

Toni Vrana
Center Spirala, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Do the concepts of social responsibility and active citizenship share the same basis?

Sta družbena odgovornost in aktivno državljanstvo dve plati iste medalje ?

Abstract

The beginning of the article highlights the topic of social responsibility in general. Further on certain dilemmas are dealt with through the analysis of opposition between voluntarism and obligation of social responsibility, and cause and consequence in case of companies. Further dilemma concerns the way we automatically treat the concept of social responsibility primarily in connection with companies, while the last dilemma exposes possible obstacles preventing discussion of social responsibility within the public sector. The term social responsibility is specifically defined later; the explanation is based on the international project ExSoRes by analysing social responsibility within the social-care and health sector. The article lists the findings of the project which illuminate the complexity and non-transparency within this sector. Furthermore, the focus of the article turns towards correlations between social responsibility and active citizenship, where the latter concept is treated briefly. The comparison between both concepts is based on investigation of dilemmas, where the common denominators of terms *socially responsible organisation* and *active citizen* are defined. With this comparison, the article exposes the *successive* and *parallel* logic of understanding of both concepts. Furthermore, the article attempts to find out how both concepts could be more successfully implemented within society and related to the concept of lifelong learning. The concept of lifelong learning is discussed briefly. The article investigates possible usage of lifelong learning as a means for developing social responsibility and active citizenship. It poses the question whether lifelong learning should not be used exclusively for promotion of both concepts through logic *from above to below*. On this basis, the term *self-recognition* is defined as the factor which could facilitate the development of socially responsible and active behaviour.

Povzetek

Članek najprej opredeli družbeno odgovornost v splošnem smislu. Osvetli dileme družbene odgovornosti skozi nasprotje med njeno prostovoljnostjo in regulativnostjo, ter med njeno

vzročnostjo in posledičnostjo na primeru podjetij. Izpostavi samoumevno povezovanje družbene odgovornosti s podjetji in se v zadnji dilemi sprašuje o možnih razlogih šibke prisotnosti družbene odgovornosti v javnem sektorju. Konkretnije družbeno odgovornost opredeli opirajoč se na mednarodni projekt ExSoRes, ki preučuje družbeno odgovornost v zdravstvu in socialnem varstvu. Članek omeni projektne ugotovitve, ki osvetlijo večplastnost in nedorečenost družbene odgovornosti v tem sektorju. V nadaljevanju članek išče korelacijo med družbeno odgovornostjo in aktivnim državljanstvom, pri čemer se slednjega koncepta samo grobo dotakne. Povezavo med konceptoma poišče v primerjavi pojma "družbena odgovorna organizacija" s pojmom "aktivni državljan". Skozi to primerjavo opredeli zaporedno in vzporedno razumevanje družbene odgovornosti ter aktivnega državljanstva. Nadalje se članek sprašuje o možnostih uspešnejšega udejanjanja obeh konceptov v praksi skozi vseživljenjsko učenje. Slednjega koncepta se dotakne v smislu, kje bi se ga dalo uporabiti za razvoj družbene odgovornosti in aktivnega državljanstva. Članek zagovarja stališče, naj vseživljenjsko učenje prvenstveno ne služi za samoumevno promocijo obeh konceptov po logiki od zgoraj navzdol. V spodbujanju posameznikov in organizacij v smeri večjega samo-prepoznavanja vidi možnost razvoja družbeno odgovornega in aktivnega obnašanja.

Ključne besede

-social responsible organisation, active citizen, successive and parallel social responsibility and active citizenship, self-recognition

-družbeno odgovorna organizacija, aktivni državljan, zaporedna in vzporedna družbena odgovornost ter aktivno državljanstvo, samo-prepoznavanje

Introduction

It is possible to initiate speculation that concepts such as social responsibility, active citizenship and lifelong learning are widely accepted and, consequently, desirable within wider society. Furthermore, there is no doubt that these concepts deal with a very wide variety of different contents, so it seems unlikely that it would be easy to find some general or basic similarities among them. However, it seems that it is possible to speculate on a general level that all of the above concepts treat our realities through a common main point of view, which is structured through positive general approach "how it should be".¹ In accordance with

¹ It is possible to speculate that positivism of this approach according to its opposite, the widely developed and widened critical approach "how it should not be", is the reason why the positive approach is more acceptable within society.

this statement, these concepts give us through this general approach certain theoretical advice as well as show us more or less practical steps on how to move towards defined solutions. Such insight can encourage further and deeper investigation in a sense that we actually could find many common points between these concepts. What is more, at times it is not possible to avoid a somewhat radical and bold impression that these concepts can actually represent two different sides of the same coin. The present article is based on the international project ExSoRes, which investigates the social responsibility within the social-care and health sector. The article focuses primarily on social responsibility in a context where some common points with active citizenship could appear. In parallel with this research, the article deals with the challenge of whether it is possible to find a potential way of using lifelong learning for additional development of social responsibility and active citizenship.

Social responsibility

The concept of social responsibility evolved at the beginning of the twentieth century (Verčič in Gruning, 1998), while the term social responsibility within literature started to be used and recognised in the early 1950s (Podnar in Golob, 2002). According to some other authors, however, the concept of social responsibility supposedly has its roots in the Middle Ages already. However, it is only in the last decade that social responsibility has become widely recognised through profit making companies and their efforts to implement this concept into their business operation. (Knez-Riedl, 2002). Parallel to this fact, in this last decade, social responsibility definitely has appeared to be one of the central topics of discussions of new opportunities that the new global world is facing. Social responsibility in its general meaning represents the connection between professional decisions and regard for ethical values, people, community and environment. (ExSoRes, 2004). Within the European Union, the debate about social responsibility was encouraged repeatedly in the established document titled Green Paper-Promoting a European Framework for Corporate Social Responsibility (European Commission, 2001).

Terminology and meanings of social responsibility

Social responsibility as a concept is defined in certain terms. Nowadays, the most common term is “*Corporate social responsibility (CSR)*”, which applies to profit organisations. Since the social responsibility applies to all organisations, another term is used: “*Organisational social responsibility (OSR)*”. In this article, as well as within the ExSoRes project, the term “*Social responsibility*” or its abbreviation “*SR*” is used. Regarding the meaning of SR, it needs

to be stressed that SR can be understood in different ways, depending on different perspectives and contexts. In order to get at least some initial common understanding of this concept, the most universal definition can be given in the following way: “SR is a concept whereby companies on a voluntary basis integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in the interaction with their stakeholders.” Another definition in use is as follows: “a balanced approach for organisations to address economic, social and environmental issues in a way that aims to benefit people, communities and society”. The concept of SR also relates to the term “Sustainable development”, where the concept of sustainability is explained through interrelation among economy, society and environment, where “sustainable development represents the people’s quality of life in a way of fairness and equity to all humanity, other species, nature and future generations”. In case that none of these concepts seem familiar, there are a lot of topics which, more or less, approach this logic. Such topics are, for example: *human rights, philanthropy and volunteering, democracy and participation, community involvement, environmental performance, biodiversity issues, environmental aspects of services and products, social development, organisation governance, business practices, business ethics, workplace and employees conditions, employees health and safety, marketplace and consumer issues, organisation disclosure, gender and race issues, disabled people, risk management* etc. To additionally illustrate the broadness and complexity of SR, certain documents² within EU, some milestones which explain the SR concept from different points of view, need to be mentioned. (ExSoRes, 2004).

Basic dilemmas concerning social responsibility

Looking carefully into the analysis of social responsibility, it is impossible to avoid potential dilemmas or paradoxes that occur. Firstly, such basic dilemma is connected with the basic idea that social responsibility needs to be based on voluntary approach.

SR between voluntarism and obligation

The public is more and more oriented towards punishing organisations with bad reputation related to their socially (ir)responsible behaviour. And conversely, the public rewards such organisations whose activities are oriented towards wider community (Hess, 2001). In view of these facts, as a consequence socially responsible investing is becoming topical in Europe as well as other developed countries. People invest into organisations which are recognised

² These documents are: Green Paper by EC, Copenhagen Chapter, ISO Social Responsibility (ISO SR), Social Accountability (SA8000), Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM).

for their highly developed social and environmental standards (Jančič, 2002). Within these facts, some researches stress the conclusions where institutional investors favour investment into such organisations whose contribution to local community and charity organisations is more dominant (Wilson, 1997). According to these facts, the inclination towards more transparent reporting of organisations to society is promoted and required as an assurance which will force the organisation to act in a more socially responsible way (Hess, 2001). One of the concrete examples of such expectations is the orientation number 2003/51/EC by EU, where the demand for necessity of more thorough reporting to the public³ is outlined (Vozel, 2004).

Such reality actuates the following questions: Is it possible to talk about purely self-initiative behaviour of organisations introducing SR? Do the initial origins for developing the idea towards social responsibility really come from organisations themselves or is it more of a consequence of increased public awareness through today's media? To what extent is the decision to implement socially responsible approaches within organisations voluntary? Is this voluntarism lost in transforming socially responsible practices into legislative regulations or even before? Such logic, where initial voluntary initiatives are later on transformed into laws and regulations which need to be respected, is actually not in harmony with the basic understanding of free will to use existing socially responsible approaches. In this way the legislation serves as a lever for transformation of initial socially responsible practices initiated by individual organisations or individuals into transparent legislative regulations, which furthermore need to be respected by all. From this point of view, it is questionable whether the organisations during the last decade (particularly companies) have been introducing the existent SR practices on voluntary basis, or whether the implementation of such practices has become an obligation, although maybe not yet legally formalised.

SR - a cause or consequence within companies?

SR must be strictly understood as voluntarism and free from constraints of legal obligations. From this point of view the orientation of companies towards socially responsible behaviour must not include the prospection for additional competitive opportunities on the market. In such cases, the SR will be used for acquisition of new customers, which will transform the SR into new marketing strategy (Hrovatič, 2005). This is another basic dilemma - is it possible at all to investigate the possibilities of implementing SR within a company without discussing the financial gain of this company. Many authors would disagree with the above statement claiming that the concept of social responsibility needs to be offered to companies

³ Organisations should include the reports on developmental issues and other non-financial issues

only in the context of finding benefits in terms of increasing financial success. Keeping in mind these two contrary opinions, the relation between social responsibility and financial success within a company needs to be exposed from the cause and consequence point of view. If the starting point of social responsibility is determined by *conditional* logic “*giving with expectation of increasing financial gain*”, the concept of social responsibility becomes the “*consequence*”, where the importance of financial success is the real priority. If the concept of social responsibility within a company is based on unconditional logic “*giving without any expectations*”, where such logic otherwise by no means excludes the potential secondary benefits for the company, social responsibility becomes the “*cause*”. If such belief in pure socially responsible behaviour sounds unrealistic or naïve, the basic question a company asks needs to be transformed in the following way: “How to be more financially successful through implementation of socially responsible approaches within the company”? The question can also be transformed in this way: “How to be more financially successful in order to implement socially responsible approaches more systematically within a company?” In both cases it is not possible to avoid the paradox that stems from “*how to be ir-responsibly responsible*”.⁴

Automatic connection of SR with companies

This dilemma is to do with the question of why the majority of literature on issues of social responsibility deals with the concept of SR in connection with companies. Is such reality in any way connected with the fact that, in practice, social responsibility is still mainly understood as “donations and/or sponsorships of companies to NGOs”⁵? These organisations, according to their basic organisational activity, automatically aim at looking into social, ethical and environmental issues. It is possible to speculate that such origin of NGOs causes the state where the attention towards socially responsible behaviour is automatically oriented towards companies. At the same time, however, it is possible to speculate that companies, faced with the competitive market, are automatically regarded as subjects whose activities do not or cannot concentrate mainly on social and environmental issues.⁶

In the case of NGOs whose activities are known for their flexibility, the forming of concrete, attainable objectives presents a problem for many of them. Forming such an objective is

⁴ To sell initially as many products as possible no matter to whom and how to make satisfactory financial condition in order to be later on socially responsible towards all possible stakeholders.

⁵ NGOs; it is about non-governmental and non-profit organisations, since it is automatically expected that companies should support mainly these organisations, and not initially public non-profit organisations

⁶ In such speculations, furthermore it is inevitable that social responsibility issues are in the first place addressed towards companies

difficult because of a vast complexity and changeability of objectives. Irrespective of such reality, objectives should be clear and focused, and more adaptable and dynamic at the same time (Pearce, 2001a: 23). There is a concern that the reporting on social responsibility within the NGOs is still mainly understood as reporting to financiers because of the acquisition of external funds, although it is at the same time clear that reports about social responsibility should include reports on all areas of organisation's activities (Pearce, 2001a: 17). Difficult assessment of whether the planned objectives have been achieved within NGOs actuates the guess whether such problems make the discussions about SR impossible. Speculation about the problem of assessment could be partly confirmed, where it is obvious that NGOs use this part of reporting, which is more concretely related to financial indicators, where qualitative indicators of their activity and possible social impact are more unclear and difficult to assess.

Understanding SR as additional control within the public sector?

The situation with public organisation in relation to SR is the least enforced. Such practice is mainly characteristic of some Scandinavian countries (Gorjanc, 2004:30). Such situation triggers off the dilemma about the types of obstacles, whose characteristics prevent the discussion about implementing SR within this sector. Could the implementation of socially responsible practice through exiting tools (social audit, social accountability etc.) be understood as additional control by the state? Are the institutional and organisational missions with existent ethical codes adequate guarantee that additional discussion about social responsibility is not treated as necessary?

International project exsores

About the project

The international project ExSoRes (*Training Methodology for Experts in process and instruments on Social Responsibility*) within the Leonardo da Vinci programme deals with the concept of social responsibility within the social-care and health sector.⁷ Partner organisations from Italy, France, Sweden, Poland, United Kingdom and Slovenia take part during two years of the project. In the first main phase the project investigates the logic and characteristics of social responsibility within the health and social-care sector. The next main phase of the project is development of educational methodology related to SR (ExSoRes, 2004).

⁷ By social-care and health sector public institutions are meant, NGOs, as well as some individual companies providing services to disadvantaged individuals/groups in need of care, help and treatment.

Project's findings during research phase

The research phase initially showed primarily the differences in understanding of the SR concept. The project presented and highlighted the extreme complexity of the concept in the face of different political, as well as cultural and historical differences among the participating countries⁸, not to mention the big differences between the various organisations operating in the social-care and health sector.⁹ It is significant that in most cases SR as a formal concept itself is ignored and that a shared definition of SR does not exist. Even in the countries where SR is better known, or where SR debate has a longer history (like UK and Sweden), SR with its tools in social-care and health sector is not systematically developed. The research shows that there is a certain level of confusion in Slovenia's case, where there are various ways of understanding SR concepts: the traditional concept (*inherited from our former political system*¹⁰); the concept of today state towards citizens, SR of social-care and health sector and, lastly, the personal concept of SR from each individual and organisation. According to this fact, in Slovenia, there is a big gap among the existing informal socially responsible approaches¹¹, while it is not easy to find the existing tools¹² of the social responsibility. The project's investigation confirmed the initial hypothesis about a shortage of insight, necessary competencies and experiences needed in relation to SR, irrespective of the fact that ethical and social issues represent fundamental and intrinsic values of the social-care and health sector. During the research phase, the project exposed two general dichotomies whose logic illuminate the complexity of SR and expose the obstacles which make SR so undefined. The first general dichotomy "*Standard vs. culture*" deals with the questions about the heart of SR. Is it about a series of clear standards or about the process-oriented culture? Is it more of a battery of specific tools or a lens through which the organisation and its activities can be watched? The second general dichotomy, "Discipline

⁸ In case of Poland the clear demarcation among project's modern SR concept and traditional SR concept was stressed, while Italian understanding of SR concept strongly depend on the historical role of the co-operative movement in relation to SR themes and reception in Italy. In the UK, the importance of the civil society movements had impact on SR understanding in this country.

⁹ Non-profit related to profit organisation, private according to public, big vs. small, rich vs. poor organisations etc.

¹⁰ In case of Slovenia, there are certain differences in correlation with other western countries involved in the project. It is necessary to stress that political system, which was not initially based on market economy, includes a lot of legislatively outlined social responsible elements related to working life. This fact additionally increases the project's difficulty in understanding the SR concept, where the sector, the project is aimed at, nowadays is faced with reduction of past advantages for employees as well users

¹¹ Such approaches can be explained through certain initiatives, strategies, practices such as; creation of successful working conditions; identification of the real educational needs; attention to special events, such as birthdays; supervision and intervention for employed people, advocacy about some unrecognised problems, public presentation of social issues; spreading the idea of voluntarism; making the scientific professional language more understandable, helping people in such a way that they are capable to help themselves; promoting of such healthy logic, promotion of voluntarism as a value; promotion of the term "health" instead of "health service"; promotion of "normality" of people with problems in mental health; promotion of value of staying at home for older people

¹² Among different SR tools, it is possible to find mainly classical tools such as ethical codes, annual reports, developmental strategic documents to some standards as investing in people; learning organisation, professional excellence, while the tools such as social audit, social accountability, social reporting are mostly unknown and not in use.

vs. approach”, initiates the dilemma whether SR is a closed discipline related to additional organisational department where SR experts are required, or an open approach, where SR behaviour is integrated into all organisational activities and it is not possible to talk about a separate SR department. In this case, the term “expertise for SR” is more relevant than “expert for SR”. In addition to these two mentioned general dichotomies, some further dichotomies need to be exposed such as »*target: “people vs. organisations”*», where the question of whether a single person, a selected group or the entire organisation should be involved in implementation of SR practices. On one hand, the need for an identified individual and team is stressed. On the other hand, the importance of SR becoming a “property” of overall organisation is exposed, otherwise SR can become an extrinsic element, unable to give shape to all activity and behaviour of an organisation. Such apparent contradiction shows the need for the training to be addressed to individuals and organisations, where character and ways of the training are different. Next such dichotomy is about »*relation “theory vs. practice”*», where project investigation clearly reached the conclusion that educational contents and methods should meet organisational and, as much as possible, practical demands to help organisations towards better understanding of their everyday working life. In this way, where organisations want to learn operative models, which can be adapted and applied to their own needs, it seems that practice-oriented education and training is favoured. A careful look shows that previous explanation does not mean that theory is considered unnecessary. It is meant that possible training should start from the state where the organisation is (from general understanding of SR, its skills, its knowledge etc.), where such approach respects the actual conditions, history and perspectives of an organisation. The third dichotomy is related to »*time-invested vs. wasted*« understanding of SR, where it is clearly exposed that the time spent for training for SR, without any doubts, needs to be well-spent and not wasted (ExSoRes, 2005).

Active citizenship

The term “*citizenship*« can be narrowly defined as “*legal belonging to a certain state*”, which can be understood as an effort to encourage citizens to recognise the law regulative, which will help them to express their own “*loyalty or belonging*” to their state. Legally favoured concept of Active Citizenship can be more broadly defined through different extensions of citizenship such as political-legal¹³, cultural¹⁴, social¹⁵ and economic¹⁶ (Ruud Veldhuis, v Mohorčič-Špolar, 1999).

¹³ It includes topics such as: concepts of democracy, democratic citizenship, political structures and processes of deciding on a national and international level, political parties, the ways of political participation, bases of civil society etc.

¹⁴ It includes the following terms: role of media, cultural exchange, cultural heritage, fight against racism and discrimination, environment protection etc.

Relating the concept of Active Citizenship to the concept of SR

Such broader understanding of citizenship through its extensions is comparable with SR. To have in mind only one of the main above mentioned documents called “*Green paper - Promoting a European framework for corporate social responsibility*”, where some internal¹⁷ and external¹⁸ dimensions of social responsibility are described (European Commission, 2001), there is no doubt that SR has similar bases related to active citizenship. Therefore, it is possible to speculate and to find the common denominator under the terms “*social responsible organisation*” and “*active citizen*”.

Looking into the same dilemmas regarding SR and Active Citizenship

Although SR primarily focuses on organisations and active citizenship focuses on individuals, it is possible to find unquestionable correlation between these two concepts. SR is about basic relation, whether organisation takes care only of its own interests or it is socially responsible towards wider community, and social and environmental issues. Within active citizenship the same relation appears, whether the individual is only interested in him/herself or does he behave as an active citizen towards wider community regarding wider social issues. In case that an organisation is only looking after its own interests,¹⁹ the organisation can be, on a very general level, compared to an individual. So, the relation between an »individual«²⁰ organisation and a socially responsible organisation is actually the relation between an individual²¹ and an active citizen. The first relation within social responsibility is, therefore, about »*whether to be socially responsible or not as an organisation*«, while active citizenship is about »*whether to be active citizens or not as individuals*«. In case that such presumption can be accepted, the additional basic main dilemma about »*when to be socially responsible as well as an active citizen*« between social responsibility and active citizenship appear. There is a relation of *succession* and *parallelism* in usage of both concepts. In the case of company towards socially responsible behaviour, can a company look after its own good competitive position²², which makes predisposition to be later on more concentrated on

¹⁵ This extension is about sensitivity about certain social questions, social security, welfare, health on a global level, social exclusion etc.

¹⁶ Last extension is about topics such as aspects of market economy, improvement of vocational qualifications, unemployment, customer rights, working legislation etc.

¹⁷ Internal dimensions of SR: Human resource management, health and safety at work, adaptation to change (related to moving industries to undeveloped world), management of environmental impacts and natural resources.

¹⁸ External dimension of SR: care for local communities, consideration of stakeholders such as business partners, suppliers and consumers, human rights, global environmental concerns.

¹⁹ In case of organisation, the logic is not so strict, since the organisation usually includes employed individuals

²⁰ With individual organisation automatically profit organisation would be marked, since such selfishness can be easily understood within those companies whose concerns are not usually addressed to wider social and environmental issues: probably in such logic new additional reason for automatically connecting companies with social responsibility, can be found.

²¹ In this context, the term “individual” is simplified and meant by someone, who looks only after about him/herself without consideration and respect of wider environment

²² To be focused only on profit by reducing all possible costs and obstacles that prevent the company from making profit. In such case the employees are not considered as relevant subjects, location of production is moved if such need appears etc.

SR or oppositely. There is another relation, not necessarily connected with competitiveness of company, which open question whether it is better to look primarily after its own employees²³ and later on other relevant stakeholders or vice-versa.²⁴ Within active citizenship, the same question could be posed in the following way: can an individual be firstly oriented towards their own status²⁵, and later on to be more focused on wider social issues or vice-versa.²⁶ In both situations within SR and active citizen is about successive logic. It is obvious at once that such combination does not seem as relevant. Without a doubt, the parallel logic is supposed to be the right one, oriented towards whether it is possible to be socially responsible and successful at the same time, as well as to be an active citizen and not neglect your own situation at the same time. It seems that answers to this dilemma are quite simple. To solve this dilemma, organisations, especially companies can encourage the logic that the socially responsible behaviour can be used for increasing financial success²⁷. In the same way, an individual making efforts to be a better active citizen would be tempted to use active involvement for personal benefit.²⁸ The same dilemma, compared with SR²⁹ occurs, on whether it is at all possible to talk about 'pure' active citizenship without expecting any direct or indirect personal benefits. Although it seems that both concepts have similar base, it looks that further search for new similar base is not necessary anymore. The next main question more regards the ways or methods of promotion and implementation of SR into organisations and wider society.

The question »*how*« to promote education to people is very present also in the case of Active Citizenship, where the relevant ways of promoting active citizenship issues by means of round tables, thematic discussions, study circles, short bulletins, have been exposed. (Vilič, 1999) Questions about what kind of educational events of SR and the ways that these contents could be promoted to targets definitely appear to be one of the main questions of ExSoRes' second phase. Questions about usage of the most relevant educational approaches to promote concepts of SR and Active Citizenship cannot be solved without considering the concept of lifelong learning (ExSoRes, 2005).

Lifelong learning

²³ Employees are considered to be strong, with good salaries, with good opportunities for education etc.

²⁴ Only external stakeholders such as users, suppliers, external collaborators etc. are considered as important factor, where internal employed are faced with extremely bad working conditions

²⁵ In a sense that an individual without any moral or other scruples achieves status, riches etc. , which provide conditions to be an active citizen later

²⁶ To look after firstly about others, wider issues, and after that to try care about own position

²⁷ In the article it was already stressed that there is a big paradox related to SR, if the financial success is treated in combination with developing social responsibility

²⁸ A simple example can be exposed, where an individual without personal motivation for altruistic work will involve in such activity in order to make enough connections to create for example their own business

²⁹ It was the question whether it was possible to talk about unconditional, totally altruistic socially responsible behaviour

Lifelong learning is a spiral cycle, meaning that it constantly goes on inside organisations as well as outside them, on different levels and in different ways. The awareness that society demands constant participation from its members, while on the other hand, these same members expect to have an opportunity for development, where development does not include only professional issues anymore. At the same time, learning individuals expect their knowledge to be relevantly evaluated. (Hrovatič, 2005) The memorandum on lifelong learning, which includes the main orientations of development of the lifelong learning, exposes six basic messages³⁰ for developing such strategies (ACS, 2000). First look gives us a hint that choosing the relevant educational contents for SR and Active Citizenship, as well as choosing the most suitable methods within lifelong learning, is supposed to be a sufficient guarantee that these concepts could be successfully developed. In case that lifelong learning should be initially born from grassroots³¹ approach, such opinion could take place without any hindrances. It must not be forgotten that ideas of concepts such as social responsibility, active citizenship, lifelong learning came from above.³² For this reason, there is a certain risk that the inclusion of citizens and organisations into educational processes about SR and active citizenship could cause certain unintended manipulations by educators and promoters of such concepts. In regard to this risk, the most ideal approach to lifelong learning would be the one where citizens or organisations would not be faced word for word with concepts such as SR or Active Citizenship in the existing lifelong learning approaches. Such approaches would only serve for creating conditions where citizens and organisations would be able to find their own intrinsic understandings of necessary practices within their own communities. In such case, the citizens or organisations could be in a position to play the role of »*active citizens or socially responsible organisations*«³³, while in the case where citizens or organisations are faced with strong automatic promotion of these positive concepts from above through further educational processes, they easily become » *reactive active citizens or reactive social responsible organisations*«. ³⁴

Taking it one step further, another potential correlation between lifelong learning related to SR and Active Citizenship can be identified. It has already been stressed that the logic of

³⁰ Including messages such as: assurance of the constant access for acquisition and renewal of skills for constant participation in knowledge society; raising the level of investment into human resources; developing productive methods and conditions for constant learning in a sense of lifelong and lifewide perspective; improvement of ways for evaluation of achievement related to unformal and informal learning; assurance of easy access to everybody towards information and counselling about learning opportunities all over Europe and during all life; assurance of opportunities for lifelong learning to individual in their own communities with support of ICT technology.

³¹ Logic, where initiatives are rising up among citizens by themselves within local and other communities

³² These concepts was not created by communities itself, but they were placed hierarchically by political and other dominant set on national or European level, as well through developmental documents, which are again hierarchically initiated.

³³ The need for SR and active citizenship came intrinsically from individuals and organisations

³⁴ The need for SR and active citizenship is adopted by individuals and organisations

parallelism³⁵ in development of SR and Active Citizenship seems to be the right one. In this way, the lifelong learning could additionally develop the logic of *self-recognition*³⁶ for individuals and organisations. Within this logic, nowadays, the methods such as life-coach counselling approaches, selfguidance (Drucker, 2001), selfmobility³⁷ (Vrana, 2004) and many others have been developing. It may not stand proof, but another likely bold assumption is that lifelong learning through additional development of these approaches towards self-recognition of individuals and organisations could consecutively have great impact on the development of SR and Active Citizenship in future. Such developed approaches towards development of self-recognition will definitely create conditions for increasing intrinsic insights of individuals and organisations towards active and socially responsible behaviour.

Final thoughts

Social responsibility as a concept within the ExSoRes project related to the social-care and health sector, obviously, has particular characteristics which could be treated and understood separately from the concept of Active Citizenship. Nevertheless, deeper reflection allows speculations that these two concepts can be briefly compared without the danger of causing any damage by such comparison. Since the article is initially based on SR issues, it touches upon the concept of Active Citizenship only peripherally, which could create potential assumptions that such cursory comparison of SR with Active Citizenship cannot be treated as relevant. While such a dilemma could occur, however, it is important to stress that the comparison between both concepts was not initially based on comparison of their contents, but primarily on certain common dilemmas or paradoxes which definitely concern both concepts. The same dilemma could arise deciding whether the concept of SR and Active Citizenship could be so easily compared with the concept of lifelong learning. It needs to be stressed that the article does not have the intention to look deeper into the overall complexity or all possible contents of lifelong learning. The only intention of the article is finding possible particular point(s) where lifelong learning meets SR and Active Citizenship and, what is more, to speculate how the point where all concepts meet one another could be additionally illuminated.

Literature

³⁵ Logic, where organisation is socially responsible and at the same time successful as an organisation; the logic, where the citizen is active considering wider social issues without ignoring his personal interests

³⁶ It is meant by individual and organisation, who achieve clear insight about their own mission, vision and basic competence

³⁷ The individual or organisation whose mobility is not based on external circumstances, but oppositely, on their own mission, vision and basic competence, which are later on integrated into external circumstances

1. ACS (2000): Memorandum o vseživljenjskem učenju: Prevedla: Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar. Delovno gradivo. Andragoški center Republike Slovenije, Ljubljana.
2. Carroll, A.B. in Buchholtz, Ann K. (2000): Bussines & Society: ethic and stakeholder manegement. 4th Edition. South-Western College Publishing, USA. 750 strani
3. Druker, P., (1999): Manegerski izzivi v 21. stoletju. GV Založba, 2001, Ljubljana, 196 strani.
4. European Commision- Directorate-General for Employment and social affairs (2001): Promoting a European framework for corporate social responsiity - Green paper, Luxembourg. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
5. ExSoRes project, (2004): Training Methodology for Experts in Processes and Instruments on Social Responsibility; Leondardo da Vinci, European Copmmision.
6. ExSoRes project, (2005): Needs Analysis and Feasibility Study, Training Methodology for Experts in Processes and Instruments on Social Responsibility; Leondardo da Vinci, European Copmmision. Dostopno na internetu: [http:// www.exsores.net](http://www.exsores.net)
7. Gorjanc, M., (2004): Poročanje družbene odgovornosti v neprofitnih organizacijah. Diplomaska naloga. Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede, Ljubljana, 68 strani.
8. Hess, D., (2001): Regulating Corporate Social Performance: A new look at social accounting, auditing and reporting. Bussines Ethics Quaterly, 11 (2), str. 307-330.
9. Hrovatič, D., (2205): Vpliv neformalnega izobraževanja na znanje. Osnutek magistrske naloge. Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede, Ljubljana. 116 strani
10. Jančič, Z., (2002): Nova družbena odgovornost podjetij. Industrijska demokracija, 12, str. 4-7.
11. Knez – Riedl, J., (2002): Družbena odgovornost malih in srednjevelikih podjetij. V: Slovenski podjetniški observatorij 2002; 2.del. Inštitut za podjetništvo in management malih podjetij, Ekonomska - poslovna fakulteta Univerze v Mariboru, str. 91-113
12. Mohorčič - Špolar, V., A., (1999): Vsebina in pomen pojem državljanstvo. Andragoški kolokvij: Izobraževanje odraslih za aktivno državljanstvo – nujnost ali utopija? Andragoška spoznanja, posebna izdaja, (4), str. 5-13, dostopno na internetu: <http://tvu.acs.si/ak/pdf/03AK.pdf>
13. Podnar, K., Golob, U., (2002): Socialna ekonomija in družbena odgovornost: alternativni globalni ekonomiji neoliberalizma?, Teorija in praksa, 39 (6), 952-969.
14. Verčič, D., Gruning, James, E., (1998): Izvori teorije odnosov z javnostmi v ekonomiji in strateškem menedžmentu. Teorija in praksa, 35 (4), str. 558-696.
15. Vilič Klenovšek, T., (1999): Kako bomo izvajali izobraževanje za aktivno državljanstvo? Andragoški kolokvij: Izobraževanje odraslih za aktivno državljanstvo – nujnost ali utopija? Andragoška spoznanja, posebna izdaja, (4), str. 85-86., dostopno na internetu: <http://tvu.acs.si/ak/pdf/03AK.pdf>
16. Vozel. M., (2004): Družbeno odgovorno je lahko samo konkurenčno podjetje. Finance, 227(22.11.), str. 10-11.
17. Vrana, T., Hrovatič, D., (2004): Evalvacija projekta Usposabljanje mladih za razvoj samo'mobilnosti. Program Mladina. Center Spirala, Ljubljana.
18. Wilson, A., (1997): Bussines and its Social Responsibility. V: Davies, Peter W.F. (ur.): Current Issues in Bussines Ethics, Routledge, London, str. 50-59.

About the author

Toni Vrana is a social worker by profession, educated by methods of transactional analysis and neurolinguistic programming. Since 1995 he has been investigating the area of non-governmental organisations and counselling students and others on their professional and personal career. Since 2001 he has been investigating the mutual relations within the Centre Spiral–Centre for the Development of Mutual Relations. He is interested in principles and mechanisms which affect, as well as, create the relations among individuals, organisations and sectors. He is currently involved in the investigation of social responsibility in the social-care and health sector as part of the international project under the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

Kratka predstavitev avtorja

Toni Vrana je po izobrazbi socialni delavec in educiran iz transakcijske analize ter nevrolingvističnega programiranja. Od leta 1995 se je ukvarjal s področjem nevladnih organizacij in svetovalnim delom študentom in drugim iskalcem zaposlitve pri graditvi poklicne in osebne kariere. Od leta 2001 intenzivneje preučuje medsebojne odnose v okviru zavoda Center Spirala-Center za razvoj medsebojnih odnosov. Zanimajo ga principi in zakonitosti, ki vplivajo na kreiranje odnosov med ljudmi, organizacijami in sektorji. Trenutno se ukvarja raziskovanjem družbene odgovornosti socialnega in zdravstvenega sektorja v okviru mednarodnega projekta Leonardo da Vinci.