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GOVERNING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH CONTROLLED GOING BACK

*In life, it's better to know why you are going back,
than not to know why you are going ahead.*

The Author

The problem of the sustainability of the management process and the dependency in human relations in social systems is defined. The causes of the misunderstood policy are analysed. Problems in the implementation of tasks are examined through the prism of team work. All this justifies controlled going back as a factor for governing sustainability under certain circumstances (as defined in the study).

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On one hand, the sustainability of the governing process is related to the structure of the institutions, and, on the other hand, to their functioning. It is a result of both the regulatory framework and the degree of compliance. All this cumulatively is a consequence of the pursued governing policy. Its focus determines the nature and the type of institutions that are related to particular results from the performance of the tasks. If the policy pursued is misunderstood by the participants in the governing process and its implementation is based on compromises and dependency in the relations, the problems in the implementation of the specific tasks appear over time. This is reflected in the results that serve as proof of the misunderstood and wrongly pursued policy. The fact that leaders have been guided by positive thoughts and attitudes in defining the policy framework does not mean that the same will be true for the resulting facts. The latter are present in the implementation of policy tasks. Controlled going back at each stage when policy issues are detected may be more effective than going ahead. In this sense, it is more important to know why going back is necessary than it is not knowing why it is necessary to go ahead.

Revolutionary technical and technological solutions in the economy are not expected in the foreseeable future. However, comparatively large reserves exist in the behavioural economy. In practice, these are reserves of human factor behaviour, through which sustainable economic growth can be achieved. In contrast to the resource economy, investments in this sphere have a specific nature and, besides their material dimensions, relate to changes in people's behaviour. Indeed, this is a field that requires a specific approach to individuals and groups for whom technological prescriptions are not universal. They are a matter of knowledge, practical skills, life experience, sense of reaction on the side of the other party, insight, etc. Some of these skills cannot be found as recipes in books, but are a matter of innate abilities

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and talent. All this means that the behavioural economy can have inexhaustible reserves if flexible and effective work with the staff is conducted. And the problem here is a matter of who are the people that are appointed to select other people. Those who outline the policy framework and through it create opportunities to unlock the human potential.

Misunderstood policy in the implementation of the governing process

The policy as a major conceptual impact on the organizations' functioning must contain a philosophy of explanation and a system of implementation. Most often problems arise when defining the conceptual framework of the policy. In an attempt to make a good impression by presenting an acceptable vision, the authors of political ideas often bring them outside of the real boundaries of thinking of those towards whom the policy is targeted. And then it becomes misunderstood. To keep making policies under such circumstances is just an inadequate action, often accompanied by unpredictable results. These processes get even more complicated when political party partiality intervenes. Very often, in order to demonstrate strategic initiatives to society, such political ideas are introduced, which aim to influence its emotional state and activate it with expectations over time. If all this goes beyond certain principles that will consistently guide the strategic goals, the negative effect of policy is inevitable.

Since each policy directs organizations towards certain expectations over time, it becomes a tool for governing impact. In order to fulfil this aim, it is necessary to take into account the fact that the pursued policy affects the individual in any structural unit of the public system. And, as it is a matter of the expected results over time, any policy will remain misunderstood if it does not take into account certain particulars related to human behaviour. In particular, this concerns the following:

- any policy, as an expected change in time, is also related to the person's emotional life. The resulting reactions are strictly individual. In this sense, having the same needs and equal incentives can cause different behaviour and activity in the different individuals. When the studies in this direction are neglected, there is a danger that the policy may be misunderstood;

- the pursued policy relates to people of different moral strength, i.e., they respond to problems and emotions in a different manner. This means that each person has their own philosophy of expectations. The key problem in this respect is to find a unifying cause towards which the positive attitude of the policy will be focused. The lack of such a cause very often results in a widespread misunderstanding of the policy's conceptual framework;

- the policy as a wide framework for future changes is also a kind of credit of trust. If this trust is not justified, a deep and lasting demotivation of the masses follows. Therefore, in the case of possible positive changes in time, the likelihood of misunderstanding of the pursued policy remains;

- the policy must take into account the dynamics of the consumers' needs and attitudes towards the expected changes. That which is now an incentive for activity may not be such in the future. In this sense, policy flexibility is an important condition for it to be better perceived by the masses. The absence of such flexibility results in

the occurrence of negative reactions by the affected parties, because their interests are not taken into account. When they become a majority, a lack of understanding of the pursued policy can result in serious social and economic problems;

- individuals control the emotional energy of expectation in different ways, i.e. expected needs and equal satisfaction can give rise to different levels of activity in society. In other words, the pursued policy cannot rely on being perceived in the same way, both by the individual and by the different groups. Such a delusion on the part of the governing person can surprise them with different reactions over time. The solution lies in trying to capture the signs in advance and to make any adjustments where required, or to mobilize efforts in order to overcome possible negative consequences;

- during crises, expectation can be used as a tool for mobilizing staff. The important thing here is how this will happen over time. Empty promises, or partially fulfilled ones are transformed from a motivator into a source of demotivation. In this sense, in order to be understood and supported, policy making should be based on realistic promises. It is not uncommon for politicians to impose unrealistic expectations on the masses in order to achieve an ad hoc outlook. The cases of using excessively “dark shades” to paint a picture of the future are just as dangerous. In this case, we rely on mobilizing forces for greater activity and better results. In both cases, the pursued policy may be misunderstood because there is no realism in its presentation. In this regard, it should be borne in mind that an unrealized expectation is more dangerous than a lack of expectation.

In order to become an instrument of the pursued policy for governing effect, expectation relates primarily to active human factor behaviour. It would be logical for such behaviour to be realized with a concrete result over time. In this sense, the expectation seems to be related to the need. This is true to the extent that the need for change to satisfy certain spiritual and material needs exists in man genetically. When the pursued policy provides them, its positive perception is natural. Otherwise, it remains misunderstood because expectation is transformed into waiting. The difference in this case has more to do with the psychological attitude of the person. While there is a certain amount of optimism about positive policy changes in expectation, in waiting, the positive attitudes are significantly reduced, which in turn results in increased mistrust in the policy.

The extent to which the policy will be understood also depends on whether the behaviour of the governing persons is a priority function of the decisions made, or it is a result of the emerging situations in the implementation of the governing process. The implementation of any policy is associated with concomitant situations that can significantly change its direction. In this regard, the behaviour of the governing figures can be provoked in two directions: *firstly* – to be a result of the situation; *secondly* – to be a function of the decision already taken.

Assuming that behaviour is always a function of the decision already made in the implementation of the governing process in the pursued policy, there may be significant issues that affect its sustainability. In an environment of uncertainty (such

as the market one), it may turn out that various problems will be dealt with using the same means (predetermined by the decision already taken). In such cases there is a danger that the policy will not only remain misunderstood, but also that it will fail over time. To this end, in our country the negative impact of the policy is experienced in those sectors of the economy in which attempts are made to solve all the problems through centralized decisions/regulatory framework. Examples can be taken from healthcare, the education system, the restricted powers of local authorities in some sectors, etc. When the pursued policy is a function of decisions already made about future changes, success can be relied upon only where the problem and the means to its solution are adequate. Because the latter are limited by the decisions themselves, the choice will be limited. In such cases, the policy is usually misunderstood.

In the case of the second option – when the behaviour of the governing persons is a function of the situation – two things need to be made clear. One applies to cases where the policy is related to a decision taken with clearly defined purposes in mind. However, in the implementation of the governing process, deviations from the technological prescription are required to implement the decision and the specific situations are observed. They also predetermine the governing actions. The other option refers to cases where no specific solutions are readily available, however, in the process of the implementation of the common policy the emerging situations are handled in one way or another. A policy that focuses on situational behaviour is usually exhausted by strategic potential and becomes a means of “emergency patchwork” of individual problem situations. In such cases, the ones satisfied or dissatisfied with the policy will be determined on the one hand by the number of such situations, and on the other hand – depending on in whose favour they are resolved. Generally speaking, such a policy remains misunderstood.

Thus, an unambiguous answer to the question of whether the behaviour of the governing persons in relation to the pursued policy should be a function of the decision or of the situation can hardly be given. If we accept the option that behaviour is always a function of the solution, it means adhering to a cause that may already be losing positions. In this case, the decision itself becomes the determinant. Or, if they go beyond the specific prescriptions, negatives shall follow for those who have violated them. And when it comes to the other option – behaviour as a function of the situation – there is an asymmetric result and a lack of consistency in the pursued governing policy. In society, this manifests itself as uncontrolled democratization which, in the absence of regulations, results in chaos in the institutional relations. Taking into account the negative aspects of both policy approaches, adhering to flexibility is a prudent solution. This means making use of their positive aspects and taking into account the expectations of the masses which is not any less important. This will also ensure a better understanding of the pursued policy.

By taking a governing decision, the uncertainty is terminated from the point of view on the particular situation. Thus, the governing persons express their attitude to it as a problem which is to be solved or as an opportunity which is to be taken advantage of. Their behaviour can be active, passive or flexible. The form of

behaviour and motivation for each governing decision are directly related to the “necessity” and “time” factors. Moreover, depending on the policy priorities, each of them may affect the decision taken depending on whether it is acted upon freely or forcibly. Thus, any form of behaviour is essentially related to the action of these two factors. Thus, a governing solution can be a product of both free and forced action of necessity and time as determinant factors that affect the sustainability of the governing process. This directly affects the effectiveness of the policy.

It is logical to expect that with the free action of the “necessity” and “time” factors, the governing decisions will be a product of the conduct of the governing process in an environment of a high degree of determination and sustainability of the process itself. This means that there is a consistency in the potential of the institutions, the subject and the object of governance. In the practice of governing, this can be observed through the prism of such facts as the type of problem situation, the motivation and state of the decision-maker, etc., which influences the “necessity” and “time” factors. In this way, they can act both one way and the other, making it necessary to take into account the particular situation. Otherwise, there is a danger that the pursued policy will remain misunderstood.

The sustainability of the governing process is to a large extent predetermined by the nature of the functioning institutions. It is they that set the beginning of sustainability as a normative regulation and define the legal framework of the human behaviour factor. In fact, behaviour within the existing regulatory framework creates the basic preconditions for the purposeful implementation of the governing process. If this does not happen, whatever institutions are structured, as Gustave Le Bon writes, “names are unnecessary labels” and goes on “... Therefore, wasting one's time for creating constitutions is an act of childishness, an unnecessary exercise of rhetoric. The necessity and timing are dealt with when these factors act freely” (Le Bon, 2002, p. 64).

It is not rare for policy-making to not take into account the free action of “necessity” and “time” factors. Most often this happens when political competition requires urgent action in order for a separate political force to prove itself, or when corporate interests impose a hasty action in view of the current market situation. In such cases, the probability of the policy being misunderstood is great. Naturally, this leads to difficulties in its implementation over time and directly affects the sustainability of the governing process. Failure to comply with the “need” factor can result in substantial time losses if the implementation of the policy is not corrected or even stopped.

In practice, the future behaviour of the governing persons is projected through their choices in the present. And this is because the actions realized in the present are the basis for the future. In practice, it is based on what has already been achieved. From this point of view, the current choice is a product of already conducted behaviour in the past and, of course, of the environment with its current characteristics. These options are in line with the basic position in psychoanalysis that “any behaviour is projective”. From this point of view, past behaviour has a projective significance for the current choice, and behaviour in the future is projected through the current choice. In

this sense, the pursued policy, apart from the value orientation of the governing persons, is based on the duration of the different parameters of the environment – political, economic, social, cultural, etc. It is extremely difficult to pursue and understand a policy that does not take these factors into account. To some extent, they have acted over time and have made their impact on the economic and social environment. On the one hand, they are related to people's way of thinking thus far, and on the other hand there are specific material expressions in the field of economics and culture. Even if the latter can be physically removed, this is not the case when it comes to the value orientation of the people. That is why it is extremely important for the pursued policy to possess a philosophy for explanation that is accessible to the masses. The inappropriate use of clichés such as “systemic”, “happening”, “strategic”, “fake news”, etc. can only complicate its perception and cause those towards whom it is directed to feel indifferent.

In the implementation of the objectives of each policy, deviations are possible related to concomitant problems. The latter can be defined as current occurrences and as having an effect for a short period of time, as well as such that have an effect for a longer period of time. The clustering of negative signs of problems that have not been sufficiently addressed for a long period of time or have been solved incompletely turns them into chronic problems. For example, if we start with the legislative activity, there are either frequent changes to individual laws or there is a lack of laws in terms of public needs. It is logical to go on further to the institutions that, through their powers, have to ensure the functioning of the legal framework. In doing so, policy objectives should be achieved. To what extent it will be understood or not, on the one hand, depends on how contractors will be motivated at all levels, and, on the other hand, it is just as important to communicate during the implementation of the policy.

Perusing any policy implies making changes and choosing the right behaviour in order to be successful. Without changes, politics focuses on the status quo and results in dictatorship. It would be unrealistic to expect that a policy will be perceived in the same way by the masses, and it would be unrealistic to expect that the government will be flawless in the process of implementing individual strategies and tactical actions. When the behaviours of governing persons and those of contractors diverge, greater flexibility should be demonstrated by the governing persons. They must have a good understanding of the philosophy that being right does not equate to being adequate to the situation. This would also contribute to preserving the sustainability of the governing process.

The syndrome of dependency in the relations within social systems

The implementation of the governing process is related to the emergence of different relationships – interpersonal, between groups of individuals, formal, informal, within institutions, between different institutions, etc. In order to ensure the necessary sustainability and the implementation of the policy objectives it is important to have an equal standing, i.e. every attitude as a form of behaviour to be met with an adequate response from the counter party. Because such a balance is difficult to achieve, the dependency of the relationship also emerges. It is expressed as an inadequacy in their manifestation and it accumulates over time, which directly influences the effective

running of the governing process. Moreover, dependency can evolve over time to form chains of inadequate relationships. On the one hand, they are a kind of compromise in essence, and on the other hand, a potential threat that may lead to the emergence of conflicts. The accumulation of dependency in the relationship makes social structures less efficient and the governing process becomes unsustainable.

Regardless of what type of relationship is involved, dependency is, in essence, a behavioural response. It can develop both horizontally and vertically to provoke mass compromises or conflicts in social systems. In this sense, the behavioural aspects of the sustainability of the governing process are among the most important ones for regulating the relationship between the subject and the object of power. In the case of countries in which relationships arise in the process of solving specific policy problems, they create a real opportunity for dependency in the relationship. The sustainability of the governance process is expressed in the ability on behalf of the subject to find the field of common interests and thus to stimulate the activity of the governed people. The need for a flexible approach is a must in this situation, because people have different values, and in order for them to unite in common actions, it cannot be relied solely upon them standing at an equal level.

At the tactical level, in social systems, policy is implemented by the governing team of people and contractors. Leaders cannot surround themselves with people who have the same values, professional and personal potential. It is necessary to know all the subordinates well in order to develop a good attitude towards every single one of them. If shortcomings that have allowed some to grow while they have caused others to be halted in their development have been suffered over a long period of time, it actually forms a dependency in the relationship between the leader and the subordinates. It can manifest at different times and in different ways as a form of conflict if certain expectations are not met. In this sense Machiavelli writes that the method "...for estimating the intelligence of a ruler is to look at the men he has around him" (Machiavelli, 1991, p. 80).

However, the ability to rule is not simply to use the positive qualities of the subordinates – the ruler must be able to transform their shortcomings into advantages. At first glance, this can seem as an unachievable or impossible task, but it is not. For example, the leader can draw valuable conclusions even from the most pointless opposition by the lower members in the hierarchy regarding how long he can rely on a certain circle of subordinates and whether the dependency in the relationship has already reached a critical level, which is dangerous when left to develop and has a negative impact on the governing sustainability. It would be an advantage if the governing person reconsiders some of the shortcomings of the subordinates and readjusts their own behaviour in their relations, so that a common ground can be reached in their way of thinking and their actions.

Breach of obligations and compromises are at the core of the dependency in the relationship. By performing the tasks assigned to him/her, the subordinate becomes free, and any deviation from them makes him or her dependent. This is the most common form of dependency between governing persons and subordinates.

Other dimensions of dependency in relationships may be related to giving trust in advance. It can be done in both directions – from the governing person to the subordinates and from the subordinates to the governing person. Giving trust in advance is related to expectation as a possible change in time (Kamenov, 2002, p. 151).

Any expectation is associated most often with a change that is beneficial for the individual, that is, one expects change because they are not completely satisfied with the present. Normally, optimism is hidden behind the expectation. In certain circumstances, there may also be pessimistic moods, but it is the optimism that stimulates the person to become active. The best form of expectation is the realistic one. This is particularly true when dealing with the relationship between the leader and the subordinates. It is, however, the most difficult for embedding as a form of human behaviour. Experience, professionalism, reason, philosophical insight into life and other qualities not so easily cultivated in man lie behind it. In most cases, dependency in relations is caused by unrealistic expectations. For example, in the case of having a strong inner motive for achieving a certain level of professional growth, but having weak potential, or having very good personal potential, but being in an inappropriate environment.

In any team or group, two types of relationships can be identified – human and functional (Kamenov, 2003, p. 15). Social engineers believe that, in the presence of reason-based objectives of the pursued policy and regulated functions, the behaviour of the person or group could be modelled to a great extent. In this sense, the dependency in the relationship can be minimized. However, the replacement of human relations with functional ones takes us away from the system of moral values. For a man to become an “appendage” to a pattern of behaviour that is developed in advance does not seem to be the most appropriate way for revealing his creative potential. However, relying solely on free organization and improvisation in the process of the implementation of the policy objectives is also not a good alternative. Very often this can lead to chaotic behaviour and difficult-to-control dependency in the relationship. When it comes to human relationships based on values, education, general culture, professional culture, ethics, etc., quantitative assessment and behavioural modelling cannot be applied. In this case, an expression of opinion or suggestion may alter the behaviour and even the social status of the other party. Moreover, even when there is no reaction to the emerging situation affecting the other side, it can still be treated as a reaction because one is responsible not only for what he does, but also for what he does not do.

In any social system, different relationships are formed outside formal ones. They too can create dependency that can be transferred onto the professional relationships. This transfer can have both a positive and a negative nature. The overlapping between formal dependency (related to professional relationships) and informal dependency (non-formal relationships) has a significant impact on the sustainability of the governing process. The overlapping of formal and informal relationships can lie at the root of a worsened social climate, regardless of the professional training of the participants, because it affects their motivation.

One of the main catalysts of dependency in the relationship between people is the behaviour of changeable favouritism. Taking into account the opinions of other is a significant component that lies at the core of such behaviour. When a person thinks and uses their judgment less about the results of their own behaviour at the expense of conforming to foreign opinions, they are inclined to show unstable behaviour in their relations with others. At an early stage, changeable favouritism can generate positive dependency, but over time it is transformed into a negative one. The question is natural – where do the negative assessments come from? The answer is that it is a source of surprises when it comes to others' expectations, which does not allow for clear outlines to be formed in emerging relationships. Moving from positive to negative and vice versa creates great uncertainty within the dependency, both between individuals and in relation to third parties who can become a party to the relationship. “The wise have always claimed that there is nothing weaker and more unsustainable than the power that does not rely on itself” (Machiavelli, 1991, p. 49).

The institutional dependency is of particular importance for the sustainability of the governing process. While interpersonal and inter-group dependency influences individual parts of social systems, inter-institutional influences can affect the governing process as a whole. This is because the innate governing policy is affected in this case, which concerns the ultimate objectives of the governing process. Unfair competition or unmotivated support for the decisions and actions of certain institutions creates dependency in the relationships. The extent to which the boundaries of dependency can be extended is a matter of the governing policy when it comes to institutions. If it is not properly conducted, it can result in a serious breach of the sustainability of the governing process.

While norms and mechanisms to seek legal responsibility exist for financial and material dependency, there is no such responsibility when it comes to the dependency of human and group relationships. This, however, does not exclude the existence of these relationships and the forms of dependency that arise from them. When it comes to morality and values, it seems as though it is difficult to point out a culprit, who is directly responsible for the violations. And this is because in this case it is a chain of institutions that have formed the person as he is now – starting from the family and going through all forms of education, the social environment, and finishing with the team where the person is evaluated. It would be an advantage for any leader if, in their actions, they take into account the fact that dependency is present in their relationships. This would help them to have a clearer view of the “narrow” places in the implementation of the governing process, which is undoubtedly related to its sustainability.

Problems in implementing tasks and team activities

The results of any public activity are directly dependent on the proper reconciliation of qualifications, experience and motivation. The level and the forms of dependency in relationships, both between individuals and groups are also important. In doing so, a distinction needs to be made between staffing for the various activities and their managing and providing them with people. The first requires if not a scientific, at least a reasonable approach to reconcile individual

qualifications while taking into account individual and group motivation at the same time. It is necessary to take into account one other very important correlation between the personal and the real factor. The worst possible scenario for an organization is to have a gathering of highly qualified but ill-motivated employees. Or another paradox – a lot of resources are being spent for acquiring high qualifications, however, in practice the technology and equipment are far from the contemporary requirements. Thus, in practice, it turns out that, even with good policy intentions, certain investments in the socio-economic system may prove to be ineffective. Equally ineffective is the approach when, due to labour market problems, the activities are assigned to people who possess neither the qualification nor the motivation required to match the complexity and the deadline for accomplishing the assigned tasks. Staff policy deformations are often associated with compromises that are being made to meet the promises made by political subjects in order to mitigate the grievances that have arisen and so that the governing persons can drive the masses into active behaviour.

In order to minimize and mitigate problems in the implementation of any activity in the socio-economic system, the philosophy that the final result of performance cannot exceed the level of the limiting factor needs to be deeply understood. Or, that is to say, the “narrow place” which in practice determines the quantity of the final result. This applies both to the staff qualifications and to the state of the equipment and technology. Last but not least, the correlation between self-motivation and group motivation is also important. If such an approach is taken into account in the governing practice at all levels, a significant amount of inefficient spending will be prevented. In this sense, the correlation between the elements of the whole may prove to be more efficient than the pursuit of peak performance of its individual parts. This makes it possible to better control changes in the factors determining the results of the activities, which directly affects their effectiveness and the sustainability of the governing process.

The dynamics of processes in socio-economic systems requires that ways are sought to manage them in line with policy objectives. In this regard, the change in them requires the study of their organizational development. One of the meanings of this concept refers to the specific way of preparing for adaptation to changes. In order to reduce the problems in the implementation of the activities, the way in which the model of collective qualification in the socio-economic systems is important. In practice, it is implemented through the building of teams. To this end, it is necessary to:

- combine specialists with different qualifications in relation to the accomplishment of the assigned tasks;
- motivate high-performance communication between the individual contractors;
- create a sense of integration between the collective and the personal responsibility in performing the tasks;
- use the qualifications of the team members in accordance with the complexity and nature of the task;
- link the objectives to be achieved to the personal interests of the participants.

Problems in implementing the policy can actually arise both at the level of the collective qualification model and during the selection of team members. The collective qualification model in practice is a set of individual qualifications on the basis of which the team is built. The attitude (motivation) to teamwork is also of importance. Very often, the model of collective qualification can be fully covered by the relevant individual qualifications, but the lack of motivation can become a barrier to teamwork. Very often, in practice, a group of people having qualifications that correspond to the volume, complexity and deadline for the performance of activities are wrongly referred to as a "team". This is a necessary condition, but not a sufficient one. The characteristics necessary for the existence of teamwork are: a consensus on the nature of the problems; a consensus on ranking tasks in terms of their importance; a unified opinion when developing the action plan, etc.

Since teams are the ones who achieve policy objectives at a tactical level, their proper building is a responsible and difficult task. The most common problems in practice are related to the lack of understanding of the role of the individual member of the team in communicating with other members. Breaching of communication links, both horizontally and vertically, may result in mistakes in the performance of the tasks. Problems in team building can also arise from the lack of orientation of team members on the nature and substance of the objectives to be achieved. Doing the work "blindly" and concentrating attention on the current tasks deprives team members from a vision to the future. This undoubtedly affects the initiatives and creativity in the teamwork. It also influences the pace of achieving the objectives because the "low beams" do not allow moving forward at a good pace. The excessive focus on the tasks to be done at the expense of teamwork is also of importance. Maintaining an appropriate social climate is an essential condition for the efficiency and sustainability of performance governing.

If two sets of requirements are set for the formation of teams – formal and informal – the latter are related to the values. If no reconciliation of the values of the individuals is achieved, it would be difficult for teamwork to exist. While there is a normative way to reconcile the formal requirements, there is none when it comes to the informal ones. Even if the formal requirements are strictly met, the informal truths about the team may be different, because it is not possible to change the values of the individual members of the team in a regulatory way and in a short period of time. And the greater the differences in the value systems of the team members, the more the group of people is moving away from the actual teamwork. Naturally, in such cases the performance of the tasks is not at the required level, which affects the efficiency and sustainability of the governing process.

Controlled going back – a factor for governing sustainability

The human mentality is made in such a way that, both in personal and group terms, the focus is on success. To speak of going back is strange at the very least. However, in order to motivate such a strange behaviour, one cannot pass without defining the philosophy of success. What could be generally accepted is that success is a subjective perception of a certain state of the individual. It can include

the state of the spirit and the way in which it is perceived by others. In this sense, success is related to self-awareness, i.e. the ability of a person to think and reflect upon their own behaviour and to judge the attitudes of others towards them. Whether it is a person, a group or a social system, success is associated with overcoming something, with achieving a given objective. What has been overcome, resolved as a problem, is the object of success, and the party that overcame it is the subject.

Success as a desire for development and progress is limited. The limitations are directly related to the potential of the individuals, the groups or the organizations, respectively. Not understanding policy-making, accumulating dependency in relationships, or making mistakes when performing tasks is a serious obstacle to success. A no less serious limitation of success is also the inappropriate environment for displaying the actual potential. The direct relation between potential and success comes to suggest that one of the fundamental differences between fair and unfair competition is precisely caused by specific inconsistencies between them. This, on the other hand, raises the question of the regulatory base and its relation to morality and success. It is the best case scenario when moral and legal norms in a social system match. However, cases of divergence are not a rare practice, i.e. certain behavioural results may be considered moral but non-conforming to the regulatory base while others are consistent, but are defined as immoral by society. In this sense, it is possible to have cases where a certain achieved result is considered to be a success from a personal or group point of view, but it is not in line with the global objectives of the organization. The opposite can also be true - the global objectives may be achieved, but a feeling of dissatisfaction may exist in some individuals or groups. This confirms the subjective nature of feelings and the relative nature of success.

The subjective feeling of success stems from the fact that, in certain cases, the subject of success can affect the interests of the organization as a whole and be related to its strategic development, but in individuals or individual groups there is dissatisfaction at some point or time. In such cases, the individual or group interest conflicts with the strategic objectives and may result in demotivation of a part of the staff members. Also, the opposite is not impossible, when the prospects are misunderstood, the strategic objectives are not properly set, the progress is slow at "low beams", but for certain individuals or groups this is advantageous and from a subjective point of view they give a positive assessment the state of the organization. Reporting such a pseudo-success is a temporary delusion or a sign of the unhealthy interests of certain circles, but at the same time it serves as a sign of upcoming conflicts or crisis.

Overall, success must be distinguished from the concrete result, although the latter is part of it. The value of success is expressed over time and relates to status and trends as integrity complex of changes, while the result is more specific and covers a specific period of time. In this sense, the philosophy of success requires that each concrete result be matched with the prospect of development. However, in the absence of a development strategy, it is accepted in a literal way, and the lack of possibility to match it with the time makes it a major reference point

of development. If such behaviour exist, it is difficult to rely on sustainable development. Moreover, individual positive results, if not analysed and maintained as a condition over time, may prove decisive for failure in perspective.

Distinguishing success as a result-specific trend has to do with the theory of controlled going back. The logic behind this theory is that success can involve a controlled backward movement, or in other words, that not every going backward movement should be considered a failure. Assuming that success is a system of concrete results, it is logical for some of them to have different values over time, as well as a different relative share in its formation. The fact that success is not considered as a particular condition but is a continuous process over time means that it cannot be fixed. If this is done, it becomes a strategic result – short-, medium or long-term, and these results are set as objectives in the governing strategy. In this sense, a successful period of development is also reported through specific results.

The above considerations also determine the immediate relation of success to the management of change and its adaptation. Success as a status and behaviour of individuals, groups and organizations is associated with certain periods in which different internal and external forces of change exist. Some of them have a direction opposite to the upward trend and they are reported as factors that influence the going back. Its philosophy can be sought in different directions:

- exhausted potential and impossibility to maintain the current development rates;
- existing potential but taking into account unfavourable external and internal factors, the overcoming of which may lead to a more intensive exhaustion of potential;
- a judgment that the selected strategy is inappropriate in the light of the changes that have occurred and that it is necessary to rethink it or develop a new one;
- a wrong strategy - the faster the pace towards the achieving of its goals is, the greater the distance from the real goals becomes. Stopping in itself would be a success, and going back means getting closer to the actual goals.

In order to have a controlled going back, a clear answer should be given to the following questions:

- Where are we, i.e. what is the current situation?
- Can we influence the current situation and, if so, how can we do it?
- What is our strategic behaviour?

The answer to the first two questions may also determine the going back as a part of the strategic behaviour. Without doing so, any going back will be chaotic and out of control. In other words, it must be related to a certain strategic dividend.

Assuming that, in the widest frame of thinking, any result of an activity is a function of time and expense, it would be logical to specify what the strategic behaviour of the governing subject will be. Its main characteristics can be defined as:

- the change – which holds two possibilities – to manage or to adapt the process of the achievement of the strategic goals (expected results);
- the improvisation – change over time can reject one activity and give a chance to others that are not included in the preliminary estimate of their possible number.

From the point of view of the two abovementioned options, it can be concluded that going back can be seen as a component of strategic behaviour. Its application to the practice of the organizations is appropriate when it is impossible to exert influence (control) over the action of certain external and internal factors or when it is considered that a certain range of activities are no longer relevant to the achievement of the strategic objectives. This requires certain actions to be undertaken in order to replace them with new ones. It is in these periods that not only retention of development, but also going back is possible.

The reasons for going back may be different. Some of the most important ones are:

- the assessment of whether the current situation lacks strategic potential;
- in the event of changes, the assessment of whether the available potential is inconsistent with the set objectives;
- competition that is stronger and harder to overcome, which requires a re-evaluation of the activities;
- wrong direction of development and, in connection to this, a wrong strategy and wrong objectives.

The decision itself to temporarily stop or go back burdens leaders or teams.

The decision, however, is only a single moment, and until it is reached, a lot of signs could be found that relate to the preliminary preparation of the decision. Decisions for going back can have different specific dimensions, such as:

- to slow down the pace of development;
- to direct efforts towards other activities that have thus far been assessed as secondary;
- to stop the main activity and to search for alternatives to it;
- to apply elements of the concept of strategic fraud for the purpose of misleading competitors, etc.

Organizational behaviour in going back should be controlled, if it isn't, it can result in temporary crises or it can even lead to bankruptcy. The latter is excluded from the controlled going back theory because it may be of a different nature that is not the object of the theory under consideration.

Ultimately, going back can be a philosophy of success in the future, and in this sense it excludes bankruptcy. It seeks more expression of the flexibility and adaptive potential of organizations. This can also be a component of the development strategy or, in other words, any strategy should be open to such behaviour. If this is overlooked and maintaining the pace of development is sought after at any cost, it would not come as a surprise if this leads to bankruptcy in the near future.

For these reasons, the meaning and content of the controlled going back theory can be summarised in several ways:

- firstly, it regulates the drive for growth and maximum profit at any cost, which, in the general practice, can give rise to a number of negative effects – from the ecological to the extreme states (for example, the state of being very rich or very poor);
- secondly, it allows more organizations to protect themselves from bankruptcy;

- thirdly, this theory lies at the foundations of a new approach, which has to do with achieving a balance of resource provision and of attitudes towards the exhaustion of natural resources;

- fourthly, it also has a significant effect on unemployment, social responsibility, unfair competition, etc.

In a competitive market economy, the logic of any development is such that, both for reasons beyond the organization's control and for reasons related to their own judgment, controlled going back is an element of their strategic development. If this fact is realized, such behaviour can also be envisaged in the development of the governing policy or in the strategic development plans respectively. This means having a pre-set expectation for it, including alternatives, meaning that the latter should include at least one other option of behaviour if there is a situation requiring a controlled going back. Those unprepared for such behaviour bear the risk of becoming a victim of the ambition to maintain the status quo at any cost, which further exhausts their potential. In this sense, controlled going back in a particular sense helps to both preserve and restore the potential of organizations. Indeed, this can happen if it has become a recognized need at a certain stage of their development and, above all, if it is placed under control. In any other case, going back will be associated with failure and can also lead to bankruptcy.

In conclusion, it can be summarised that the circumstances of a competitive market economy also form the content of the logical potential of the controlled going back theory. If the policy is misunderstood, if a high degree of dependency is accumulated in social systems, and if there are any problems with the implementation of policy tasks, controlled going back becomes a necessity. The preservation of governing sustainability goes through such a stage of the implementation of the governing process. Unprepared people may bear negatives because they have not realized the philosophy that controlled going back is a prerequisite for success in the future.

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