# SUSTAINABILITY AS PART OF A KNOWLEDGE-BASED ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

**BUČKOVÁ JAROSLAVA*[1], UBREŽIOVÁ IVETA[1], PRZYŁUSKA-SCHMITT JUDYTA[2]**
*[1]Catholic University of Ruzomberok, Faculty of Education, Department of management, Hrabovska cesta 1, 034 01 Ruzomberok, Slovakia*
*[2]The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Economics and Finance, Department of Global Political Economy, Al. Racławickie 14, 20-950 Lublin, Poland*
*Corresponding author's e-mail: jaroslava.buckova@ku.sk

***Abstract:*** *Sustainability cannot be a separate area or department. Sustainability must be set in a mind that integrates it into everything we do, it must be part of the organizational culture. It is not about working with sustainability - it is about working in a sustainable way. However, in addition to cooperation, an innovative approach is needed to bring about change for future generations. Knowledge - knowledge management in organizations brings innovative procedures and solutions. The main goal of the article is to point out the need to support the building of a knowledge-based organizational culture for building sustainability. Primary and secondary data were used for this purpose. Subsequent statistical testing of the hypothesis revealed the links between organizational culture, knowledge sharing and sustainability. The benefit is the summarization of knowledge in the field of sustainability support in organizations through the support of knowledge management.*

***Key words****: employee, knowledge, organizational culture, sustainability*

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of sustainability was formally introduced in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development. Sustainability was identified as a guiding principle for the future during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. As stated by the European Commission [6], sustainable development means meeting the needs of current generations without compromising the needs of future generations, represents a comprehensive approach that combines economic, social and environmental aspects in a mutually reinforcing way. Sustainable development strategies within innovation management are implemented by business entities through innovations for the sustainable use of environmental resources. In addition to the sustainable use of resources, society and the business environment address environmental issues in an effort to address, improve and develop the quality of the environment itself and social conditions, which should clearly ensure environmental sustainability and social economic development itself. Innovative approaches to sustainable development are therefore applied at all levels of management [13]. We consider innovation to be a fundamental change that is tied to the implementation of knowledge in the economy, which will cause an increase in value at the level of the whole society. The result of innovation is a positive change that leads to the efficient use of resources. The innovative capacity of companies is the basis for creating the company's wealth and depends on the creation of their knowledge strategy. In the 1960´s, the first theorists emerged who pointed to knowledge as an important asset for the future of society (K. Arrow, F. Hayek, P. Drucker, J. Tobin, and others). A new systematic discipline, knowledge management, is being formed [7]. Knowledge management is currently a technological information process, so it is logical that it is dominated by companies in the field of information technology. However, the technological process has its limits, so according to Glocková [7], it is necessary to revive and fulfill this process by educating a qualified and motivated human resource. The transition from a fixed corporate culture to a learning organization is therefore essential.

Košturiak and Chaľ [11] argue that innovation is learning, sharing knowledge and experience, creativity and perseverance, the joy of work and enthusiasm for change - all of this stands and falls on people, trust and cooperation between them. The knowledge organizational culture supports the creation of knowledge sharing and use, which is a necessary condition for the functioning of knowledge management. According to Barton [1], knowledge organizational culture affects the creation, sharing and use of knowledge at all levels, namely language (symbol level), creativity, problem solving, cooperation with others (social and behavioral standards) and perception (basic idea level). basis). The organizational culture and innovation in the organization should be consistent with sustainability and part of socially responsible business, considering three basic determinants [1]:

- environmental assessment of the effect and its understood severity,
- financial considerations,
- current and likely priorities of the stakeholders involved in the organization.

However, it should be noted that all these factors are constantly changing. Understanding environmental issues, on the basis of which environmental effects are assessed, will evolve, for example, as new scientific knowledge becomes available, or the problem worsens in some way. Related to this will be a change in social priorities.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The main goal of the article is to point out the need to support the building of a knowledge-based organizational culture for building sustainability in the conditions of the Slovak Republic. Slovakia has ambitions to preserve its nature with its diversity and self-regulatory capabilities, to pass on to future generations enough carefully used natural resources and a quality environment. At the same time, it presupposes a move towards a functioning, nature-saving economy, based on the principles of efficient use and fair distribution of resources, and towards a healthy, meaningfully functioning society, enabling the satisfaction of social, spiritual and cultural needs. An important condition for achieving the vision are institutions and legislation that serve individuals and, consequently, entire societies in improving the quality of life, including the right to a quality environment, agriculture and the comprehensive development of human resources. For these reasons, the issue is addressed in the environment of Slovak public administration organizations, which directly affect agricultural organizations. Primary and secondary sources were used in solving the problem. From secondary sources, it is mainly the study of the subject literature as well as strategic documents and statistics. In the case of primary sources, it is a presentation of part of the research. Following the goal of the paper, we wanted to verify with the hypothesis H1 in the practice of Slovak public administration organizations how individual organizational cultures differ in the level of awareness of sustainability. We established hypothesis *H1: There is a statistically significant difference between different organizational cultures supporting knowledge sharing in public administration organizations and levels of sustainability awareness.*

Through the modification of the OCAI methodology (methodology of the authors Cameron and Quinn) and the questionnaire compiled on the basis of the CAF manual, organizational cultures were identified that support knowledge sharing in the research environment to various degrees. By conducting another questionnaire survey, we obtained data to verify the validity of the defined hypothesis. We first processed the results in Excel. The processing consisted of clearing the so-called raw data from the Google.docs environment and adjusting them to values 1 - 10, or to values of 0 - 100, which represented the percentage of representation of individual options in issues with multiple choice

options. Statistical procedures for testing hypotheses were selected with respect to the types of variables and SPSS software from IBM was used to process them.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using the OCAI questionnaire and the questionnaire for identifying elements of knowledge management, the types of corporate cultures that have a positive effect on knowledge sharing in the organization were identified. After identifying cultures based on how they support knowledge sharing in organizations, an additional questionnaire was used to examine the relationship between the various organizational cultures supporting knowledge sharing and the level of sustainability awareness.

Given that there are nominal and ordinal variables, we tested hypothesis H1 through a one-way analysis of variance - ANOVA, which offers as very mean averages and uniform preferences over the dependent variable. Because ANOVA allows you to analyse data that has a normal distribution, we used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test before using it (see Table 1). If the normality is evaluated positively, all components of the file must be evaluated positively by the test. If this condition is not met, the file cannot be considered a file with a normal distribution of values.

**Table 1**.

**Normal data distribution test - hypothesis H1**

| Test of normality | H1 | Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Q_OC | 1,00 | ,286 | 67 | ,554 |
| | 2,00 | ,328 | 99 | ,200 |
| | 3,00 | ,280 | 81 | ,068 |
| | 4,00 | ,332 | 67 | ,120 |
| | 5,00 | ,314 | 54 | ,064 |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*Source: own processing*

The test showed a normal distribution of data ($p > 0.05$), and therefore we used one-sided analysis of variance due to the type of variables (see Table 2). From the results shown in Table 2 generated in IBM SPSS Stastistics 22, we can read that the level of significance $p < 0.05$, i.e. the statistical significance of the differences is confirmed. Based on the above, it can be stated that the alternative hypothesis: H1 There is a statistically significant difference between individual organizational cultures supporting knowledge sharing in public administration organizations and the level of sustainability awareness is confirmed.

**Table 2.**

**Hypothesis testing H1**

| ANOVA | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 66,915 | 4 | 16,729 | 10,930 | ,000 |
| Within Groups | 555,582 | 363 | 1,531 | | |
| Total | 622,497 | 367 | | | |

*Source: own processing*

By confirming the hypotheses, we can state that in public administration organizations, in which shared knowledge sharing is supported, awareness of sustainability is also supported. The growth of innovation capacity is long-term oriented, created by the given environment, willingness to take risks, by supporting the development of talents in a company where the key innovation role is dominated by knowledge management. Human knowledge and innovation processes will be acquired through a new source of differentiation that helps to gain a competitive advantage. Innovation management supported by a knowledge-based organizational culture respects resource constraint requirements in line with sustainability.

In its annual European Innovation Scoreboard, the EIS compares the performance of EU Member States and selected third countries. The table presents data calculated by the same measurement methodology, comparing 2014 (gray bars) with 2020 (colored bars). As we can see, the Scandinavian countries are among the leaders in innovation. Slovakia is below the European average.

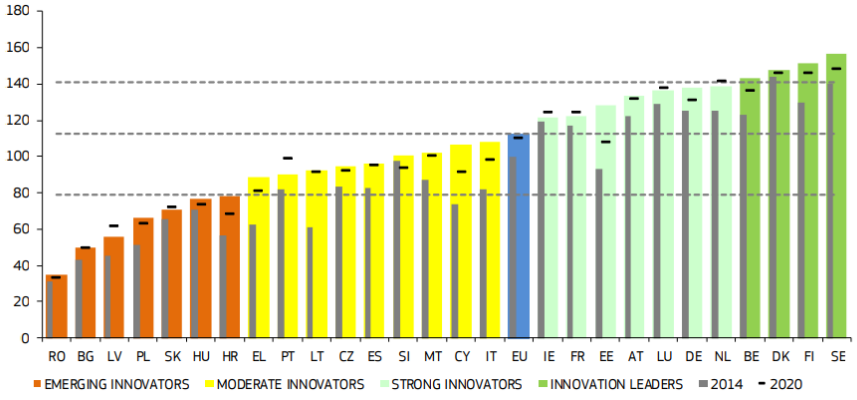


**Figure 1. European Innovation Scoreboard 2021 [6]**

In 2019, independent experts from the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) prepared a report on sustainable development in Europe [10]. If we look at the results of the IEEP and SDSN study (Figure 2), we will see that again the countries of northern Europe - Denmark, Sweden, Finland - are at the forefront of sustainable development.

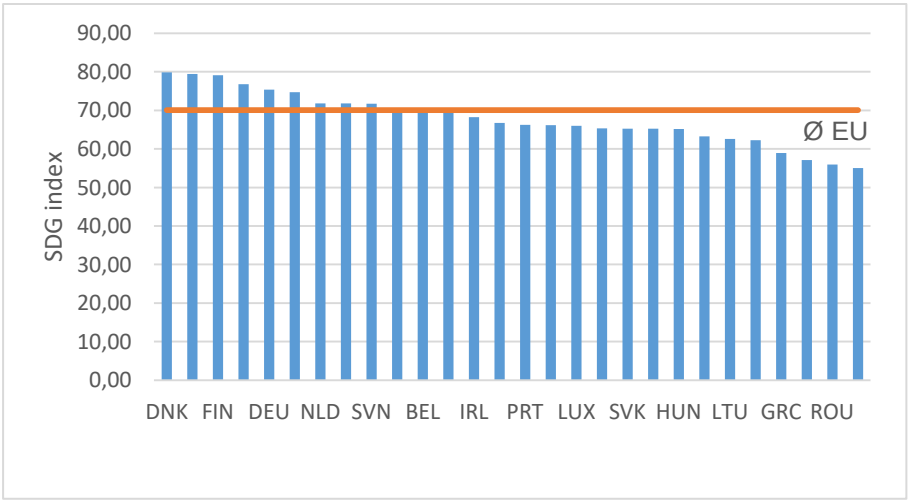


**Figure 2. SDG Index for the European Union, own processing according to [10]**

Knowledge management contributes to a higher level of education of employees and contributes to a better and more efficient use of experience. It is very important to point out that knowledge development is based on individual needs and does not happen on command. Based on the research results, we can state that in order to build knowledge management it is necessary to support an environment in which a certain tolerance of freedom of thought is developed, finding new starting points, repeated attempts, willingness to go to risk and tolerable tolerance of errors and mistakes, which would be condemned in other activities. as undesirable delays and some ineligibility. Such a knowledge organizational culture also influences the awareness and application of sustainability in the researched environment, i.e. public administration environment affecting agricultural organizations. Thus, sustainable performance can be understood as the harmonization of economic, social and environmental goals in the implementation of basic business actions in order to maximize value. To achieve this, it is essential to support innovation and create business processes and processes that reconcile sustainability with business performance. As confirmed by other research (EIS, IEEP, SDSN), it is the countries in which a higher degree of innovation capacity is also observing better results in relation to sustainability. We can state that knowledge management enables the invention to be transformed into innovation as much as possible. The effective use of knowledge contributes to a positive stimulus to innovation capacity and to sustainable development in the company as a result of a corporate culture that brings responsibility for economic success into line with responsibility towards the environment, employees and society.

## CONCLUSION

In today's global digital world, intelligent sustainable development, value creation and wealth are among the most important goals of society. The performance of the sector includes the integration of the objectives of smart sustainable development, namely social and territorial cohesion, economic efficiency, innovation, digital and environmental performance into the company's operating procedures. It is also important to pay attention to the functioning of public administration organizations, through building a prosperous society that gradually leads citizens and institutions to independence and responsibility, building and autonomy, permanent and public intellectual capital, innovation also affects the functioning of agricultural organizations and their sustainability. The concept of sustainability is not, in our view, contrary to business principles - it even supports them. This is by serving as a source of new, revolutionary ideas. Social and business principles can achieve a synergistic effect leading to a final win-win situation.

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