minutes a day to talk with their children. And what about children in social houses? The situation is may be different in European countries but can you suggest how many parents talking with their children more than five minutes teach them basic human values? And what their chances are, having in mind the time their children are spending with computer games, movies, some Internet options? In my opinion the very first aim of education today is to develop human nature using the best of available knowledge. So we need the energy of most influential people and the hearts and skills of the best teachers and spiritual leaders to develop a subject for primary schools which can be named “Man and Society”. Even if these topics seem to be difficult for children, contemporary teaching technology offers enough possibilities to make this subject not only understandable but very influential as well. We shouldn’t wait till the secondary school to teach children these issues. Otherwise they will be lost.

Secondary school education. In the secondary school another subjects is needed – “Consumer Citizenship”. If children were not such an important customer segment there wouldn’t have been so many advertisements targeted at them. With this subject we should teach them not only how dependent the society is on scarce resources and what does it mean to be responsible consumer. We also should teach them how to avoid manipulation through the advertisements, how to use their consumer rights, and how to be a driving force of changes in society.

University education. Normally, it is accepted that we would have been done enough if a course on Sustainable development exist in curriculum. And, of course, I agree that subject like that is necessary and should be core and not optional. But I definitely will not agree this is enough. Especially in majors like “Business Administration”, “Marketing”, “Industrial Management” etc. Because graduates of these majors are those people who will take future management decisions in different businesses. My suggestion is, in the content of basic management courses some topics to be included showing the sustainable development point of view on that issue. And in more detail:

1. When teaching ‘Fundamentals of Management’ in the topic of strategic planning and competitive strategies the concept of strategic advantage to be linked with the concept of socially responsible behavior
2. When teaching “Human Resources Management” a concept of “Quality of Working Life” to be included, but with a content adapted to the requirements of sustainable development
3. When teaching “Production Management” a special topic on ‘green’ production technologies to be included
4. When teaching “Consumer Behavior” the importance of decision criteria stemming from consumer citizenship to be stressed
5. When teaching “Marketing” and especially the elements of marketing-mix the concept of Product to be linked with the concept of ‘green’ product/service
6. When teaching Innovations Management the importance of Integrated Product Design to be stressed
7. A special course to be included in curriculum on Corporate Social Responsibility. And this course to be in the last year and to integrate the knowledge received from all other management courses.

But in all other majors in university education sustainable development should become a significant part of the teaching content. Because I am working in a university with engineering profile I would suggest some changes in curricula of technical majors. First of all, there should be place for economics and humanities there. In some engineering majors now only engineering subjects exist with the exception of the course on Economics. No Philosophy, no Sociology, and sometimes no even Intellectual Property Rights’ Protection. Or, if such courses exist, they are optional and professors use their expert power to force students not to choose these courses but other technical subjects again. And, of course, you will not find Consumer Citizenship or Sustainable Development even as option. So my first suggestion is such course to be included as obligatory and in the last year of education. Its content should stress not only on global problems of sustainable development but on Corporate Social Responsibility and individual responsibility as well. Secondly, having in mind the importance of technology for solving environmental problems, in all subjects dealing with technologies a topic of environmental issues should be included. And finally, in subjects on different products design the concept of Integrated Product Design should be presented.

I strongly believe these are necessary changes and I know you agree as well. But I have been too long in our educational system to know that it is not enough simply to prove how important sustainable development is and the subject to be included in a curriculum. I am sure that all or at least most of the members of Universities’ Academic Boards recognize the problem but I am quite sure as well they will not approve the subject to become obligatory for all majors. And being deeply in my heart very democratic person, I would appeal to the Ministry of Education to behave responsibly and **to direct** the inclusion of special criterion about socially responsible teaching content in the accreditation procedures for all kinds of educational institutions.

SUMMARY

Against the background of so many problems the society is facing today people try to find solutions which will bring sustainable development into being. And it is difficult to find better example of such solutions than the work and ideas of the Nobel Peace Prize holder for 2006, the professor of Economics and founder of the Grameen Bank

Muhammad Yunus. This paper is a response to his ideas from the point of view of sustainable development and consumer citizenship and stresses on some possibilities to achieve changes in consumer behavior through educational means.

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Making bridges over cultural differences – The podlasie case

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1. THE OUTLINE OF PODLASIE HISTORY

Geographical and historical conditions have made Podlaskie Voivodeship a place of coexistence of various nations and cultures. A specific cultural landscape has been created, with unique religious multiplicity and variety of rituals. Poles, Belarusians, Tartars, Russians and Jews have been getting along here for centuries. Multinational character provided solid background for the creation of distinct systems of values and attitudes, characteristic of representatives of different denominations inhabiting the north-east of Poland. Many historiographers of the region agree on its unique character. The border of the voivodeship was delineated in 1569 (The Union of Lublin), and the name is derived from its geographical setting: “land among forests” (pod lasem) was called Podlasie. Alternatively, the name “Podlasie” comes from Ruthenian word “Podlasze”, meaning “the land of Lachs(s) – “Lach” being Ruthenian equivalent of “Pole”.

Since the very beginning of its history Podlasie has been the object of competition among the Mazovian dynasty of Piasts and Lithuenian and Mazovian dukes. In 11th century the region has often changed its national status: it fell under the authority of Kiev Ruthenia, then it became part of the Duchy of Volinia. In 13th century it was part of Lithuania, and later became part of heritage of Mazovian dukes. Stability came about in the first decades of 15th century, when Podlasie was split between Mazovia and Lithuania. In 1569 almost the whole of Podlasie (apart from Białowiecki Forest and Knyszyński Forest) became the land of the Crown. The appointment of Ivan Sapieha as the first voivode took place in 1513 in Drohiczyn. Thus, enacted by King Sigismund the Old, Podlaskie Voivodeship came into existence. Up to 15th century the territory of Podlasie – frontier land among Mazovia, Prussia, Sudovia, Lithuania and Ruthenian Duchies – was almost entirely covered with primeval forests and swamps. Rivers provided the only venues of communication between loose network of scattered insular settlements. Political instability, frequent approaches by hostile forces and the absence of roads hampered development. Political stability, which ensued the normalization of relations with Lithuania, the defeat of the Teutonic Order in the war of 1409-1411, and the end of Polish-Lithuanian-Teutonic War fostered the intensification of settlement and specified its course and limits. It brought about further development of municipal and rural settlement, and led to the creation of parochial network of Catholic and Orthodox churches.

In the second half of 15th century and through the entire 16th century the territory of Podlasie endured a period of intensive development of municipal system. Within the span of two centuries – from 1400 to 1600 – forty two towns were set up, out of about eighty

towns existing at the end of the period within the range of the voivodeship. At that time the fundamentals of ethnic framework of population inhabiting the land were laid down, as well as the territorial range of ethnic and denominational groups which, with a few alterations, has remained up to date. The majority of local people came from the neighbouring territories of Mazovia and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The period of the Deluge in the mid-17th century ruined Podlasie to great extent. Devastating raids of Swedish and Muscovite troops depopulated entire districts. Such was the case of the vicinity of Krynki, where almost deserted villages destroyed in the time of the Deluge were populated again by Muslim Tartar settlers brought by King John III Sobieski.

In relatively short period of time the reconstruction of the ruined towns and villages gained momentum. Numerous sanctuaries and monastic compounds were established, particularly Carmelite monastery over the Wigry Lake, Carmelite compound in Bielsk Podlaski, monastic buildings in Supraśl and Dominican compound in Sejny. Simultaneously, many places of worship of other denominations arose in the region: synagogues in Tykocin and in Orla, and Evangelical chapel in Mieruniszki.

By the end 18th century Poland lost its sovereignty. During the partitions Podlasie was divided between Prussia and Austria. In 1807 it became part of the Russian sector. The remaining part was incorporated into the Duchy of Warsaw after 1809. After 1830 the Russian Tsar suppressed the autonomy of the Kingdom of Poland, and the region, as well as the rest of the country was included into Russia. In 1918 it was returned to the mother country, and in the years 1939-1941 the territory was annexed by the Soviet Union to the line set by Bug and Pisa Rivers.

In the new political and administrative situation brought about by the partitions of Poland the development of the region never stopped. Administrative centers like Suwałki, Augustów, Łomża and Białystok were undergoing most dynamic growth. In Białystok and other towns of Białostocki district the textile industry became the motive power of the development. Dwellers of rapidly expanding towns were in need of places for professing their faith and many Catholic churches (in Białystok, Sztabin, Pobikry, Dąbrowa Wielka, Kobylin-Borzymy), Orthodox churches (in Białystok, Łomża, Suwałki and Sokółka), Protestant chapels (in Choroszcz, Michałowo, Łomża, Sejny), and synagogues (in Białystok, Łomża, Suwałki and Sokółka) were built at that time.

Due to its turbulent history, the Plain of Northern Podlasie remains the most varied region in Poland as far as the ethnic background of the population is concerned. Poles, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Russians, Gypsies, Tartars, Jews and Germans have been living here for centuries. Ethnic minorities have created a unique cultural mosaic. Nowadays, Belarusians constitute the largest ethnic group (about 200,000). For the most part they are members of Catholic Orthodox Church – Christian religion which arose in 9th century, and was definitely separated from the Roman Church in 1054, after the exclusion of Constantinople's patriarch Michael Cerularius from the Church by Pope Leo IX.

2. THE REVIEW OF VANISHING DENOMINATIONS IN PODLASIE

2.1. Białystok Tartars

Białystok Tartars constitute a section of ethnic oriental group which, since the beginning of 13th century, has been inhabiting the lands of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. They had come to Lithuania either as free settlers or forcedly settled prisoners of war. The sovereigns of the duchy of Lithuania, starting from Gediminas and Vytautas, were settling tartars in Lithuanian land in an organized and purposeful manner, with respect to

their separate ethnic-religious character. The tolerance allowed Tartars to safeguard their uniqueness and preserve religion. The history of their stay in Białystok region is shorter and can be traced back to 17th century. King John III Sobieski in the charter of March 12, 1679 granted the land around Sokółka and Krynki to Tartars serving his army as a compensation for back pay. Turks-Tartars coming to Podlasie, representing ethnic and cultural diversity of the Golden Horde, found themselves in multifarious cultural environment being the crucible of cultures characteristic of borderland. After regaining independence in 1918 only 6,000 Muslims remained within the borders of Poland out of numerous Tartar community of the 1st Polish republic. They inhabited mainly the regions of Vilnius and Podlasie. The shift of borderlines after 2nd World War left about 4,000 people of Tartar descent within Poland. Out of several religious Tartar communities in Poland nowadays the most numerous is the community in Białystok, with approximately 1,800 worshippers.

2.2. Jews in Podlasie

Polish-Jewish relations date back to the 10th century, when the first Jewish communities appeared in this part of Europe. Although Podlasie's first Jewish inhabitants actually appeared in the 14th and 15th centuries (in Bielsk, Drohiczyń, and Mielnik), their numbers were so few they could not be considered communities until much later (Wisniewski, 1998).

Therefore the existence of Jewish centers in Podlasie can be traced back to 16th century. The influx of Jews into Podlasie was mainly from the East. The oldest Jewish communities arose in Tykocin (Podlaskie Voivodeship at that time) and in Nowy Dwór (Troćkie Voivodeship). The settlement came from Grodno community existing since 1395.

According to the partition treaties after the fall of Kościuszko insurgency the part of Podlasie north of the Bug river was granted to Prussia. Next year, the administration of new Eastern Prussia was created. It consisted of two departments: Płocki and Białostocki. Białostocki department survived until 1807 when, due to Tilsit Agreement, its part including Białostocki district was given to Russia. The first data on Jewish settlement in the very city of Białystok comes from the years 1658-1661. In 1692 a branch of Tykocin community already existed here. By the end of 19th century Jewish worshippers constituted about 70% of the population of Podlaskie. Such great ratio was due to the inflowing destitute Jews (so called "Litvaks") from Russia after 1880. In the interwar period Białystok region was considered "the heart of European Jewry". In Białystok region, the number of Jews in towns frequently amounted to more than half the number of all inhabitants.

Today, in Białystok itself, where before the 2nd World War about 100 synagogues and Jewish meeting houses existed, Jews belong to the great absentees, virtually non-existent in the ethnic mosaic of Podlasie.

2.3. Evangelicals in Podlasie

Lutherans arrived in Białystok at the end of 18th century. After quenching of the Kościuszko uprising, according to the treaty of October 24, 1795 Podlaskie north of the Bug river fell into Prussia. Three months later, the Prussian forces entered the town. Białystok region was incorporated in the so called Neu-Ostpreussisches. The keepers of the late Hetman Jan Klemens Branicki's property – the family of Potoccy – sold the town and the surrounding territories to King William II for 270,970 thalers. A Hanover

Lutheran, Karol August von Holsche, became the first director of the province's board. He and his wife, Sophia, contributed to the creation of Augsburg-Evangelical community in Białystok. The community was augmented by Prussian administration and military workers and innumerable artisans. The establishment of a printing house in Białystok run by Lutheran Jan Kanter, the first Białystok newspaper edited by Lutherans – *Intelligenz Blatt* – issued from 1797 in two language versions: Polish and German. After the Tilsit Peace Accord in 1807, Białystok became the subject of financial deals and changed its proprietor once more. The King of Prussia sold the town with the neighbouring town of Tykocin to Tsar Alexander II for 200,000 roubles. The Protestant community flourished steadily in spite of administrative changes. During the Napoleonic campaign, numerous soldiers of General Carriee's Saxon Company (mainly clothiers by trade) settled in Białystok. In this way, the social structure of the Protestant group was altered: administrative-military character of the group was superseded with a community representing skilled workers. The Augsburg-Evangelical community was gradually gathering strength. Up to the mid-19th century the number of Lutherans was about 1000, but by the end of the century their number, according to the poll from that period, increased to 3600. The period of the Great War was particularly unfavourable to Protestants. According to the tsarist authorities any Evangelical was held responsible for subversive activity on the part of Germany. In that period, several ministers were exiled to Siberia; workshops owned by Protestants and their chapels in Białystok were burned down with the authorities' approval. Evangelical community was decimated again during the interwar period when the number of worshippers came down to 3000. After the war the remaining Evangelicals from Białystok either died due to natural causes or left the region. No Evangelical chapel existed for many years. Recently, however, a gradual revival of Evangelical community in Białystok can be observed. Without its own premises so far, meetings of the community are held regularly in a rented accommodation in Warszawska Street, with the attendance of about 30 participants.

2.4. Old Ritual Believers

Old Believers are remnants of the split within Russian Orthodox Church in 1654 – the result of introducing liturgical reforms by Patriarch Nikon. The changes aroused widespread indignation among worshippers, and some of them dissented from the reformist part of the Orthodox Church hierarchy. They set up a community of Old Ritual Believers, often persecuted and facing the prospect of death penalty for the adherence to their creed. A significant part of the community fled Tsar's authority seeking refuge in Poland. In Podlasie region, they were settled in Przelomski Forest. In 1935, the number of Old Believers' community in the region was estimated 7400. The 2nd World War brought about its partial downfall. Particularly, it was due to forced resettlements in March 1941 – the fulfillment of German-Soviet accords.

According to 1996 data, 905 Russians – Old Ritual Believers live in Poland. Thirty years earlier, their number reached 1400. They inhabit three villages in Suwałki region: Wądzilki, Gabowe Grądy and Bór, living on agriculture and lumber industry. In recent decades Old Believers have undergone increasing polonization.

2.5. Greek Catholic Church in Podlasie

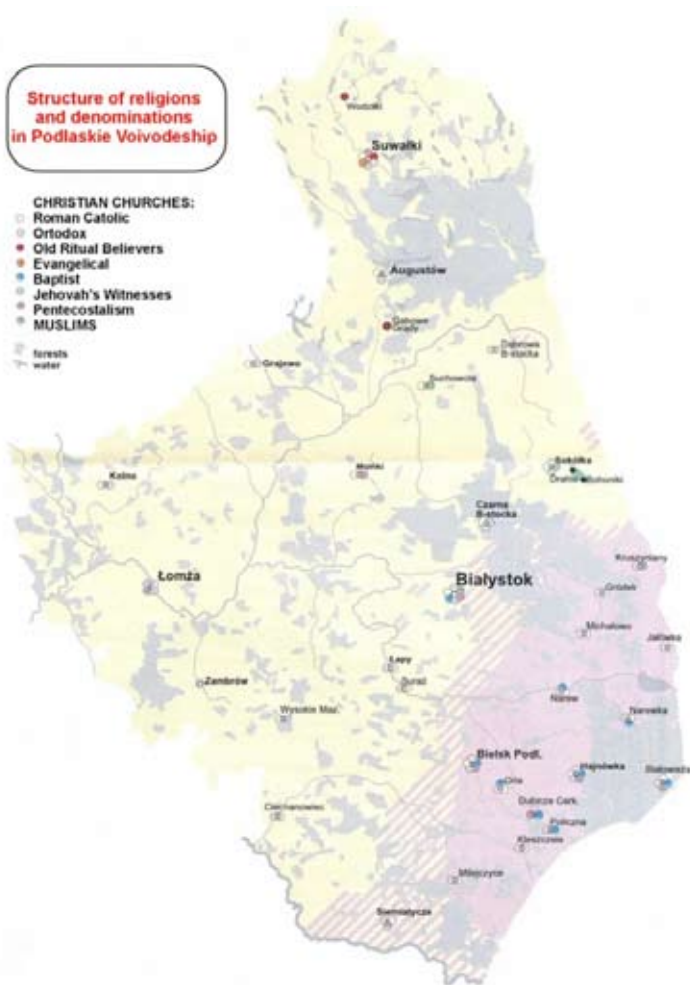
Uniates appeared in Podlasie with the conclusion of the Lublin Union in 1569. according to the act, Catholic Orthodox bishops of the Republic of Poland recognized the Pope's authority, but retained liturgical order of the Eastern Church, separate hierarchy, and

approved the marriage of priests. After the partitions of Poland, the Russian invader fiercely opposed Greek Catholics. In 1839 Uniate Church was dissolved in the former Eastern voivodeships; only one diocese in Chełm remained covering the area from Augustów to Lublin. In 1870s that diocese was also suppressed: in 1873 the Bishop of Chełm issued a circular warranting the unification of Uniate and Orthodox liturgies. Despite the legal dissolution of the Union, Ruthenian population never accepted Catholic Orthodoxy and, after the Tolerance Act of 1905, they abandoned Orthodoxy in favour of Latin Rite Catholicism. As a result, immediate polonization of Podlasie ensued. The Union never survived in Podlasie, though Greek Catholic denomination can still be encountered in some other regions of Poland.

3. THE REVIEW OF EXISTING DENOMINATIONS IN PODLASIE

Blending and permeating of various cultures and religions has been prevalent in Podlaskie Voivodeship since early medieval times. Today, only two Christian denominations have remained of that religious motley: Catholic and Orthodox Churches. According to 31.12.2000 data there are 1,222,709 inhabitants of Podlaskie Voivodeship. This voivodeship, one of 17 such in Poland has an area of 10, 000 square kilometers (about 125 km north to south and 80 km east to west). Lightly populated, it is a land of open space, farmlands, evergreen forests, clean air, and light industry. The major farm crops are oats, rye, wheat and, especially, potatoes. Most of the agricultural acreage, however, is grassland, feed for the dairy cattle that make the region Poland's first in milk production. The Catholic and Orthodox congregations make 77% and 13,5% of all inhabitants of Podlaskie Voivodeship respectively (in some districts, for example in Hajnowski district, the inhabitants are over 80% Orthodox Church believers).

The denominational framework of the inhabitants of Podlaskie Voivodeship today is less diverse than in former centuries. Yet, there are spots where ethnic-religious stratification is demonstrated, which substantiate the opinion of Podlasie as most heterogeneous of all Polish regions in terms of religion and ethnicity. The map below presents the phenomenon of religious diversity among the inhabitants of Podlasie.



Source: Structure of religions and denominations in Podlaskie Voivodeship, *Białystok 2000*.

3.1. Orthodox Catholics

In the second half of the 9th century two brothers set out on a mission from Thessalonica. Their purpose was to bring Christianity to the Slavs. On their way to the Slavonic nations they traversed borders of their own homeland, civilization and culture. At the request of prince Rotislav, the ruler of Great Moravia, they went to the pagan nations that had no written word. They were sent by the patriarch Photius and the Byzantine court to areas that were in the jurisdiction of Rome and Constantinople. At that time the Church was not yet divided, but the tension between Rome and Constantinople was steadily on the increase. Some have questioned whether the Solun Brothers' mission reached Poland.

There are historians who claim that it did not spread that far to the north. Such a viewpoint, however, does not account for the phenomenon of the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition in the Orthodox Church that is present in Poland. Some historians claim that the Methodian Liturgy in the Slavonic language was carried out in the land of the Slavonic tribe of Vistulans and in Silesia when these lands were part of Poland, and Cracow was the Slavonic metropolis. The oldest volume in Polish is a collection of books known in scientific literature as the Supraśl Codex. It was written before 1014 on the territories of Eastern Bulgaria in the Cyrillic alphabet in Old Church Slavonic language. The first books in the world to be printed in the Cyrillic alphabet were printed in Cracow and, in fact, they were the very first publications in Poland. In the 16th century under the rule of Jagiellonian dynasty, Orthodox Catholics constituted approximately 40% of the republic; the Roman Catholics accounted for the same percentage. From the 14th century onward the western border remained intact, whereas the shifting borders in the east had heavy impact on the number of Orthodox Catholics at a given time.

3.2. Roman Catholics

When Poland received Christianity in the tenth century, it comprised the territory between the Russian grand duchy in the east, Prussia and Pomerania in the northeast and north, the Wendish tribes in the northwest, the German empire as far as the Oder in the west, and Moravia in the south and southwest. Christianity was introduced as a resultant of the Slavonic mission of the Greek Oriental Church; and, in particular, according to the oldest and most reliable reports from Bohemia, where it had obtained a permanent foothold under Duke Boleslaw I. the Pious. Duke Mieczyslaw married in 966 Dambrowka, the sister of Boleslaw II., duke of Bohemia, and in 967 accepted Christianity, followed immediately by the nobles and a part of the people. Further expansion was promoted by priests from Bohemia; and at the order of the duke all his subjects were baptized.

At this point Germany began missionary work in Poland. Under the protection of the emperor, Jordan, a German priest, worked with great zeal and under many difficulties, as missionary. The Poles had indeed accepted Christianity after the example of their duke, nominally; but in secret they were still attached to their old gods, and at a later time heathenism was yet strong enough to produce a reaction. The ecclesiastical organization of the country soon followed the acceptance of Christianity by the duke. This could not possibly have been accomplished by the efforts of the Slavonic-Greek mission; but the close political connection of Poland with Germany and the feudal relation of the duke to the emperor effected in the course of time close relations with the German-Occidental Church, and from these a firm foundation and organization of Polish Christianity proceeded. Mieczyslaw, in 977, after the death of his first wife, married Oda, the daughter of the Saxon Margrave Dietrich, under whose influence the Greek rite gave way to the Roman forms of church service (see ROMAN CATHOLICS, "UniateChurches").

Thus the connection of the Polish Church with the Roman Church was established, and under the influence of the political conditions the Roman Church gained the ascendancy over the unwilling Greek element. As the Roman missionaries from Germany did not speak the Polish language, they could not gain that influence over the people to which the Slavonic missionaries owed most of their success. Conflicts arose, and it became very

difficult to introduce the institutions of the Roman Church. The pope found it necessary to make temporary concessions; and preaching and liturgy were allowed in the vernacular. Until his death in 992 Mieczyslaw remained a faithful adherent of the imperial power. Under his son from his first marriage, Boleslaw Chrobry, "the Brave" (992 to 1025), one of the most powerful and valiant of the old Polish dukes, the tie of Poland with the Roman Church became still closer. Although Poland had not been fully Christianized even externally, it became under him a center for the further expansion of Christianity among the neighboring peoples, in that he made the mission serve his warlike undertakings. Boleslaw Chrobry had safeguarded St. Adalbert on his missionary tour to Prussia and afterward redeemed his remains; and over his grave in Gnesen he contracted an intimate friendship with Emperor Otto III. Gnesen became an archbishopric and the center of the Polish Church. Seven bishoprics were placed under its jurisdiction, among them Colberg, Cracow, and Breslau; and thus there was established the first comprehensive organization of the Polish Church. But with the foundation of the archbishopric of Gnesen Poland's connection with the archbishopric of Magdeburg and with the German Church and empire was loosened, and there gradually grew up a more immediate connection with Rome. As he had protected Adalbert on his missionary tour to Prussia, so Boleslaw aided powerfully the bold undertaking of Brun of Querfurt, the enthusiastic disciple of Adalbert, to bring the Gospel to the wild people of the far east. Boleslaw also sent to Sweden missionaries whose efforts were very successful. The further he extended his power over the neighboring Slavonic people, the stronger became his desire for a great Christian-Slavonic kingdom, the crown of which he asked from the pope. In 1018 the Greek empire in Constantinople feared its power and the Russian kingdom, in the capital of which, Kief, he erected a Roman Catholic bishopric, succumbed to it.

Originally, in 13th and 14th centuries the territory of Drohicki District could have been under the authority of the Bishops of Plock. During the period the jurisdiction, according to some researchers, was held only formally. He also assumes that under the rule of Halicz-Vladimir Princes it was not carried out at all, with an exception for the territory of castellany with the centre in Święck, the propriety of the Plock episcopate. The subsequent military activities, temporary shifts of national status and depopulation of the region led to a total set-back of the expansion of Catholicism in Podlasie. The establishment of the Latin rites on a larger scale in Podlasie followed the christianization of Lithuania in 1385.

4. CONCEPTS OF DIVERSITY

Diversity is defined as what differentiates one group of people from another along primary and secondary dimensions. Primary dimensions of diversity, which exert primary influence on one's identity, are gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, mental and physical abilities and characteristics. Secondary dimensions of diversity are less evident. They exert more diversified impact on a person's identity and add new traits to primary dimensions of diversity. They include: educational background, geographic location, religion, first language, family status, work style, work experience, organizational role and level, income and communication styles.

There is a definite trend towards the definitions of the multiplicity of diversity dimensions. Aredondo (2004) adds culture, social class, and language to the primary

dimensions; and health-care beliefs and leisure interests to the secondary dimensions. Further, she adds tertiary dimensions that encompass personal experience of history. Confrontation with the dimensions brings forward an analogy with an iceberg: the characteristics of race, ethnicity, gender, age and disability correspond with small, visible part of the iceberg. Other dimensions, such as religion, culture and political orientation, are less obvious, and they constitute secondary dimensions hidden just below the surface that may emerge in time. The tertiary dimensions lie deep down and often make up the core of an individual's identity. They constitute the very essence of diversity.

The dimensions of diversity are presented in Figure 1.

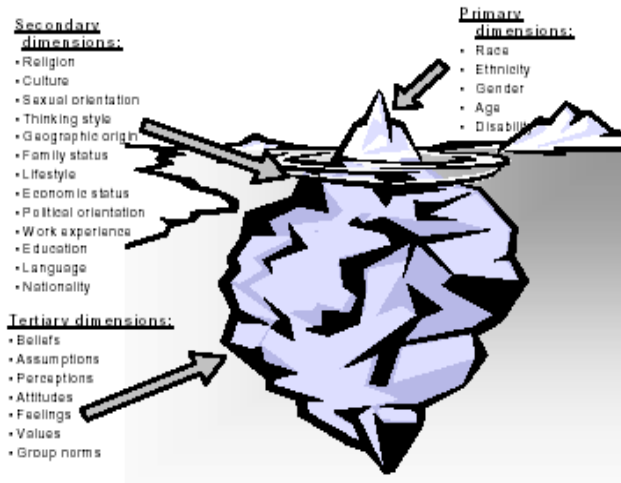


Fig. 1. Dimensions of Diversity

Source: Rijamampianina R., Caramichael T. (2005), "A Pragmatic and Holistic Approach to Diversity, Problems and Perspectives in Management" nr 1, (p.111).

5. VALUES PREFERENCES AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN PODLASIE

Differences among people stem from their different systems of value preferences. Diversity is nowadays an important characteristics of numerous organizations. Therefore diversity management has become an imperative of modern business.

The existence of differences in attributing certain ranks to values among various denominational groups (tertiary sphere of diversity) has been acknowledged by psychologists (Czerniawska and Leszczyński, 1996) in a research conducted among students from Podlasie and Mazovia regions. M. Czerniawska also accomplished a comparative analysis of value systems among the representatives of 9 religious denominations in the Central and North Eastern parts of Poland (Czerniawska, 2001). She researched the representatives of the Catholic, Orthodox, Muslim, Buddhist, Baptist, Lutheran, Seventh Day Adventist, Jehovah's Witnesses and Pentecostal denominations.

The research corroborated the statement that *religion is the factor differentiating the preferences for ultimate and instrumental values.*

In Czerniawska's research, creed determined an independent variable; preferences for ultimate and instrumental values made dependent variable. Rank ascribed to a particular value was the indicator. Value held in highest esteem obtained rank 1; value appreciated least was rank 20. In the research, M. Czerniawska applied her own Scale of Values, which was a modified version of Milton Rokeach's (1973) questionnaire research. Statistical analysis aimed at presenting the differences between the indicators of preferences for 20 ultimate values and 20 instrumental values depending on a particular denomination followed. The ultimate values taken into consideration were: *accomplishment, beauty, composure, equality, exciting life, family, freedom, friendship, happiness, life and health, love, material well-being, perfection, pleasure, preservation of nature, safety, salvation, self-esteem, social maturity, social status.* They were juxtaposed with instrumental values such as: *ambitious, capable, cheerful, clean, courageous, creative, diligent, faithful, forgiving, helpful, honest, independent, intellectual, logical, loving, obedient, polite, responsible, tolerant, sedate.*

Quality and quantity of the suggested values and the assumed categorization of values differ the applied Scale of Values from the one used by Rokeach. It means that the participants in the research were not compelled to separate ranking of values, and values perceived as equally important could be positioned on the same level. It was meant to decrease the probability of creating an imaginary system of values. It also allowed for the establishment of the number of hierarchy levels representing a genuine mind-based system of values (participants were not bound to distribute a certain number of elements within a closed structure, which meant that high preference for one value did not entail low preference for another value).

The research encompassed 9 denominational groups: Catholics (100 people), Orthodox Church believers (50), Baptists (50), Lutherans (50), Pentecostals (50), Seventh Day Adventists (50), Jehovah's Witnesses (50), Muslims (50) and Buddhists (50). It was conducted in 1998-1999 in Podlaskie and Mazovia voivodeships on the group of day and extra-mural students of Warsaw Christian Academy of Theology and Bialystok College of Catholic Theology. Non-Christian denominations were researched in their shrines and meeting centers. Groups were standardized according to sex (50% male and 50% female), age (19-30 years old), education (high school or higher). Anonymity of response was provided.

The indicators of preferences for 20 ultimate values and 20 instrumental values were obtained from every participant. High preferences for such values as *salvation, love, family, composure* among ultimate values was found in all participant groups. Moral values such as *loving, honest, responsible, faithful* were emphasized among instrumental values.

The statistical analysis consistent with the formulated hypothesis was meant to point out the differences among the indicators of preferences for 20 ultimate values and 20 instrumental values depending on the independent variable i.e. denomination. Non-parametrical analysis of Kurkal-Wallis variance was applied for the comparison of preference indicators among particular groups. The result of the analysis proved that in the cases of 20 ultimate values and 18 instrumental values the researched samples, selected with regard to religious affiliation, did not belong to the same population. Such analysis leads to the conclusion that religion is one of the most fundamental factors

determining human value system and, simultaneously, it enables positive verification of the hypothesis put forward in the research.

Divergence analysis in the context aspect of value system can also be conducted through the comparison of those groups that had highest and lowest indicators of preferences for particular values. In such an attitude the difference between average ranks of two "extreme" groups is taken into consideration. In analyzing the scale of ultimate values the greatest disparity was observed in the case of such values as *preservation of nature* and *freedom*. The smallest difference in preferences was found regarding the notions of *love, happiness* and *salvation*.

Similar characteristics obtained for the scale of instrumental values proved the existence of distinct disparities on the level of accepting such values as *independent, obedient, logical*. Values: *diligent* and *honest* were most similar in preferences.

The research outcome presented above indicates that denominational groups in question present biggest differences in attitudes describing inter-human relations in terms of *freedom-dependence* and *ecological* value.

Considering the dissimilarity of ranks ascribed to particular values by the member of various religions, it can be assumed that managers in Podlaskie Voivodeship are confronted with cultural differences among their employees – perceived as differences in the professed values – on a daily basis. Assuming that this dimension is pivotal for the notion of cultural diversity, it can be further stated that their administrative activities take on the function of managing cultural diversity.

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Building bridges between disciplines – aspects of teaching consumer citizenship

The concept of interdisciplinarity in consumer and sustainable education – secondary schools

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A transdisciplinary approach to consumers education is needed at all levels of society to guarantee options for a future based on the concepts of sustainability, equity, justice and peace. A trans-disciplinary understanding of the world's problems - when transmitted to the public at large - is the starting point for developing a new global consciousness to drive changes in behaviour and lifestyles. Likewise, such a perspective is the basis for the development of options for informed decision-making to manage the transition to consumers education and sustainability locally, nationally and globally. As the prefix “trans” indicates, transdisciplinarity involves going between, across, and beyond different disciplines and develops both a new vision and a new experience of learning.

The move toward transdisciplinarity is closely linked with changes in ways of thinking about the challenges and changes facing the world. The concept of sustainable development emerged in the 1980s in response to a growing realisation of the need to balance economic and social progress with concern for the environment and natural resources. Since then, there has been a growing understanding of the complexity and interrelationships of problems such as poverty, wasteful consumption, environmental degradation, urban decay, population growth, gender inequality, health, conflict, and the violation of human rights. Addressing these complex problems requires transdisciplinary and inter-sectoral approaches that provide people -and especially students- with the tools to confront and adapt to the changes taking place around them; decision-makers with the information, skills, and will to make future-oriented choices; and the international community with a global commitment to a world of socially just and peaceful development.

Education of sustainable development includes objectives, content themes, and learning and assessment processes to encourage changes in moral attitudes and behaviours and lifestyles. It not only encourages learning how to make decisions that consider the long-term future of the economy, ecology and social well-being of all communities, but also seeks to empower people to make decisions that assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future and aware consumers.

The speaker, considering the existing situation, formulates a proposal for teaching regarding transdisciplinary sustainable consumption education for secondary schools.

INTRODUCTION

The meaning of Transdisciplinary

Trans has several meanings. It refers to that which is *across the* disciplines, *between the* disciplines, and *beyond and outside all* disciplines. It *traverses* all possible disciplines. To traverse means to crisscross, zigzag, and move laterally from side to side. The objective of transdisciplinary is to understand the present world, in all of its complexities, instead of focusing on one part of it. Indeed, transdisciplinary research is being conceptualized as both: (a) a specific kind of interdisciplinary research involving scientific and non-scientific sources or practice; and, more excitingly, (b) a new form of learning and problem solving involving cooperation among *different parts of society*, including academia, in order to meet the complex challenges of society. Through mutual learning, the knowledge of all participants is enhanced and this new learning is used to collectively devise solutions to intricate societal problems that are interwoven. Out of the dialogue between academia and other parts of society, new results and new interactions are produced, offering a new vision of nature and reality.

Didactics is complex because knowledge is complex

Didactics should be interdisciplinary as knowledge itself is too. Disciplines are useful for the classification of knowledge and are necessary for the organization of the teaching action plan.

Though, it is necessary to think in terms of disciplinary areas, so that knowledge interconnection and cognitive experiences are facilitated; transversal competences are guaranteed; project activities are developed. Besides, students will be able to recognize their own attitudes and inclinations.

Disciplinary to understand the world – interdisciplinarity to learn how to project

The model of knowledge division, as it developed in the historical process of disciplines, created a major incommunicability among the school subjects. Disciplines, on the contrary, should be considered in a “laboratory” dimension, in an open space. Today we have a need of rebuilding the school system, but school itself cannot do this alone. Interdisciplinarity is not yet considered as a real teaching activity, though this is not just schools' fault: the disciplinary organization was created between the 18th and 19th century and derives from science sociology. As a matter of fact, school does not create knowledge, but it reproduces it by dissemination. Now, what kind of knowledge and disciplines' categorization do teacher apply to their teaching modalities? A paradox comes from the world of cultural production: there is a crisis in disciplines' distinction and at the same time a domination of subjects specialism. One of the thesis that have been proposed regards disciplinarity as a means to understand world and interdisciplinarity to learn how to undertake projects. The first one should focus on the

first years of secondary school; the second one on the last period. Thanks to disciplinarity we can understand world for at least three reasons:

because through disciplines we can learn the knowledge's geography, by respecting its boundaries;

because disciplinarity includes a number of competences, without which knowledge would become vague and inaccurate;

because interdisciplinarity is not compatible with the initial moments of a higher cognitive formation, but regards people who are reaching a certain degree of knowledge and maturity.

Through interdisciplinarity we can learn to make projects, to make use of practical thinking, to research and at the same time we can avoid hyperspecialization, which is often useless. The creation of an interdisciplinary -or multidisciplinary- research object allows information exchange, cooperation, multi-competence.

Pluridisciplinarity, interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity.

With the term pluridisciplinarity we denote the acquisition of a number of competences through different subjects. There is still quite a lot of confusion about this term, but a more clear explanation has been offered by Jean Piaget, Swiss psychologist and epistemologist. He determined three different competence criteria:

1. *Pluridisciplinarity (or multidisciplinarity)*: aggregation of competences deriving from extrinsic criteria: for example, given a topic (the “romantic hero”, the concept of “time”..), more disciplines are linked to each other because they all consider different views of the topic itself. The learning object is *building connections*;

2. *Interdisciplinarity*: aggregation of competences deriving from the experience of solving a problem. The aggregation element is intrinsic: given a *problem* (i.e. the understanding of literary essay or the interpretation of a work of art), different information and methods are identified and used, in order to solve it. The learning object is *building a project*;

- *transdisciplinarity*: aggregation of competences that creates new disciplinary areas: i.e., environmental science, ecology...

EXAMPLES OF TRANSDISCIPLINARY PROJECTS - ITALY

Well-being education

Independently -or at a national level- schools undertake specific projects, which are considered essential in order to train students to live in a responsible way in the today's complex society.

Food education: to acknowledge food as well-being, work, tradition, relation between time and history, open dialogues between ourselves and society.

Road safety education: roads as a communication and meeting network; respect of road code means respect for people;

Correct use of drugs: medicines are friends we should not abuse of; knowledge is life and ignorance is death.

Smoke and drug prevention: prevention is the best solution; people must find proper pathways to solve their own problems and to build a strong personality. Happiness can be built -step by step, not “taken”.

Project Orienteering: showing kids what is the best school choice for them, considering their preferences and inclinations.

Other **projects**, of particular relevance, are organized year by year, according to the requests i.e. [Anorexia and Bulimia](#)).

Each project has a reference teacher, who coordinates its realization.

SUSTAINABILITY AS A LOCAL TRADITIONAL CULTURE

-Actions-

- Analysis of the relation between cultural heritage and sustainable education at a regional and national level: data collection (hard copy and multimedia material).
- Identification of the connection between local cultural heritage and vertical curricula of the different school disciplinary areas.
- Teaching of new forms of knowledge related to students' own cultural heritage, in order to enhance the development of *sense of belonging, interest, awareness* and *respect* for their own and other people's culture.
- Steady collaborations among school institutions and didactic sections of museums, libraries and archives. In this way, always new learning pathways will be created and updated.
- Creation of learning material and tools to realize curricular pathways, that might enhance the dimension of transversality, by collaborating with regional and national competent authorities.

CTRRCE PROPOSALS

PROJECT "CONSUMER AWARENESS"

Typology:

- project by modules – TARGET: II level secondary schools ;
- to be repeated in later school years, so that all students can complete their learning path while attending their study course.

Subjects involved:

- biology
- IT
- history
- geography
- sports

Objective:

within health education sector:

- to provide students with basic information about the proposed topics
- to foster the training of a basic consumer, safety and food education

Contents:

I “What do labels say?” – a guide to the interpretation of labels' meaning , evaluation of information completeness, according to the EC legislation in force; considerations upon food label nutritional facts, along with principles of correct eating and diet.

II “Deceptive advertising” - criteria defining advertising deceptiveness; competences of the Italian Competition Authority; tools for consumers to report incorrect behaviors.

III “Safe Internet: guide for surfers” – guide to a correct use of the Internet (including e-commerce); problems and pitfalls that users might encounter using the Internet; devices and tricks to defend ourselves.

IV “Small electrical appliances safety” – risk factors in using small appliances;

IV “ House safety” – a critical guide to possible dangers hidden in our homes, including tips to avoid accidents.

V “Drugs: warnings and instructions” – guide to self-medication and over-the-counter drugs.

Before the seminar, the teachers give the students a questionnaire, in order to acknowledge the modality of their drugs' intake.

Examples of modules

SAFE CONSUMPTION EDUCATION FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Learning objectives:

to educate students to a safe consumption

Contents:

to make students aware that everyone has the right to be safe while:

- at home
- playing
- eating
- on the road
- at school
- buying a product
- breathing
- at the stadium
- at the swimming pool

Proposals:

- Province, national and European legislation on the use of gas, energy and sewage system.
- “Clean energy”: what if cars ran with solar panels?
- Safety at school: handicaps and safety. Are disabled students protected at school?
- “Shall we go by tram?” Let’s make a project.
- Young people and safety: Saturday nights.
- Nuclear energy: from atoms to atomic energy.
- Infrastructures at risk: swimming pools, gyms, buses, stadiums...
- Misleading and deceptive advertising: wrong purchases.

Working methods:

- Group researches with the support of teachers of different subjects
- Searching for new urban projects at district offices
- Trams: yesterday and today. Work on the city of Bolzano in the 1940s.
- Visits at the city stadium and swimming pools

Examples of modules

CORRECT EATING EDUCATION

Learning objectives:

- Defending our health by consuming better
- defending ourselves from allergies and food intolerances
- How to detect endemic diseases due to poor hygiene

Contents:

- food additives
- cleanliness and hygiene in public utilities (bars, cafès, stores..)
- diseases due to poor hygiene and their transmission

THE INTRODUCTION OF SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTH EDUCATION INTO SCHOOL

Helping young people accept their own identity as a necessary condition for the acceptance of the “other”, solidarity, ethic and the ability to face risks that endanger the achievement of well-being.

The notion of “**feeling good with other people within our cultural environment, in touch with other cultures**” focuses upon solving socio-cultural difficulties. The idea of “**feeling good within institutions, in a Europe that leads the world**” is aimed at shortening the distance between vital social and institutional worlds. In other words, the projects underline the premise that, “to successfully make the transition from adolescent, teenager, and then on to adulthood in a happy healthy manner, requires people to meet, interact, and integrate with other people and institutions.

“**Feeling good**” is synonymous with positive well-being which is the antithesis of “**discomfort**”, the main cause of academic, social, and professional failure”.

This educational approach led school to add a new subject –health and sustainable education- and to re-elaborate its teaching methods, its relational system and its curricula, in order to give the student the chance to experience the exertion of responsibility, the balance between training and information means, social roles and the relationship between other people and environment.

Besides this general goal, health and sustainable education offer other specific goals – didactic and educational.

The intended goals of the curriculum are:

- providing the students with basic knowledge of health education and environment protection, that they will develop for their future life;
- creating a critical knowledge in the individual regarding health and the code of behaviour to maintain and a critical consciousness regarding sustainable consumption;
- teaching health education and sustainability, in order to prevent risks inside and outside the school environment;

To reach these didactic and educational goals, health education and sustainability have been developed around the concept of educational/didactic planning.

Health and sustainable education projects should adhere to the following criteria:

- giving up the traditional approaches, such as normative prohibition;
- educating people with a particular emphasis on the interdependence between health and life style;
- searching for contents and methods which are appropriate for kids;
- maintaining a long-lasting relation between information and education;
- observing school reality from the view point of students and teachers who face discomfort;
- determining available resources and potentialities;
- educating people on concept: to live well with less resources it's possible;
- educating young people on use again of materials.

The development of health and consumption education introduced a new role: the reference teacher: this role has been introduced by a law which is valid all over the national territory. The functions of the reference teacher –chosen by the school director after being proposed by the teacher staff- are hereby described:

- fostering the spread of information within school;
- promoting training activities for the other teachers;
- offering consulting and support to the initiatives brought out by the students;
- involving families and local infrastructures in prevention activities.
- monitoring discomfort situations, by using the proper resources which can be found within schools and on the territory;
- assisting planning work groups in facing problems that rise at school;
- helping school directors realize the projects;
- constantly monitoring the activated projects.

Proposal of training route

The subjects of the reference teachers' training lessons:

- the concept of health within complex society;
- the propagation of health in the age of development;
- the educational challenges of the social complexity;
- the condition of adolescence in the social complexity;
- the educational relationship;
- the group "class": its dynamics, evolution, and educational management;
- the educational and curriculum within health/consumption education and within sustainability;
- the educational and teaching evaluation within health/consumption education and within sustainability;
- the educational cooperation and the respect of the others;
- the equitable work and the agree consumption;
- the interpretation of needs, risk factors and resources;
- new perspectives of sustainable education according to the new school reform.

Specific subjects of the didactic route of high schools can be:

- **Information and Consulting Centers:** history, evolution and normative aspect of an ICC planning;
- the role of a reference teacher within the ICC management;
- the role of ICC within the working and consumption formation of the adolescents;
- awkwardness of adolescence and its indicators;
- listening to the needs and problems of adolescents;
- ethic education and new consumption style;
- the social system of prevention for human people and environment.

All in all, the specific goals that should be reached within high schools are:

planning, implementation and management of an ICC together with its integration within the social system of total prevention and well-being;
 ability to understand the adolescent condition, with special reference to the needs of every single teenager and possible indicators of awkwardness;
 ability to introduce the use of multimedia technologies for the swift researches.

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Implementation of elements of critical thinking within teaching content

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Key words

Critical thinking, reading, using a text, mind maps, teacher training, comprehensive school.

The development of economic thinking is closely connected with the development of independent critical thinking and evaluation skills. Economy and Consumer Science topics connect the material being acquired and life within general education school subjects, but the latest researches on independent critical thinking and developing evaluation skills prove that when teaching separate skills and facts that are separated from tasks and aims of real life, we decrease students' opportunities of critical thinking.

Education may be conceived as a system of learning experiences that bring about desirable changes in students. Guilford has analyzed the "Structure of Intellect" into several primary categories. Among these are:

1. *Cognitive memory* – simple reproduction of facts or other items. Cognitive abilities involve the discovery, recognition, or comprehension of information in various forms.
2. *Convergent thinking* – analysis and integration of data, leading to one expected answer because of the tightly structured framework through which the individual must respond. This type of thinking may be involved in solving a problem, summarizing material, or establishing a logical sequence of ideas.
3. *Divergent thinking* – ability to generate one's own ideas or take a new direction. The individual can take off from established facts, see further implications, or make unique associations.

4. *Evaluative thinking* – ability to construct his own value dimension, make an assessment, offer a modification of a prior judgment, or declare opposition to the position of another person./Cynthia., Schuster, 1958/.

Process of Critical Thinking

The steps involved in critical thinking	Description
<p>1. Identifying and defining the central issues.</p>	<p>Crucial words and phrases need to be defined according to the ways in which they will be used in discussing the immediate problem. Schuster has said that there are two kinds of definitions:</p> <p>(1) <i>report</i> or <i>dictionary definitions</i> are statements of common usage which may need further clarification of any particular meanings that have been adopted by certain groups or at certain times;</p> <p>(2) <i>stipulative definitions</i> declare the intention of a person to use a word in a given meaning during a given discussion.</p> <p>The difference between these two types of definitions might be illustrated with the word "cooperate."</p>
<p>2. Recognizing the underlying assumptions and forming hypotheses</p>	<p><i>Teacher</i> defined an assumption as "a proposition treated as true without examination. Assumptions may be generally accepted, they may not be accepted, or there may be some doubt as to their truth. Sometimes we are aware of the assumptions upon which we act, and at other times we are completely unaware of the underlying assumptions—we take things for granted." An illustration that might be used to show how assumptions serve as short-cuts was given.</p>
<p>3. Selecting and organizing relevant facts and evaluating the evidence.</p>	<p>Students need guidance in discriminating between facts that are relevant and those that are irrelevant to a problem. As they read, they should learn to evaluate how the evidence was obtained and whether the conclusions need to be revised in the light of more recent data. They should learn to recognize the need for further data to confirm, qualify, or negate the evidence that is available. In addition, they should be able to differentiate between factual evidence and opinion.</p>
<p>4. Drawing warranted conclusions.</p>	<p>The process of logical thinking is not complete until a student learns to come to a conclusion. Among the abilities that are involved in drawing warranted</p>

	<p>conclusions are the following.</p> <p><i>Ability to see the point.</i> The ability to recognize the point in question and to stick to it until it has been dealt with is the first essential in reaching a sound conclusion.</p> <p><i>Ability to restrict generalizations.</i> Schuster pointed out that hasty generalizations or leaping to a general conclusion from too few instances is very common. People fail to distinguish between an illustration and a proof. Or, they assume that two things that occur simultaneously or in sequence have a causal connection.</p> <p><i>Ability to base conclusions on sound facts.</i> As mentioned above, facts must be separated from opinions. Precautions must be taken against errors of observation, memory.</p>
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Critical thinking includes three phases:

- **Phase of initiation** (one can apply associative drawing, a piece of music, varied questions, brainstorm, a sentence, an idea, an aphorism, etc);
- **Phase of comprehension** (adjustment, editing, asking to repeat it again, etc);
- **Phase of reflection** (a mind map, a chart, revision of the basic conceptions, a discussion, a group discourse, essays, etc)/Sorosa fonds,Latvija, 1999./

Reading is one of the elements to develop critical thinking. This process is based on the following assumptions:

- *Reading is the main technique to help people gain new information.*
- *It is not sufficient to learn to read. Pupils should learn to read advisedly.*
- *Reading is the technique of thinking and learning, rather than just a school subject.*
- *Reading and doing after-reading exercises make the way to critical analysis.*
- *In order to acquire teaching content it is necessary to read a considerable amount of the text without any assistance, therefore reading comprehension can facilitate understanding and analysis of teaching content.*
- *There is a close link between reading and writing. Understanding reading – writing relationship facilitates learning./Lubkina V., 2006.-2007./*

Work with texts at the lesson depends on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding of the topic, as well as on aims of the lesson and on the way the text is being read.

There are five ways of applying the text:

1. The text can be applied for the check-up in order to consolidate or controvert the previous views or comprehension

This kind of text can help pupils to find out the differences between the information being presented directly or indirectly.

2. The text can be applied as an indirect reference allowing pupils to compare and contrast the gained information

This kind of text helps those pupils who are able to memorize the material, but not always understand the relevance of it.

3. The text can help to attract attention to teaching aims repeatedly applying the text as a conversation mainspring

In this way the text is applied most frequently. However, if it is applied too often, it can downplay the discussion and overwhelm pupils' knowledge activity.

4. Paraphrasing the ideas in the text within work with the most complicated text

This is the way how to develop pupils' strongest belief in their own strength. Paraphrase should be applied in connection with other kinds of the text application in order to prevent pupils' complete reliance on it.

5. "Closed book" opportunity

Makes pupils mainly remember the information being read in the text. It should be applied in connection with other kinds of the text application in order to prevent them from mere memorizing the text when reading./Lubkina V.,2006.-2007./

One of the most difficult tasks is to define the aim of reading of the selected text and understand the most important results to be achieved with the help of reading. If there is no clear aim, pupils feel uncertain, get confused and are not motivated to read. The teacher's main task is to help pupils to become active and thinking readers through reading with pleasure, linking their thoughts with the text, reacting to the text, understanding the difference between lower-level comprehension reading and reading for thinking.

Hitherto, great attention was paid to what is written and much less it was thought about the way different people perceive the written by the author, as every reader perceives it in his own way.

Reading as an element of critical thinking includes:

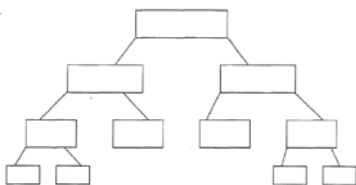
- Setting the aim linked with the content of the text and clear formulating of the expected result;
- Thinking over the notions which can be necessary for content comprehension;
- Getting acquainted with the most important notions found in the text that are unknown or normally used in another meaning;
- Speculating about the content of the text;
- Refreshing the previous knowledge on the selected topic;
- Arousing a discussion on the content of the text; searching for relationships and interconnections between the present topic and the previous one or life activity;
- Asking questions to make thoughtful reading easier.
- Literary texts can represent various genres and possess different structures, nevertheless, in education, when structuring the text material, mind maps are used when applying the elements of critical thinking.

Mind maps are used for:

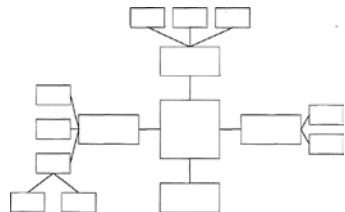
- Creating a logical system;
- Creating comprehension of interconnection of things and processes;
- Finding out what is known about the given topic;
- Creating comprehension of to what extent people's perception of the same thought or notion differs
- Writing down the information;
- Facilitating planning presentations, compositions, essays, projects;
- Writing down the course of the discussion.

Various models are used for creating mind maps /see pictures 1 – 5/ (Geske, Grinfelds, 2006)

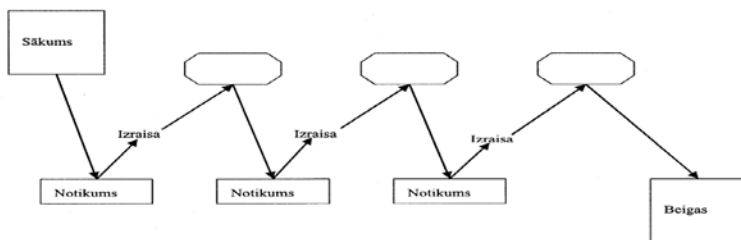
Picture 1. Description mind map model



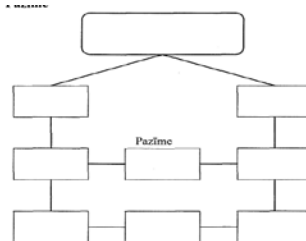
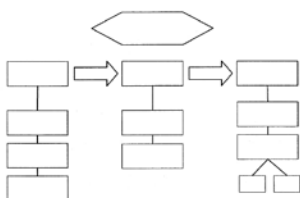
Picture 2. Topical mind map model



Picture 3. Problem/ solving or reason/ consequence model of mind maps



Picture 4. Successive episodes model of the mind maps Picture 5. Comparative/ contrast model



Within the European Social Fund project *Latgale Region Teachers' Competence Development for Implementation of the New Standard for Basic Education in Comprehensive School* (Contract No 2006/0088/VPD1/ESF/PIAA/05/ APK/ 3.2.5.2./0097/0160) the participants of the course were offered to acquire the methods of work with mind maps so that they could apply it in their work with pupils. In the course 20 teachers participated from 15 Latgale region schools including 5 teachers of Mathematics, 2 teachers of foreign languages, 6 teachers of Latvian and Latvian Literature, 2 primary school teachers, 2 teachers of Social Sciences and 3 teachers of Nature Sciences and Geography.

The course included teachers' analysis of the regulation documentation issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia and the new standard for basic education which states that the seven educational aspects must be reflected in every school subject. In order not only to develop teachers' critical thinking, but also to make

application of the gained skills in their work with pupils easier, the following task was given for group work:

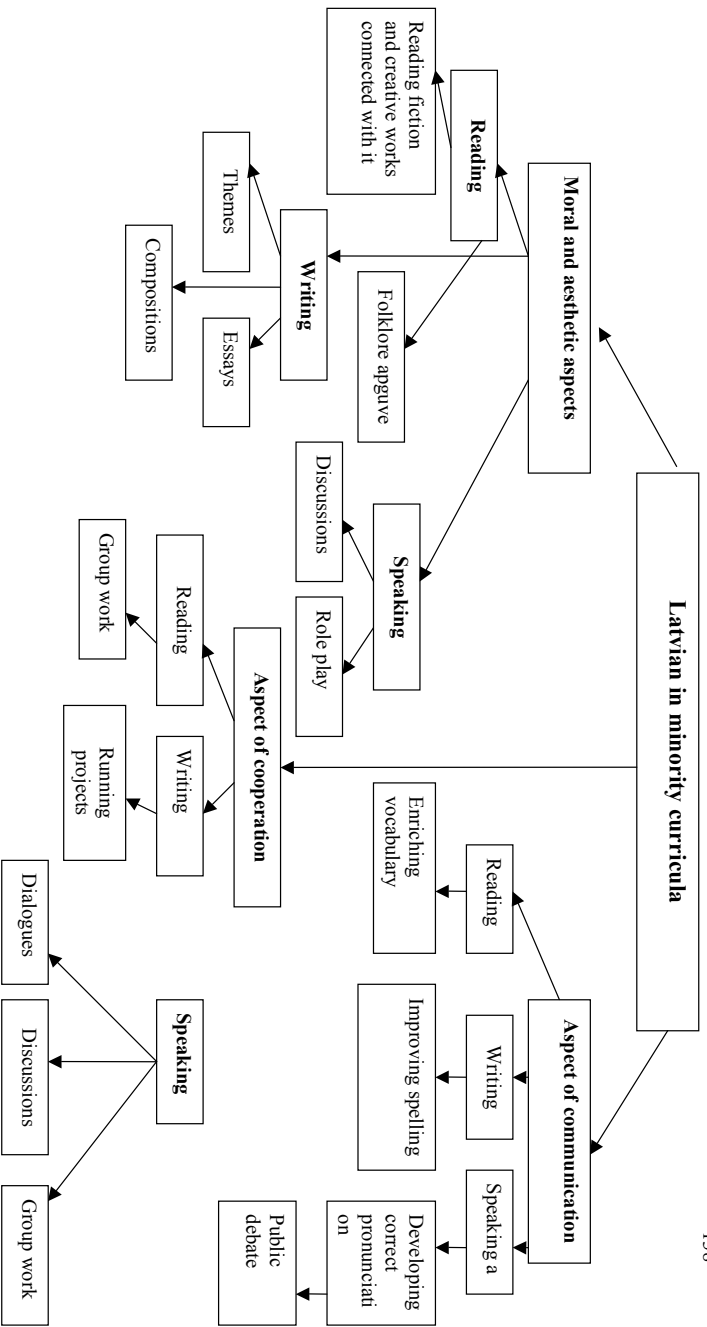
- applying any of the mind map models to make logical structures being based on the educational aspects stated in the education regulation documentation of Latvia.

The teachers worked with the same text material which they read, analyzed and thought about the ways of reflecting it visually. Three groups of teachers involving mainly language teachers, applied the description model creating a hierarchic system and reflecting the main thing, i.e. the educational aspects followed by explanations. Two mind maps are seen in pictures 6 and 7; they were applied for doing the same task and reflect different approaches to solving the problem. One of the groups created their mind map stressing reading, writing and speaking; nevertheless, another group reflected there acquisition of competences: language competence, communicative competence, teaching competence and sociocultural competence.

One more group of teachers applied the topical model /picture 8/, but another one used the comparison model /picture 9/. These group results show graphically the diversity of variants, opportunities of their usability not only in critical thinking, but also in integration of education content for implementation of different topics in comprehensive school.

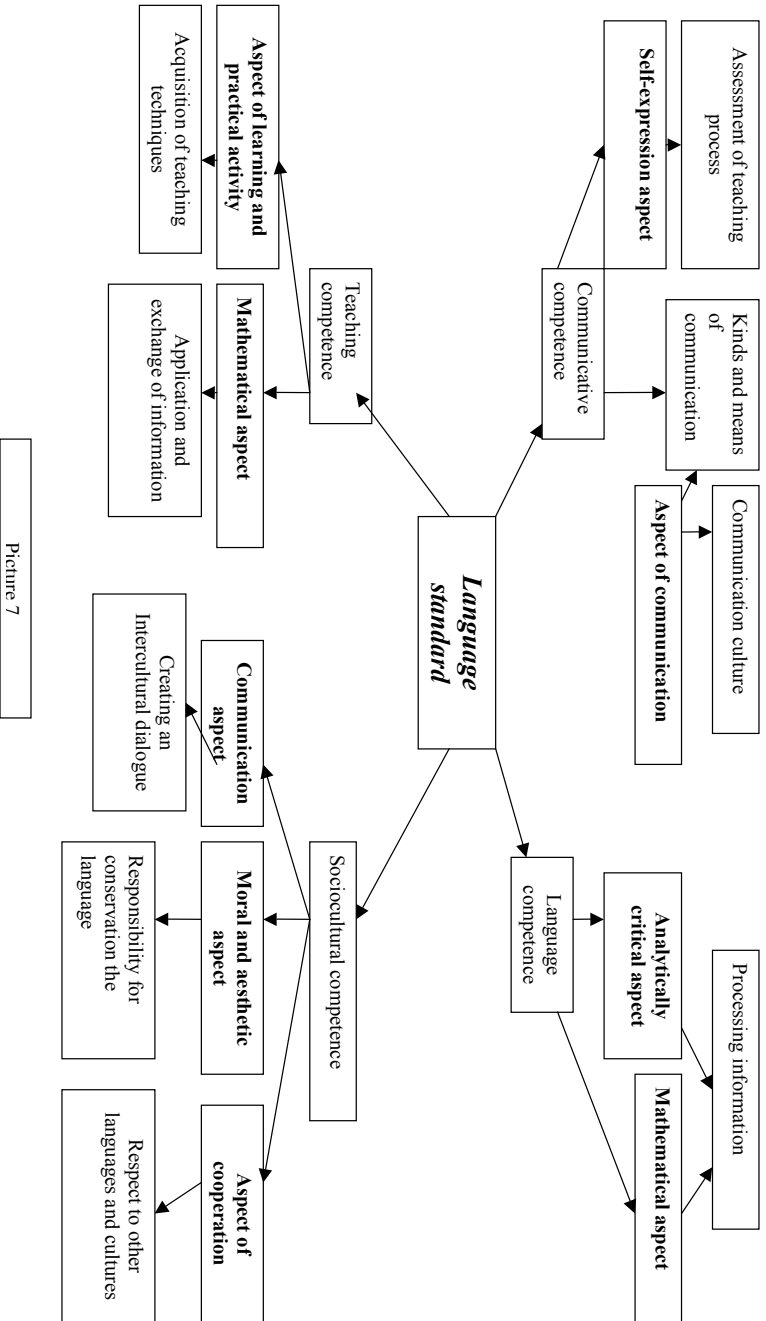
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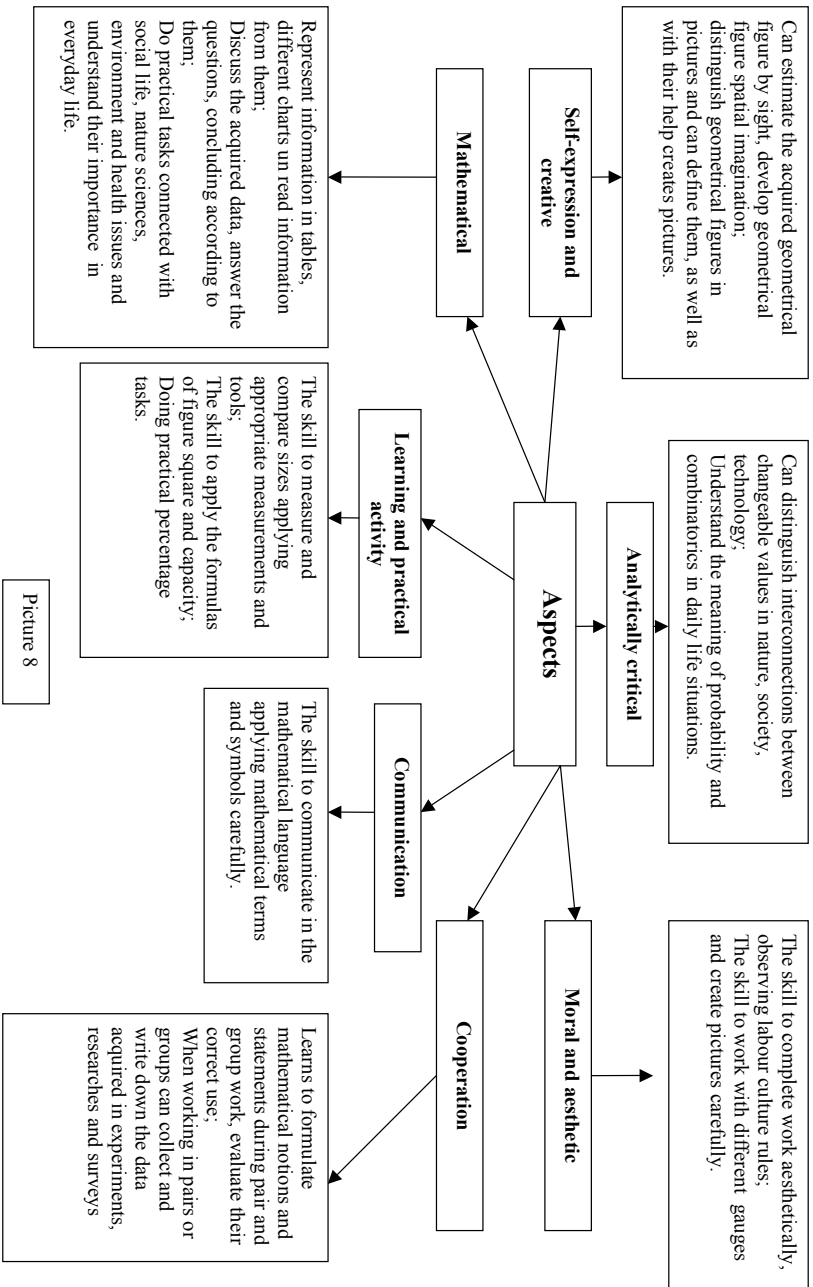


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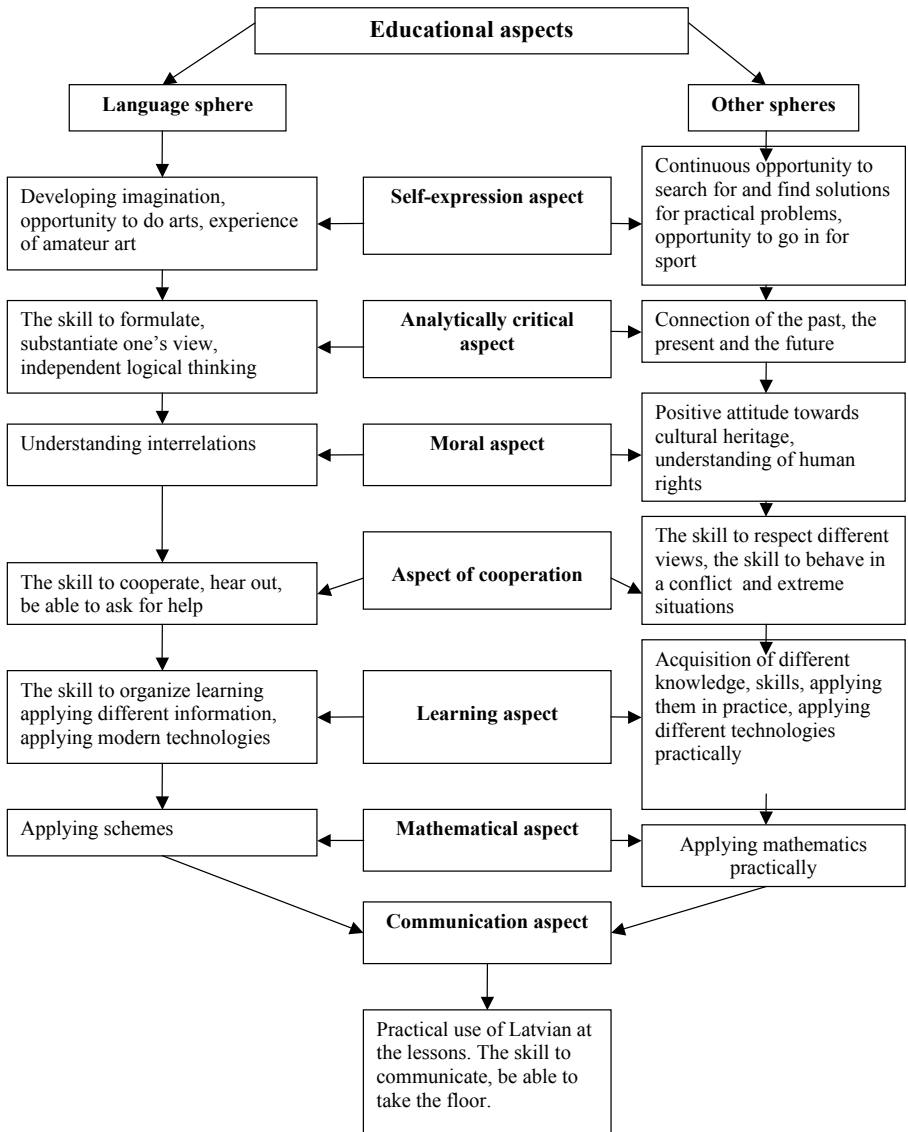
Picture 6



Picture 7



Picture 8



Picture 9

Consumer citizenship – bridges and cross roads

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Abstract

In the submitted paper the authors present a work version of a draft model called How to build the bridge. Through that model the relationships among particular stakeholders of consumer environment are described and the steps leading to reaching their mutual agreement are outlined. The model is only in the first phase of its building and it will necessitate further elaborating.

In the second part of the paper a summary of input information for the creation and searching mutual relationships in the model can be found.

Pre-face

Consumers must therefore wield the relevant capabilities, knowledge, information and confidence in their consumer rights. Consumer rights must be clear and understandable.

Consumers must have access to corresponding, adequate sources of guidance and must be able to draw on conditions and resources to seek the enforcement of their rights, including the use of out-of-court alternative dispute resolutions.

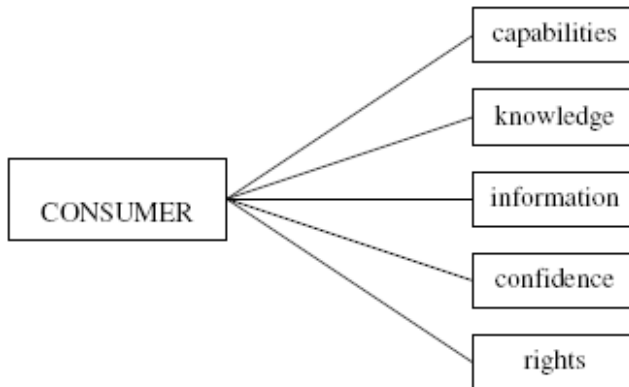
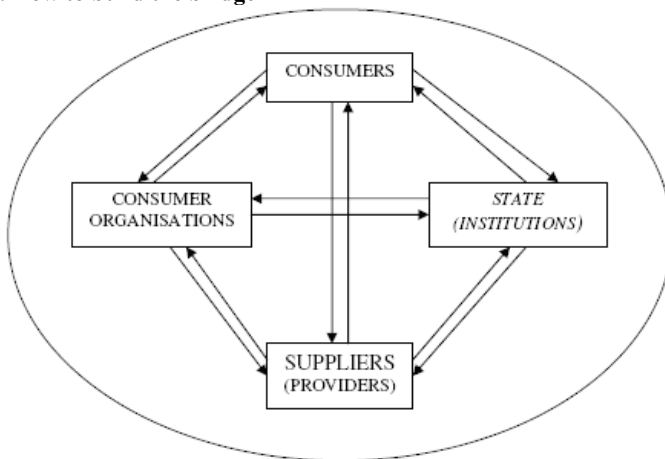


Fig. 1: What does the consumer require?

Formulating this orders it should be mindful of the fact that cross-border trading in goods and services, especially on the EU's internal market, is already expanding. Services are constantly developing, including financial services and services of general interest, such as services connected with power, gas and water supply, transport, and telecommunications. In these areas, too, it will be necessary to pay close attention to and enforce the protection of consumers' warranted interests.

From the above-mentioned enumeration of requirements it is obvious that consumers problems are an issue that does not concern only state institutions.

1. How to build the bridge



Steps leading to the application of the model:

1. Definition of the basic groups of stakeholders
2. Who is usually included in each defined group (national and international environment should be taken into account).
3. What particular groups of stakeholders require.
4. What particular groups of stakeholders can offer.
5. How to find a consensus between requirements and offer, i.e. how to build a bridge?

Fig. 2. Model: How to build the bridge

Example of the procedure for the stakeholder Consumers is described in Appendix 1. We drew our inspiration to the creation of a work draft of the model from the model built by M. Mikušová in her Ph.D. thesis.

At present we are engaged in the starting phase of processing the model. For the time being we will concentrate on input issues. This paper we consider as an introductory step on our way leading to the creation, accomplishment and searching of mutual relationships, and to probable testing of the model. In addition to it the outlined model requires further searching and adjustments. We hope it will also serve as an inspiration to our colleagues whose possible cooperation in its further development would be welcome.

In the following we are trying to create a summary of input information for the creation and searching of mutual relationships in the model but not yet trying to accomplish it. From what has already been said, however, the requirements and offers of some stakeholders will be obvious. To be able to meet them, it will be necessary to build a bridge.

2. Development of relationships among particular stakeholders

We will pay attention to some priorities significantly concerning all involved stakeholders. In our following work on the model we will start from those determined priorities. We will assign to particular stakeholders their requirements and offers. Then we will try to define how to do it that these requirements and offers would advantageously cross. Furthermore, we will try to find out under what conditions and in which way it is possible to create a bridge between them.

2. 1 The protection of consumer rights

In terms of the protection of consumer rights related to dangerous and harmful products, it is necessary to provide rigorous and effective enforcement of the law via market watchdogs, and to cooperate in this field at national level, with the European Commission and its warning systems, and with the supervisory bodies of other Member States. This cooperation can be manifested in various ways, from specific cooperation in the investigation of a case to participation in organizations or associations that specialize in the harmonization of procedures and methodology for risk assessment, in the creation of a database of screened products, etc. One such organization is the European PROSAFE (Product Safety Enforcement Forum if Europe). At the same time, it is advisable to support the creation of codes of ethics connected with the manufacture and sale of products and the provision of services.

In connection with new legislation and the recodification of the Civil Code, it would be expedient to review the current Consumer Protection Act and adapt it to the new conditions.

Behaviour among enterprises that harms the economic interests of consumers is re-emerging in the wake of the liberalization of certain network sectors, such as energy and telecommunications. A rise in consumer complaints can be expected in services, especially financial and travel services, and in connection with the advancing e-commerce. As new digital technologies are developed, the need to protect consumers in relation to the use of these technologies has also surfaced.

In the preparation of legislative measures, we will continue the established trend of involving consumers (via nongovernmental civic associations) and representatives of enterprises in the legislative process.

2. 2 Dialogue between state institutions and consumers, and dialogue between enterprises and consumers

The main areas here will be:

- support for the establishment of codes of ethics and other activities by business entities, including the creation of instruments to ensure the practical implementation of these codes and their thorough application by enterprises,
- intensification of dialogue between consumers and state institutions, mainly by fostering conditions for consumers, or their representatives, to take part in discussions of matters that affect consumers; the opportunity to put forward comments in the legislative process, involvement in various working parties on specific areas, such as the creation of standards,
- the promotion and capacity-building of consumer organizations, reinforcement of consumer organizations and their capacities in areas and regions,
- representation of consumer interests in European and international forums, in particular greater participation of consumer representatives in the field of standardization,
- support for the principle of comprehensive planning (design for all) so that the proposed solutions are satisfactory for all consumers, including those of limited movement or orientation,
- intensification of dialogue between consumer representatives and enterprises.

Dialogue can be viewed as a means of preventing irresponsible and manipulative behaviour by enterprises in relation to economically weaker consumers. In order for dialogue not to remain as mere declarations, they must contain transparent instruments for the enforcement of obligations.

2. 3 Market oversight

The effectiveness of market supervision needs to be enhanced in the following areas:

- the safety of products and services on the market, including involvement in warning information systems on the occurrence of dangerous products on the Community's internal market,
- the protection of consumers' economic interests,
- financial and travel services,
- e-commerce,
- reactions and searches for appropriate instruments to handle damage to consumers in the light of new problems, such as sales over mobile telephone, the limited possibility of using new technology,
- effective cooperation among market oversight bodies within the Community's common internal market,
- the education of persons responsible for enforcing the law,
- the creation of a user-friendly interconnected system of information run by supervisory bodies and accessible to the general consumer public.

2. 4 Out-of-court settlements in consumer disputes

All over the world, out-of-court settlements in consumer disputes are considered to be a fast, cheap and expedient way of resolving consumer claims. Mediation or arbitration can be successful in resolving disputes between consumers and enterprises that would otherwise have to be brought before the courts.

Alternative dispute resolution methods are not yet particularly widespread in the Czech Republic. However, the need for ADRs is constantly rising, and it will be important to select and legally enshrine a model that can handle consumer disputes efficiently without placing an excessive burden on any of the parties involved.

2. 5 Development of information and educational activities

- Support for consumer education
- Support for activities focusing on greater consumer awareness
- Support for the implementation of specific programmes of sustainable consumption
- Publications
- Internet
- Media coverage of consumer rights

Communication with citizens needs to be reinforced and improved in order to provide them with the necessary information important for the protection of their consumer interests, especially for qualified decisions on the goods or services they purchase, inter alia in relation to the sustainability of their consumer choice.

Support for the possibility of the active enforcement of the law by consumers is an important element in safeguarding a high level of consumer protection. Therefore, consumer interest in education and information about relevant areas of law etc. needs to be supported.

2. 6 Support for the activities and development of consumer organizations

Consumer organizations play an indispensable role in the general concept of consumer protection; therefore, it is necessary to continue support for the development of their activities

and to make their operations more efficient, including the education of their members and representatives. The main aims of support will be integration and improvements in the consulting and information services provided to consumers, involvement in educational and awareness activities, the implementation of collective cases protecting consumer interests, increases in the membership and sponsors of consumer organizations, improvements in the ability of consumer organizations to help consumers, the monitoring of unfair trading, consumer warnings, and representation of the interests of consumers at national and international level.

At the same time, essential requirements need to be placed on these consumer organizations based on discussions at European level (the creation of a binding code of ethics for consumer organizations), especially full independence of business entities.

Conclusion

With regard to a cross-section character of consumers' protection and education, the role of the state is irreplaceable. But it is not good, however, to rely solely on it. All stakeholders are involved in the above-described issues. With their role as well as with the role of the state we would like to deal in further processing of our model. We are aware that considerable efforts will have to be made if we want to finish a work draft of our model. At the same time it is obvious that the model in question is not static but it will be dynamically developed along with its surroundings.

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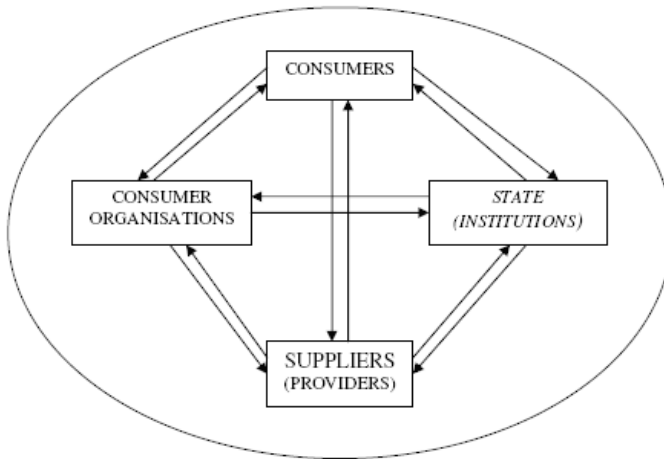
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Appendix 1: How to build the bridge

1st step:

Definition of the basic groups of stakeholders



Example of the procedure for the stakeholder: Consumers

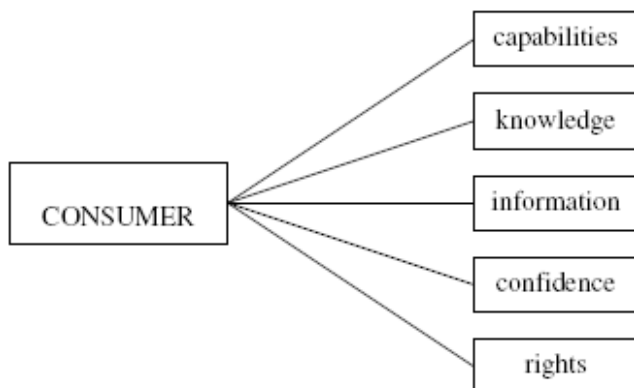
2nd step:

Who is usually included in each defined group (national and international environment should be taken into account)?



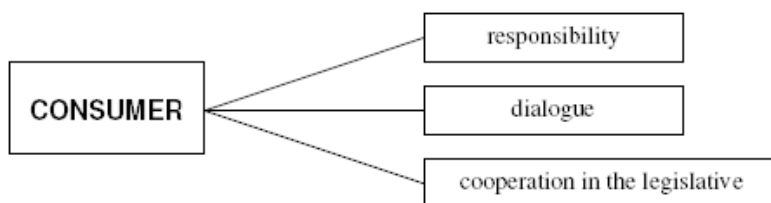
3rd step:

What particular groups of stakeholders require?

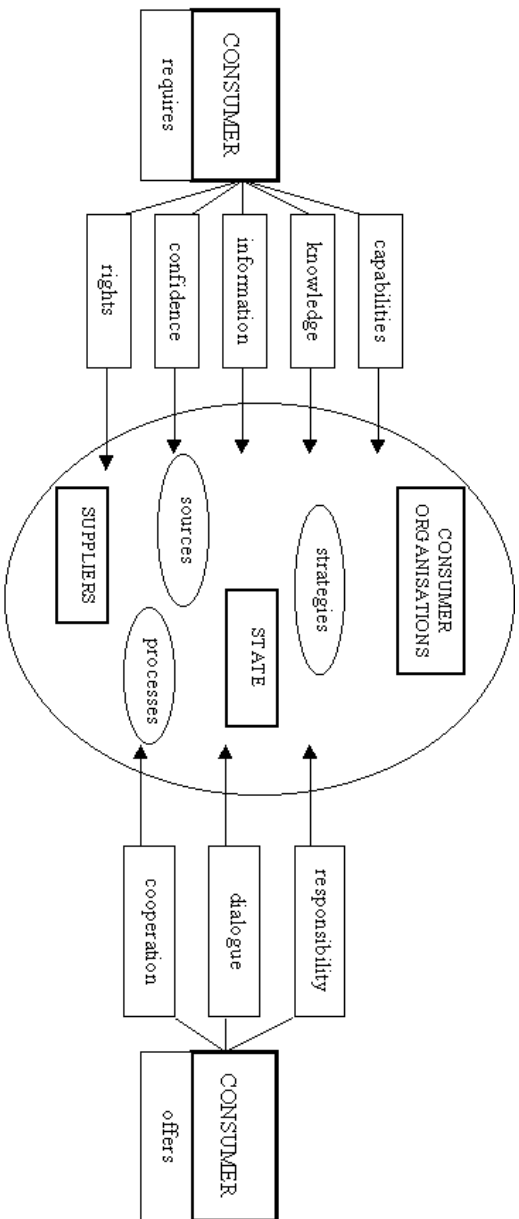


4th step:

What particular groups of stakeholders can offer?



**5th step:
How to find a consensus between requirements and offer, i.e. how to build a bridge?**



Healthy Schools, Healthy Pupils

Tove Brita Eriksen

Oslo University College, Faculty of Education, Norway

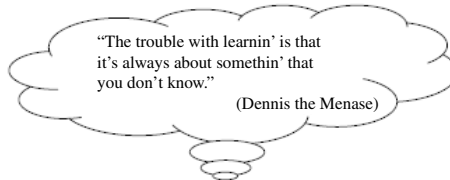
Introduction

This paper is based on the health and lifestyle study “*Født til bevegelse, om fysisk aktivitet og helse*” [“*Borne for Physical Activity*”] at Oslo University College (OUC), Faculty of Education in 2005-2006. The study presents a series of different socio-cultural dimensions in our modern society with focus on children growth and development, schooling, consumer citizenship, education and the growing lifestyle problems in a modern, rich western society as Norway. The aims of my study were:

- To visualize both positive and negative aspects in a consumer society with regards to consumption, nutrition, health, physical activity and teaching in school for Teacher Training students and students at The Sport- and Health Bachelor-study at OUC.
- To teach students health psychology through communication and building bridges between subjects and themes.
- To visualize the meaning of preventing physical education and consciousness in a modern multicultural society as Norway with a focus on teaching in school.

We need a reflective school and reflection in educational practice (Schön 1983). We have to promote new interdisciplinary themes and build bridges between active learning and a conscious lifestyle in school societies. According to the theme of this paper, my last research ended up with publication of the book “*Født til bevegelse, om fysisk aktivitet og helse*” [“*Borne for Physical Activity*”] in August 2006. The methodological approach in this study was based on a literature study, and the published book is today curriculum among students in different Universities in Norway. The study gave me multi various data on what we call a common modern Norwegian lifestyle which is characteristic for a consumer society. These data gave me a didactical push and reflections for the importance of nutrition, physical activity and health teaching in school.

In my presentation and in this paper I focus some of the main findings from this study towards my vision of “Healthy Schools, Healthy Pupils”.



Background

What we in an earlier agriculture society thought as basic and normal is today in many ways changed. These conditions are stated through the 10-yearly Norwegian research of Living (Levekårsundersøkelser 1974, 1980, 1983, 1987 and The Norwegian Monitor in 1996). The modern society has for millions of people lead to economic growth, better education, better housing and clothing, more and enough food and shorter working days for everyone. The old agriculture society is today history in Norway, a time when daylight and very often the four seasons were the given factors for working time, or the domestic animal controlled the time for feeding and care. The times of native consumption in Norway lasted to the end of the 60', and at that time people in general, did not have time or possibilities neither for using money nor time for shopping. Home economics were in focus, and families could be regarded as small *working units* at the countryside with a common interest in essential conditions. This period belongs also to the post war period, a period where Norwegians build new houses, home economic was natural, people listened to the radio from Luxemburg, and clothing were very often re-circulated within the family and between close friends.

The evolution of the times of consumerism started in the 70' (Steffens & Thoresen 2000), and today the weeks consist of *working days*, *working time* and *leisure time* (Hellevik 1996). The social meaning of the term *leisure time* was a result of the industrialization and the feminism. These two big social changes have lead to a radical change of how families live and how families spend their leisure time in Norway today. The family is still the centre of interest and activity for every growing child and for the chosen activities during leisure time as shown in figure 1.

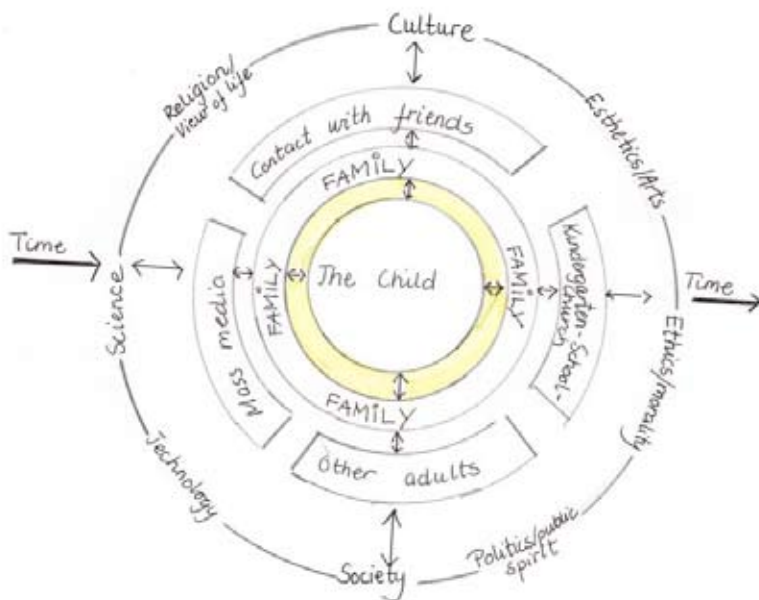


Fig. 1: A pedagogical family model after Evenshaug & Hallen 1993:24. (Translation: Tove Brita Eriksen 2007)

The model is complex and composed of different circles ranged after the individual child growth and development in time. Evenshaug & Hallen explain the model in this way:

"We can describe socialisation as a process where the individual child dedicates a special culture and group's value and way of living. This dedication comes though different processes of imitation and identification with special persons, groups and institutions, and we usually call these factors of socialisation." (p.22)

The new way of living, gave the industrial revolution new possibility to make profit on goods we all have to buy and, and we became a society with regulated economics. Today, we are all regarded as *consumers*, and the industry produce continually new "needs" in one or the other way, and very often with a regard to how easy life will be if you buy this or that. It is then of great importance to keep a *reflective consumer's eye* on what do we really need? Reflecting my theme, important questions will then be:

1. What characterize modern marketing which affects the consumer's daily life? 2.

What kind of popular trends are dominating youth societies? 3. How do we spend our leisure time? 4. How can transdisciplinary education deal with the issue of over-consumption towards an unhealthy lifestyle? 5. How can transdisciplinary education be stimulated in higher education on issues like consumer citizenship, more healthy pupils and more healthy schools?

Documentation on a consuming society

We have during the 10-15 last years, received both national and international documentation on how marketing has led to changes in lifestyle for individuals. Studies tell us that for about 35-40 % of the Norwegians, lifestyle problems are dominating in one way or the other (Strømme & Høstmark 2000, The Norwegian Department of Social- and Health Affairs 2004). National studies conclude with that this group of Norwegians, and Swedish youth as well (Ehdin 2004, Folkehälsostitutet 1997), eat too much of fast-food, too much of chocolate and daily fat food and too little of fruit and vegetables. People smoke and drink too much of saccharine refreshing drinks (Eriksen 2006, Strømme & Høstmark 2000), and there are often *too little of daily physical activities*. For a large group of Norwegians overweight and lifestyle problems are very often a result of inactivity and an unhealthy nutrition.

We all adopt the easy way of living and use our cars from door to door, we buy and use the last models of shoes not always very good for walking, but because they are popular and can be bought in a new fashion and colour. New fashion clothes are very often tight to the body and not always suitable for schooling and working-days, but popular for young groups of people because of fashion, designer and name. These variables are some of many which have resulted in lifestyle problems in one or the other way for many young boys and girls or more grown up people. The psychological effect of mass media and commercials hits too many and may lead to a negative lifestyle in one or the other way.

I shall not be unfair, quite a lot of Norwegians today are aware of these negative effects, and very often national studies share the Norwegian population roughly into two groups of people; the one with lifestyle problems and the other without (SEF 2001, 2002)). Still, these negative lifestyle trends are often consequences we meet in the richer part of the world; *a consumer effect of economic growth*, more shopping, the mass medias' perfect look, a growing motorised society, and an inactive life because of too many hours in front of a DVD, Play-station, PC or TV. In Norway today, doctors arrange seminars for people with both drinking, smoking and weight-problems (The Department of Social- and Health Affairs, N 2004) just like in The United States. Many seminars' programmes are about how to cook, how to eat healthy and how do I do my daily physical activity? We have in some newspapers a daily agenda for how to gain *a better mental and physical health and increased quality of life*. It is not to wonder, we need to be taught for a reflective life. Our health variable is a result of how we live, and The European Commission's Directorate for Health and Consumer Affairs (2004-2009: 131-137) want to adjust preparatory actions regarding public health, preparedness, response and the contribution to the WHO framework Convention of

Behaviour among enterprises that harms the economic interests of consumers is re-emerging in the wake of the liberalization of certain network sectors, such as energy and telecommunications. A rise in consumer complaints can be expected in services, especially financial and travel services, and in connection with the advancing e-commerce. As new digital technologies are developed, the need to protect consumers in relation to the use of these technologies has also surfaced.

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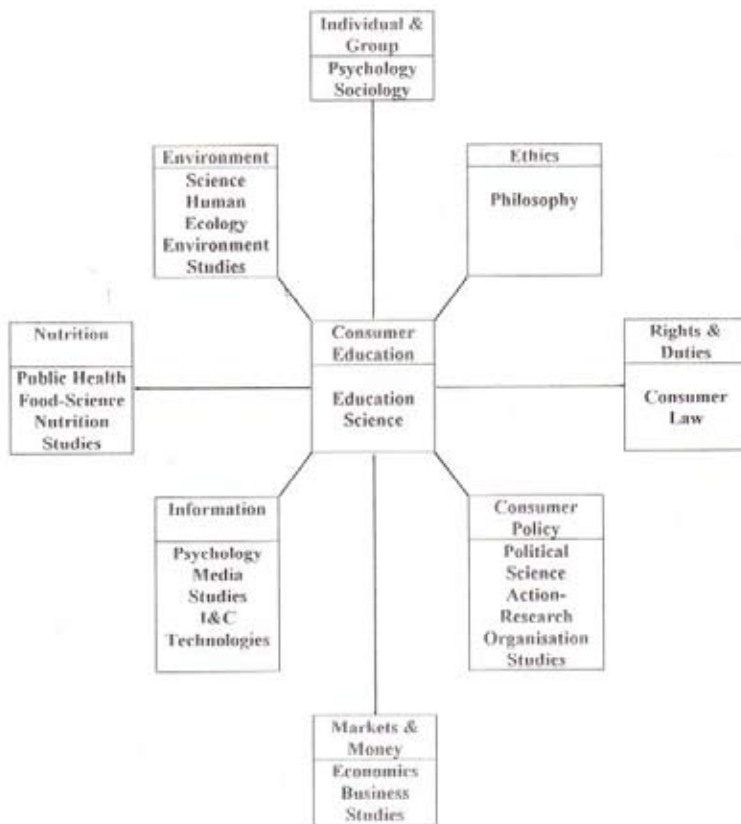


Fig. 2: Draft of interdisciplinary and theo-prax frame of reference of Consumer Education (Steffens 2000:9).

Steffens and Thoresen (2000) represented their view on consumer education in a multi-theoretical approach as proved in figure 2. The figure approve that the topic *consumer education* have to be taught widely as a trans disciplinary theme in school, and not only with focus at ex. market/money, environmental studies or consumer/law studies. It is of great importance to build bridges of knowledge between different subjects in consumer education both in Teacher Education Studies and for teachers and students in Primary and post Primary Schools. The dimension of learning are multiple, and I have in this paper chosen to put an eye more on the psychological effects with regarding to public health- and nutrition studies based on the main theme.

The World Health Organization (WHO) wrote in 1970 about Health towards 2000. One of the aims on the WHO-agenda was:

"... health and the pedagogical approach for health have to be continuously analyzed on the background of costs for living, lifestyle problematic, culture, trends and the prevented agenda. " (In: Elsaas 1993:97)

WHO have in this way given some directions for the latest published Norwegian documents about 1. Physical Education in School Society (Social- and helsedirektoratet 2003), 2. Prevention and Treatment of over-weighty people in the Norwegian Society (2004), 3. Physical Activity, Health and Nutrition (Statens Råd for ernæring og fysisk aktivitet (2000). All these documents focus *inactivity* in society as a trend of our new industrial society and economical wealth. The Documents are concerned about public health, lifestyle, nutrition and physical activity.

WHO is also concerned about that diabetic II, a typical lifestyle syndrome, is rapidly growing in the population in the western countries. In Norway in earlier days, diabetes II was a typical sickness for older men. Today, we find diabetes II even among younger people and very often combined with overweight and inactivity (Eriksen 2006). In Europe today, we have about 2 millions over-weighty pupils in Primary Schools (NRK 27.12.07), and nutrition is a problem for many. EU is involved in this health problem through different health studies.

Elsaas (1993) analyzed public health in his theories and said that people in general have very often a lack of self awareness when they feel a constant pressure, have diabetes II, high blood-pressure and BMI is 25 or higher. This is the main reason to why Elsaas says that in the aspects of health psychology, we have to analyze the cost of living, individual lifestyle, nutrition, personal habit and more. *Self awareness* is then a psychological incentive we have to be aware of in all kind of consumer teaching. Regular physical activity has profound effects on both self awareness and body composition and the utilisation of nutrients (Strømme & Høstmark 2000), and help to maintain and increase muscle mass with increased resting metabolic rate and enhanced capacity for lipid oxidation during both exercise and rest. One hour daily physical activity is recommended, and in particular if food is fat and we are sitting too many hours in school, during working time or in leisure time.

Motor functioning

Recently, the topic of motor competence among school children in Norway has figured in media. Being a nation with an old focus on physical activity and sport, Norwegians have a history for skiing, skating, walking, running and cycling in leisure time, but what kind of activities are children and more grown up people attracted of in leisure time today? Sport and physical activity is generally believed to be beneficial to young people's psychosocial health. Findings support an association between involvement in physical activity and sport and well-being. Physical activity is associated with lower levels of mental health problems, and seems to promote self esteem (Ommundsen 2002). Following table visualize a study of voluntary sport groups in leisure time among a population of age 8-24 (NIF 1996 and 2002, N=1108):

Age 8 - 11	61 %
Age 12 - 19	35 %
Age 20 - 24	26 %

Table 1: Different groups participation in voluntary sport in the period 1996 and 2002 (The Norwegian Organisation of Sport, NIF. www.idrett.no)

It is not a big surprise that the table shows that small children are the most physical active group of this population Norwegian, and we find the most inactive part of the population after the age of 24. This situation may indicate coming health problems in a modern society where the need for more physical activity is a positive incitement to an inactive lifestyle. But consumer information is then also a question about *nutrition and knowledge*. This study is followed up by other studies of motor competence among children, and Sigmundsson & Haga (2000) concluded that 6 – 10 % of Norwegian children in the 7 – 10 year age group had a motor competence well below the normal. They said:

"Children with motor problems have shown to be less physically active than their peers. In a larger health perspective this in itself can have very serious consequences for the child." (2000:16)

Strømme and Høstmark (2000) describe the modern society's lifestyle problems with regards to physical activity, over consumption and overweight. The focus and interest of a huge group of boys and girls are today altered from sport to data, video and play-station. Our education as well as social and physical life are regulated in multi various variables, and among these variables are both genes and our mode of living. To regulate our mode of living is often a question about knowledge competence, self awareness and a positive motivation towards a goal. It is then a challenge for teachers today to consider consumer citizenship issues from perspectives of health, nutrition, trends, ethics and didactical innovativeness.

Education

In Norway we have recently had a political discussion about the use of advertising in school books even for use in Primary Schools as a substitute for school-sponsoring. I believe politicians or journalists do not always have the same opinion as teachers about how it is possible to prevent pupils from the commercial market? Discussions are still going on, but what kind of knowledge and development do we want for our children and the coming generations? What is qualitative thinking, and what kind of priority, values and directing lifestyle choices do we want for life? What kind of consumer education do we give teacher students and pupils in Primary and Secondary Schools in Norway? Consumer education is a trans disciplinary education, and at Oslo University College, Faculty of Education, we have had in the period 1998 – 2005 a well organized trans disciplinary student project every year in December and January for all students on the third year of the Teacher Education Program. The

project main theme was: *Consumption and Lifestyle*. The following list indicates some of the themes we have taught the students during this period every year:

- Consumption theory
- Consumer policy and Consumer Power
- The Consuming Family / Home domestic
- The Consumer as a social and responsible Actor in Society
- Garbage and garbage combustion
- Environmental responsibility
- How do we repair old toys?
- How do we use re-circled materials (plastic, papers, folio etc.) in creative work in school?
- Changing climate
- Lifestyle and lifestyle problems
- Technical knowledge and product design
- Smoking and health in school society
- Nutrition and health in school society
- Physical activity in daily life in school
- Why do some boys and girls develop anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa?

We involved both OUC professors and guest professors in the project. We had a close partnership to The Norwegian Consumers' Council, The Norwegian Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and a lot of teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools, our school partners for the next student's placement periods. In this way we made important partnerships between Faculty of Education, Schools and different Councils.

Finishing the *Consumption and Lifestyle* project at OUC, the student group went every year for their four weeks placement period in school where every student had to teach about Consumption and Lifestyle in the classes as a trans disciplinary theme guided by a coaching teacher. Different didactical methods were used (role playing, exhibition, newsletters, video presentation, storyline, show presentation and more). The students' final project presentation was both in teaching schools and at OUC. In this way, we involved and encouraged both students and pupils to participate in a complex consumer theme, and we observed an important and engaged membership across schools and ages.



Photo 1: 7-year old boy leaving Primary School in Oslo in the afternoon (T.B.E February 2007).

It is an educational challenge to use a methodology based on activity and creativity in school to make enthusiasm for knowledge and to try to solve some of the consumer problems among youth in school. In this way, it is of great value to build bridges between different subjects, culture and arenas in school. The local society has to involve both children and parents about consumption, self consciousness and quality in life. An important question will then be: *What do we really need in a modern society to enhance quality of life and a healthy lifestyle? In what way do the local culture and trends give positive or negative frames for health, nutrition and physical activity?*

Teaching in school has then to be a part of conscious training and learning, and we have to build bridges between the knowledge society and how to raise reflection and consciousness among the consuming youth. National culture is an important part of these aspects.

Conclusions

It is a paradox that we today need to be guided for a healthy lifestyle as a result of good economy and a wealthy society, and in my opinion, this learning process has to start in the kindergarten and continue in school as a transdisciplinary basic theme with roots in communication and bridge building between different interest groups in a way of *knowledge construction*



Fig. 3: Knowledge construction: From unconscious understanding to conscious competence through adapted communication in time.

To analyse social trends has to be a continuous subject for both parents, researchers in the field of education as well as in school. We have to guide boys and girls in school continuously through didactical teaching and communication, and learn them to look at the consumers' society with a critical eye. We have to guide them to choose food, clothing, hobbies and physical activities which may contribute to a positive source of knowledge and development both for their mind and for their body image. This didactical way of teaching will be one way of a qualified follow up of The European Commission's Directorate for Health and Consumer Affairs (2004-2009:131-137). To raise a preparatory action in school regarding consumer citizenship with a focus on health preparedness and awareness will also be a local response to WHO's Framework Convention on sugar, over-weight, tobacco and physical activity among growing children. In this way we may have in future societies more Healthy schools and more Healthy pupils.

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Some aspects of consumer citizenship education: Inter- and transdisciplinary perspectives

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Introduction

A new millennium has seen a rapid development of communication and information technologies, emergence of peer production and social networking, interaction of economy, politics and society beyond the boundaries of existing national states, etc. A key role belongs to the change of values, which focus on the role of mankind in the world and the preconditions of human existence as opposed to the increasing threat of global terrorism and the “gloomy” perspective of a conflict between cultures and religions. All these processes can be seen in the light of globalization that requires adjustments in each field it touches upon. Whereas in human history nearly all human production and consumption was local, today most of it is connected to regional, national and global markets. From the social perspective globalization trends contribute to the creation of integrated society based on social responsibility, humanity, justice and shared concern about our common welfare. This stimulates the development of such personal qualities as tolerance, camaraderie, mutual solidarity that is essential for interaction between individuals, groups and societies and eventually may contribute to sustainable development. Globalization and acceleration of its development precipitated a global Second Democratic Revolution in the last decade of the 20th century. The process of democratization required the emergence of socially mobile citizens. Democracy is currently an inclusive environment of global development. In the context of these trends and changes education, in particular Consumer Citizenship Education (CCE) faces an unprecedented challenge of asserting itself as one of the critical agents of economic, political and social modernization. In our view, CCE can be viewed as a possible constructive response to the challenges of the 21st century. The questions posed are: What is the role of CCE at tertiary level in fostering civil engagement and political vigilance?

How can the role of higher education institutions, in particular the Departments providing CCE be strengthened? How can transdisciplinary cooperation be stimulated in higher education? We assume that these questions are also *challenges*. This makes the present study *topical*.

The aims of the paper are:

1. To give an insight into the theoretical background of CCE in the light of inter- and transdisciplinary approaches;

2. To extend discussion about challenges to CCE, in particular higher education in the field of economics.

To achieve *these aims* we have to accomplish *the following tasks*:

1. To identify areas of difficulties of providing CCE keeping in view inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation;
2. To illustrate provision of CCE at tertiary level with examples of thematic curricula modules in the domain of economics.

1. Latvia: Current Situation

Let us examine the current situation in Latvia. It is a small country along the coast of the Baltic Sea with an area of 64 589 km² and population of 2 306 434 inhabitants. On May 1st 2004 Latvia joined the EU.

The natural increase in population is a minus figure (-48%). Death rate (14, 2%) exceeds birth rate (9, 3%). Net migration of population is -11 % (Demogrāfija 2007: 7). The economy develops mainly due to commercial and service sectors. The inflation rate is high. The country has scarce energy resources and lack of minerals. To ensure sustainable and onward development it is of crucial importance to develop manufacturing sector, attract foreign direct investments, expand export, prevent outflow of population, raise standard of living, solve environmental issues, and raise intellectual potential of the country. Thus, as mentioned above, the primary focus should be on the development of education and science, in particular CCE.

In Latvia, at tertiary level CCE is provided mainly by the Departments of Social Sciences, Home Economics, Handicraft and Food Sciences. Also, attempts to deliver CCE are currently being made at the Departments of Economics. In addition, at present CCE work is being carried out in the public, private and voluntary sections. However, regrettably most CCE initiatives remain the work of individual organizations that act independently. This results in duplication of effort, poor coordination and patchy provision. The lack of focused coordinated approach also limits the opportunity to influence policy and target initiatives for maximum impact. A new coordinated approach is needed which implies cooperation of departments of higher education institutions with civil society, economy and politics.

2. Essential Content of Consumer Citizenship Education

Let us consider the notion of *consumer citizen*. According to Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN), consumer citizen is defined as “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.) 2005:7).

Different scholars and educators explore diverse dimensions (social, political, economic) and perspectives of CCE across a range of disciplines in different countries (Benn 2004; Dahl 2004; McGregor 1999; McGregor 2002, etc.). We agree with McGregor’s treatment of *consumer citizenship* as the challenge facing nations and preparing them for rapid changes in society, global market and influencing diverse aspects of their life and environment (McGregor 2002:6). The Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN) as an interdisciplinary network of educators, researchers and

representatives of non-government organizations work on developing innovative interdisciplinary approaches to the main issues of CCE (Thoresen (ed.) 2005). We believe that it is of crucial importance to develop common grounds so as to coordinate and harmonize work with specialists of different fields.

CCE has a *multidisciplinary content*. According to Brand (2000:14), *multidisciplinary study* covers the topics, which are common for various subject areas. Different fields explore different aspects of the same subject by means of their specific methods. Study outcomes may be summed up so as to represent diverse aspects of the same topic. The subjects that may cover CCE issues are economics, math, statistics, sociology, psychology, chemistry, foreign languages, etc.

CCE offers not only knowledge and skills but also promotes critical thinking, problem solving and action.

The concept of CCE can be analyzed from holistic, future oriented and global perspectives. The “*four pillar pattern*” may be seen as the answer to the education requirements of the 21st century: (1) learning to exist in relation to other people and society; (2) learning to acquire knowledge (learning to learn, i. e. study skills); (3) learning to take action; (4) life-long learning. The foundation on which these pillars are based should be a broad-based education that enables learners to embark on a life-learning track (Süssmuth 2003: 320).

There is a shift towards awareness of a variety of learning types, strategies and opportunities. Students should be given an opportunity to take up various kinds of learning: (1) learning in educational institutions; (2) community based learning; (3) e-learning; (4) learning in the workplace; (5) life-long learning, etc. Different ways of learning should complement each other and be more interconnected.

It is worth pointing out that in the global knowledge society life-long learning has become an increasingly important type of learning. It can be supported to a great extent by electronic means. This implies that the role of e-learning is increasing. As regards higher education institutions the importance of virtual universities should be emphasized. However, life-long learning means more than mastery of ICT and adjustment to changes in the world. It also means the development of the creative potential of the individual as a whole. We cannot solve any problem without an active involvement of the broad public and activating its ingenuity in seeking socially acceptable solutions (Field 2000).

The global aspects of CCE originated from the education development policy. Global learning covers content and experience gained in the teaching conflict management, environmental education, cross curricula learning and focuses on the conditions of our common future (Ibid).

3. The Challenges of Inter- and Transdisciplinary Cooperation

There are different dimensions of CCE. We will make an attempt to differentiate between an “interdisciplinary approach” and “transdisciplinary approach” to CCE. According to Brand (2000: 14), these approaches may be defined in the following way:

Interdisciplinary study implies a “disciplinary interface”. It is based on the integration of different disciplinary perspectives, theories and methods so as to establish new knowledge structures.

Transdisciplinary study refers to problems beyond the scientific world, which may be solved by scientists who collaborate with experts possessing practical experience and know-how (Ibid: 14). In our study we will use these terms in the meaning described above.

Experience shows that inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation in the CCE context often fails due to a number of difficulties. They are:

- Lack of consistent usage of terms which may have different meanings in different disciplines;
- Clash of values, standards and criteria of different disciplines with each other;
- Lack of common methodology for inter-and transdisciplinary cooperation as compared to specific research methods of each particular discipline;
- Team problems, i.e. teamwork may result in conflicts and failure to reach a consensus if team members do not have an appropriate psychological background.

It is worth mentioning that initially the emphasis of inter- and transdisciplinary dialogue should be placed on a common understanding of key terms and the contexts in which they are used or alternatively it may result in misunderstanding between involved parties. Hence, inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration within CCE is designed to reach a shared understanding between involved parties, to exchange expert knowledge and know-how and to discover new sights into issues of global concern. In inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration specialists with different scientific background, expertise and disciplinary perspectives interact. According to J. Godeman, “The extent to which an understanding is possible depends on the ability to exchange knowledge in such a way that it becomes part of a common knowledge as well as one’s own perception of the problem” (Godeman 2006:51).

It is widely acknowledged that academic curricula have some limitations. The main problem is that traditionally curricula in specific disciplines are designed to equip students with *knowledge*, which they are unable to use in their daily lives. A possible solution of this problem might be to *develop students’ understanding* of a narrow defined discipline as compared to the accumulation of knowledge. We would like to illustrate this idea by an old Chinese proverb: “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for life.” In the light of inter- and transdisciplinary approach the challenge is the need of equipping students to integrate understanding drawn from different disciplines so as to make sense of their social experience (Davies, Dunhill 2006: 62). In other words, attempts should be made *to develop understanding*, which takes into account *perspectives of different disciplines*. It suggests that the acquisitions of certain key ideas at the outset, which are the basis of key concepts, may lead to a transformed view of other ideas that have already been acquired (Ibid: 66).

It is worth noting that establishing inter- and transdisciplinary links is a lengthy and complex process. Individual members of academic staff play a vital role in it but it requires a support from a combined bottom-up and top- down strategy that is consistent with the institution’s policy in inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation. Moreover, members of academic staff should collaborate with representatives of consumer organizations, government structures and stakeholders in the process of the development of collaborative study programs. As a result, scientific knowledge and

action relevant knowledge are integrated. Successful cooperation requires the development of organizational, analytical, reflexive and interpersonal skills as well as such personal qualities as the ability to prioritize, flexibility, thoroughness, positive attitude and enthusiasm, etc. Moreover, a *web-based problem-solving network* of the parties involved in inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation can be established. It will maintain a register of inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation activities, act as a resource for those developing and delivering inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation and as a delivery channel for inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation initiatives.

4. Curricula Modules in the Field of Economics: Examples of Practical Applications

Collaborative study programs are intended to provide new perspectives on issues of global concern in social, economic and political context on a sustained and meaningful basis in the light of inter- and transdisciplinary dialogue. They should be designed keeping in view holistic, humanistic and participatory approaches. In this way it will be possible to prepare students for tests and exams as well as for challenges they will face later on in their life. It should be noted that the topics chosen should be up-to-date and relevant to CCE and satisfy students' need for novelty.

We will endeavor to illustrate two thematical curricula modules relating to CCE, which may be included in academic Master Studies Program "Entrepreneurship and Management" and applied in practice at the Faculty of Economics, Riga Technical University in Latvia.

The modules can be viewed from *inter- and transdisciplinary perspectives* (See **Table 1**).

Module 1. Consumer Based Marketing: Economical, Psychological, Sociological, Statistical, Business English/German/French and Computer Science Perspectives

No.	Main Topic Areas
1.	Market Orientation and Consumer Value
2.	Consumer Behavior and Psychology
3.	Consumer Satisfaction-Consumer Loyalty-Profitability
4.	Segmentation- Targeting- Positioning
5.	Brand Management and Market Communication
6.	Marketing Issues in a Global Society
7.	Consumer Based Marketing

Further, we will make an attempt to illustrate the content of module 2 (See **Table 2**).

Module 2. Global Economics: Environment and Trade: Economical, Statistical, Business English/German /French, Computer Science Perspectives

No.	Main Topic Areas
1.	Micro- Macroeconomics Analysis; the Basic Theory for Business
2.	Competitive Analysis and Business Globalization
3.	International Trade and Banking

In terms of format structure thematical modules may be implemented via lectures, seminars, workshops, debates, case studies, project work. The focus might be

on *case studies* built around a global CCE problem of contemporary importance as seen in the *context of Latvia* as well as *project work*. Such activities can encourage problem solving, peer learning and critical thinking and motivate students through intellectually challenging tasks.

We suggest implementing a program through a combination of traditional methods of teaching/learning and the use of IT. Since students belong to a new generation of learners who actively explore new technologies we have to speak their language in order to reach them and create effective learning environment. Hence, we put emphasis on *the use of IT* in teaching/learning. The teacher can choose to use *synchronous practices* of teaching/learning (e.g., real-time lectures, chat-rooms, etc.) as well as *asynchronous environment* (e.g., message boards, online forums). In addition, students may be encouraged to be involved in the process of a large stock of independent reading matter in order to become independent strategic readers and broaden their knowledge on the topic. E-learning environment enables to provide a quick and meaningful feedback by specialists from different disciplines. Students can be directed to various sources for better understanding. This enables to create an active learning paradigm.

As mentioned above, specialists with different theoretical background should collaborate on (1) further development of module materials and adjusting them to students' needs in the context of Latvia; (2) analyzing and assessing the effectiveness of implementation of new practices.

Conclusion

CCE has emerged as significant area of interest for researchers, educators, representatives of different consumer organizations, etc. across a range of disciplines in different countries. Various dimensions of CCE require changing perceptions and developing new institutional paradigms so as to meet rapidly changing needs of society. Respectfully, higher education institutions have to adjust to new situation and redefine its curricula. This refers to Latvia in an equal manner.

We assume it is important to initiate a discussion on developing new kinds of University courses, in particular Consumer Citizen-related course at Master studies level in the field of economics in Latvia. The debates on this issue should be conducted using critical, discursive and interdisciplinary approaches. This may contribute to developing common grounds for productive cooperation.

In this paper, we have presented some ideas and strategies as promising directions rather than a consistent development program. There is much to be clarified. Overall, we believe that Consumer - Citizenship related courses can prepare young people for an effective role in society as active, conscious and responsible consumer citizens. Eventually, this will contribute to the sustainable development and onward movement of society.

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Recognizing differences in understanding of sustainable development by different social groups in order to build bridges for educational activities

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INTRODUCTION

Humans are a part of nature. They are heterotrophic organisms. The services the ecosystems offer to us are not only providing us with materials for various branches of industry, energy and drugs but, more importantly, providing us with air to breathe, water to drink, biomass of other organisms to eat, all of good quality.

Throughout millennia, mankind has been increasing the pressure exerted on nature, shaping it in a way comfortable from humans' point of view. As *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment* (2007) show, the last 50 years of greedy transformations of the world has destroyed 50 per cent of global ecosystems' functions and, which is worse, their deterioration has not stopped.

The idea of sustainable development, which is to slow down the physical transformation of nature through balancing the needs of contemporary man with the needs of future generations, developed in the '80s is spreading slowly, too slowly, it seems, to be put into action early enough to save our existence on Earth.

Polish society, in the last decade of the 20th century, was in the phase of shaping its ecological consciousness. Thanks to various educational activities, the research made in the 90's by Public Opinion Research Center commissioned by the Institute for Sustainable Development in Warsaw, showed that 1/3 of respondents did show a pro-ecology approach, about 1/10 an anti-ecology one while the rest presented ecological indifference (Burger 2000).

Nowadays, it is crucial to point out that ecological education is not a fully covered spectrum of education for sustainable development as it should also cover social, cultural and economical aspects.

Pro-ecology approaches resulting from ecological consciousness is a lot but not enough. In order to implement them, it is necessary to respect facts concerning humans as individuals of society as well as rules of economy of the beginning, 21st century.

The aim of the research was to analyze the differences in interpretation of terms connected with sustainable development in various social groups so that conclusions can be made concerning the actions to implement sustainable development in everyday life.

METHODOLOGY

The paper consists the interpretation of understanding of sustainable development terms by students of agriculture at Rzeszow University and management and production at the Technical University in Bialystok as examples of Polish Universities. 72 randomly chosen people (36 from each of the two universities) took part in the survey. Each of them were asked to answer seven questions listed below:

1. *Have you heard about the concept of sustainable development?*

Yes No

2. *If you are familiar with it, choose a place and a course where you heard about it.*

- Primary school
- Secondary school
- High school
- University
- During what course/courses?
- Mass-media
- Family members
- Friends
- Other source

3. *Do you understand the term "sustainable development"?*

Yes No

4. *What does the term stand for in your opinion?.....*

5. *Could you define social, environmental, economical basis of sustainable development?*

- Social basis.....
- Environmental basis.....
- Economical basis.....

6. *Which definition fits sustainable development best?*

- Stimulation of economical development with regard to contemporary knowledge of rules of sustainable development
- Stimulation of development through maximizing enterprises' income
- Stimulation of development through social justice
- Development through absolute stop in using natural resources
- Stimulation of economical development balancing the needs of contemporary societies with those of future generations

7. *What would make you take the effort of putting the rules of sustainable development into everyday life?*

Choose the order of factors putting "1" to the most important, "2" to second most, etc.

- Financial encouragement
- Legislation
- Sensing a threat to the environment
- Social pressure
- Others
- What are your other factors?

RESULTS

QUESTIONS 1,2,3,4 ANALYSIS

Every respondent from UR (Rzeszów University) had heard of the concept of Sustainable Development while only 23 out of 36 students of TUB (Technical University in Białystok) claimed to have heard about it.

UR students gave their courses on ecology, regional development management, environmental protection and sustainable development within the curriculum as answers to where they had heard about the concept. Additionally, they pointed to mass-media and friends. TUB students' answers suggested that only 13 of them had heard about sustainable development during their courses (technology, business ethics, management, environmental protection and management, quality management, production technology and processes, environment management), 2 in high school, 5 in mass-media and 2 from other sources.

Apart from one person who claimed not to understand it and two who did not answer at all, every UR student claimed to understand the term 'sustainable development'. TUB students, however, answered otherwise. Only 9 students stated they understand the term, 14 that they do not and 13 did not answer. The charts below (Fig 1, 2) represent the first three questions.

Fig.1. Answers for question 1,2 and 3 at University in Rzeszów

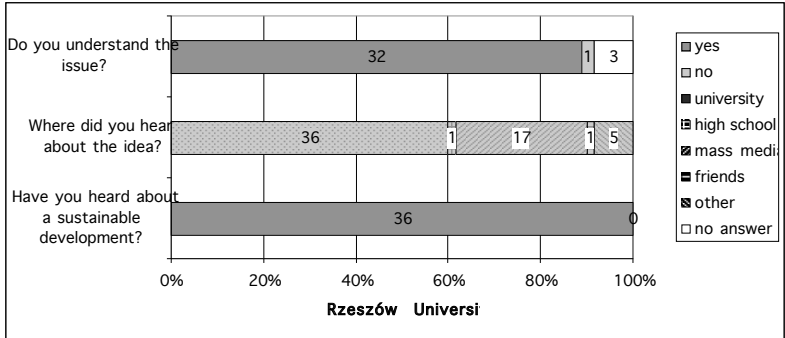
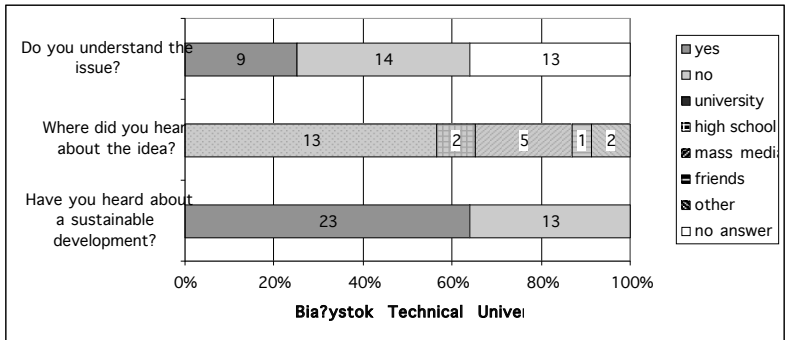


Fig.2. Answers for question 1,2 and 3 at Technical University in Białystok



Answering the 4th question, UR students stressed the biological (environmental) aspect of sustainable development. References to social aspects were scarce. It suggests that students perceive the issue from one point of view only and do not understand it fully. TUB students stressed social and ecological aspects in terms of industry and enterprising or perfection as a result of systematic and well thought over solutions in economy rather than biological one. None of the two groups hinted at financial aspect.

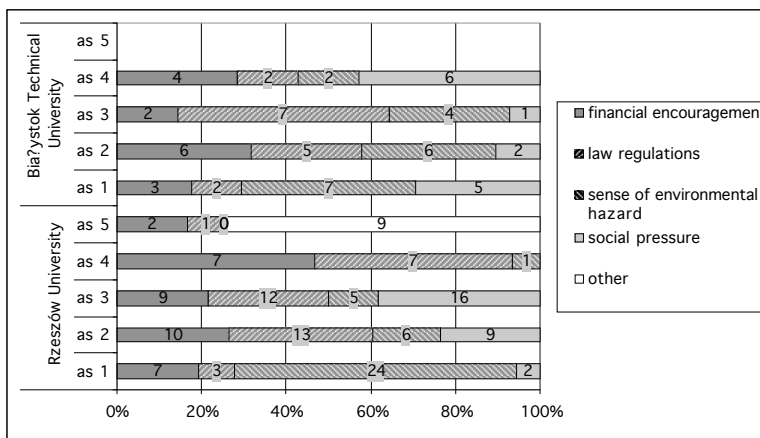
In the 5th question TUB students often saw social and environmental basis as the same, seldom remembering that within the social aspect regional needs should be included. As far as UR students are concerned, there was no blending of social and environmental aspects. They hinted at the needs of future generations as TUB students did not.

Both groups gave conscious and satisfying answers concerning the environmental aspect.

TUB student also appeared to be aware that economical basis of sustainable development concern maximizing the income while minimizing the use of natural resources. UR students tended to put environment on a more important position than income. That suggests they represent the, so called, strong concept of sustainable development which assumes that the losses to environment are impossible to make up, which is why they see the environmental aspect as more important than the others.

Question 6: Both groups chose "Stimulation of economical development balancing the needs of contemporary societies with those of future generations" as the most correct definition. Some chose the first definition: "Stimulation of economical development with regard to contemporary knowledge of rules of sustainable development".

Answering the 7th question, "What would make you take the effort of putting the rules of sustainable development into everyday life?", both groups chose the threat as the first factor most frequently. UR students gave legislation as the 2nd reason while TUB students chose financial encouragement. The 3rd factor was social pressure in case of UR students and legislation in case of TUB. The 4th factor was, ex equo, financial encouragement and legislation for UR and social pressure for TUB. The representation of those answers is shown in the chart below.



DISCUSSION

Answers to the first four questions suggest that UR students understand the issue of Sustainable Development better, on a wider scale than TUB students and the number of affirmative answers to whether they know the issue was better in case of UR. Studies at UR allow each of the surveyed students to familiarize the concepts of Sustainable Development contrary to studying at TUB. The fact that students of TUB

come from an environmentally valuable area is disturbing. Future technicians are not enough aware of the demands of sustainable development of the world. They also are not aware of social responsibility that contemporary organizations bear as they see social pressure as the least important of the listed factors. As far as UR students are concerned, social pressure is more important though only in some aspects. This indicates the necessity of educating about social basis of sustainable development. Students of TUB will have the opportunity to listen about the concept of social responsibility in business during business ethics course which is conducted during the 5th year and only as a lecture. It seems it would be better if those concepts were explained earlier throughout the course of studies. Moreover, at technical universities, social courses are often treated as 'less important' which results in putting less effort to learning them. This practice, upheld for years, causes the lack of due pressure put to social needs in development activities undertaken in North-eastern Poland.

Constant education brings results (Kasprzak 2005, Kostecka 2007) in knowledge first. Comparing the familiarity of the term of Sustainable Development between UR agriculture students and randomly chosen citizens of Rzeszów showed that the term is practically not known outside the university (Kostecka 2007). Knowledge about the concept was declared by only 17% of adult citizens of Rzeszów. Most of the surveyed students, apart from first year students, who gave the surveys back unfilled, declared they know the term and understand it. Correct (or close to correct) definitions were pointed most frequently by 2nd and 4th year students. This correctness probably resulted from the fact that 2nd year students just finished "ecology and environmental protection" course and started "Nature Protection" where they could familiarize with the concepts of Sustainable Development. 4th year students, during the 7th semester, participated in a course on „Economic basis of Sustainable Development” and „Regional and Local Development Management”. During the 3rd year, students mainly learn technological issues and do not strengthen their knowledge on Sustainable Development.

Research showed that students knew the concept almost solely from the program of their studies. Few noticed it in television. Adult Rzeszów citizens, however, based their knowledge on Sustainable Development mainly on mass-media and strengthened it during conversations about it. It seems, though, that even if those issues are brought up in television or press, neither adults nor surveyed students are able to find it and claim it should be stressed more.

During the Decade of Education (2005-2014) for Sustainable Development (Pigozzi 2003), our task is to make the world's citizens more sensitive to interlocking social, economical and environmental problems. As we can often see, there is a necessity to widen the range and improve the organization of education in that field.

Undertaken activities should be conducted by well informed groups of educators and be included in a well planned system covering cooperation between various educational institutions and NGOs.

The state of ecological consciousness is an effect of knowledge processing, one's own reflections and experiences. Those are affected by feelings, views and orientations shaped throughout upbringing (Thoresen 2004, 2005). All that determines the actions of a human being towards natural environment and society. Easy access to information speeds up the process of changing the knowledge we gain into everyday

life rules. The need of protecting the environment may then become an automatic instinct, a habit taken into account in every action we make.

The diagnosis of the differences will be useful for the stakeholders involved “building bridges” between those two social groups so that the rules of sustainable development can be put into action in everyday life as soon as possible.

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Finnish forestry and FSC standards: A case study of teaching sustainable development

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Introduction

Forests and forestry are important to Finland's economy. Finland is Europe's most heavily forested country: $\frac{3}{4}$ of the land area is forest. In periodic cover silviculture forests are managed in cycles which end in a regeneration phase and which are called rotation periods. At the end of the rotation period the forest is said to be mature for felling or regeneration. The various phases and their impact on the environment and landscapes as well as the methods used in felling systems and paper industry etc. have raised a lot of discussion. The landscapes of managed forests are not as beautiful as those of protected forests. As consumers we need to know why managed forests are important and what the forestry industry does and has done for the sustainable development in forests. We have new standards (FSC) for certification of the forest products. It is important to give information on the standards also for students and school children.

The present paper is 1) a short presentation of the Finnish silviculture and forestry; 2) a brief overview of the Finnish forestry and education; and 3) an account of what we do with class teacher students on a short course in biology at the Savonlinna Department of Teacher Education.

Finnish Forestry and Silviculture

As consumers we have to understand the meaning of forests and forestry for Finland. Measured by its share of the national economy, forest industries are the second largest branch of industry in Finland, only surpassed by the electro technical industry. One quarter of Finland's export revenue is derived from the forest industries. In all but two regions of Finland, the forest sector is the largest or second largest branch of industry and production. Almost all of the raw material used by the Finnish forest industries is domestic. The forest sector has also led to the creation of other industries and economic activity in Finland, such as the manufacturing of paper and forestry machinery, and an extremely diversified sector of engineering, consulting and expert activity. The roots of practically all large Finnish companies – including, for example, the mobile phone company Nokia – can be traced to forest industries. (Suomen Metsäyhdistys 2007).

The state owns 34% of the Finnish forestry land. Private individuals and families own slightly over half of the Finnish forests. There are almost one million forest owners in Finland. This means that nearly one fifth of the population are forest owners. A couple of decades ago the typical forest owner was a male farmer living in the countryside and with little formal education. Presently, 60 percent of forest owners live on sparsely populated areas and one fifth live in cities of more than 20 000 inhabitants. Half of the forest owners still live on their holdings. About one in every four forest owners is a woman. The next significant change in forest ownership will take place in 15-20 years, when the forests are handed over to younger generations born in cities and towns. Finnish forest holdings are typically small. The number of holdings above two hectares is about 440 000. The average area of a private forest holding is 44 hectares. Forest holdings often have several owners, which is why the number of forest owners is twice the number of forest holdings. (Metsäntutkimuslaitos 2002.)

The important principles of Finnish forest management are sustainability and closeness to nature. Forest management that is close to nature means that natural processes are emulated in forestry. During the 20th century the management of Finland's commercial forests adopted the system of periodic cover silviculture. This means that silviculture is organized into rotation periods. The purpose is to stimulate the natural development of the forest, in which various phases and habitats succeed each other. In southern Finland the rotation period is 70-80 years, whereas in the north it is longer. At the end of the rotation period the forest is said to be mature for felling or regeneration. After a final felling a new forest is set up either through cultivation – in other words, sowing or planting – or through natural regeneration, if seedling trees were retained during the final felling.

Only one quarter of the Finnish forests are the results of forest cultivation. It has been estimated that 80% of Finland's current tree stock are the result of natural regeneration. During the rotation period, seedling stands are managed and thinning is carried out. Thinnings are undertaken 2-3 times during the rotation period. (Suomen Metsäyhdistys 2004.)

The forest countries of the European Union are Sweden, Finland, Germany, Austria and France. Although Germany, for example, has larger forest industries than Finland, the significance of forest industries is much greater for Finland than for Germany, for their share of the national exports in Finland is ten times that in Germany. The sources of raw material are also different: the volume of available recycled fiber is much greater in Central Europe than in the Nordic countries, which are substantial exporters of paper and paperboard. Because recycled fiber is less suitable for high-quality paper products than wood-based pulp, the paper grades produced in Finland are superior in quality. (Suomen Metsäyhdistys 2007).

Finnish Forestry and Education

Consumers' knowledge about the Finnish forestry is the key to understanding the ideology of sustainable development in Finnish wood and forestry products. It is also included in the school curriculum (Finnish Board of Education 2004; Lahti 2000).

There is a long tradition of cooperation between the Association of Biology and Geography Teachers (Biologian ja maantieteen opettajien liitto, BMOL) and the Forestry Centres – the Finnish Regional Forestry Network (Metsäkeskus, former

Metsälautakunta) in Finland. For over 30 years, teachers and forestry centres have had an agreement that in every municipality there is an official at the Regional Forestry Centre who will help teachers in forestry problems free of charge. Teachers can ask the officials to join classes in visits to forests, and they will help teachers and classes as experts, make forest paths etc. Later on, the Finnish Forest Association began to produce forest-related educational materials nationwide, and to organize forestry courses for teachers.

In Finland quite a lot has been done for forest-related teaching, as every year many Biology and Geography teachers take part in forestry courses. A new report by the Finnish Forest Association (Suomen Metsäyhdistys 2006) shows that young Finns see in forests both recreational and economical values. A major trend following this report is that the parents' role as educators of forestry and silviculture becomes less important and the significance of formal education grows.

Excursion into a National Park and a Commercial Forest

The present chapter gives a short presentation of what we have done at the Savonlinna Department of Teacher Education during a short course in biology for creating understanding of the Finnish forestry and the landscapes in all cycles of the periodic cover silviculture.

Finland has new FSC standards (Forest Stewardship Council standards. Suomen metsäkeskus 2005, Forest Stewardship Council 2006, Heinonen 2004). FSC is an international non-profit, membership-based organization aiming at finding solutions to problems created by bad forestry practices and rewarding good forestry management. The FSC certificated products tell consumers that the product has been produced in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. Consumers thus know that they use ecological, socially responsible and economical products.

The short course in Biology at the Savonlinna Department of Teacher Education is intended for 60-80 students divided into 3 or 4 groups. The groups made a study visit to the Linnansaari national park in Savonlinna, 40 kilometers off campus. An expert from the Regional Forestry Centre was invited to join the groups, as it is methodologically always refreshing to have visitors on courses. In Linnansaari the groups could see small areas that had been cleared and burnt over for cultivation. Additionally, the different phases or cycles of the forest succession were visible in the conserved area. The significance of commercial forests for Finland is evident; however, national parks are important as well.

After the study visit to the Linnansaari national park, the groups visited a commercial forest with the expert. The students could ask about the different phases in forestry. In the forest the groups tried to distinguish as many examples of the FSC standards as possible: projected trees and watersides, marks of old buildings, conserved areas.

After the one-day excursion, the student teachers planned a teaching period focusing on forest-related matters for lower secondary school (classes 5-6, years 11-12). They also made a video in small groups, "How to teach Finnish forests in lower secondary or primary school". The videos were viewed in groups later on.

Conclusions

Finnish forestry and fine paper are not always valued in Central Europe. Nature protection and consumer associations do not always appreciate the use of new wood materials. In Finland we have to understand the economical importance for a variety of different groups and try to do our best to ensure that our products are ecological and produced in a socially responsible manner. We also need to see the economical aspects and our possibilities as a Nordic country.

Forest owners in Finland are mostly individuals and they are beginning to be more and more city-based than before. We have to teach children to understand the significance of forests for our country.

In Finland it is easy to organize excursions and see production processes. We can discuss sustainability freely also with school children. With the help of the visiting expert, the students received information about the agreement between the Regional Forestry Centres and teachers in every municipality. Excursion can be seen as an effective way of studying Finnish forestry and national parks, and understanding the Finnish traditions in forestry from the consumer's point of view.

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Joint European master as a tool for interdisciplinary teaching in consumer citizenship

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THE CHALLENGE OF INTERDISCIPLINARY TEACHING IN CONSUMER CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship education is an important vehicle for learning about today's society. Today's consumer requires greater knowledge and a broader range of skills than ever before. People will be best equipped to participate effectively in the marketplace if they have received systematic preparation for their role as consumers by the time they leave the educational system. Different schools of thought have offered diverse perspectives and suggested distinct focus of analysis in the field of consumer citizenship education (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987; Block, 1994; Dawes, 1980; Lindblom, 1997; Park and Mittal, 1985). Although the authors define it using a common background they put the emphasis in their research on different components and aspects such as political literacy (Kerr, 1998), consumer literacy (Bannister and Monsma, 1982), social awareness (Gabriel and Lang, 1995). This paper believes that consumer citizenship education (CCE) should both reflect the interdependence between the political, social and economic spheres, and balance this relationship in synergistic ways using the method of interdisciplinary teaching. As McGregor (2002) stated, CCE should enable students to gain an appreciation of the links between the values and principles of the market economy and the values and principles of a democracy, often seen to be at odds with each other.

Interdisciplinary teaching approach is the core concept of the Consumer Citizen Network as an interdisciplinary network of educators who share an interest in how the individual's role as a consumer can contribute constructively to sustainable development and mutual solidarity. Housing natural, social and human sciences under one roof, UNESCO promotes multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to the

wise use of natural resources and to the improved understanding of human–environment relationships.⁴

We can understand the consumer citizenship education only if we could recognize both how the consumer citizenship affects the behavior of the society it governs and how consumer citizenship reflects the values of that society. For this reason, it is better for the students not to study consumer citizenship as an autonomous discipline but as an integrated course combining different point of views and different fields of study. Social, economic, cultural, ecological, political, ethical and law components are equally important because of the delocalized nature of many issues in today’s world. While law and economics was the first traditional for higher education interdisciplinary field, the integration of the other fields together has special advantages and challenges. Any education should exceed the simple sum of its parts thus providing a synergy effect. Interdisciplinary study brings the biggest rewards when it is brought into the traditional mainstays of the curriculum.

The interdisciplinary aspects of the curriculum include required courses at different levels. Interdisciplinary teaching involves a conscious effort to apply knowledge, principles, and/or values to more than one academic discipline simultaneously. Jacobs (Jacobs 1989, p. 8) defines the term interdisciplinary as “a knowledge view and curricular approach that consciously applies methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central theme, issue, problem, topic, or experience”. The organizational structure of interdisciplinary teaching is called a theme, thematic unit, or unit, which is a framework with goals/outcomes that specify what students are expected to learn as a result of the experiences and lessons that are a part of the unit.

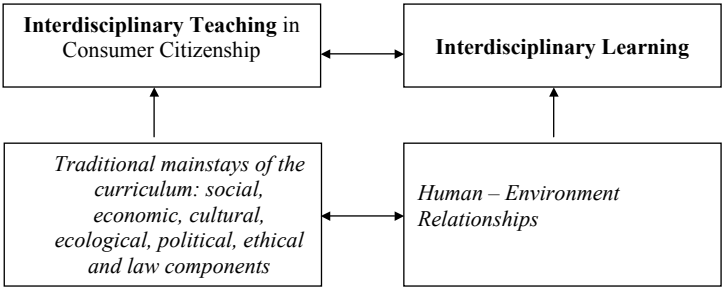


Figure 1. Interdisciplinary learning and teaching in Consumer Citizenship

Obviously, individuals cannot have all the specialized knowledge relevant to a decision in their private, work, or civic life. They must realize, however, that such information is relevant and available.

⁴ www.unesco.org

The interdisciplinary learning strand identifies a range of knowledge, skills and behaviours which cross disciplinary boundaries and are essential to ensuring students are prepared as active learners and problem-solvers for success at school and beyond. Interdisciplinary teaching is often seen as a way to address some of the recurring problems in education, such as fragmentation and isolated skill instruction. The twenty-first century requirement for a flexible use of knowledge goes beyond a superficial understanding of multiple isolated events to insights developed by learning that is connected-or *integrated*. (Lake, K. 2001). Figure 1 represents a holistic view of learning and teaching process.

In order to find solutions to the complex, multifaceted problems related to living sustainably, today's students of environmental science must be exposed to techniques of teaching that directly involve them in diverse interdisciplinary collaboration, the creative process, advanced technology, cross-cultural communication, economic development, and environmental ethics and values, to name a few. This integrative approach will also produce a new generation of scientists that are both sensitive to the intrinsic value and inherent worth of the natural environment and responsive to the fact that science and technology should be used for nature's sake and not simply as a means to exploit nature for society's continued use.

That is why we need to prepare a "new" professional who should be able to feel comfortable in a multi-disciplinary framework. Hence, the basic goal of interdisciplinary teaching in consumer citizenship is to generate and transference knowledge, information, ideas, methodological principals and teaching materials in consumer citizenship.

BASED ON THE CONCEPTS GIVEN ABOVE WE COULD IDENTIFY THE FOLLOWING VALUES AND BENEFITS OF INTERDISCIPLINARY TEACHING IN CONSUMER CITIZENSHIP: 5

1. Applies, integrates, and transfers knowledge.

What is learned and applied in one area of the curriculum is related and used to reinforce, provide repetition, and expand the knowledge and skills learned in other curriculum areas. (Bonds, Cox, and Gantt-Bonds 1993) Interdisciplinary teaching supports this transfer of knowledge and skillsq and retrieval of information.

2. Increases motivation and promotes positive attitudes in students.

Interdisciplinary teaching can increase students' motivation for learning and their level of engagement. When students are actively involved in planning their learning and in making choices, they are more motivated, reducing behavior problems.

3. Improves learning and student achievement.

Interdisciplinary teaching provides the conditions under which effective learning occurs. Integrated curriculum helps students apply skills, to solve problems by looking at multiple perspectives.

⁵ www.eduplace.com/rdg

CCJEM CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY TEACHING IN CONSUMER CITIZENSHIP

The use of the conceptual framework of the components of consumer citizenship education is based on previous work of several authors. Lindblom (1977) frames his analysis of the major politicoeconomic systems of the world into three classes of social control: persuasion, exchange, and authority. John P. Knapp (1991) has three elements in his analysis: individual, business, society. Hastings and Elliott (1993) use 3Es – education, environment, and enforcement – in their micro level framework. Incorporating aforementioned elements with the results of the work of Michael L. Rothschild (1999) we propose the CCJEM (Consumer Citizenship Joint European Master) conceptual model to be used as a background for developing a in Consumer Citizenship (Figure 2).

The interdependence between the elements in the CCJEM conceptual model is very important since it reflects the interdisciplinary way of teaching and the complexity of obtained skills and knowledge thus providing different possibilities for future career of the graduates. Their education should be dual-purposed, because they will work as managers⁶ but also will “act” as consumers in their daily life. Social awareness and responsibility are both an outcome of and drivers for the continuous and successful process of consumer citizenship education.



Figure 2. CCJEM Conceptual Model

Increasing complexity, rapid change, and global perspective are the characteristics of the world in which today's students will live their adult lives. Consumer education - the process of learning to manage personal resources and make decisions (Bannister et al. 1992) - is essential in this challenging environment. Knowledge of economics, personal finance, and consumer rights and responsibilities can help people function as

⁶ *Manager* is used here as a generic term that includes, but is not limited to, various persons such as civil servants, nonprofit administrators, legislators, and/or private sector managers who attempt to direct the behaviour of individuals for the good of society.

more independent, productive, and informed citizens. However, surveys (Bonner 1993; Brobeck 1991) showing glaring deficiencies in the consumer competence of young people are cause for concern. Consumer citizenship education should be multidisciplinary by design. Therefore, consumer citizenship concepts might and should be offered as an independent integrated Joint European Master programme.

CCJEM: FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

The objectives of the paper were twofold: (1) to investigate and evaluate the status quo of consumer citizenship courses; and (2) to develop an initial methodological framework or format for Joint European Master in Consumer Citizenship, which could be used further as a background for project proposal for Erasmus Mundus programme.

Our research is secondary by its nature. By present, a vast variety of consumer citizenship courses is offered. We found 182 000 matches for Consumer Citizenship syllabus while searching in the Internet. Then we performed a content analysis and identified the following main fields covered by the analysed syllabuses:

1. Rights & Responsibilities, including the following main topics:
 - Consumer/Trader Rights and Responsibilities
 - Practical Consumer Law
 - Personal Finance
2. Government & Democracy, including the following main topics:
 - Local Government and its role in helping the Consumer
 - Central Government and its role in helping the Consumer
 - Role of Europe in helping the Consumer
 - Consumers, Business and the Economy
3. Communities & Identity, including the following main topics:
 - Consumer Choice and Expectations
 - Ethical Consumerism
 - Consumers and the Environment
 - Global Citizenship

The courses are offered for different levels of study but we didn't find an integrated programme in Consumer Citizenship which is offered on Master Degree level. There are many courses and programmes in corporate social responsibility offered mainly as a part of university curriculum.

Further we analysed the available Erasmus Mundus Master Courses. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of Erasmus Mundus Master Courses by Year

Year	Number	Year	Number
2007	23	2005	17
2006	21	2004	19

We suggest that the most suitable subject areas where CCJEM could be offered are "Business studies, management studies" or "Social sciences (including Economics)". Selected projects in these two subject areas are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Selected Erasmus Mundus Master Courses by subject area

Business studies, management studies	Social sciences (including Economics)
EMIN - Economics and Management of Network Industries	CoDe - Joint European Master in Comparative Local Development
Europubhealth – European Public Health Master	EMIN - Economics and Management of Network Industries
IMIM - International Master in Industrial Management	IMESS: International Masters in Economy, State and Society
IMMIT: International Master in Management of Information Technology	M.A. Degree in Economics of International Trade and European Integration
International Master "Vintage": Vine, Wine and Terroir Management	MUNDUS MAPP - Erasmus Mundus Master's in Public Policy
MSPME - Masters in Strategic Project Management	NOHA MUNDUS - European Master's Degree in International Humanitarian Aid
	EURO CULTURE
	European Master in Global Studies
	European Master in Law and Economics
	MA Human Rights Practice (Erasmus Mundus)
	Europubhealth - European Public Health Master
	Master of Bioethics
	PHOENIX EM - Dynamics of Health and Welfare
	QEM - Models and Methods of Quantitative Economics
	TPTI: Techniques, Patrimoines, Territoires de l'industrie: Histoire, Valorisation, Didactique
	WOP-P - Master on Work, Organizational and Personnel Psychology

Four Erasmus Mundus Master Courses were considered by the authors as being close to the field of consumer citizenship and the selected courses were analysed thoroughly (Table 3).

Table 3. The Analysed Erasmus Mundus Master Courses

Year	Erasmus Mundus Master Course	Website
2007	IMESS: International Masters in Economy, State and Society	http://www.imess.eu/index.html
2007	JEMES - Joint European Master Programme in Environmental Studies	http://www.tuhh.de/eciuegs/pro_joint_jemes.html
2007	ME3 - European joint Masters in Management and Engineering of Environment and Energy	http://webi.emn.fr
2005	MESPOM: Masters of Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management	http://www.mespom.org

As a result of the analysis we suggest the following methodologica framework for CCJEM:

1. INTRODUCTION / CCJEM POSITIONING
 - 3.1. The Importance of Consumer Citizenship (CC) and CCJEM
 - 3.2. The Scope of CCJEM
 - 3.3. The Structure of CCJEM
2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF CONSUMER CITIZENSHIP JEM
 - 3.1. Aims
 - 3.2. Objectives
 - 2.2.1. Knowledge
 - 2.2.2. Concepts
 - 2.2.3. Skills
 - 2.2.4. Attitudes and Values
3. OUTLINE OF THE CCJEM
 - 3.1. Module 1: The Individual and the Consumer Perspective on CC
 - 3.2. Module 2: The Community and the Society Perspective on CC
 - 3.3. Module 3: The Business Perspective on CC / Corporate Social Responsibility
 - 3.4. Module 4: The Global Consumer Citizenship

Suggested modules reflect the interdependence between the elements of the CCJEM conceptual model (Figure 2). Depending on the duration of the CCJEM (1 or 2 years) two more modules could be added: Project Work and Thesis Work. Each module will include subjects which are topic for further discussion.

The design and implementation of the proposed integrated curriculum represent two different steps in the process of achieving an effective interdisciplinary teaching in CC. The key point for achieving a sustainable result should be the aims and objectives of Consumer Citizenship JEM which will balance the curriculum breadth and depth.

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IV. POSTERS

Integrating of the Content of Primary Education in Latvia

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Annotation: the Education reform taking place in the Republic of Latvia is connected with introducing the new standard for basic education. The seven aspects of educating being designated by the education standard facilitate integration of the content of education into basic education, which results in pupils' development of their diverse skills and competences, as well as are closely connected with items of consumer education.

Key words: *basic(primary) education, integration; content of education; consumer education*

PREFACE

Social changes connected with joining the EU require purposeful improvement of the system of education. This process is orientated to the development of the personality who is able to have self-determination, therefore is able to choose independently the strategy of his/ her development and self-realization in the conditions of market economy.

Nowadays rapid socially economic changes take place in the society, people's attitudes and readiness alter, values and life aims transform. Thus, when living in modern dynamic society, it is vital to realize clearly the aids, kinds, necessary personality qualities and influencing factors that are possible to facilitate effective advance towards the goal and self-actualization. Therefore, in order to do this complicated task the teacher not only has to be an expert in the subject he/she teaches,

but he/she also should be able to create the educational environment to ensure effective teaching – learning process; to facilitate awareness of norms of morality and ethics and to accomplish the human's system of values; to further development of the student's personality and readiness to work, etc./EU project, 2006.-2007./.

The Regulations on the standard for basic education and subject programs created by Latvian Ministry of Education and Science contain many questions; they present an altered approach to the educational process. Latvian teachers are skilled in terms of acquisition of subject knowledge and teaching methods, but there still are problems in organizing learning process, integrating of teaching content. Therefore, all is being done to improve teachers' professionalism, to fulfill qualitatively the standard requirements and the basic principles of the content reform that update the improvement of general skills, ability to work with information, to use information technologies, be active at a class bilingually, to evaluate it critically, to make decisions and to assume responsibility.

NOTION AND ESSENCE OF INTEGRATION OF EDUCATION CONTENT

Integration originates from the Latin *integratio*, that means renewal, elaboration, where *integer* means whole, uniting separate parts into the entirety. The dictionary of foreign words gives the following interpretation of this term: "a process of joining separate elements, subsystems and parts into a systemic whole (system)". In education process it is e.g. solving, acquisition or studying a subject or a problem that practically link knowledge and skills been acquired or being acquired in segregated school subjects into a whole. It can take place in the form of specially created integrated school subjects, as well as integrated handling of segregated parts of a school subject content /Gedrovics, 1985./.. The notion of integration can be come across in different literature sources and defined in different ways. However, its essence is the same, i.e. synthesis, conjunction, interaction, systematization, mutual enrichment, plenty of opportunity, etc.

In modern society the notion *integration* is used either in economy or politics, social sciences or education, etc. UNESCO international commission report entitled *Education for the 21st Century* stresses that transition to the 21st century as information society, makes it really necessary to systematize and combine facts or regularities in order to ensure thereby more prompt and precise acquisition, memorization and practical applicability of them /Eirpoas Baltā grāmata, 1998./.

The process of integration of Latvian society influences the reform of education content. Teaching content can be considered a didactic aid of the integration problem in pedagogy.

The following educators tried to solve integration problems of teaching content: W.Ratke (1571 - 1635); J.A.Komensky (1592-1670); J.J.Rousseau(1712- 1778); J.H.Pestalozzi (1712- 1778); etc. In Latvia integration of teaching content was researched by the scientists I.Zogla, R.Andersone, Z.Cehlova, Z.Grinpauks, A.Karule, A.Perere, Z.Anspoka, etc.

Studying different scientists' theories on the integration process shows that integration of teaching content is one of the ways of completion the education

programmes. E.g. K.Lake points out that an integrated programme and its content are considered to be interdisciplinary which prepares pupils for life-long studies /Lake K./.

Nowadays one of the school reforms is a search for integration of different school subjects. The topicality of the problem of teaching content integration is reinforced by the lack of reconciliation of teaching content among school subjects, as well as teachers' coordination, pupils' amount of work, shortage of integrated curricula and methodological aids concerning integration processes in pedagogy and other factors. Integration of curricula, methods, forms, aids and other factors into one school subject facilitates pupils and teachers' cooperation for solving different problems. It is a complex solution of teaching and upbringing tasks through systemic knowledge, purposefulness, arousing cognitive interest within the teaching process which furthers diversification of forms and methods at school.

One of the tasks of education is to prepare the adolescent for life, which can be realized within teaching and upbringing process, stressing integration of the teaching content. The material is easier to perceive if the knowledge received at the lessons is linked with practical implementation (interconnection of life and teaching content – life experience – for life), motivating pupils to transfer the knowledge independently and facilitating self-education. Life skills as an acknowledgement of pupils' creative abilities in activity appear to be the main education result to be planned, reached and assessed.

TEACHING CONTENT IN THE ASPECT OF THE STANDARDS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

The National basic education standard, the main goals and objectives of the curriculum of basic education, its compulsory content, the basic principles and procedure for assessing pupils' achievement are stated in regulation N 462 "On National Standard for Basic Education" (Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia) /LR MK, likumi.lv/.

The reform of the content of basic education includes:

- transition from acquisition of a large amount of information to skills of working with it;
- to emphasise useful resolutions and skills;
- to improve general skills, which could give pupils the opportunity to act either in familiar or especially in obscure and unexplored situations;
- to include up-to-date themes into the content of education;
- to reconcile content among subjects in order to prevent content doubling and overloading, as well as content integration in several school subjects.

The Regulation on national standard for basic education and all subject standards issued by the Ministry of Education and Science were implemented on September 1, 2005. They state the main educational aspects reflecting the development of general abilities and skills of the personality:

- self-expression and creative aspect;
- analytically critical aspect;

- moral and aesthetic aspect;
- aspect of cooperation;
- aspect of communication;
- aspect of learning and practical activity;
- mathematical aspect /www.izm.gov.lv/.

The Standard for basic education and subject programs include a lot of innovations, as well as the approach to educational process has been altered /table 1/. The teacher is to teach the pupil rather than the subject, the pupils are to be prepared for further socialization. Nowadays teachers are professionals concerning acquisition subject knowledge and teaching methodology, but they still have difficulties in arranging learning process, therefore all opportunities are used in order to improve teachers' professionalism, qualitatively match the standard requirements and the basic principles of the reform of the content, which activates the improvement of general skills, the skill of dealing with information, applying information technologies, work in class bilingually, assess it critically, make decisions and take responsibility /DanilaneL., LubkinaV., 2005./.

Table 1

The Standards for Basic Education in Comparison

	Old standard for basic education	New standard for basic education
Aim	To impart scientific knowledge	Prevalence of Nature Sciences
Content	Scientific knowledge	Subjectively meaningful for the pupil (knowledge, skills, attitudes)
Methods, approach within the teaching process	Narration, algorithm in action, practical work after the pattern – after the <i>Cooking Book</i>	Research work to teach to think, to express one's thoughts, to substantiate one's views, to discuss
Pupil	Passive from cognition activity	Active, responsible for his/her learning

Integrated training is one of the all-embracing teaching kinds, therefore education content is created to match pupils' needs and interests. Teaching process should be experimental and connected with pupils' daily life, wishes and activity. Imagination and creative talent can be used for problem solving. The components of this method are closely connected with the model of experimental knowledge acquisition and cognitively constructive theory: the same elements are used, but considered from different points of view.

The analysis of the subject standards makes it clear that their content, aims and objectives are closely connected with customer education, therefore teachers' own

experience and personal example can often be useful for improving customer education methodology. The questions and problems to be discussed can be chosen from pupils' own experience. Lessons providing analysis of theory and practice become more interesting for pupils. Effectiveness of learning depends on creative tasks and the pupil's own experience being used at the lesson. Attracting e.g. theatre, art and other aesthetic activities to customer education we can create psychological bridges over pupils' daily reality at school and at home. Attention is attracted to games too; especially in kindergartens and during the first 4 school years this method has a great meaning in introducing customer education themes. An essential part of customer education is activity, it should contribute to framing concepts of socially economic structure of society /Lubkina V., 1997./.

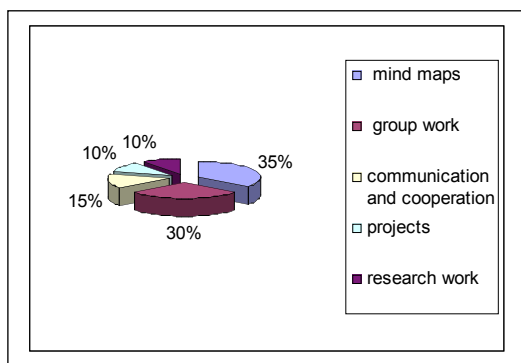
Customer education is linked with people's mutual behaviour and ways of solving problems. Listening, brainstorming, developing self-confidence, role plays, group work, exploration make a part of teaching – learning process. It means that apart from conventional lectures there are a lot of other more effective and interesting ways and methods how to organize and integrate customer education into teaching content /Danilane L., 2002./.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE *INTEGRATION OF EDUCATION CONTENT IN THE ASPECT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARD FOR BASIC EDUCATION*

Within the European Social Fund project *Latgale Region Teachers' Competence Development for Implementation of the New Standard for Basic Education in Comprehensive School* (Contract No 2006/0088/VPD1/ESF/PIAA/05/APK/ 3.2.5.2./ 0097/0160) there was carried out a survey *Integration of Education Content in the Aspect of Implementation of the New Standard for Basic Education*. 20 teachers participated from 15 Latgale region schools including 5 teachers of Mathematics, 2 teachers of Foreign Languages, 6 teachers of Latvian and Latvian Literature, 2 primary school teachers, 2 teachers of Social Sciences and 3 teachers of Nature Sciences and Geography.

Analyzing the responses for the question "What do you think *integration* means?" different directions are seen. A number of them are defined in a narrow aspect, e.g. integration is 'including separate school subject topics in some other subjects', 'cooperation of different subject teachers, as well as different stream class pupils' or 'acquisition of the same topic within different subjects joining them together, i.e. speaking about the same topic through different aspects'. However, a part of the teachers understands it in a wider aspect, they explain the term *integration* as 'inclusion of some part of society into the state life and society' or as 'tolerant attitude towards another nation's culture and traditions, adoption of these traditions'.

The teachers were asked "Do you try to integrate content in your school subjects and how do you do that?"/picture1/. The responses were rather different. Teachers try to teach their subjects applying pedagogical modeling based on various life situations.



Picture 1. Applying different ways for integrating teaching content in Latgale schools

10% teachers state that pupils' social skills, critical thinking skills, etc are developed within project work; 30% teachers run group work; 35% teachers work with mind maps; 15% teachers develop them through communication and cooperation in class and out-of-class activities; 10% teachers run research work with their pupils.

The teachers responses show that approximately 50% of the respondents deal with integration. Similar themes from the standard for the school subject are joined, e.g. in Mathematics joining theory of probability, elements of combinatorics and statistics with the skills of creating charts; teachers of foreign languages join themes of environment and health, sports and leisure time, food and the geographical map; teachers of Nature Sciences join physical and chemical properties of substances, dangerous substances, labour safety regulations; in Home Economics can be joined healthy food and customer's shopping principles, nature protection issues and their impact on human health, etc. Most teachers of Chemistry, Physics, Geography and Social Sciences cooperate and join similar themes with their colleagues teaching different subjects. The responses show that teachers of Latvian try to dovetail teaching content with teachers of Russian. Approximately 50% from the respondents have not done it yet, nevertheless because of implementation of the Education reform in Latvia and the new standard for basic education in comprehensive school transition to integrated teaching content will take place.

All the teachers responded to the question "Which educational aspect do you apply in your daily work?" that more or less they apply all the seven educational aspects in their work /table 2/.

Table 2

Application of the Educational Aspects in Teaching Process in Latgale Region Schools

No	Educational aspect	Application within teaching process
1.	Self-expression and creative aspect	In creative works, i.e. drawings, writing essays and reports, running projects, creating spatial imagination, artistic imagination in needlework; developing presentation skills, the ability to express and defend one's thoughts, etc.
2.	Analytically critical aspect	In creating charts, distinguishing relevancies between sizes in nature and society; in doing percentage tasks it is concluded where it is better to do shopping, which bank loan would be the most advantageous, how to save electric energy, warmth, etc., analyzing and evaluating the results, etc.
3.	Moral and aesthetic aspect	In languages and literature discussing literary characters' behaviour; analyzing different situations and making decisions on one's personal actions; observing labour culture and aesthetically designing works, arranging and keeping work area in order; attitude, learning motivation, labour culture, etc. are brought up.
4.	Aspect of cooperation	Working in pairs and groups – practical work, projects, dialogues, communicative games; presenting completed works.
5.	Aspect of communication	In Mathematics “mathematical” language is developed; as well as the ability to hear others out, the ability to express and substantiate one's thoughts; to make up a dialogue; to gain information from various sources.
6.	Aspect of learning and practical activity	At every lesson according to the school subject.
7.	Mathematical aspect	Representing information and analyzing charts, algorithms, curves; formulating conclusions; analysis of the results.

The teachers were asked „What positive and negative features do you sight in teaching-learning process concerning the Education reform in connection with implementation of the new standard for basic education?"/table 3/.

Table 3

Positive and negative features concerning the Education reform in connection with implementation of the new standard for basic education sighted by Latgale region teachers

Positive features	Negative features
Main attention is to be attracted to the person – personality where the pupil as an explorer who searches for problem solution on his/ her own; but the teacher is a consultant rather than an author of ready-made, “correct” ideas.	Evaluation system (pass - fail) that trains to do daily tasks carelessly.
Link with real life.	Shortage of necessary teaching aids.
Makes the teacher work creatively.	Teachers are not ready to implement the standard.
Stressing social skills in all school subjects.	It requires plenty of extra work done by the teacher.
All-embracing development of various skills.	Teachers are insufficiently provided with up-to-date teaching technologies.
Every pupil has an opportunity to verify himself.	There is no coherence among several subject standards.
Transition from a great amount of information to learning how to find information and apply it.	The content is too bulky.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The seven educational aspects stated in the Education standard facilitate integration of teaching content in basic education, which results in development of pupils' manifold skills and competences.
2. Consumer education themes are closely connected with the content of basic education, and their integration into different school subjects facilitate pupils' acquisition and socializing of their „everyday skills”.
3. The carried out survey gives an opportunity to analyse the multiform implementation of the educational aspects in teaching process where the link with customer education themes is also seen.
4. The survey results point out not only positive features of the implementation of the new Standard, but also give an opportunity to analyse drawbacks in this process.

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Curriculum for Master of Science Degree for Consumer Protection in Foods

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INTRODUCTION

On the eve of World War II Winston Churchill spoke of a storm gathering for their generation. Now there is a new type of storm gathering for our generation in two interrelated aspects: environmental ecology, respectively climate, and food ecology. Regrettably, both aspects have been caused by the technical progress much dreamt of by humanity, therefore it deserves a contrasting evaluation: with a big plus and a big minus. Everyone has the right to evaluate the balance between the two extremes without disputing their real existence, hence their effect on the present and future of humanity.

Serious comments on and evaluations of environmental ecology issues started around the mid-20th century. Now the alarming state of these issues is measured by the decisions taken at the Kyoto conference, Japan, and by the comments in the UN Security Council in April this year. The reasons for these world-scale events can be seen in the tragic evidence produced by science and in the population's stress condition. Regrettably, the recommended nature restoration measures are still mainly within the sphere of wishes.

Concern for ecology and food problems has much longer history in view of food-related health damage and death rate attributable to pathogenic and toxicogenic microorganisms entering the human organism with food, predominantly food of animal origin. This also applies to diseases caused by parasites developing in animal organisms, e.g. tapeworm. However, the progress in some agricultural areas (plant growing and animal husbandry) has created new problems as a result of the use of plant protection products (pesticides and herbicides), fertilizers, etc. The problem is aggravated by air and irrigation water pollution. In animal husbandry, the advance of veterinary medicine has dictated the extensive use of different pharmaceutical products for the prophylaxis and treatment of all kinds of domestic animals.

STATE OF THE PROBLEM

Food industry has contributed to the degraded ecology of agricultural raw materials processed into various products. The problem is related to the use of chemical

substances the majority of which have no counterparts in food raw materials, e.g. preservatives, thickeners, colourants, fragrances, additives amplifying the sensory qualities of ready products, etc. An indisputable negative contribution is made by polymer packaging, the manufacture of which involves the use of quite a few substances enhancing its mechanical qualities, stability during storage, colour, transparency, etc. Some of these ingredients are water soluble, whereas others are soluble in vegetable oils or animal fats.

Real progress in food processing and preservation technology with regard to the nutritional value and shelf life of foods is mainly obscured by two alarming phenomena. The first one is the production of effective substitutes to be used independently or as counterfeits of the respective original foods. For instance, chicory has been used on its own or as counterfeit of real coffee. Other coffee drinks made by cereal plants (rye, barley, etc.) are also used for the same purpose. The second trend is the imitation of original products by the addition of cheaper analogues to them. For example, olive oil is imitated by a mixture of analogous products: sunflower, rapeseed, soy, etc. The imitation of red wine is based on its colour characteristic and involves the addition of intensely coloured fruit such as elder, black currant, etc. Clear grape juice is mixed with apple, pear or other fruit juice. All juice, nectar and wine sorts are traditionally imitated by addition of sugar solutions or solutions of the so-called artificial honey made from maize or starch-derived glucose, etc. The same method is applied to the production of white and red wines, including repeat extraction of the skin and seed mixture. Bee honey is most commonly falsified by feeding sugar syrup or artificial honey to bees, or by adding these products to the honey.

High quality meat products are adulterated by addition of lower quality meat of the same species or of meat from other, lower priced animals. Finely ground products are often mixed with soy isolates or skin, tendons and other animal tissues.

Similar problems are observed with cereal, dairy and other products. Even spices have not been spared.

Reliable methods of detecting counterfeit products have been developed for the most widespread cases but sometimes the control results are not very convincing.

The monitoring of agricultural raw materials for pesticide and nitrate presence is not systematically performed, and there are many countries where the extent of its application is inadequate.

The role of water and air ecology for consumer health cannot be overestimated. However, the effect of food in this respect is most prominent. Food carries all the components necessary for the building and restoration of tissues and organs and guarantees the energy needed for physical activity, for body temperature maintenance, and for the function of physiological processes such as respiration, heart rhythms, motor activities, etc. The rational nutrition criteria are reached through consumption of various animal and plant foods in an annual quantity that is ten times the respective consumer's weight. Vegetables account for 23%, fruit for 11%, animal foods for 14% (dairy foods alone comprise 21%), cereals: 9%, sugar products: 10%, etc. Their consumption is daily, water is partly compensated by the water contained in food, and

the role of air is evident from the fact that if oxygen is cut off for even 5 minutes, the organism will die.

Protection Charta has been developed in which definition of a consumer has been given and consumer rights have been enumerated for the first time as follows:

1. *The right of consumer protection and assistance against economic and material damage, and easy access to justice*
2. *The right of compensation for damages that affect the consumer because of defective products or diffusion of deceitful message*
3. *The right of information and education*
4. *The right of representation*

In the resolution of the Council of Ministers of April 1975 a preliminary programme for consumer protection policy was defined identifying the lines of action and assembling consumer rights in five categories as follows: health and safety protection, protection of economic interests, compensation for damages, information and education, and representation.

In the Maastricht Treaty signed on 07/02/1992, a special article was dedicated to the higher level of consumer protection and consumer interest in having a safeguarding organisation. The triennial action plan (2002 – 2006) focused on three priority lines:

1. *A higher common level of consumer protection*
2. *Effective application of consumer protection laws*
3. *Adequate involvement of consumer organisations in community politics*

Paragraphs 100 and 100A of the Treaty of Rome constituted the juridical base of the community directive concerning consumer protection in different directions including labelling, presentational advertising of food products (Directive 89/359 and 89/396) and food destined to a particular alimentation (Directive 89/398), some aspects of Warranties on Consumption Goods (Directive 99/44), producer's responsibility to primary agricultural products (Directive 85/374), etc.

For the past years several critical situations concerning food products have occurred (dioxin, BSE, etc.) and have become the reason for a reduction in European consumers' trust in the ability and will of food industry and public authorities to warrant the safety of foods. Therefore the European Commission has been involved in food safety and its major priorities. The White Book of Food Safety was printed on 12 January 2000 which showed that more should be made with regard to prevention by legislation modernisation, control enforcement 'from farm to table', increase in the resources and ability of the scientific consulting system. Some other essential elements of this book are: food and ingredient traceability, risk analysis, precaution principle application, research and cooperation on a scientific basis, animal food control and animal health as an essential warranty of quality and consumer safety, food hygiene, stipulation of maximum limits for pollution and residual substances (pesticides, veterinary medicaments, fertilisers, etc.), 'new foods' regulation, regulation of additives, spices, etc., the need for labels to be more informative for consumers,

consideration of the nutritional value of foods, the need for directives concerning dietetic foods, alimentary interaction, etc.

In 2002 the financing of the European project on Integrated Safety and Environmental Knowledge into Foods towards European Sustainable Development (ISEKI-Food) was given a start. The project is coordinated by Associate Professor Cristina Silva, Escola Superior de Biotechnologia, Porto, Portugal. The questionnaire on food safety elucidated the state of several problems. The responders were 4326 people from 19 countries in Europe. Answers were separated into 5 population groups: food science/nutrition, not professional male and female, and total assessment. The answers were: 1) yes, absolutely; 2) generally yes; 3) not always and 4) not. Results are as follows:

Question 1. Do you think the food you are consuming is safe? Total answers for all participants are: 1) 7%; 2) 57%; 3) 3%; 4) 33%.

Question 2. What is the biggest food safety risk? Total answers are: microorganisms: 40%; pesticides: 25%; chemicals and BSE: 7%; irradiation: 2%; acrylamide and genetically modified microorganisms: 1%, other: 21%.

Question 3. Is organic food safer? The total result is: No: 62%; Yes, always: 26%; I don't know: 12%.

Question 4. What does an E-number mean on a food label? The total result is: 47%: EU approved additives; 6%: potential harmful substances; 32%: preservatives; 15%: not natural ingredients.

Question 5. Do you usually read the labels? The total result is: 27%: Yes, always; 63%: yes, sometimes; 10%: never.

Question 6. Do you have/get enough information on food/ food ingredients? The total result is: 15.7%: Yes, enough; 53.4%: Yes, but not enough; 31%: way too little.

By means of a special question it was proved that most people receive information about food mainly by labels, TV and radio, newspapers. The government is an important source of such information in the Netherlands and Norway. The universities are such source in England, Italy and Portugal.

It can be stated with certainty that for every consumer the health aspects of the food consumed are a primary concern, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Unfortunately, modern civilization has destined a significant part of world population to unhealthy nutrition, or starvation to different extents, which in many cases is the cause of premature death. That this affects children, even nursing babies, is a particularly tragic fact.

The latest achievements in food and nutrition science and food technology are indisputable. However, there is also the equally indisputable fact that the economic interests of raw material and processed food manufacturers form the dark aspects of the nutrition issue both economically and with regard to health. Therefore consumers need to have certain knowledge of the ways in which they can be deceived by food manufacturers and traders. Doubtlessly, this has led to the CCN project which has

expressed concern on this matter and formulated the idea of large-scale implementation of suitable consumer training forms for the population. The reasonable idea of working to achieve this goal on all education system levels starting with nursery school deserves admiration. This would unify the efforts towards an education degree and cultivation of a critical attitude in people to everything they buy. For some products they would certainly need consultations, for instance, when they purchase technical equipment, household goods, etc. The principle should be 'believe but research'. The approach to advertisements whose primary concern is the advertisers' economic interests rather than consumer care should be particularly critical.

A proof of the CCN project concern is the issuance of a brochure with instructions for involvement of the higher education system written by Victoria W. Thoresen, member of the project central governing body. The instructions are based on the large-scale discussions of the project in work groups and on the annual scientific conferences within the project framework where papers are presented and discussions are held on the role and trends of conducting a training process towards consumer knowledge and critical attitude enhancement. This can be illustrated by some of the texts in the instructions such as:

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

"Consumer citizenship is multidisciplinary elements which are to be found in different subjects in the curriculum. Central topics of civic training, consumer education and environmental education provide the backbone of consumer citizenship education. Consumer citizenship education can even be part of general educational promotion of generic competence or life skills. This education can even be considered as didactical approach to teaching in general rather than a specific discipline even though it includes certain subject specific competence and skills".

"Consumer citizenship education includes a wide variety of issues like life quality and lifestyles, consumer rights and responsibilities, advertising and persuasion, consumption and environment, safety, information, diet and nutrition, etc."

The variety in consumer protection problems is a mirror image of the variety of things purchased. Therefore governmental and non-governmental institutions exerting control over product and service quality should employ specialists in different scientific and applied areas. At the same time, the specialists to be involved in this type of activity should have some background in the legal basis of the activity and the principles of its organisation and implementation. These criteria should also be considered for the development of the **Master of Science Degree Curriculum for Consumer Protection in Foods**. The curriculum could be in the format suggested below in terms of topics and credit point equivalents.

Subject title	Total hours	Lectures	Exercises	ECTS credits		
				Auditorial	Non-auditorial	Total
First semester						
Fundamentals of Rational Nutrition	90	45	45	3,0	3,0	6,0
Fundamentals of Mathematical Statistics	60	30	30	2,0	2,0	4,0
Pathogenic and Toxicogenic Microorganisms	60	30	30	2,0	2,0	4,0
Fundamentals of Sensory Analysis	60	30	30	2,0	2,0	4,0
Modern Methods of Food Analysis	60	30	30	2,0	2,0	4,0
Food Ecology and Safety (incl. Labeling, HACCP, GMP, Traceability)	90	45	45	3,0	3,0	6,0
Project	30	-	30	1,0	1,0	2,0
Second semester						
Food Packaging	60	30	30	2,0	2,0	4,0
Food Adulteration	60	30	30	2,0	2,0	4,0
National and European Consumer Protection Systems	60	30	30	2,0	2,0	4,0
Industrial training	(90)	-	-	-	3,0	3,0
Master Thesis	(250)	-	-	-	15,0	15,0
Total	630	300	330	21	39	60

CONCLUSION

This curriculum is targeted at Bachelor degree holders in Food Science and Technology. However, it may be advisable to form separate groups of Bachelor program graduates in agriculture, biology, veterinary medicine, ecology, biochemistry, and tourism. The curriculum for those students should include mandatory courses, e.g.

of the following types: Food Biochemistry and Microbiology, Basic Technological Processes in Food Industry, Food Additives, Food Safety, etc.

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EDUCATION FOR RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION:

Dilemma workshop

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In this article is described a method for the responsible consumption. In the CCN international conference, Hamar the group of education for the sustainable development organized a workshop using this method. The aim was to try out and evaluate the workshop method, designed to accordance with this didactical idea in the education for responsible consumption. The didactical idea in this workshop was to try to make the dilemmas of a consumer-citizenship visible, and to create spaces for the facilitation of the mutual learning and how to cope with them in our everyday lives.

Expected outcomes were 1) a better understanding of the role of an individual/consumer and a group/society for the sustainable development. 2) A personal understanding and commitment of one's own action in everyday private life and its professional endeavors in relation to the dilemmas discussed and to values and principles for the sustainable development. In the method was a some kind discussion method. The topics of the discussion were: 1) What is for you the meaning of 'quality of living'? 2) What kind of world would you (as a human and as a citizen) like to live in? 3) What is the role of the consumption in this context?

Workshop participants were divided into two groups: A) One group will discuss about topics from the angle of the individual/consumer's point of view. B) The second group will discuss about the topics from the society's/group's angle. The topics 1 and 3 will discuss in the group A and the topics 2 and 3 in the group B. In both groups was a leader who asked and wrote downs the members' opinions. The groups discussed if the opinions were relevant in the context. They discussed about the reality and relation between results: What is responsible consumption? How can we, as consumer-citizens, cope with our dilemmas in the relation to the responsible consumption? Both groups told the results to the others. After that, was a debate with all participants of the following topics: What drives consumption to increase consumption? How to promote the responsible consumption and a concluding discussion.

In the concluding discussion, all evaluated the method. The members said that the method was successful. By it the groups got new ideas to a better understanding of the role a individual/consumer and the group/society for the sustainable development. The

method was good to inspire the attendees to elaborate on the ideas of the dilemma oriented the education for responsible consumption to fit into their own specific setting. The method is good for example at the beginning of the course of the responsible consumption and sustainable development.

V. SYMPOSIUMS

Symposium no. 1.

Bridging the gaps between disciplines

Template for in-depth analysis of consumer education strategy

Yoshi Takahashi

Introduction

1. At its 72nd Session in October 2006, the CCP agreed to begin a new project on Consumer Education, to be conducted in the context of Consumer Empowerment in accordance with the CCP's PWB 2007-08. In order to obtain information on the existing approaches to consumer education in each member country, as well as identify the issues and challenges associated with different education approaches, the Questionnaire on Consumer Education: Consumer Rights [DSTI/CP(2007)2] was developed and circulated to the CCP. The questionnaire, which represents the first stage of the project, was designed to examine Member countries' overall approaches to consumer education, including lifelong strategies. Based on the responses to the questionnaire, the different types of approaches being used will be identified. In-depth analyses will then be carried out on selected countries (subject to their agreement). The template was finalised and approved by members of CCP at the 73rd Session of the Committee on Consumer Policy on 16-17 April 2007.

Purpose of the template

2. The attached template has been developed to assist in carrying out the in-depth analyses. The first part concerns the general environment for consumer education and

the institutional framework. The second part concerns the specific consumer education strategies being pursued, including the major initiatives undertaken, the roles of stakeholders and cooperative schemes, and the measurement of effectiveness. **The members taking part in the in-depth analysis** are invited to use the template to provide the information through answering the questionnaire, or, if necessary, the questions below.

In-depth analysis template

Country:

Note: If relevant, please indicate the characteristics of the consumers, to which strategies and major initiatives are targeted, as following. If age sensitive, age brackets could include: a) infancy, b) pupils in primary, c) students in secondary schools, d) students in higher education (e.g. universities), e) young people or adults, and f) the elderly (or retired adults) . If it is related to certain characteristics other than age, please indicate g) and the content of such characteristics (e.g. purchase behaviour, income, gender, and/or location).

Part I General environment and institutional framework of consumer education

3. All countries taking part in the in-depth analysis are requested to this part (*i.e.* regardless to whether or there are specific consumer education strategies in place or not).
 1. *Goals*: What do you see as key elements to succeed in achieving the goal and objective of consumer education or consumer capacity building? How do you assess the effectiveness of the consumer education?
 2. *Vulnerable consumers*: Which consumer groups are most vulnerable in your country? What kind of consumer troubles do they face? Are these facts presumed to be the objectives/goals of the consumer education strategies in your country?
 3. *Social/ethical goals*: What kinds of general social/ethical goals should consumers be recognising and supporting (e.g. sustainable life, supporting other consumers)? Besides consumer education, what measures do you take to make consumers recognise these goals?
 4. *Roles of stakeholders*: How do you view roles of stakeholders, especially consumer organisations and businesses, in implementing effective consumer education (including the roles in the development and design of the initiatives and the level/nature of consultation at each stage of the programme)? If the roles are different at a specific life stage, please provide your opinion for each life stage.

5. *Active groups in private sectors*: In order to provide consumer education, are there any active groups/bodies in the private sectors in your country (e.g. consumer organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)/Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs), industry associations, and private companies)? If so, who are they and what kind of consumer education do they provide?
6. *Guidelines provided by businesses*: Are there any guidelines for consumer education that are provided by businesses? If so, please describe the guidelines. Are the guidelines taken into account by businesses and/or people in charge of consumer education (e.g. trainers and teachers) when they involve or provide consumer education?
7. *Relevant surveys*: Are you satisfied with the consumer skill levels and level of consumer knowledge in your country? What have been the results of relevant surveys on consumer education (e.g. awareness level of consumer rights, knowledge on complaint process, means of making contracts, improved/increased consumer skills etc.), if any?
8. *Clearing houses*: Are there any clearing houses or one-stop shops for a range of materials and resources aimed at consumer education in your country? If so, what kind of organisations is responsible for these? Does the government support their financial and other resources?

Part II Specific consumer education strategy

4. This part concerns countries which have specific consumer education strategies in place, which would be described in the answers to the questionnaire [DSTI/CP(2007)/2] .

1) The strategy and major initiatives

5. Please indicate *i*) the elements that contribute to the development of consumer education strategies, *ii*) the problems in implementing the strategies, and *iii*) the main features of initiatives.

1. *Scientific insights*: To what extent, and in what ways, do the strategies/approaches draw on scientific insights (e.g. psychology, human development, brain science (or neuroscience))? Please describe in detail.
2. *Main obstacles*: What do you consider to be the main obstacles to implementing your approach? Do you have any strategies in place to overcome these obstacles to achieving the objectives of the consumer education programme? If so, please describe the detail.
3. *Updating skills*: If the strategies or other guidance does not include the concept of "lifelong" learning, what methods are in place to re-invent and renew consumers' knowledge and skills to protect their rights? For example,

how are consumers' skills up about changes in the legal framework, new consumer issues, etc? Do you have any outcomes or results to show the success of these update?

4. *Policy co-ordination*: How do you assure the co-ordination of different aspects of consumer education schemes? Do you have any strategies to avoid the possibility that consumer education becomes fragmented or short-sighted? Do you have or consider any measures in order to interconnect the major initiatives in your institutional framework or strategies? If so, please describe in detail.
5. *Rural education*: Do you have any initiatives under the strategy to reach consumers in rural areas? If so, please describe.
6. *Information campaigns*: Are you using various types of consumer information (e.g. warnings, information campaigns, etc.) as education tools? For example, are you including case studies, which are received as consumer complaints, in the educational materials used in primary schools? If so, please describe.
7. *Adult education*: Do you have any initiatives under the strategy to provide education for adults who have never received any consumer education at school? If so, please describe.
8. *Training*: Do you have any programmes under the strategy to train the people in charge of delivering the initiative (e.g. teachers, instructors etc.)? In particular, do you come up with various ideas to attract a lot of interests from them? If so, please describe.
9. *Teaching tools*: What are main teaching tools (e.g. teachers' guides, games etc.) in the major initiatives under the strategy? Please also indicate how and with whom they are developed. What are the obstacles to developing or providing tools?
10. *Consumer education at school*: What initiatives are being taken to use schools to promote consumer education?
 - Is the content of initiatives described in the school curriculum or other similar guidance? If so, have its objectives been achieved? If the answer is no, what do you consider the reason for the unsuccessful result?
 - How many units/credits are required in school curriculum? If available, what percentages of total units/credit does consumer education comprise/represent?
 - What methods are in place for overcoming the limitations of maximum total units per year? (e.g. combination with other subjects, interdisciplinary approach)

- In teacher training education for primary or secondary schools at educational professional schools, are any compulsory lectures related to consumer issues?
- Do you have any scheme to send consumer policy experts (e.g. lawyers, academics, members of consumer organisations etc.) to schools?

2) ***Roles of stakeholders and co-operative schemes***

6. Please describe (1) the roles that governmental and non-governmental stakeholders are playing and (2) the co-operation being pursued with stakeholders.

1. *Co-operative schemes*: What types of co-operative schemes with stakeholders are being pursued (e.g. Round Tables, conferences, and special committees)? How do they operate (e.g., the presence or absence of a co-ordinator or a co-ordinating body, frequency of meetings, and concrete methods for co-operation)?
2. *Co-operation with other ministries*: When you built co-operative relationship with other ministries, did you have any obstacles to do so? If so, how were you able to overcome them?
3. *Media*: Do you have any cooperative initiatives with media to deliver the consumer education? If so, what kind of cooperation do you have? What results has this generated?
4. *Expansion of co-operation*: Are there other possible organisations both from the public and private sector that you could or do work with to enhance the effectiveness of consumer education?
5. *Financial resources*: In terms of financial resources for the consumer education, do you have any co-operation with other stakeholders to finance consumer education strategies and/or initiatives (e.g. Business, industrial organisations, etc.)? If so, please describe.
6. *Obstacles*: What kind of obstacles have to be overcome to enhance co-operation?

3) ***Measurement of effectiveness***

7. Please indicate how the effectiveness of consumer education programmes is being evaluated and under which specific strategy it is.

1. *General view*: Do you consider that your major initiatives targeting towards specific life stages are an effective means of achieving your education

goal/objective? If not, what do you consider to be more appropriate consumer education strategies?

2. *Methods of monitoring*: What methods are in place for monitoring the impact of consumer education and/or improving the implementation? (e.g. Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle, achievement tests)
3. *Benchmarking*: Have you undertaken any benchmarking work to establish skills levels of consumer education prior to implementing the strategy or any of the major initiatives? If so, what kind of works have you undertaken?
4. *Measurement*: After implementation, what quality and/or quantity measurements are in place for measuring the effectiveness of the strategies or the major initiatives? What are the results, if available?

Studies: Even though you may not have implemented any system for measuring the effectiveness of consumer education, have you done any research or studies in order to assess the effectiveness

Symposium no. 2.

Engaging young people in sustainable development – a contribution to the north-south dialogue

Investigation about global solidarity

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This is a report on survey made among students who came from 4 countries: Austria, Netherlands, Portugal and Slovakia. Survey **goal** was to discover issues related to global solidarity.

Methodology:

A questionnaire was distributed to the students of following schools:

Austria:

Paedagogische Akademie der Dioezese Graz-Seckau, Graz

Netherlands:

HAS Den Bosch, University of Applied Sciences

The students with age of 18/19/20 are first year Environmental Science studies.

The students of higher age 21-24 are 3-year students from Animal Husbandry.

Portugal:

Lisbon School of Education which belongs to Polytechnics of Lisbon

The students are in teacher training degree for teaching children between 6-12 years in all subjects

Slovakia:

Faculty of Commerce, University of Economics, Bratislava

I want to thank people which were members of the CCN thematic group Global Solidarity and actually they are members of the CCN2 task group 5 Preparation and carrying out of Africa seminar. They help me in developing the questionnaire and gathering answers from students.

Their names are:

Søren Breiting from Denmark

Herminia Pedro from Portugal

Ingeborg Schrettle from Austria

Peter van der Baan from The Netherlands

Thank you.

According to our resources and capabilities this survey is to be seen as an insight into students attitudes to solidarity.

The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions covering attitudes to the issues related to helping people and supporting other countries, considering amount of the country's actual development aid, trust / don't trust organisations helping other countries and understanding of the concept "global solidarity".

The questionnaires were collected from October to November 2006 and we received 46 answers from Austria, 45 from Netherlands, 61 from Portugal and 277 from Slovakia. The sample is not balanced (relatively small samples from 3 countries to one bigger sample) and not representative. Results are therefore only informative and not based on scientific sampling and analyzing statistics methods.

Open questions were answered by Portuguese in their mother tongue. Because of problems with translation they are not included.

Sample structure

Gender	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
male	13,0	20,0	6,6	23,8
female	87,0	80,0	93,4	76,2

Majority of respondents from all 4 countries were females.

Age	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
to 20	36,4	31,1	48,2	0,4
20 - 22	49,9	42,2	30,4	95,6
23 - 29	11,4	26,6	10,8	4,0
30 +	2,3		10,7	

The age structure of Slovak respondents is different from all the other countries because the majority of them is in the age group from 20 to 22 years. Students from other countries were also younger than 20 and older than 22.

Results

Students were asked to give their personal view on importance of helping people. The actual question was:

Questions about helping people in other parts of the world

	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
are important for me	54,3%	35,6%	85,2%	41,9%
are only partly important for me	41,3%	44,4%	13,1%	52,0%

are not at all important for me	4,3%	11,1%	1,6%	3,6%
I don't have any opinion		8,9%		2,2%

Over all we can say that helping other people is important topic for young students. Some differences can be seen in the table above. The greatest enthusiasts for supporting people are the Portuguese (more than 85% find this issue important). Austrians show a little less enthusiasm since nearly 55% of them consider helping important.

Majority of Slovaks and Dutchmen (52%, resp. 44,4%) answered that supporting other people is only partly important for them. For 11% of Dutch students is this issue not at all important (from other countries was this number less than 10%).

Students explained their attitude as follows:

Reasons of young people who answered “**important**” were e. g.:

If I was in the situation if I needed help I could be glad to receive help

Many rich countries and we have to help also the poor countries so they can also live in a good way

Important to fight against hunger and poverty

To give poor people a chance

People around the world have the same chance to live, to be happy and stay well

Reasons of young people who answered “**partly important**” were e. g.:

I care mostly about my country

If you have more money than other people you should help them

Government also give money to poor countries

Me as a student can contribute only a little bit

The next 3 questions were designed to find further information on future development of aid.

SHOULD OUR COUNTRY IN THE FUTURE CONCERNING DEVELOPMENT AID

	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
continue like we have done until now	44,4%	48,9%	34,4%	41,2%
reduce the development aid from the government	6,7%	15,6%	3,3%	2,5%
increase the development aid from the government	35,6%	26,7%	44,3%	34,7%
I don't have any opinion	13,3%	8,9%	18,0%	21,7%

The majority of respondents agreed to sustain the country's level of aid. Only the Portuguese would like their government to increase the development aid (more than 40%).

Dutch students seem to be less concerned about helping other countries. More than 15% of them answered that the governmental aid should be **reduced**. Majority of them didn't give any reasons form their opinion. Just 2 of them answered as follows:

There is no clear description of the „development aid“

Holland gives much more than other countries

Students from Austria and Slovakia mentioned same reasons why to **continue** or **increase** helping other countries . There were:

Austria do enough for enother countries

They will also help us

So much poverty in the world

We have the money so we have to help

Too less help not really right

We don't have any benefit if we help others

People have to help each other

Even though only 2,5% of Slovaks wanted to **reduce** amount of aid, the number of these answers is relatively high (because of high number of Slovak respondents) so I decided to mention their reasons.

State has its own problems

We are poor country

To have more in our country

I don't think money assigned for this purpose are really used for this purpose

I BELIEVE THAT DEVELOPMENT AID IS

	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
seldom helpful for people in need	30,4%	24,4%	30,0%	40,1%
often helpful for people in need	60,9%	64,4%	50,5%	45,1%
I don't have any opinion	8,7%	11,1%	13,3%	14,4%

Students from all countries perceive development aid as **often** helpful. They gave following explanations:

Help is often not there where it's really needed

Money, clothes, food and medical help is always needed in poor countries

Better to give know how than money

But an indispensable part of students consider development aid only **seldom** helpful. The most skeptical students are from Slovakia (40% of them). The difference between "seldom" and "often" is only 5% and in other countries it is more than 20, resp. 30 up to 40%.

Students who consider development aid seldom helpful explain it in following way:

A lot of money doesn't go to the poor, but is needed for organisation

Money don't reach really the poor people

In many countries dictators get the money and poor people are still poor

Things we are giving to them are often not really helpful

A lot of money doesn't go to the poor, but is used by organisation

Then we asked the students what they thought was the best way of giving development aid to a country. Their answers are shown in the table below.

What do you think is the best way of giving development aid to a country

	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
through organizations of United Nations	13,3%	44,4%	26,2%	44,2%
through our own government	8,9%	2,2%	4,9%	1,1%
through our private organisations (NGOs)	17,8%	4,4%	4,9%	8,7%
through a mixture of all types of organisations	60,0%	44,4%	59,0%	38,0%
not to give any development aid				1,1%
I don't have any opinion		4,4%	4,9%	6,9%

Slovak and Dutch students prefer giving development aid through both UN organizations and mixture of all types. In contrast, Austrian and Portuguese clearly declared their preference for a mixture of all types of organisations (three fifths of them).

Presented below are some specific arguments for chosen ways of giving aid.

Through **UN organizations** because they are international

Through our **own government** because:

- it is more effective, easier to overlook
- it's important to stop unserious organisations
- I don't trust private organisations

Through **NGOs** because

- they are not influenced politically
- money from government/UN is often missused

Through a **mixture** of all types because

- everybody can do something
- more opinions can make more ways to do something in different ways
- many different kinds of help – not just one
- more people can do more
- I'm not sure that all organisations are really helpful so the mixture is the best way

Please mention some organisations you trust to help other countries in an efficient way without wasting too many money for own administration etc. (if any)

The respondents were requested to name some organizations they trusted. We give just names of those with international status. The most frequent named organizations were: UN, UNICEF, Amnesty International, Red Cross.

Some students mentioned also these: Greenpeace, ISSN, UNHCR, Warchild, WHO, WNF,WTO

The reasons why they trust them were stated by a small number of students. Here are these reasons:

- good reputation
- important for all children
- we can see results

Please mention some organisations you *don't* trust to help other countries in an efficient way without wasting too many money for own administration etc. (if any)

Compared to the previous question this question about mistrust was answered by only a few students. Here are the organizations which the students do not believe in: EU, Greenpeace, NATO, Red Cross, UNICEF, UN, World Bank, private funds.

Their answers were justified as shown below:

- I don't care about most of the protected animals
- I heard about misusing of donations
- I've heard bad things about it

Here we present the answers for question

What does it mean for you to trust an organization or government to deliver developmental aid?

Hope/sure, that poor people really get the money, clothes
 That they don't waste the money
 I know what they do with my money
 When you have a feedback
 Organisation should be serious and make much advertisements

What does it mean for you that we support developing countries

	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
I feel better because I know my country is helping someone in need	82,6%	60,0%	73,8%	76,8%
I feel it is a pity that we waste some of our money for other countries	8,7%	11,1%	4,9%	3,3%
I think it is the fault of the other countries that they don't have enough money by themselves	2,2%	13,3%	4,7%	4,3%
I don't have any opinion	6,5%	15,6%	14,5%	14,9%

Students from all the countries definitely feel better when their country is helping people in need. Here are presented some of their explanations:

It's important that we help poor countries for their own development

A lot of people waste their money for useless things but if you donate some money for people who can need it, you don't waste the money

Why should we don't help any people when we have more money

In our country we have enough – that’s so unfair

I should mention that relatively high number of Dutch students had negative emotions towards supporting developing countries. E. g. more than 10% thought it was waste of money in contrast to students from other countries (8,7, or 4,9 and 3,3%) or thought it was the fault of the poor countries in contrast to less than 5% from all the others.

The next 3 questions were to find out the understanding of the concept “Global solidarity”. At first the term was divided into single words Global and Solidarity and afterwards joined together to one concept.

Students were requested to express their opinion of these words.

Global means

	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
Global things are too far away for us to worry about		2,2%	3,3%	0,7%
Global things are too difficult to worry about	2,2%	2,2%	1,6%	
Global things are about the whole Earth	91,3%	82,2%	75,4%	96,0%
Global things are only about economy	2,2%	6,7%	6,6%	1,4%
I don’t have any opinion	4,3%	6,7%	13,1%	1,4%

Nearly all students see the expression Global as something that is about the whole Earth.

Solidarity means

	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
that you are alone about the problem	2,2%		3,3%	0,7%
that you should wait until others can help you		9,3%	6,6%	0,7%
that you should identify with others and try to help them	95,7%	83,7%	80,3%	95,7%
that you should always demand your rights to get things or support	2,2%	2,3%	4,9%	0,4%
I don’t have any opinion		4,7%	4,9%	2,2%

Solidarity means for the majority of students identifying with others and trying to help them. They explain it by these reasons:

Solidarity is one of the most important things

Everybody should helps everybody

Everyone should have a good life

Global solidarity means

	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
You don’t need to try to solve problems yourself because someone else will solve them for you	2,2%	2,3%		2,2%
You should think on effects on other people	89,1%	79,1%	70,5%	84,7%

when you do things and try to help them				
The globe has enough soldiers		7,0%	1,6%	2,9%
You should try to get the most out of the global possibilities for yourself	2,2%	4,7%	6,6%	1,1%
I don't have any opinion	6,5%	7,0%	21,3%	8,0%

We can clearly say that most of the students understand the concept “Global Solidarity” as duty of people to think on effects their actions on other people. An interesting fact is more than one fifths of Portuguese didn't have any opinion on this topic.

The purpose of the next question was to find out the individuals' abilities to help people in need.

How do you think you can help people in need in other parts of the world the very best way?

	Austria	Holland	Portugal	Slovakia
I should talk and write about the problem in the media	21,7%	13,6%	19,7%	29,1%
I should turn vegetarian	2,2%		3,3%	1,8%
I should change my daily behaviour, if that can help	41,3%	22,7%	44,3%	25,5%
I should donate some money to an organization	45,7%	56,8%	41,0%	29,5%
I don't have any opinion	2,2%	25,0%	8,2%	20,0%

The answers of Austrian and Portuguese students were almost the same. More than forty percent would prefer to change their daily behaviour or donate money.

A clear majority of Dutchmen thought the best way to help people is to give them some money.

To talk and write about this problem in media was an issue for all the students but the Slovak respondents prefer this way of help more than others.

The necessity of using **media** was explained as follows:

We don't know much about some poor countries and suffering people

A lot of people should be informed

I don't trust organisations

Students gave these reasons for willing to **change** their daily **behaviour**, if that can help

It would be the best way, but I don't want to do it

Everybody can change the world

The reasons for **donating money** were e. g.:

The best and most effective way

Other ways are too difficult for one lonely person

Some students didn't choose any possibility and they wrote:
I prefer to buy Austrian products
Nobody has to work for me for less money
Alone I'm not able to help

The last question was

Have you ever tried to help people in other countries in some way? Please describe.

This question was answered by only a few students. Those who answered mentioned following ways of help:

To donate money was the most frequent way. Others occurred seldom:

- Collecting money
- Collecting clothes
- Sending toys clothes
- I am a member of Amnesty International
- 1 year ago I went to Egypt to help people who are in need

Conclusion:

In this conclusion I will present general findings from investigation about Global solidarity. Young people do not feel careless about poverty, hunger, diseases and issues concerning poor countries. They welcome the involvement of their governments and NGOs. The most trusted organizations are UN, UNICEF, Red Cross and Amnesty International.

Their personal contribution to solving the problem of unbalanced resource usage in the world is donating money. This form can be seen as passive way but a fairly big number of young people is willing to change their daily behaviour and I think this is a very important step towards changing the actual situation.

