

A specific feature of Ukrainian mining industry in comparison with EU countries is its complex mining and geological conditions. The expert evaluation of these conditions should influence the decisions of economic expediency of innovations diffusion.

The suggested method of assessing the degree of factors' impact on the production process allowed giving quantitative estimates of the complexity of mining and geological conditions. The estimates could be used in analyzing the perspectives of attracting innovations.

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ОСНОВНІ ЕКОЛОГІЧНІ ЧИННИКИ ТА СТРАТЕГІЧНИЙ ВИБІР ПІДПРИЄМСТВ У ПОЛЬЩІ

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В умовах ринкової економіки через навколишнє середовище польські компанії обмежують своє функціонування. Умови, що швидко змінюються, та ринки, що розвиваються, змушують компанії вживати різноманітних заходів з метою виживання, щоб впоратися з конкуренцією та скористатися можливостями для розвитку.

Ключові слова: маркетинг, середовище, стратегічний вибір, умови.

KEY ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND STRATEGIC CHOICES OF ENTERPRISES IN POLAND

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In a market economy conditions resulting from the environment of Polish companies provide the framework and limits of their functioning. The rapidly evolving conditions, and evolving markets cause that companies undertake various adaptation measures in order to survive, cope with competition, to take the opportunities for development.

Key words: marketing, environment, strategic choices, conditions.

Problem formulation. Polish companies operate in an environment influencing the image of modern markets and effects, such as, among others progressive internationalization of economic activity (including the integration of national economies under the expanding common economic area of the

European Union), rapid development of new technologies (with a consequent e.g. homogenization of products and re-evaluation in terms of market channels) or changes in the behavior of customers visualized through phenomena such as individualization of demand, pragmatism and increase consumer awareness. Analysis of the conditions functioning of the company on the market is to create a kind of early warning system against threats, and to inform about the opportunities that should be used to gain a competitive advantage.

Analysis of current research output and publications. Economic literature cites a general breakdown of the environment in two dimensions [1, p. 162]:

- wider environment (macro-environment, external environment), including the factors: (1) political-legal, (2) economic, (3) socio-cultural (including demographics), (4) technology (5) natural
- closer environment (the micro-environment, task-based environment, purposeful environment, the competitive environment, internal environment), including the traditional system entities such as customers, competitors, suppliers, regulators and allies.

Analysis of the macro-environment, called the determinants of global [2] within five of these dimensions would start an international dimension, in particular European dimension. From the moment when Poland joined the European Union (EU) and the European Internal Market (ERW) the background for functioning of Polish companies are Euromarket conditions – a common European market conditions associated with the program initiated in the eighties of the last century, the process of political, economic and social integration of Europe.

Article objectives. The purpose of this article is to show the relationship between the directions of the major changes in the business environment and behavior and marketing strategies implemented by managers in the context of adaptation. On the one hand the impact of elements of the environment, and on the other the current strategic position of the company, including prejudice the possibility and expediency of defensive or offensive actions taken by the management. The article is a synthesis of the research conducted in the Department of Marketing at the Faculty of Management at the University of Economics in Katowice, Poland in 2010-2011.

Presentation of main materials. Despite the adoption of the principle of striving for homogeneity of the activities on the Euromarket, the macroeconomic environment in the European Union has some differentiations in terms of economic, technological and socio-cultural between countries and regions of Euromarket. The integration process continues, in future years can be expected further reduction in disparities between countries.

Domestic factors that create environmental functioning of enterprises can also be analyzed within the five dimensions of the environment. Important elements of the business environment, of the political and legal dimensions, are: the scope of freedom and civil liberties, the implementation of democratic rule, political pluralism, continuity of power, the level of institutional development, decentralization of competence of public authority, the level of development of civil society, including organizational development of social sector and behavior of political entities in accordance to ethics.

Legal regulations impose certain behaviors. Frequent changes or excessive interference by law in the regulation of many areas of business can rise to a restriction on the principle of economic freedom, destabilize the economic situation inside the company. The main barriers to the development of entrepreneurship in Poland in the field of political and legal factors are: an extensive range of state intervention (a large number of business regulation), unclear regulations, including ineffective law enforcement, poor legal protection of creditors in pursuing their claims resulting in payment delays and loss of financial liquidity, excessive bureaucracy of the process of starting new businesses [3, p 104].

Too extensive scope of state intervention in the economy is one of the biggest problems of the development of enterprises in Poland in accordance with the principle of "the more legal barriers, the less economic freedom." Polish entrepreneurs are now facing the most complicated problems of the tax system,

unstable legislation and enhanced procurement procedures [4]. What's more, often inefficient government bureaucracy inhibits the growth of economic activity and tax and legal regulations should be made more transparent and predictable [5].

One of the most significant positive trends in the political and legal environment is deregulation, which means the withdrawal of the state from regulating the area of socio-economic activity. In practice, this means removal of prohibitions, barriers, restrictions. The conditions for competition are changing. Another positive change which generate opportunities for business development is the creation of the institutional environment (e.g. research and development facilities, employer and employee organizations – associations, chambers and associations, training and consulting institutions, business incubators, industrial parks, business support network [6, page 9]). Quite a controversial issue in the context of equal conditions for enterprises functioning, though highly effective for their beneficiaries, are the Special Economic Zones. Studies of the Polish Confederation of Private Employers have shown that the conditions for business in Poland remains one of the toughest in Europe [7].

As part of the environment significantly affecting the functioning of the business are the factors of a socio-cultural context. To this factor primarily include demographics, tradition, culture, lifestyle, religion, human capital, ideas, values and heritage. Culture has its own historical background and ideological. A part of this group of factors is difficult to identify from the business level, which, however, in the long-term strategies should take into account social trends, especially when you plan to expand into foreign markets. E. Glinka claims that culture is one of the main factors causing the differences of types of activities undertaken by companies [8, p 68]. The role of hard factors of competitive advantage is decreasing in favor of soft factors: skills and creativity of staff, professionalism, experience, mobility of people, readiness skills, individual and team motivation, team skills [9, p 17]. Demographics of Poland presents a fundamental problem so far as aging process of population, which for some is a threat (e.g. declining demand in selected markets), and for others an opportunity to develop (such as service industry businesses related to the care or medicine).

The published data among others by the European Commission concluded that the current and future labor market is and will be mainly determined by the phenomenon of globalization, which involves the growing importance of knowledge as a factor in generating and providing competitive advantage and stimulating economic and social development.

Technological factors in recent decades are experiencing strong growth thus determining the functioning and development of enterprises. Visible are the dynamic changes in the art, communication, medicine. Technological revolution on a global scale has resulted in the Internet, which led to the development of new business areas defined by the prefix "e" (e-business, e-commerce, e-banking, e-business). In a competitive modern economy, companies produce more and more complex, technically and technologically advanced products that end up in more and more demanding customers. Knowledge and the ability to transform into new products shall rule on the success or failure of the market, companies and entire economies. The challenge is therefore to intensify the present day technology transfer and commercialization of knowledge. Unfortunately, in international comparative terms, innovativeness of the Polish economy is low [10].

Natural factors are the elements of the business environment which consists of natural conditions specific to the country or region, terrain, climate, raw material resources, including water, the frequency of weather events (floods, droughts, snow, etc.). This has implications especially for those companies that are dependent on the elements of the natural environment. The modern enterprise management is also connected with an increasingly important external factor affecting so far as are interacting with the natural environment. The national trends in the field of relations between business environment are increasingly stringent requirements for environmental protection set out in the directives, laws, regulations, standards. Today's businesses need to integrate environmental protection requirements to be taken seriously into account. This is reflected in the methods of production, transportation, packaging, customer correspondence.

In summary, today's environment is becoming increasingly complex and variables. Changes are getting deeper, and the pace is increasing exponentially. It is important that from the variability and

complexity of the environment stems the uncertainty that is the source of risk – an important element in terms of doing business. Uncertainty is a factor impacting on many organizational decisions.

Completed in 2012 by the Department of Marketing at the University of Economics in Katowice studies based on data obtained from primary sources were an attempt to diagnose the perception and evaluation of the environmental factors that determine the functioning of most Polish companies by their managers, as well as to obtain empirical insight into the strategic choices made by the managers of the need adapt to the challenges of a turbulent environment. Below presents the overall conclusions of the study.

Managers of companies with reference to the legal and political determinants of national and EU evaluated the impact of administrative regulations on the activities of Polish enterprises in the context of barriers rather than stimulants of business development. The factor which hinders the operation is instability and volatility of the rules, which absorb the resources of the company, due to the need to track the changes and adapt to the parameters that should be characterized a rather low volatility. The low perceived effectiveness of cooperation between public administration and business results from the poor quality of the legal system, negatively assessed the functioning of the state administration, both problems with regulation and its enforcement.

Companies have recognized barriers to development caused by:

- bureaucratic administrative procedures hindering flexibility
- stretching procedures in time
- excessive freedom of interpretation by officials.

General causative factor of inefficient system of law regulation, and poor functioning of state administration are political factors. The political situation in the general level is perceived as a factor in decreasing the external competitiveness of the Polish economy. Positive activities are assessed at the operational level of economic policy (e.g. temporary regulations "crisis" in order to increase the flexibility of labor law). Labour law in Poland is assessed as being restrictive and heavily overregulated, and the phenomenon of over-regulation of business processes is seen as a significant barrier to business enterprises. Another aspect of the legal conditions is to assess of adaptation of EU law, which is evaluated by managers generally positive as a system of much higher quality than the national. It is therefore an element for ordering of Polish regulations. An important determinant of business in the regulations shall also be regarded regulations governing environmental protection requirements. Among the barriers to the legal environment also pointed regulation of foreign trade with countries not belonging to the European Union – mainly Russia.

Among the economic factors making up the environment of enterprises to the most directly affecting the market situation of individuals classified as demand (its potential size and capacity of the domestic market) and issues related to the evolution of relationships with buyers. Respondents noted increased requirements of buyers to the market offer, both in terms of quality, as well as in relation to the expected relationship between the supplied value and costs incurred in connection with the purchase of the product. Changes in customer behavior managers perceive in:

- tendency to waiting for the buyers offer on a more developed foreign markets,
- change the minds of buyers in environmental matters,
- increase in wealth,
- volatility, seeking novelty and innovation.

labor costs that respondents have considered as a relatively low, not only in absolute terms, but also in the context of the relationship of these costs to the quality of work and qualifications of human resources.

The European Union is treated as a stimulator of Polish companies and Polish accession brought a favorable image and credibility in the international markets. An important source of supply of the Polish economy has become the financial capital of the Structural Funds to support the restructuring and modernization of the economies of less developed countries and regions. It also identifies the risks associated with the relative high availability of funds, such as over-investment, spending without the

support of economic calculation, the pressure on spending. In view of the adoption of the euro or to remain to the national currency respondents expressed a different assessment. In favor of the first scenario suggests the elimination of exchange rate volatility, significantly impeding business planning, risk reduction potential foreign investors, formation of uniform trading conditions. The argument in favor of the second scenario is the ability of the economy to a more flexible response to the global turbulence in the case of having its own currency, the fear of the final level of the conversion rate, or the loss of one of the tools of the sovereign conduct of economic policy.

In the context of socio-cultural study underlined the importance of entrepreneurship, reliability and willingness to take reasonable risks, as the features of the mentality of Poles constitute one of the cornerstones of economic development. These characteristics are of course primarily the engine of making business, but what is especially important from the point of view of managers, reflected in the quality of the available labor market also. Managers recognize that adaptation cultural patterns of Western European societies, including the postponement results in life priorities and lifestyle changes, family life is often sliding into the background and consumption and career becomes a priority.

The most general level of impact on the operation of enterprises are characterized by cultural changes that determine the course of some of the socio-demographic characteristics, including the most changes in social consciousness. The constant increase in the average level of education of Poles has been assessed as clearly favorable to the development of Polish enterprises.

Among the natural conditions and infrastructure in respondents assess that most important determinants of business are:

- advantage of the favorable location of Poland, resulting primarily from the proximity and, therefore, easy access to both markets in Western Europe and Eastern Europe,
- availability of raw materials,
- environmental and political causes of displacement of minerals by other energy sources,
- common in Poland, the problem of underdevelopment technical and communication infrastructure.

Environment in a diverse ways influences on decision-making strategies for their businesses on the conduct on the market. As a result, the same situational context, the same considerations expressed in nominal values of various indicators, but perceived in different ways by managers will result in a wide range of choices (options) strategy. One of the examples is the diversity of managers respondents assessments on the impact of market regulation on the operation of their business and the difference of how to relate to the ability to function in an environment created by these regulations. Enterprises evaluating these two criteria identified themselves at strategic positions, which can be defined as [11, p 28]:

- "strategic choice" – the freedom to make decisions concerning the selection of target markets (both in the product-market) and the use of resources to achieve business objectives
- "conscious strategic adaptation" – despite a strong and negative impact of market regulation – freedom in the implementation of planned activities and the relevant term strategic vision of the market in the past, adaptation to adverse market regulations,
- "standby / hesitation" – not high impact of perceived regulation on the functioning of the organization, but the presence of a sense of market phenomena limiting the choice of strategy, the position of the observation,
- "adaptation under pressure" – the need to adjust to environmental conditions – especially those that are created by the regulatory institution (state authorities or supranational institutions) and target-dependent.

The implementation of research also enabled to know the companies opinion on, among other issues:

- assessment of the opportunities and threats in order to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and willingness to adapt to new of market regulations depending on whether these regulations are seen as favorable or unfavorable (possible positions occupied by the company described as "full of momentum", "hesitation / expectations ", " gradually yielding to pressure "[12]),

– assessment of the scope of necessary changes caused by varying environmental conditions and the evaluation of possible changes from the perspective of the potential of an organization (the range of adaptation "to maintain the status quo, reengineering, transformation of the external energizing).

Presented by the surveyed companies information subsequently allowed to make attempts to determine the relationship between the strategic position they occupy and their key strategic choices. Companies choose specific policy options, making its long-term decisions on their ability to adapt the capacity of the environment. By adopting the terminology and methodology referred in the literature [13, p 278], based on the concept of matrix GE diagnosed among the enterprises a number of possible strategic choices. Some of them are offensive in nature ("Market aggression", "leadership in selected segments", "attempt to gain leadership"). The next choices are characterized by defensive or almost defensive strategic actions ("defense items", "attempt to specialization", "prepare to leave the least attractive segments"). Last diagnosed strategic choices are: selective effect options, or "competitive strategy", "conservative strategy" or waiting for the further development of market events.

The activities most offensive implemented under an aggressive strategy, take the only global company, the vast majority included in the group of mobile leaders. Companies that use an aggressive strategy, they found success, which is consultation and entered the relationship with the environment – the so-called co-operation. task environment (suppliers and key customers), and in some cases even competitors. Where the perspective effect on the environment is relatively small companies are looking for new segments which are formed as a result of environmental changes. Some of the offensive organization wants to implement strategic plans previously occupied by penetrating the market, other offensive actions carry through changes in product or market expansion, in extreme cases, aiming to diversify.

Such defensive actions are taken by a relatively small group of surveyed enterprises. Their strategic choices can be described as: "regroup", "defensive position" or "pre-emptive strike" [14, p 99]. Threats are posited in the ongoing dominance of competitors in the market, especially consolidating international entities with foreign capital. The defense forced a poor assessment of the potential of the organization and the perception of changes in the environment, especially their high turbulence. The cause of the turbulent nature of the environment is to: (1) the unpredictability of change, (2) high innovation changes (mainly technology), and (3) a significant rate of change (especially in the field of law). The weaknesses of the organization were included in particular: (1) an unfavorable assessment of the brand in the context of the effect of "made in", (2) lack of human resources, in terms of the number of workers needed, and (3) the qualifications of employees, (4) inability to meet the demand, resulting from production system with limited flexibility.

Conclusions and perspectives for future research. Determination of the competitive position and market of the surveyed enterprises allowed to present hypotheses about the nominal current strategic areas for particular groups of enterprises. Studies have shown that the context in which managers formulate strategy affects not only the evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats made by the company, but also the wider social expectations and characteristics, beliefs and values of those responsible for the planning and implementation of activities. A matter of further research remains to determine potential areas of strategic actions, or parts of the interior and the environment that the organization considers to be strategically important, but there were not used by it to achieve the objectives.

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