Research Paper

Building a proactive attitude by using ICT among local leaders in developing countries

by

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ABSTRACT

The article attempts to determine optimal ways of communicating with local leaders. It is the analysis of tools used today (as well as training programs, coaching and mentoring). In this study local leaders are people characterized by above average activity, undertaking and inspiring activities involving local communities. These are people operating in three sectors - local governments, businesses, NGO members. The phenomenon of the "competence gap" in developing countries is a starting point for discussion about the importance of human capital for social and organizational life.

Keywords:

proactive attitude, local leaders, developing countries

Introduction

Reflections on this subject should begin with the introduction of the concepts of "competence gap" and "proactive attitude". For purposes of this paper it is assumed that the competence gap is individually assessed lack of psychological features, appropriate knowledge and skills to ensure efficiency in the individual and social activities. Individual competency gaps accumulate in the collective lack of adaptation to the requirements of the changing socio-cultural conditions. Proactive attitude, in the accepted sense, is based on needs of activity, develop, learn and personality traits, such as openness to experience, social contacts and socio-cultural diversity.

Another important in this article terms are "local leader" and "effectuality". As already indicated in previously published articles from this domain – "Local leaders are individuals operating within the three sectors of the economy - local governments, businesses, persons involved in NGO, but also the clergy and people positively motivated to create local

initiatives, with qualifications of leadership and involved in relationships with the residents of the local community"[1]. Inextricably linked with the concept of the leadership is term "effectuality", which is positively evaluated compliance of the result with the planned goal[2].

Historical and structural sources of competence gap of Eastern Europe societies

Modern economics more and more often uses the sociological and psychological tools for describing the behavior of people in the economic life. The modern economics searches subjective factors inherent not only in human psychological mechanisms, the cognitive schemas, stereotypes and prejudices, but also in attitudes rooted in a culture, based on a various normative systems and religious beliefs. M. Weber wrote about the importance of cultural factors, especially the religious beliefs in "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" – one of the most famous works of social science. He was proving that, the cultural factors are crucial for economic prosperity of the societies. Capitalism did not expand from the start so fast, if there were no specific cultural factors, such as stronger than in the other countries "culture of individualism" and the characteristic values for the Protestant tradition. Although some Weber's arguments has been criticized repeatedly, however, which is confirmed by numerous studies of the late 20th century, the main thesis remains still current: culture has a huge impact on the economic and social processes. "Culture Matters" - under such a title[3] at the beginning of this century was released collection of works of the most eminent representatives of the social and economic sciences (e.g. D. Landers, M. Porter, J. Sachs, R. Inglehart, F. Fukuyama). In these reflections is repeated thesis, that cultural differences have a substantial impact on social life and possibilities to instill a change or development. Even if the poorer countries copy from the richer their institutional arrangements, bring the free market and rule of law, there can be no assurance that it will end in success[4]. This is confirmed by many historical and sociological analysis. Noteworthy is the book of the American political scientist R. Putnam – "Democracy in Action"[5], where the differences between regions of the world shown in the context of cultural and religious factors

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[1] Ł. Haromszeki, *Liderzy lokalni w kontekście barier administracyjnych w zarządzaniu gminą,* Dysfunkcje i patologie w sferze zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi, Vol. 4, Red. Z. Janowska, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2011; *Skuteczni liderzy lokalni, Efektywność zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi*, red. B. Urbaniak, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2011.
[2] *Słownik Zarządzania Kadrami* (red.) T. Listwan, Wyd. C. H. Beck, Warszawa 2005, p. 142.
[3] *Culture Matters. How Values Shape Human Progress. Polskie tłumaczenie wydane przez Zysk i S-ka, 2000.*
[4] See: E. Bendyk, *Nieufny jak Polak,* „Tygodnik Polityka" , 2005, 3 września, n. 35, p. 17.
[5] R. Putnam, *Demokracja w działaniu*, Wyd. Znak, Warszawa 1999.

reaching up to the Middle Ages[6]. Also, today is developing the new discipline of economics, which remains in close relation with sociology and social psychology. The scientists seek neurophysiological cause for economic behavior. This discipline is neuroeconomics. Neuroeconomists from the United States and Switzerland focus attention on the impact of subjective factors (personal conditions, prejudices and stereotypes) on a trust and cooperation between societies, and consequently the economic and social relations[7].

Many studies of cultural differences in the social sciences using the term "national character" – having, according to some authors – a great influence on the development and organization of social life. The content of this concept are usually typical socially efficient attitudes and typical organizational skills – but always culturally, historically diverse and could be a relatively constant feature that occurs more frequently in one group than in others. For example, a prominent Polish ethnographer and sociologist, K. Dobrowolski, singled out two stratums of a collective nature: constitutional inborn and acquired social. He believed that a collective character concern the various territorial communities and their parts (classes and strata). The character of each group (class, stratum, the nation) changes due to biological selection, transformation of living conditions[8] and the changing aspirations of contemporary societies, which in the context of dynamic changes of globalization is crucial to proper understanding of this category.

The methodological question arises in this context: whether it is legitimate to talk about "the specifics of the societies of Eastern Europe", "typical social behavior," "national mentality" and finally, the "national character". Does the concept of national character in general can relate to the national community[9]. In spite of various methodological and definitional questions sociologists, ethnologists and historians use these terms. There is a need for some theoretical category which allows to identify and compare the ethnic communities and understand their actions. There is a rich scientific literature about this question[10].

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[6] See: E. Bendyk, *Nieufny jak Polak*, op. cit., „What interesting, in many contemporary decisions of Poles until today one can also see the legacy of such events as Poland's partition. In 2003 during the referendum on the accession of Poland to the EU the map of the schedule of votes still agreed almost precisely with the map of the partition division".

[7] More: A. G. Sanfey, J. K. Rilling, J. A. Aronson, L. E. Nystrom, J. D. Cohen, *The Neural Basis of Economic Decision-Making in the Ultimatum Game*, Science, June 13, 2003.

[8] See: P. Sztompka , *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa*, Znak, 2002, p. 229.

[9] A. Kłoskowska, *Charakter narodowy a osobowość we współczesnej problematyce badań społecznych*, „Kultura i Społeczeństwo", 1957, Vol.1, n. 1, p. 10.

[10] At the prepared work under the aegis of UNESCO Dutch scientists collected the bibliography including as many as 988 items, and on this base distinguished six types of the definition of national character and all at the same time six methodological various options. (Also see: E. Lewandowski, *Charakter narodowy Polaków*, Aneks, Warszawa 1995, pp.10-11). In Polish social sciences it is possible to show this theoretical category supporters and opponents. For example A. Kłoskowska belongs to opponents. She says that, the national society

This position seems to be closest to the present consideration of the genesis of a typical eastern specificities of developing countries. *Typicality* for these countries often is understand as a determined layout social relations, organizational skills, entrepreneurial skills, level of social trust etc. This is also the ethos of civil (attitude complex[11]) and patterns of behavior common for the majority, historically shaped and perpetuated through the generations. This concept doesn't analyze a specific features of individuals, but models of thinking, valuing and behaving shared for the majority in the social and economic life.

Reflecting on the sources of the "competence gap" in societies of developing countries, the researchers of this matter, apart from the ancient historical conditions (described by the category of national character and mentality), refer to days after Second World War, which have had great importance in shaping the identity of the societies of the Eastern Bloc Area. Effect of politically imposed socialism on a widely understood processes of building social resources[12], should be considered from the perspective of development of the "civic nation" within the meaning of democracy. For the formation of a pro-active attitudes of citizens need to root the values such as: private property, free market, inequality, freedom, individualism, competition and pluralism[13]. However, in the structures of Socio-

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is more a sum of diverse subcultures than a synthesis. J. Topolski, who makes it out as the expression of the anthropomorphism, the psychologism and the evolutionism typical of the social science of the 19th century is also an determined opponent of a theory of national character. H. Kubiak is taking a similar stance. J. Szczepański, T. Łepkowski, K. Dobrowolski, A. Kępiński are supporters of this theory. With some reservations also W. Markiewicz, who similarly to J. Szacki, thinks that "little it will be possible to say according to high scientific standards about the problem of national character, but it is worthwhile after all trying, every because methodical reflection is in this case better than mindless copying the stereotypes included in the popular thinking". J. Szczepański assume existence of national character ("psyche of the nation", "national mentality"). But stating that e.g. the Polish national character influences public processes in Poland, simultaneously he is emphasize: "I don't mean here some biologically determined, unchanged features, but historically formed, typical attitudes, models of proceedings, hierarchy of recognized values". See: J. Szczepański, *Rozważania o Rzeczypospolitej*, PiW, Warszawa, 1971, p. 25.

[11] Numerous reports of studies are attesting to the permanence of these attitudes. In the work "*Mentality of Poles* (2003)" authors presented findings from 1988 and 1998. Both reports are confirming that invariably among a lot of Poles a "defensive, conservative, claim" attitude is dominating ". It is tendency for avoiding unnecessary effort and to searching for facilitation and additional privileges. It is correlated with the strong claim orientation both in the relationship to the state and parents. See: J. Koralewicz, M. Ziółkowski, *Mentalność Polaków, Sposoby myślenia o polityce, gospodarce i życiu społecznym 1988-2000*, SCHOLAR, Warszawa, 2003 p. 180.

[12] It is possible to understand categories of resources diversely, depending on the scientific perspective. "Resources" in economics are the essential elements of the economic growth, belong to them earth (her area, atmosphere, waters, plants, materials etc.) human resources (supply of the work, educating etc.) capital (machines, equipment, buildings etc.). See: *Encyklopedia Gazety Wyborczej*, PWN 2005, Vol. 20, p. 484. At the contemporary psychology the term "resources" most often appear in the context of issues of the stress and dealing with his sources and consequences. Also other people, objects and traumatic experience can be a resource of the person, if are used in the constructive way. H. Alder and B. Heathem are representatives of such understanding term of resources. (See: H. Alder, B. Heather, *NLP w 21 dni*. Poznań: Dom Wydawniczy REBIS 2000, p. 317). There are defining resources as: "any mean, with which it is possible to lead the achievement of the result: physiology, self-feeling, thoughts, strategies, experience, people, events, owned objects ".

[13] Z. Zagórski, *Strukturalne bariery transformacji i integracji a społeczeństwo Polski*, Wydawnictwo UW, 1996, p.7.

Realism societies followed a process of marginalization of private-sector classes. Admittedly, some regions such as Poland, among other socialist countries (along with Yugoslavia) stood out the highest share of private-sector classes, especially peasants. In those days there wasn't real middle class, which, according to Z. Zagorski, is always "the mainstay of citizenship". Middle class is indispensable for formation of civil, co-operative attitudes, constructive organize of social groups, social activities, real ethos of labor and appropriate relationship to private property.

Multifaceted transformation in Eastern Europe that have occurred over the last twenty years, in a nutshell consisted of moving from a centrally planned socialist economy to market economy. Lack of civil liberties, imposed consensus, lack of competitiveness or policy of full employment and low wages that characterized the preceding period, encourage stagnation and perpetuate the passive-claim attitudes. Those determinates weren't conducive for perception of civic activity as autotelic value[14]. That state of consciousness generated later demanding attitudes and ineffective coping of many people in the new and dynamically changing reality. Discussion about influence of the period of real socialism on the current attitudes of people and their way of thinking about the state of democracy and free market economy is still live in many sociological works. Without a doubt, political changes have given many people the opportunity to demonstrate their own invention and organizational skills. Self-realization through hard work has become the social norm in many circles. Model of man absorbed and devoted work (including work for the next social environment) common in western countries, naturally moved to the post-socialist countries. Professional and social activity has become more important goal, than other dimensions of life. However, a significant part of the former Eastern Bloc societies unwillingly takes a pro-active attitudes. In addition to objective factors influencing the quality of social life resulting from inefficiency of economy (lack of capital, restructuring etc.), occurred the social barriers and psychological blocks – for example: lack of acquired entrepreneurial attitudes (in the Western sense), poor mobility of people, the low level of civilization and inefficient management of its own.

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[14] Although in the period of the realistic socialism the active citizenship, the work and the diligence formally were valued, however it has often had an only propaganda dimension ("labor day", " leaders of workship"," organizing oneself for the structure of the socialism "etc.) - in this period the civil ethos could not consolidate and develop as in the same way as in capitalist countries. Particularly in Poland the civil ethos developed after with influence of historical background e.g. underdeveloped native burgesses and therefore – are lacking in Poland of bourgeois revolution, the dichotomous social structure and the farm-villein system of the "Rzeczpospolita Szlachecka", the role of the conservative Polish Roman Catholic Church. Compare: M. Ossowska, *Moralność mieszczańska*, Polska Akademia Nauk, Wrocław, 1985; J. Tazbir, *Kultura szlachecka w Polsce*, Wyd. Poznańskie, 1998; M. Wańkowicz, *Geneza polskiego Chama*, Wyd. Łódzkie 1982; E. Lewandowski E., *Charakter narodowy Polaków*, op. cit.

Social capital and building the network of social engagement

The theory of social capital in its most elementary formula says that if people are in contact with others, in a regular and repetitive manner work together to achieve shared goals, it leads to a permanent and positive impact on individuals, to strengthen the ties between them and the activities of the organization. In the literature one can see many versions of depictions and contexts in which potentially have social capital[15]. Social capital refers to organizational features of society as: trust, norms and relationships that can increase the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions[16]. Trust is an essential component of social capital. As noted by K. Arrow, "almost every commercial transaction has within itself an element of trust, certainly any transaction conducted over a period of time. It can be plausibly argued that much of economic backwardness in the world can be explained by the lack of mutual confidence"[17]. Network of civic engagement is the foundation of social order and the ground for harmonious development. This network is formed by previous successes achieved through cooperation[18]. They can constitute a cultural pattern for future cooperation. There are some the structural sources of a culture of trust (or distrust) according to P. Sztompka, for example:

- Historical heritage;
- Current structural context (normative stability, existential security;
- Persistence of social order;
- The subordination of power to the rules of action;
- Implementing entitlements and enforcing duties[19].

Fundamental factors contributing to the strength of social engagement network, a culture of trust and the occurrence of proactive attitudes (for example personality traits such

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[15] C. Trutkowski, S. Mandes, *Kapitał społeczny w małych miastach*. Scholar, Warszawa 2005, p. 46 and next, w: Organizacja i zarządzanie, I. Grzanka, *Badania nad wykorzystaniem kapitału społecznego przedsiębiorstwa*, Kwartalnik Naukowy, n. 4, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Śląskiej, Gliwice, 2008.
[16] R. Putnam, *Społeczny kapitał a sukces instytucji*, przekład J. Szacki, Kraków 1995, w: Socjologia, lektury, P. Sztompka, M. Kucia (red.), Wyd. Znak, Kraków 2005, p. 388 and next.
[17] Ibidem.
[18] Ibidem, p. 394.
[19] P. Sztompka , *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa*, op. cit., pp. 318-319.

as: aspirations, activism, dispositional optimism, affirmation of success, the location of control) are an additional determinant. Above traits are part of a general pro-social orientation. There are also important the resources of individual such as education, wealth, network of relationships, health and other social characteristics[20].

The above-mentioned structural source of a culture of trust that make up the network of social attitudes of engagement, a well explain the cause of deficits in the level of social capital in developing countries. Especially in countries such as Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus the subordination of authorities to officially declared rules is only a fiction of law. Persistence of the social order can be effectively achieved through intergenerational exchange of best practice in terms of existential security and stability in the rules. Also, the societies of such countries as Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and others " start learning" a culture of trust and proactive attitudes[21]. Major role in this process plays a part in the European Union. Unify patterns of social and institutional organization, clear legislation and, although imperfect, but the consistent policy of equal opportunities, it gives hope for further, sustainable development of human capital, relatively backward in many areas compared to the historically richer Western Europe.

Proactive dimensions of attitudes of local leaders in developing countries

Discussed the effectuality of leader refers to leadership, which in the modern world is a "relationship superordinate with subordinates (or co-workers, depending on the particular type of organizational leadership), aimed at achieving goals - a vision, dreams, plans, values - based on respect and trust the qualifications of the leaders, and often the fascination with him, rational or irrational commitment to the co-created vision of development"[22].

A successful local leaders are individuals who have reached the hierarchy of values with the high importance of moral values (integrity, honesty, kindness), convinced of their self-esteem (awareness of its strengths and possibilities of their use). Persons particularly pronounced shaping the reality of local communities are characterized by a proactive and positive thinking, optimism, creativity and belief in the predictability of the world and high probability of achieving success. Aware that the success of leadership depends on the

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[20] Ibidem, p. 320.

[21] Although the fact of relatively lower social capital and "competence gap" among societies of developing countries, is well documented empirically, certainly one should carefully analyze all generalizing judgements.

[22] Ł. Haromszeki, *Przywództwo w czasie kryzysu*, *Zarządzanie w sytuacjach kryzysowych podczas Euro 2012* red. T. Listwan, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 2010, p. 40.

executors of created initiatives, leaders increase their effectuality through the skillful cooperate with other people based on mutual respect and trust. Social influence depends on the persons concerned by the impact. The best tactic for the high qualified, self-esteem person, aware of his/her role in shaping the local welfare is rational persuasion. In other cases local leaders use tactics based on an emotional impact. An effective local leader of the modern world (such examples are known in Poland) is a person involving the local community in various initiatives by giving good examples, continuous improvement and support the ideas of the local community members.

There aren't outcomes, which show that predisposition to directing is determined genetically[23]. Findings confirming the existence of one source of leadership don't exist[24]. E. Aronson and M. Armstrong said that one must be the right person (to have the appropriate features) at the right time[25].

In such an approach importance of socio-cultural factors is growing. They shape all elements of leadership: leader, his co-workers (supporters) and the different dimensions and range of the action contexts (legislation, political, educational, developmental conditions etc.).

If we assume that the responsibility for our own lives, the needs of the activity, achievements, life optimism, belief in the predictability of the world and possibilities of creative shaping the surroundings (including other people) appear in primary socialization, the existing cultural conditions (particularly encouraged value systems) may predetermine residents of selected countries to take a leadership role with its associated rights and obligations.

Analyzing the results of G. Hofstede[26], F. Trompenaars, C. Hampden-Turner[27], B. Bjerke[28] researches we can perceive many dimensions of culture that shape various social organizations[29]. G. Hofstede mentions: individualism/ collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/ femininity, time orientation. F. Trompenaars, C. Hampden-Turner are distinguished: rules and relationships, individual and group, the scope

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[23] Children of persons being successes in the business mainly don't have psychological similar characteristics. See: D. L. Landes, *Dynastie. Wzloty i upadki największych firm rodzinnych*, MUZA, Warszawa 2007.

[24] B. R. Kuc, *Od zarządzania do przywództwa. Dylematy władzy organizacyjnej*, Wyd. Menedżerskie PTM, Warszawa 2006, pp. 378-379.

[25] E. Aronson, T. D. Wilson, R.M. Akert, *Psychologia społeczna. Serce i umysł,* Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 1997; M. Armstrong, *Jak być lepszym menedżerem*? Dom wydawniczy ABC, Warszawa 1999, pp. 226-227.

[26] G. Hofstede , *Kultury i organizacje. Zaprogramowanie umysłu*, Warszawa 2007.

[27] F. Trompenaars, C. Hampden-Turner, *Siedem wymiarów kultury. Znaczenie różnic kulturowych w działalności gospodarczej,* Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków 2002.

[28] B. Bjerke, *Kultura a style przywództwa*, Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków 2004.

[29] Which also includes the organized (planned and implemented) activities in local communities.

displays of affection, commitment and a way of seeing the world, a way of gaining position, the ratio of the time, the attitude to the environment. The dimensions shown by B.Bjerke: power distance (small, large), the tendency to avoid uncertainty (small, big), social orientation (individualistic, collectivist), approach to time (short-, long-term), attitude to change (the pursuit of stability, openness to change), trust in others (a lack of confidence, high level of confidence), goals (materialistic, idealistic), the attitude to the environment (exploitation, adaptation), the measure of success (self-realization, position in society), relationships (formal, informal), troubleshooting (traditional, scientific), the method of governance (democratic, autocratic), communication (low context, high context), desirable skills (system, people).

The analysis shows that there is no single recipe for successful leadership, because different local actors shape requires a different approach to inspire, motivate and coordinate their work. Distinctive feature of the world of civil societies from those who only aspire to it is the conviction that only the activity resulting from a strong internal motivation and translating into group action, brings successful community action. Already described in this article, historical factors meant that some residents of Central and Eastern Europe can't accept responsibility for local development, with no awareness that in democracy, the people are sovereign and exercising formal authority are executors of their will. Another element limiting the activity (for example Poles) is incapacitation the people through wrong actions taken by those shaping the education system in Poland. For example, commands instead of the inspiration for creative thinking and action, slight participation of design classes or low tolerance for errors.

Is it possible to reverse this situation shaping adults through the implementation of various training programs (including coaching and mentoring) available free of charge in the most democratic and unlimited space in the world – in the Internet?

Activation programs forming the basis of civil society with the use of ICT

In Poland, for many years was carried out different activation programs financed by Batory Foundation, the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, the European Union. Since 1992, the mobilization of local communities, aiming to produce the basic mechanisms of civil society was implemented in the Phare programs:

- Social (Civic) Dialogue - PL9112, PL9412 - 1992,
- Democracy, LIEN; Partnership - 1993 – 1997,

- Pro-European Initiative (PHARE PL9707),
- ACCESS - 1999 (Macro-Project Scheme),
- 2000 - The Access 2000 PL0002,
- 2001 - Programs and PL0101.11 PL0101.10 and PL0102.05,
- 2002 - Program PL605.01.02,
- 2003 - Program PL379.01.01[30].

Then, after the Polish accession to EU 01.05.2004 available for activating community activities have become a structural funds. NGOs could raise funds from the various programs of the two programming periods 2004 - 2006 and 2007 – 2013. The biggest opportunities for staff training, developing proactive attitudes has the Operational Programme Human Capital[31]. This program includes the central and regional priorities, broken down into specific activities. Priority I - Employment and social integration, Priority VII - Promotion of Social Integration and Priority IX - Academic Development and Promotion in the Regions offer bailout for creating a proactive attitude and support the initiatives of local leaders[32].

Each of the activities under the HCOP particularly appreciates the projects involving the development and use of ICT. It should be considered such actions as thoughtful and far-sighted, since modern communications technologies can boost the development of civil society in a changing socio-cultural conditions. The term "democracy" has changed its meaning since the progress of information technology. We can also observe redefining the role of citizens in the civic activity. The new conditions (the availability of the Internet) promote greater interactivity for the participation of citizens in the exercise of power (the ability to communicate, influence through the fastest growing medium in the world). Ease of access to information, including examples of good practices, manners of the problem solving, training programs, coaching and mentoring can help change social attitudes to those characterized by greater openness to people and new experiences than is currently.

Such action can only occur in a situation of universal access to the Internet and the skill efficient and effectual use of its resources. The Social Diagnosis 2011[33] shows that two thirds of households in Poland has a computer. Internet access is at 61.1 % homes. The increase in computerization is slower than several years ago. According to research one of the main reasons for the lack of access to the Internet is not having basic skills - knowledge and

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[30] www.npr.gov.pl, 30.05.2012.
[31] www.fundusze-europejskie.pl, 30.05.2012.
[32] www.efs.gov.pl, 30.05.12.
[33] www.diagnoza.com, 30.05.2012.

conscious needs. Programs implemented to modernize the way people communicate, (i.e. OPIE) aren't always fulfill their role, because a current identification of actual needs of people isn't being conducted. The information collected within the Social Diagnosis in 2011 found that people use the Internet have a much more social activity:

- Commitment to local community (18.9% of Internet users and 10.4% of other respondents),
- Participation in public meetings (25.1% using the Internet and 18.9% of other respondents),
- Membership in organizations and associations (17.5% using the Internet and 10.8% of other respondents),
- Volunteering (24.5% using the Internet and 12.1% of other respondents).

Community development can take place through the introduction of programs funded and coordinated by the Polish American Freedom Foundation, including:

- Act Locally,
- Local Partnerships PAFF,
- Library Development Program,
- PAFF Leaders,
- New Technologies Locally,
- "Pro Publico Bono" Competition,
- Support for NGOs,
- Citizen and Law.

These activities will create the social activity of citizens, support the leaders and share new technologies. For example, the aim of the "New Technologies Locally" Program is to broaden knowledge and skills in the practical use of modern information and communication technologies. The program comprises an educational component and a support system, including financial aid. Activities under the program are prepared for diagnosed systematically needs of the selected local communities.

The programs implemented in Poland in the area to educate the public and support local leaders conducted since the early 90s led to a substantial increase in the activity of local communities. Developing new attitudes towards challenges of socio-economic reality of 21st

century manifest itself with convincing about the feasibility even very complex and time-consuming projects in the situation of financial means reduced or hard to reach.

The level of development in the forming of the civil society has caused, that institutions which projects activating and changing the social awareness carried out had moved their action to countries more slowly changing in this respect which citizens also expect changes in the democratization of life and the decentralization of power. This action is e.g. a Program the East East of Batory Foundation, the part of the East East Beyond Borders regional program coordinated and financed by Open Society Foundation[34]. The aim of the program is to support international exchange of experience, expertise, and knowledge, and contribute to spreading the values of an open society. The program was created in 1991 to support cooperation between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus. At present, the East East Program encourages innovative initiatives, which contribute to joint development of good models of social action and to solving problems on a regional scale.

Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights also conducts Internet training and consulting aimed at the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia[35]. HFHR due to the large potential of knowledge and experience of the activities forming the basis of civil society also implements projects in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Projects co-finance are in frameworks of the program of the Polish developmental cooperation Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Republic of Poland.

 In 2011 there were funded projects for citizens of Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Central Asia:

- affecting the development of communication,
- supporting the equalization of the competence gap along with the advisory help by the Internet.

Along with advisory activities funds for the purchase of the necessary equipment (e.g. computers), software, language learning etc. are finding their way to beneficiaries[36].

The evaluation of the effectuality of described programs directed at the local community is demonstrating, that in spite of identical proposals for various regions in Poland and in Central-Eastern Europe not all proposals are meeting with a favorable response.

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[34] www.batory.org.pl, 30.05.2012.
[35] www.hfhr.pl, 30.05.2012.
[36] www.msz.gov.pl. 30.05.2012.

Persons being characterized by needs of the activity and the execution of tasks for the local communities realize deliberate objectives even in situation of financial, administrative and social difficulties Findings of this type are showing that the situation not always creates the leader. Responsibility for the development of the local community assume a person with an appropriate, optimal set of traits, knowledge and skills useful in a particular place and time. In this perspective, the situation is only a "detonator" starting creating the leadership relation with the project concerned members of the community. Apart from suitable qualifications an appropriate attitude accepted towards the own life and the social reality turns out to be essential to act. Whether it is possible to gain such an attitude in members not-revealing to the tendency to the group activity of the local community via ICT?

It is necessary to start the attempt to explain of reasons of unsuccessful changing the attitude of the local community members from psychological factors. In this regard, mechanisms for changing behavior is usually explained by three main concepts: social judgment theory, processual model of persuasion and two-track theory of persuasion[37]. The theory of social judgment take into account only two determinants of the effectuality of persuasion: discrepancy between transmission and the attitude of receiver and the validity of this attitude. However the processual model of persuasion assumes, that the final effect of persuasive communication depends on the four stages of processing: attention, understanding its content, yielding to his/her arguments and to maintain this altered attitude in the face of counter-propaganda. Two-track theory of persuasion combines detailed theory of social judgment, and a wide range of phenomena characteristic of a processual model of persuasion. Two-track theory of persuasion assumes that attitude change can occur to the existence of two different tracks – central and peripheral. The central transmission is characteristic of recipients carefully analyzing the transmission and senders with abilities to arouse favorable cognitive reactions of the recipient. Peripheral track of persuasion based on the superficial identification of a signal suggesting a positive or negative attitude to the stance offered in the transmission. Determinants of the effectual attitude change are: sender, recipient, content, organization and medium. Social judgment theory assumes that the involvement of the recipient makes it difficult to change his opinions. The study of B. Johnson and A. Eagly[38] shows that the phenomenon of change attitudes is more difficult when the increase in the commitment results of connecting the attitude with important values of the subject. In this

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[37] J. Strelau, *Psychologia. Podręcznik akademicki*. Wyd. GDP, Vol. 3, pp. 92-97.
[38] B. T. Johnson, A. H. Eagly, *The effects of involvement on persuasion: A meta-analysis*, Psychological Bulletin, 106, 1989, pp. 290-314.

approach, adults with an individual hierarchy of values with which strongly they are identifying itself are definitely less willing to the change of attitudes than children.

In addition to above-mentioned, there are also a number of socio-cultural factors, already described in the introductory part of the article, such as: inheritance of helplessness, lack of identification with the state, authority, organization – resulting from the situation of Central and Eastern Europe societies for the last decades before changing the system and exodus from the Warsaw Pact, which can significantly hinder the change of attitudes.

Conclusion

Based on studies of the local leaders[39] it is possible to risk the thesis, that beneficiary of prepared activation programs, also of the ones carried out via ICT (of especially an Internet) are already active persons which are seeking the possibility of the implementation of planned or begun investments. Interest in such programs is large, because the implementation of promoted activities is connected with obtaining financing, often in the form of non-repayable grants. The elements that may limit the effectuality of proposed solutions based on information and communication technologies are the lack of competence particularly in the use of computer programs, efficient use of Internet resources and a lack of knowledge of the languages in which such communication is carried out (modern variants of Polish language variations and foreign languages). It is impossible not to notice that in the field of knowledge and skills of people positive changes occur. The dynamic growth in the proportion of people using ICT is a good omen for the future. In Poland, currently 55% of the adult population actively uses both a computer, Internet and mobile phone. In comparison to previous years has seen the rapid growth of people actively using ICT and decrease in the number of people who have any of these technologies do not use[40]. Even in 2005, people such was near 40%, in 2011 only 13.3%. Similar trends can be noted in all the countries of Eastern Europe. It is well known that a proactive attitude are closely related to the use of ICT tools in the private and

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[39] Findings of local leaders in provinces of Lower Silesia and Silesia in the years 2006 – 2011 were presented i.a. in : Ł. Haromszeki, *Strategia rozwoju turystyki dla miasta i gminy Wisły w latach 2007-2013* (współautor), Wrocław 2006*; Ł. Haromszeki, *Strategia rozwoju turystyki dla miasta Oleśnica w latach 2009-2013 (*współautor), Wrocław 2008*; Ł. Haromszeki, *Koncepcja Subregionalnego Produktu Turystycznego „Ślęża”* (współautor), Wrocław 2009*; Ł. Haromszeki, *Liderzy lokalni w kontekście barier administracyjnych w zarządzaniu gminą, Dysfunkcje i patologie w sferze zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi,* Vol. 4, Red. Z. Janowska, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2011; Ł. Haromszeki, *Skuteczni liderzy lokalni, Efektywność zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi, red. B. Urbaniak,* Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2011. *Ł.* Haromszeki*, Aktywność liderów lokalnych jako szansa rozwoju organizacji trzeciego sektora w powiecie dzierżoniowskim,* Szanse i zagrożenia rozwoju organizacji w społeczeństwie informacyjnym*, Kraków 2012.
[40] *Diagnoza społeczna 2011*, p. 311 and next.

professional life. In Poland people using the Internet show a much more social activity than other citizens. Nearly two times more likely they engage in the local community activities than other community members. Persons, who using the Internet, more often take part in various public meetings and are members of organizations and associations then other citizens[41].

It should be noted that the relationship between social activity and widely understood active attitudes socially don't result directly from the ability of using ICT tools and inversely (it isn't straight causal relation). A number of explaining factors of the change in attitudes in the discussed scope, it is necessary to seek in, what sociologists are calling, "features of the generation" and process associated with it more widely of "generation exchange". Apart from the general increase of the knowledge of societies, change of a lifestyle and aspiration – at least many times strongly connected with individualistic values – is giving the chance of cultural strengthening proactive attitudes among next generations of leaders of the local communities.

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[41] Ibidem, p. 321.

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