

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY WITHIN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

One of the main postulates of building a stronger ground for the idea of sustainable development is to make society have bigger engagement in the state participation. It is important to create such conditions in order to make possible for all sectors – social, economical, political, in local as well as in global means – to have direct influence on making an integrated balance. The most crucial principle, which has to be changed depends on passing from the type of thinking we contra them to thinking in categories of wider understood us. Besides, to obtain more optimal conditions of free and polycentric political communication it seems necessary to realize those following two basic conditions: (1) to make possible free ideas expression as well as their free evaluation; (2) to have a free access to alternative sources of information.

The Idea of Sustainable Development

Any discussion concerning the subject of civic society can have a meaningful sense when the theory of democracy is taken into consideration, which means that: (1) there should be satisfied all basic conditions and principles for democratic structure; (2) each model of civic society in some sense is a function of exact democracy; (3) it is impossible to formulate one universal type of civic society, being flexible to all democracies; (4) the concept of participating democracy plays the main role in searching for democratic society.

Taking into consideration all of the determinative elements of civil activity we can not forget about the role of social capital. According to Robert Putnam social capital should be understood as a sort of social ties, norms and trusts which help people to cooperate in achieving mutual goals [Putnam 1995, s. 258]. The social capital played a meaningful role in F. Fukuyama's investigations concerning development in Asian countries.

Social capital should be considered from the perspective of its “small” and “large” scale. In the first case we talk about mutual trust among people – I trust you because I trust him/her, and he/she trusts you. The problem of trust is a very important subject of social capital in the sense of a “large” scale, but it must be considered in a norm of general reciprocation which helps to build horizontal networks of civil engagements. Social trust in society can be achieved either by individual participants and through organizations (associations). More or less formal mutual contacts play fundamental role in cooperating common actions undertaking by people. Playing undoubtedly basic role in social capital, trust can be either cumulated or wasted. We have to remember that social capital has a meaningful place in a process of creating public good (it is not a private property!). It also can have immeasurable impact on economic development and social initiatives concerning protection of natural environment [Broda – Wysocki 2005, 121]. The lack of social capital can cause a negative influence on different practical aspects in the area of: economy, society, education, ecology etc. According to American sociologist J. Alexander building a platform of solidarity among different sectors helps to create a sense of belongingness with others and loyalty in interests

Sustainable Development within Contemporary Public Discourse

Since the last three decades some meaningful attempts have been undertaken to redefine man – nature relationships in a new way. Undoubtedly, present discourse about the necessity of nature protection does not only belong to the environmentalist's rhetoric. Now among subjects applying for sustained development there are individual associations, different government departments and even some business corporations.

It is commonly agreed that U Tant's Report Problems of human environment published in 1969 starts a new era of thinking about development. The document points at such problems as: (1) evident lack of connections between high developed techniques or technologies and demands of natural environment; (2) rapid devastation of cultivable soil; (3) unplanned development of cities;

(4) decreasing of free and opened spaces and territories; (5) disappearing some forms of animal and vegetable lives; (6) intoxicating and polluting natural environment; (7) the necessity of cultivated soil, water and air protection. Actually until Brundtland Report in 1987 the idea of sustainable development was not commonly used in public discourse. At that time global concept of natural environment became the subject of dialog and cooperation among different countries, including western and eastern blocs.

One of the central components, playing fundamental role in Brundtland Report concerning global threats of natural environment, was the idea of “the common boat”. Authors of the concept tried to figure that all people have got this same responsibility towards limited natural resources and if they do not learn how to coexist together they might cause really dangerous catastrophe. Brundtland Commission called up for global environmentally management as a mechanism leading to sustainable development. There were three indispensable conditions: (1) establishing some scientific programs being able to evaluate devastations of natural environment and asses limits of growth; (2) appointing new World leaders who will be agreeable in making strategic decisions concerning the World (for example such possibilities would come from organized Earth Submits); (3) educating and informing all citizens that they are passengers of “the same boat”.

The delegates of The Earth Submit organized by United Nations in 1992 put a very strong emphasize on the role of society in obtaining sustainable development. In the tenth principle of Rio Declaration they stated: Environmental issues are the best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities and the opportunity to participate in process making decisions. States shall felicitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available.

Conclusions

If the civic society is so important to sustainable development implementation, than why it is so difficult do adopt this idea in political and business programs. The problem is complicated, because the barriers with building civic society are not the same. Taking into account all determinations of social engagement there should be mentioned such issues: (1) the context of social surrounding - which means the measure of social activity; (2) geographical barriers – almost all social organizations are located on territories of big cities and agglomerations; (3) lack of believe in efficiency of civil activity; (4) economical barriers – financial uncertainty of non-profit organizations hinders them from involvement into strategic projects; (5) sociological barriers – reluctance towards non-profit organizations, corruption.

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ÚROVEŇ KONKURENCESCHOPNOSTI ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY

Ekonomická teorie popisuje konkurenceschopnost jako kategorii komplexní a složité měřitelnou. Pojem konkurenceschopnost můžeme vnímat v užším či širším významu. Je měřitelná kvantitativními i kvalitativními metodami. Z tohoto důvodu se v literatuře setkáváme s různým vnímáním tohoto pojmu jak v rovině významové, tak v jeho definování.

Mezi ekonomy se najdou jednak ti, kteří vnímají konkurenceschopnost jako důležitou charakteristiku ekonomik, ale i tací, kteří tento koncept zhodnotili jako nicneříkající.

Pro dostatečné ujasnění pojmu konkurenceschopnost je důležité zmínit také existenci několika referenčních úrovní, na kterých ji můžeme pozorovat a definovat, a které mají také na svědomí nejednoznačnost definic pojmu. Můžeme rozlišovat konkurenceschopnost na úrovni jedinců, firmy, odvětví, celého regionu i země. Tyto kategorie se dají v ekonomické rovině sloučit do dvou základních důležitých konceptů, mezi kterými vnímáme výraznější rozdíl – konkurenceschopnost firem a státu. Totiž – státy si nekonkurují stejně jako firmy.

Jednotlivé státy mají také výhodu ve faktu, že i pokud budou relativně nekonkurenceschopné, tak nezaniknou, jak by se tomu stalo v případě firmy. Komplexní definice OECD (zahrnující všechny úrovně) vnímá konkurenceschopnost jako schopnost korporací, odvětví, regionů, národů a nadnárodních celků vytvářet vysokou úroveň příjmů z výrobních faktorů i poměrně vysokou úroveň jejich využití na udržitelné úrovni při současném vystavení se mezinárodní konkurenci [3]. Jinými slovy – konkurenceschopnost závisí na schopnosti subjektu produkovat zboží a služby, které obstojí v mezinárodní konkurenci a zároveň zvyšovat (nebo alespoň udržet) HDP. Vzhledem k zaměření této práce nás dále bude zajímat pouze makroekonomická konkurenceschopnost, tedy konkurenceschopnost států.

V této práci se budeme zabývat hlavně zkoumáním konkurenceschopnosti na národní úrovni, z toho důvodu se zaměříme přímo na její definování.

Ekonomická encyklopedie vymezuje konkurenceschopnost zemí jako schopnost ekonomiky jedné země soutěžit s ekonomikami jiných zemí podle úrovně efektivního využití národních zdrojů, zvyšování produktivity ekonomiky a zabezpečení na tomto základě vysoké a stálé rostoucí životní úrovně občanů [2].

Evropská unie národní konkurenceschopnost popisuje jako schopnost zajišťovat vysokou a stále rostoucí životní úroveň občanů, současně za podmínky co nejnižší nedobrovolné nezaměstnanosti.

Světové ekonomické fórum definuje konkurenceschopnost jako soubor institucí, politik a faktorů, které určují úroveň produktivity země. S produktivitou následně souvisí i prosperita, které daný stát dosahuje. Tedy, že více konkurenceschopné ekonomiky dosahují vyšší úrovně příjmů svých občanů. Úroveň prosperity také určuje míru návratnosti investic a ta má vliv na růst