# Building Bridges

Consumer Citizenship: Promoting new responses

Vol 3

# Building Bridges

Edited by Declan Doyle



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# Building Bridges

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# Building Bridges

# INTRODUCTION

**Building Bridges**

How apt a title for a CCN conference. Consider the many different ways in which this simple phrase may be interpreted in relation to the CCN network? CCN partners have built bridges between countries, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Black Sea and from the Norwegian Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. They have built bridges between disciplines from Architecture to Zoology. They have built bridges from North to South and from East to West. Conference speakers have come from North and South America, Africa and Asia. Now they are seeking to build bridges crossing the rivers of knowledge that separate as well as unite disciplines. Can that big bridge to bring CCN from a multidisciplinary network to an interdisciplinary network be built?

The Cambridge University Press dictionary defines multidisciplinary as involving different subjects of study in one activity. It defines interdisciplinary as involving two or more different subjects or areas of knowledge. The difference can sometimes be difficult to comprehend. If we take the example of sustainable development, a multidisciplinary approach would involve, for instance, an economist and a scientist working on the same problem but separately. Research may be carried out and published in the relevant academic journals of the individual discipline but the most effective method for dealing with the problems may not be developed. Using an interdisciplinary approach involves the economists and scientists coming together whereby concepts and methods from one discipline are worked on and developed by researchers from other disciplines developing a single unified response.

Consumer Citizenship requires movement towards the integrated interdisciplinary model. The evolving discipline is so diverse as to make other approaches meaningless. As researchers and activists approaching consumer citizenship from many different directions there is a need to cross bridges to arrive at a common destination.

Declan Doyle
Editor

# STIMULATING STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

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***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 lead 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 Dopler 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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# 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)*

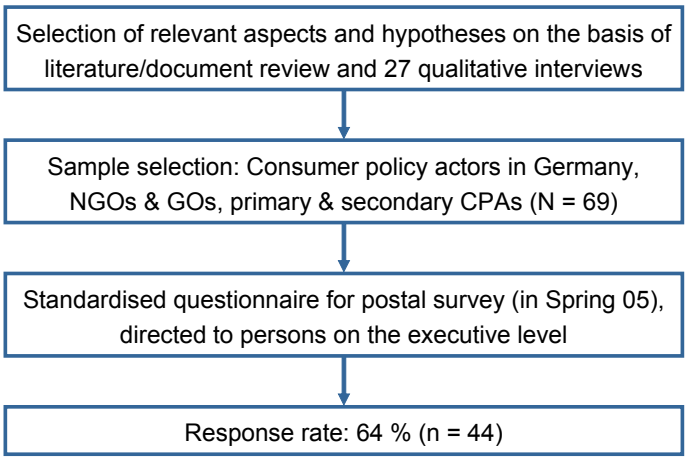
Consumer citizenship means essentially to make consumption "choices based on ethical, social, economic and ecological considerations" (CCN 2005, p. 7) which support sustainable development. This implies the recognition of "The World Behind the Product" (De Leeuw 2005), i.e. the behaviour of producers 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 theses questions after a clarification of the methods used.

## *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



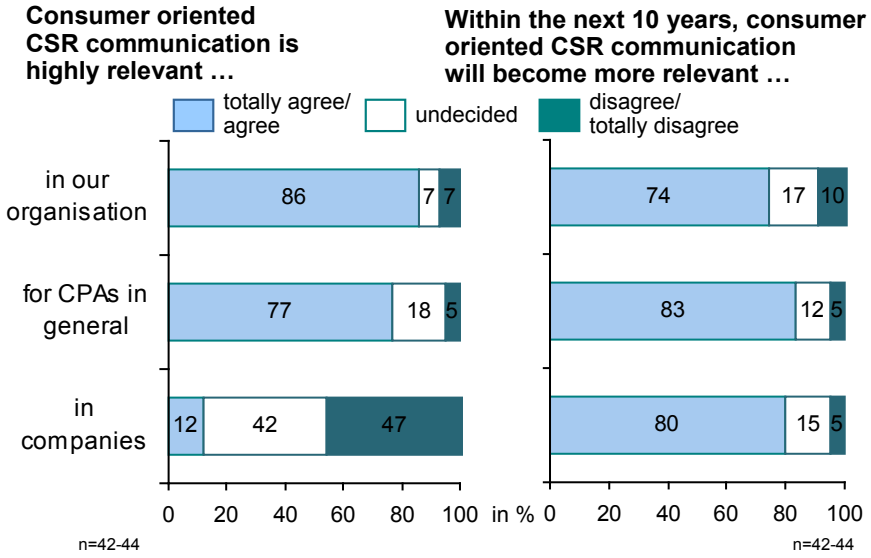

The survey was planned as a census of all German CPAs. In our understanding this covers all governmental and non-governmental organisations which act in the interest of consumers. Governmental organisations include ministries and state owned consumer institutes. Non-governmental organisations consist 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

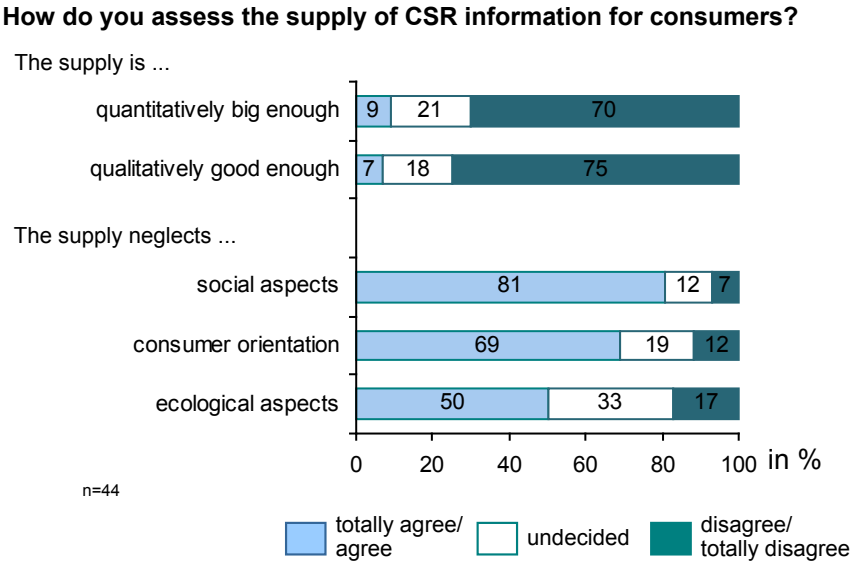



An analysis of the respecting organisation types reveals that consumer initiated NGOs are significantly more likely to assess CSR information as relevant for them than governmentally initiated CPAs (100 % agreement in relation to 79 %). This finding supports Hilton's (2005, p. 11) observation that the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

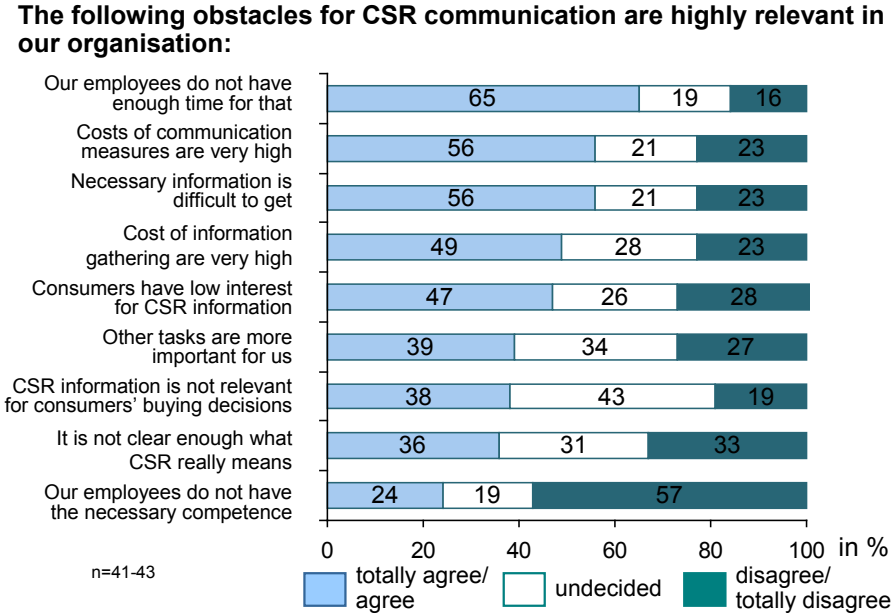



Only 9 % consider the quantity of information as sufficient and even less are satisfied with the quality. Most important shortcomings are perceived with regard to the social aspects of CSR, followed by a non-satisfying consumer orientation and a lack in ecological aspects. This ranking is not surprising 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



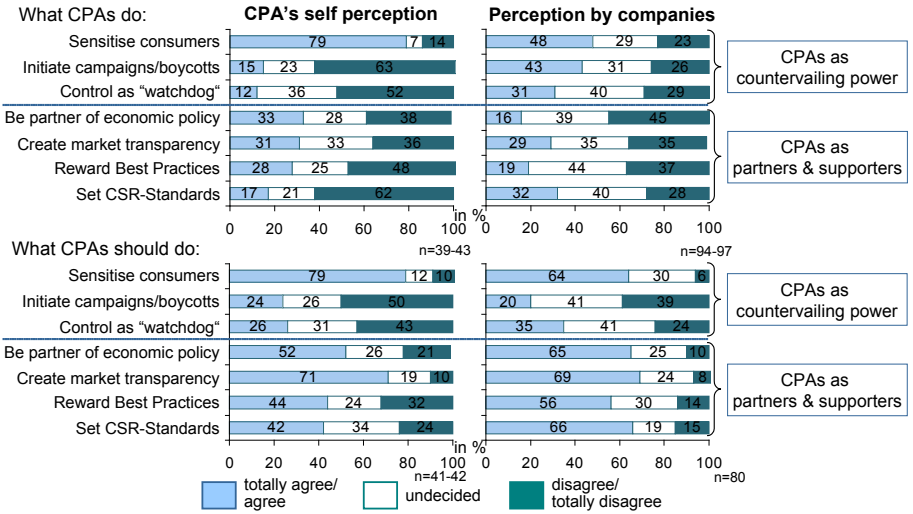

Most respondents identify a lack of time and high communication costs as highly relevant. The other most important obstacle is the limited accessibility of information about corporate behaviour, which is often difficult and costly to obtain. Possible lacks of interest or buying relevance for consumers 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

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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 Thogersen (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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# BRIDGING FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION. WHICH STAKEHOLDERS FOR WHICH POLICIES? EMPIRICAL SUPPORT FROM A SURVEY OF 800 CONSUMERS.

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## 1. Introduction

Risk society (Beck, 1986) does not influence eating styles as much as it does the relationship between consumers and the food system. As debate moves away from the scientific fray into the day-to-day lives of common people, the consequence has been that consumers have become more competent and selective. So much so that consumers are now in a position to influence the choices made by the food processing industry as a whole, almost elevating them to the role of the system's referees (Fabris, 2003). In order to establish a relationship founded on trust, it becomes crucial to understand how they actually perceive food quality.

Our survey-based data of a sample of 800 consumers show that there is no relation between trust in the food and the structural variables that define the socio-economic condition of the consumers. The main results of our survey illustrate that it is very difficult to marshal consumer trust. What is then required are new strategic alliances between the socioeconomic actors of the food chain, bridging food production and consumption.

In this view, the paper will discuss the concept of food chain as the aggregation of stakeholders and the combination of material flows (raw materials, additives, semi-finished products, packaging) that contribute to the manufacturing, distribution, marketing and supplying of the product (Murcott and Campbell, 2004). The construct of the food chain is useful to shed light on the activities that are required in the food processing passages whereby the agricultural produce is transformed into food eaten at the table or processed in the back kitchen, i.e. in the places where food is processed. The core of the paper will be then to identify which policies are required to implement food quality governance and who are its stakeholders.

## 2. Perception of food risks: survey's selected method and techniques

Considering the interdisciplinary nature of the survey as well as its exploratory character, we have defined an open approach towards existing theories right from the outset, focusing on the analytical description of relations among perception of food risks, information and consumer conduct.

Following an accurate analysis of the economic, sociological and anthropological literature on consumption, a hypothetical analysis model was developed in connection with the purchasing conduct of consumers. We have thus adopted a research perspective of the 'contextual constructionist' kind,[1] believing that the perception of food risks on the part of consumers is a function of several

1 This theoretical setting derives from Mary Douglas' theory of dynamic integration with the classical structural perspectives in which (co)determining factors are the social, political and historical contexts within which behavioural patterns take place, and in our case, consumption choices. Cfr. F. Beato, *I quadri teorici della sociologia dell'ambiente tra costruzionismo sociale e oggettivismo strutturale*, in <<Quaderni di Sociologia>>, XLII (1998), pp. 41-60.

variables, subjective as well as structural. Subjective variables include those relating to different forms of rationality and culture and to the degree of trust individual consumers grant to the complex network of individual and collective players, which includes the media. As for structural variables, we have considered those pertaining to the domain of society and birth, to geographic origins, to occupation, and to income.

The model was then tested and fine-tuned by utilising focus group techniques, which contributed to developing accurate tools for the survey.

Consumers' behaviour constitutes the synthesis of social and cultural components impacting their lifestyle. With a view to explaining the impact of risk in the behavioural patterns of consumers, a broader model was required where the point of departure is not represented by needs, as economical consumption theory states, but by norms and values. Both, in fact, are basic aspects in the articulation of the "structure of preferences" which, in turn, determines consumption choices.

Two different focus groups, found in central and southern Italy, allowed us to reconstruct causal sequences in the behaviour of consumers. They highlighted the attributes that consumers felt were relevant in the choice of food products. Together these attributes form quality, intended as the presence of an aggregation of characteristics in a specific product that ultimately determines its choice or, if absent, its rejection on the part of consumers.

An attribute considered crucial by consumers is the genuineness-naturalness-freshness combination which shows a significant correlation – inversely proportional – to the consumers' level of trust in the products they eat. In particular, there is concern about the ever-lengthening process leading to the end product. Another possible sequence is in a way alternative to the one outlined earlier. Specifically, research on safety is linked to differing and often contradictory motivations. There are many examples. Safety is linked to the famous brand which, however, produces low-quality goods utilising raw materials of dubious provenance. Artisanal products are preferable, although in reality, any product can be potentially copied by cheap imitations. Against this backdrop the only certainty lies thus in the fact that one has to live with existing uncertainties.

The semi-standard questionnaire that was used included 28 questions and was submitted – applying the CATI system – to a sample of 800 cases, stratified by gender, age, geographical provenance (Northwest, Northeast, Centre, South and Islands), as well as by the size in terms of the population of the city of residence.

The data was processed through various sequential phases that included single and multiple factorial as well as cluster analyses that served to define the behaviour of consumer groups.[2]

**3. Food risks and consumers' trust**

Anxiety and concern are the predominant sentiments felt by Italians at the table. These fears involve not only the entire food processing system (transport, brands, non-EU production, presence of chemical products, etc.) but also the elements that are contained in the food they eat (food preservatives, hormones, antibiotics, saturated fat, etc.). 87.4% of consumers considered the production system "very risky", and 75.8% of respondents felt 'anxiety' while eating.

The main source of anxiety concerns pesticides (66.0%), hormones (67.1%) and antibiotics (64.3%). These responses were further confirmed by the data emerging in connection with the risk elements within the productive system: 95.2% of respondents were worried by the use of chemical products; 88.3% by the use of gene modified (GM) food, while 82.1% were concerned by the transport system and 76.4% by the way sales outlets are managed.

The observation of the various attributes that pertain to the purchase of food gives us the image of a society that is rooted in a vision of quality that combines the need of pleasing the palate with that of safeguarding safety and health. The attributes which respondents care most about are taste (97.2%), 'best before' date (96.5%), and health benefits (94.0%).

The willingness to pay (WTP), i.e. the demand exercised by consumers even in the presence of a higher price to obtain increased guarantees and certifications, concerned half the sample surveyed (45.2%). Elaborating consumer typologies through a cluster analysis, we also observed that WTP has no significant correlation with structural variables such as social position, gender, or educational level.

The examination of the attributes leading consumers to buy even when prices are higher proved the wide extent of the awareness that the entire food processing system must be constantly controlled in order to safeguard one's health: provenance and traceability and environmental respect are considered key factors (respectively 41.0% and 35.3% of respondents). The analysis of the relationship between consumers and high quality content products (DOP, DOC, organic, typical, etc.) helps us to better understand this demand for quality and to shed

2 Coordinated by the present author, the research is the outcome of an interdisciplinary effort involving agrarian and environmental economists as well as environmental and cultural sociologists and methodologists. Though significant synergies were achieved, there are specific merits to be acknowledged: the survey on available literature was carried out by Daniele di Nunzio and Serena Rugiero of IRES; the investigation model was defined together with Prof. Davide Marino of Università del Molise; the questionnaire was compiled by Anna Ancora, a methodology researcher; the data were processed by Prof. Stefano Nobile of 'La Sapienza' University of Rome and by Prof. Roberto Rocci of 'Tor Vergata' University of Rome.

light on the contradictions that entail this kind of consumption. Though it was shown that more extensive knowledge does lead to an increased consumption of quality products, precise information continues to be lacking, generating an asymmetry between the perceptions of consumers and the correctness of their consumption practices.

**4. Bridging consumers' trust and food processing. The need for "food quality governance"**

Our data show that living in an era of uncertainty has led consumers to become more competent, demanding and selective. Consequently, consumers have filled a relevant role in influencing the choices made by the entire food processing industry to the extent that they have emerged as referees of the system as a whole. Consumers, though, do not wish to take up a confrontational stance with regards to the food producer, but demand that it be a trustworthy partner in a situation where the perception of food risk is high (Fabris, 2003).

Given that primary needs have been satisfied and goods mainly serve to satisfy desires, consumption in industrial societies is entirely substitutive. Thus, if expanding, market quotas flourish on marginal or non-competitive companies in a zero sum game that betrays the Fordist illusion of unlimited growth and of growing expectations in terms of social and consumption mobility. There will always be niches that expand in order to meet new desires but unlike what occurred in the past the phenomenon will indicate niche expansion rather than sectoral growth as was the case in the period after the war (ibid).

As confirmed in our study, Italian consumers have a propensity to seek information. But this propensity and willingness to learn is often frustrated by an industry and a distribution system that do little in this regard, in other words, producing a plethora of data but little knowledge.

These elements of analysis produce at least a consequence – a consequence laden with difficulties that seriously impact food safety policies: it becomes difficult to marshal consumer trust (Fürst et al., 1991). And if trust cannot be marshalled top-down, what is then required are motivational decisions that integrate the traditional policies of food quality control with voluntary regulation through specific measures aimed at providing adequate awareness and training.

According to the way we have approached it in our study, food quality is in all practical terms a commitment, involving all parties of the food processing cycle (producers, processors, distributors, consumers), for the activation of 'new alliances' (Fabris, 2003) between interests and knowledge, between production and consumption, under the sign of the mutual interdependency of nature and culture.

The aim of these conclusive remarks is, therefore, to single out the processes (and the contexts in which these take place) aimed at enhancing agro-food quality as well as practices and policies pursued or to be pursued.

With a view to analysing the new alliances between nature and culture, between production and 'thoughtful' consumption, the utilisation of the 'food chain' concept is useful inasmuch as it allows us to bring into focus the activities inherent in the processing phase leading to the transformation of the food item, which is taken from fields to end up not only exclusively on the table but also in the back kitchen, and thus also in those places where food processing of a metabolic nature takes place. We prefer this concept to that of industrial processing which singles out all the activities, players and flows that are critical for the definition of the product's characteristics but not specifically for the processes themselves. By giving relevance to the former, the notion of 'food chain' also includes, for example, the processing of leftovers and waste in the consumption process, on which we intend to focus our policy in view of its impact on the environment.

What is intended as the food production chain is the aggregation of players and the combination of material flows (raw materials, additives, semi-finished products, packaging) that contribute to the manufacturing, distribution, marketing and supplying of the product (Murcott and Campbell, 2004). This term thus defines the full range of activities, players and material flows that are crucial in determining the characteristics of the product but not the actual processes. With a view to identifying the socio-economic actors involved in agro-food processes, the notion of food chain is useful to shed light on the activities that are required in the food processing passages whereby the agricultural produce is transformed into food eaten at the table or, as we shall see shortly, processed in the back-kitchen, i.e. in the places where food is processed. In addition, the concept of food chain also includes the processing of leftovers and waste during the consumption process, an aspect we would like to focus on, considering the impact it has on environment.

The following table may be useful:

| PROCESS | PHASE | PLACE |
|---|---|---|
| Cultivation | Production | Farm |
| Processing | Transformation | Agro-food enterprise |
| Conservation/Distribution/ Selling | Distribution/trade/ selling | Storage<br>Market<br>POS |
| Cooking | Preparation | Professional<br>Domestic cooking |
| Eating | Consumption | Table |
| Processing | Distribution/ recycling | Back kitchen |

Source: adapted from Murcott and Campbell (2004)

Food quality, intended as a synthesis of organoleptic, health- and nature-related, ethical productivity components, is pursued within the food chain and, therefore, in a context of material and energy flows (also social) that contribute to the cultivation, transformation, marketing, supplying, consumption and recycling of the food product. Thus intended, food quality essentially implies that food products undergo as little transformation and alteration as possible and that the agro-food cycle be as closed as possible – like what occurs in nature – with enhanced efficiency in terms of energy consumption and reduced waste material.

In this framework, who are the stakeholders in the processes involved in the food chain that we have outlined theoretically and which are the policies that best serve to sustain those products and processes aimed at enhancing productive quality and the territory (some of which have already been implemented in Italy)? In the following table, we have tried to trace the different phases of the food chain and, therefore, the different places where these production and disposal processes take place, singling out, for each one, the public policies that could sustain the processes outlined and the players involved, which are the active upholders of interest. We do not pretend to supply an exhaustive overview of existing best practices, but rather to highlight those practices that allow for the interaction between production and consumption, between food demand and supply that the 'discerning' taste of players – producers and consumers – express and substantiate.

Table 5 – Food chain policies for quality governance

| PROCESS | PHASE | PLACE | PUBLIC POLICIES FOR QUALITY ENHANCEMENT | STAKEHOLDERS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Production | Commercial farm | Spreading of Agricultural Best Practice (ABP) – eco-compliance.<br>Integrated Product Policy (IPP).<br>Incentives for the development of bio-dynamic, organic and eco-compatible agriculture.<br>Utilisation of eco-efficient technologies.<br>Incentives designed to enhance voluntary regulation.<br>Company and collective brand names.<br>Certification systems: quality, typicality, eco-compatibility, corporate social responsibility, production traceability, product certification. | EU, Government, Local Authorities<br>Entrepreneurs<br>Workers<br>Employers and trade union representatives<br>Consumers' associations |
| Transform | Transformation | Commercial farm | Integrated Product Policy (IPP).<br>Incentives designed to enhance voluntary regulation<br>Certification systems: quality, typicality, eco-compatibility, corporate social responsibility, production traceability, product certification. | EU, Government, Local Authorities<br>Entrepreneurs<br>Workers<br>Employers and trade union representatives<br>Consumers' associations |
| Conserve/ Distribute/ Sell | Distribution/ Commerce/ Sale | Warehouse<br>Market<br>POS | Integrated Product Policy (IPP).<br>Incentives designed to enhance voluntary regulation..<br>Company and collective brand names.<br>Certification systems: quality, typicality, eco-compatibility, corporate social responsibility, production traceability, product certification.<br>Promotion of/adhesion to discerning consumption initiatives.<br>Adhesion to Last Minute Market1 or Food Bank initiatives. | EU, Government, Local Authorities<br>Distributors<br>Tradesmen<br>Large retailers<br>Workers<br>Employers and trade union representatives<br>Consumers' associations |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cooking | Preparation | Professional or Family kitchen | Purchase groups.<br>Promotion of/adhesion to discerning consumption initiatives.<br>Adhesion to Last Minute Market or Food Bank initiatives.<br>Care in the utilisation of packing materials.<br>Utilisation of 'best technologies' in terms of eco-efficiency.<br>Agreements involving quality restaurants with local producers with a view to safeguarding food biodiversity and to enhancing the territory.<br>Policies aimed at shortening the food processing chain.<br>Policies aimed at encouraging eco-efficient technologies. | Consumers<br>Chefs, Restaurants<br>Agricultural producers<br>Local authorities |
| Eating | Consumption | Table | Purchase groups.<br>Promotion of/adhesion to discerning consumption initiatives.<br>Agreements involving quality restaurants with local producers with a view to safeguarding food biodiversity and to enhancing the territory.<br>Policies aimed at shortening the food processing chain. | Consumers<br>Chefs, Restaurants<br>Agricultural producers<br>Local authorities<br>EU, Government |
| Discarding | Elimination/ recycling | Back-kitchen | Reduction of waste matter.<br>Separate waste collection.<br>Composting.<br>Policies aimed at encouraging closed cycles.<br>Adhesion to Last Minute Market or Food Bank initiatives. | Consumers<br>Chefs, Restaurants<br>Agricultural producers<br>Local authorities<br>EU, Government |

Our conclusive assumption is that within the framework of our country's agro-food system, it is necessary to develop an agro-food quality governance in which government, market and society interact to sustain discerning policies aimed at

protecting resources, places and people that would ultimately have repercussions on the tastes of and information available about the products.

At a policy level, this process would resolve the tensions between structure and player, between production and consumption if food quality, in its socio-cultural and environmental components, became a shared objective as well as a vehicle for economic competitiveness, where well-being is intended not only in monetary terms but also as the satisfaction of wider values.

Thus the integration among the diverse production and consumption phases concern both material and structural aspects as well as symbolic and cultural ones which both impact production and consumption through the domain of information.

The complex interactions between production and consumption pass from the knowledge node to the cognitive and emotional double dimension of how we produce and communicate food. Knowledge ultimately boils down to how consumers' tastes – at the double level of taste and knowledge – interface with attitudes, styles, and the choices of food entrepreneurs.

# USING SOCIAL INNOVATION AND DIALOGUE AS A TOOL IN CREATING A MORE SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY – THE INTRODUCTION OF FAIRTRADE TOWNS TO NORWAY

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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 transdiciplinary 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. (Læssø: 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)

Transdiciplinarity 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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# 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.

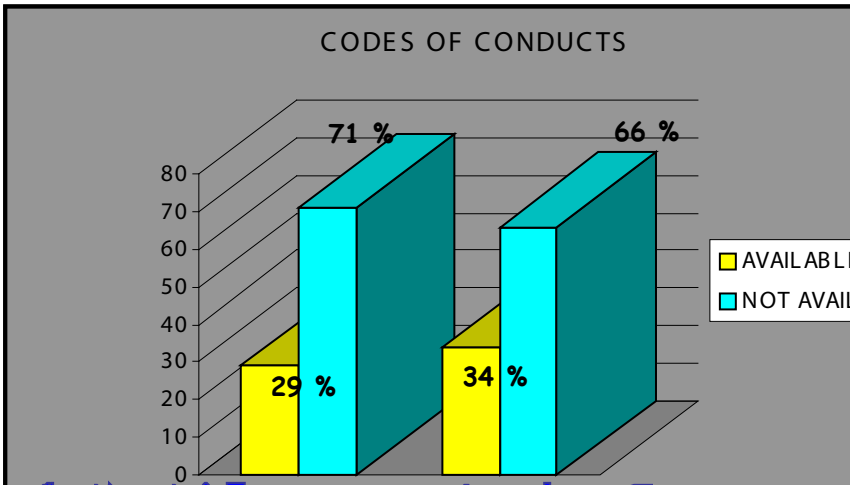


Figure 1: Code of conduct

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 concnerned 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.

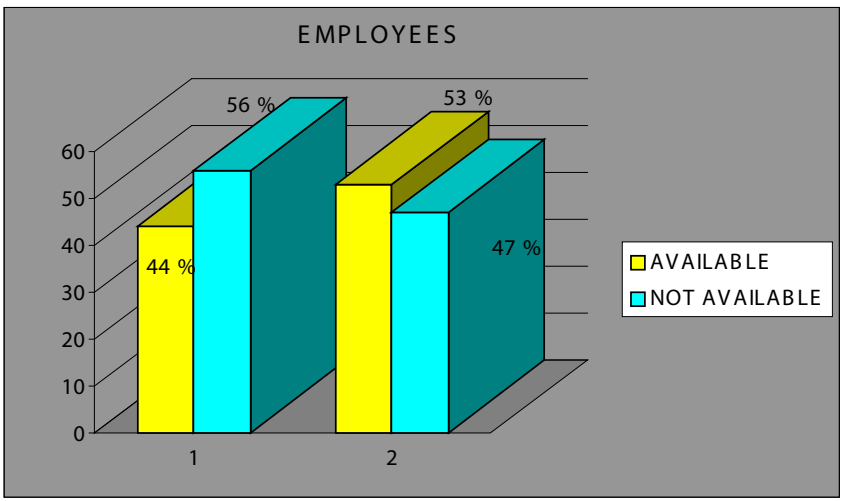


Figure 2: Employees

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.

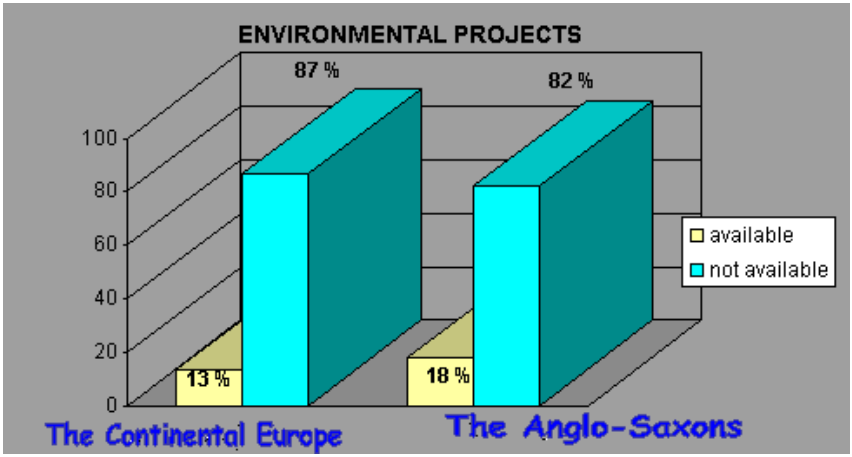


Figure 3: Environmental Projects

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.

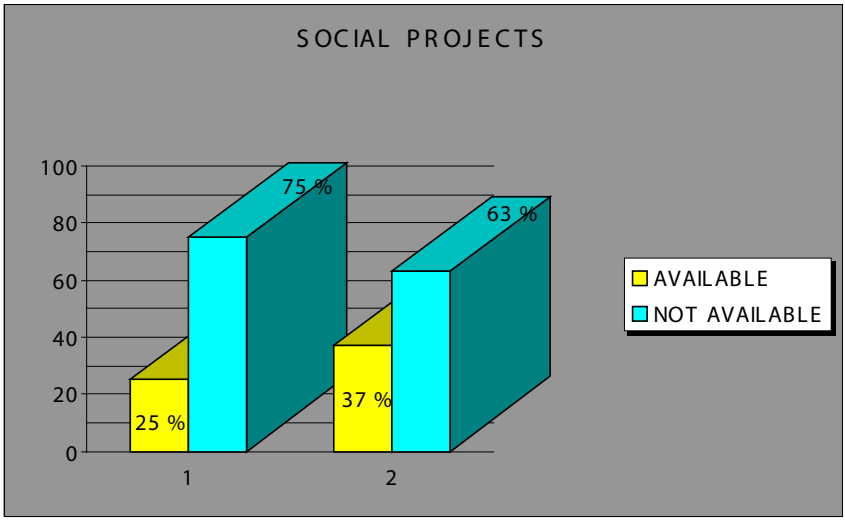


Figure 4: Social Projects

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.

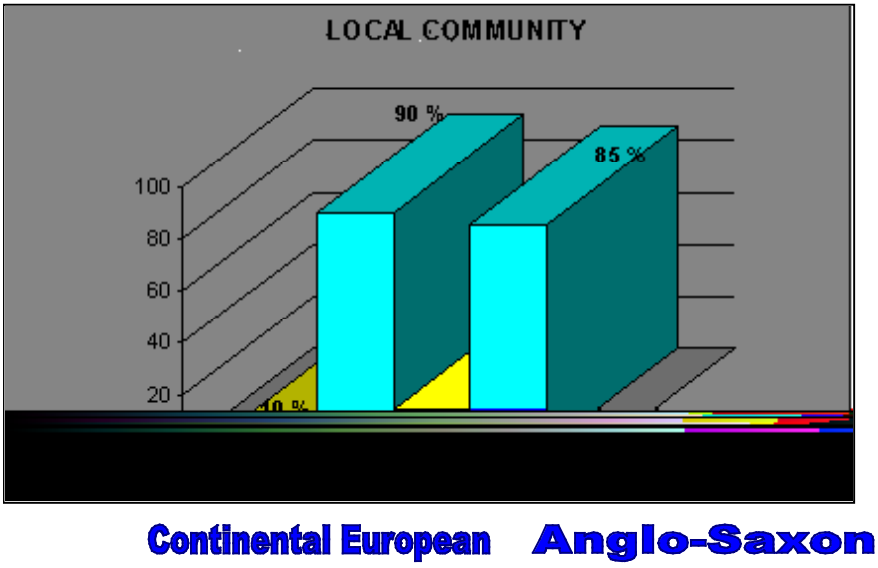


Figure 5: Local Community

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.

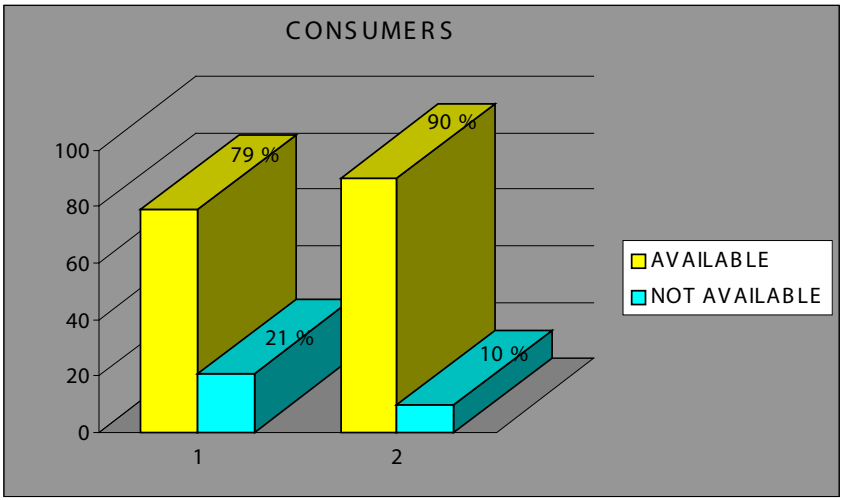


Figure 6: Consumers

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.

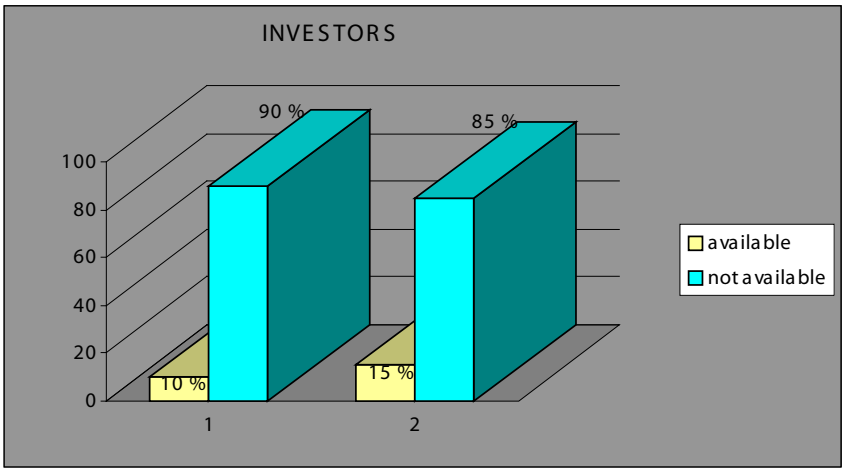


Figure 7: Investors

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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# 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 all, 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 all, 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 Cherian, 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 ($\chi^2$) 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 ($\chi^2$) 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:

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

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 |
|---|---|---|
| *Sex of immigrants* | Nominal | 1 if respondent are men; 0 if they are women |
| *Nationality* | Nominal | 1 if they are from Eastern European Countries; 0 otherwise |
| *Education* | Nominal | (1if they have bachelor & above; 0 otherwise |
| *Residency* | Scale | Years of Residence in Greece |
| *Mother tongue* | Nominal | 1 if immigrants use of mother tongue with family; 0 otherwise |
| *Greek TV* | Nominal | 1 if there watch Greek TV; 0 otherwise |
| *Greek Friends* | Nominal | 1 if they have Greek Friends; 0 otherwise |
| *Customs of Greece* | Nominal | 1 if immigrants follow and adapt the traditions and customs of Greece; 0 otherwise |
| *Greek Attitude* | 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(*Expenditure on food product*)= 1.619*** - 0,002*Age* + 0,037*Education* + 0,375*** *ln Income* + 0,361****Children* + 0,325****Quality* + 0,315***Price* - 0,185**Greeks Shop* + 0,176**Street Market* +ui

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 |
|---|---|---|
| *Age* | Scale | The age of responders |
| *Education* | Nominal | 1 if they have bachelor & above; 0 otherwise |
| *Income* | Scale | The logarithmic monthly income per capita |
| *Children* | Nominal | 1 if the family have children; 0 otherwise |
| *Quality* | Nominal | 1 if immigrants buy higher quality products; 0 otherwise |
| *Price* | Nominal | 1 if immigrants buy from low prices stores; 0 otherwise |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Greek Shop* | Nominal | 1 if immigrants buy from local stores; 0 otherwise |
| *Street Market* | 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:

Ln(*Expenditure on education*)= 1,326* + 0,464****Education* + 0,255** *Religion* + 0,333****ln Income* + 0,301****Children* - 0,202 *Manual Work* +ui

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 deforestation[3] 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)

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

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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)*

- 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 lead 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 were 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, paleoecologial, 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 then 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 realties, 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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# SOME PROBLEMS 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 km$^2$ 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 and 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 inters- 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**).

**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**).

**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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# "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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# 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  theaching 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 sinergy effect. Interdisciplinary study

4 www.unesco.org

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.

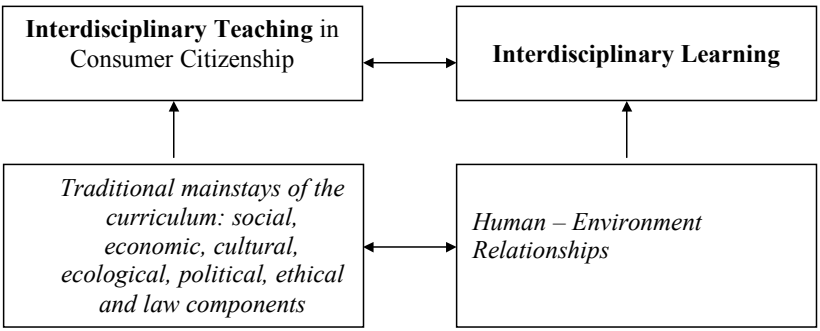


**Figure 1. Interdisciplinary learning and teaching in Consumer Citizenship**

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.

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.

## *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.

5 www.eduplace.com/rdg

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 Citizemship 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 posibilities for future career of the graduates. Their education should be dual-purposed, because they will work as managers[6] 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.

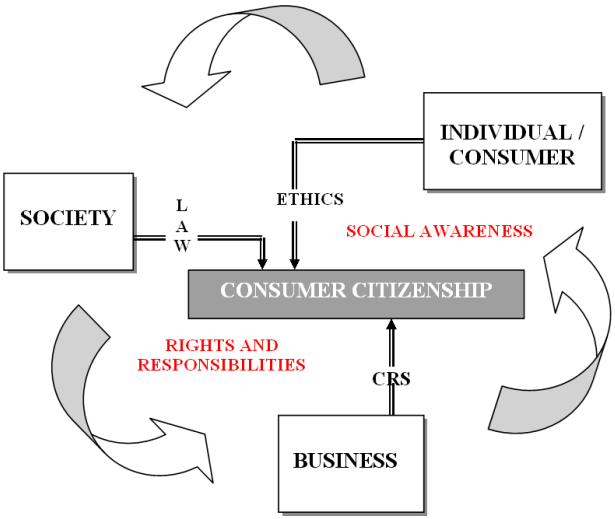


**Figure 2. CCJEM Conceptual Model**

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 more independent, productive,

6 *Manager* is used here as s 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.

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. Than 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 |
| | EUROCULTURE |
| | 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/eciu-gs/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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# 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 Białowieski 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, Lithuenia 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 ethic 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 an monastic compounds were established, particularly Camedolite 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 arouse 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 Othodox Church – Christian religion which aroused 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 Vilnus 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, Drohiczyn, and Mielnik), their numbers were so few they could not be considered comunities 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 (Trockie 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-Ostpreussiches. 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 innumerous 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 Othodox 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 Przełomski 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: Wşlziłki, Gabowe Grşdy and Bór, living on agriculture and lumber industry. In recent decades Old Believers have undergone increasing polonization.

## 2.5. Greek Catholic Church in Podlasie

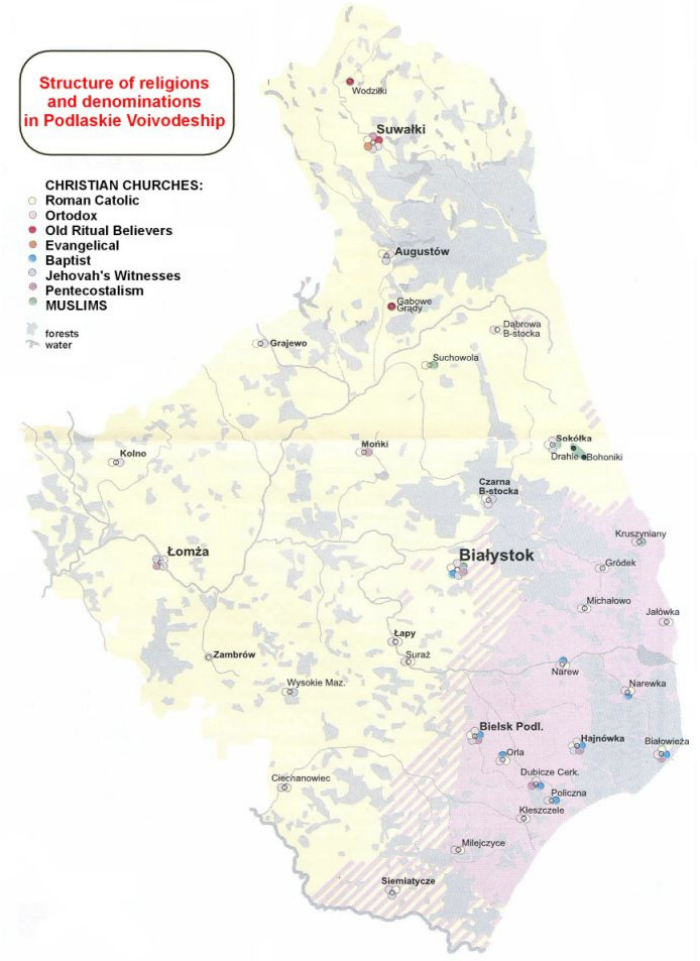
Uniates appeared in Podlasie with the conclusion of the Lublin Union in 1569. according to the act, Catholic Orthodox bishops of the Republic of Poland recognized the Pope's authority, but retained liturgical order of the Eastern Church, separate hierarchy, and approved the marriage of priests. After the partitions of Poland, the Russian invader fiercely opposed Greek Catholics. In 1839 Uniate Church was dissolved in the former Easten 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).Lighty 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 Supraş 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 ascendency 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 13$^{th}$ and 14$^{th}$ centuries the territory of Drohicki District could have been under the authority of the Bishops of Płock. During the period the

jurisdiction, according tosome 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 Ş wiŞck, the propriety of the Płock 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 and 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.

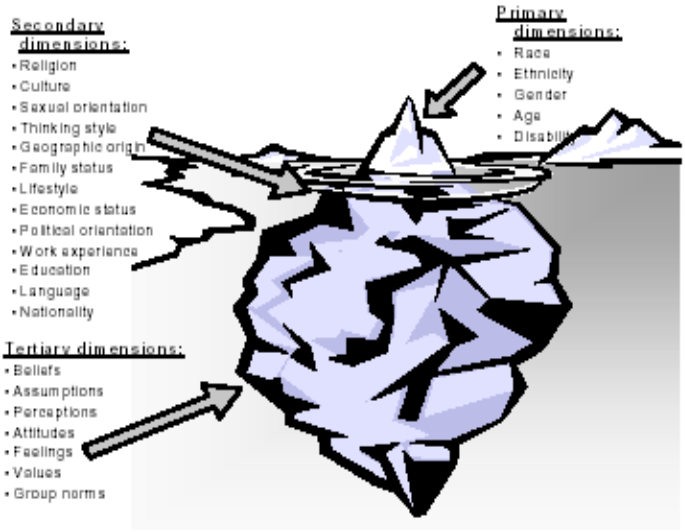



Fig. 1. Dimensions of Diversity

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*. The 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 Roakech. 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 as 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 Białystok 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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(Footnotes)

1 Introduced in Italy by Prof. Andrea Segre, Last Minute Market projects aim "to transform waste into a resource". The projects are activated by Carpe Cibum, a co-operative providing a service that makes possible the reutilisation of unsold goods which have no commercial value, but which are still fit for consumption. These items are made available through donations to Bodies and Associations that provide assistance to people belonging to disadvantaged social classes. A similar initiative, the Food Bank focuses on collecting food surplus that is then distributed by charity organisations that assist the poor and outcasts. The first food bank was set up in Phoenix, Arizona, at the end of the Sixties. In Italy, the initiative was developed and consolidated by Danilo Fossati, chairman of the food producer Star, and by Monsignor Luigi Giussani, founder of the ecclesial movement Communion and Liberation. Europe can rely on 174 food banks in 13 countries (Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg, United Kingdom, Ireland, Poland, Latvia, Ukraine).