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THE PROFIT PROJECT IN THE 6TH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME OF EU AND SUMMARY OF ITS MAIN FINDINGS

Since 1984 framework programmes have been the main research funding instruments of the European Union. The special role of framework programmes has been defined in the Maastricht Treaty which stated that they should strengthen scientific and technological bases of industry and increase the international competitiveness while promoting research activities in support of other EU policies. Research and Technical Development (RTD) is one of the crucial aims of the European Commission.

The key factor is formation of international research teams working on specific topics within defined research priorities.

The 6th Framework Programme launched in 2002 had the budget of 17.5 billion Euros, which represents 4 to 5 percent of the overall expenditure on RTD in Member States.

It was focused on 7 strategic priorities:

1. Life science, genomics and biotechnology of health
2. Information society technologies
3. Nanotechnology and nanosciences
4. Aeronautics and space
5. Food quality and safety
6. Sustainable development, global change and ecosystems
7. Citizens and governance in a knowledge based society.

The PROFIT project was located in Priority 7: Citizens and governance in a knowledge based society, Theme 1: Knowledge based society and social cohesion, Research Area 2: Options and choices for the development of a knowledge based society, Instrument: Specific Targeted Research or Innovation

Project. It was launched on the 1st of May 2004 and finished on the 30th of April 2007.

According to EC requirements the study was conducted by multidisciplinary research team composed of representatives of following social sciences: sociology, social psychology, political economy, child and family development, political sciences and educational sciences, being citizens of eight EU members states and United States. Following persons working for below mentioned institutions were involved in the project at various stages of its realization:

FIGURE 1. Researchers involved in the PROFIT project

PROFIT PROJECT – STAFF		
University of Łódź (PL)	Wielisława Warzywoda-Kruszyńska, Professor Ewa Rokicka, Professor Wojciech Woźniak Anna Rokicka Kamil Kruszyński Jolanta Grotowska-Leder, Professor Jerzy Krzyszkowski, Professor Anna Matuchniak-Krasuska, Professor Paweł Starosta, Professor Piotr Szukalski, PhD Tomasz Drabowicz Marta Petelewicz Magdalena Rek	Coordinator Vice-coordinator Research Fellow Secretary Administrative Officer Members of Coordinating Team Research Assistants
Research Centre 'Regional and Global Development' REGLO in Sofia (BG)	Elisaveta Ignatova, PhD Dragomir Draganov	Contractor Research Assistant
Justus-Liebig University Giessen (DE)	Dieter Eissel, Profesor Carmen Ludwig, Corinna Zakikhany	Contractor Research Assistants
University of Tartu (EE)	Dagmar Kutsar, Professor Avo Trumm Kairu Kasearu	Contractor Research Assistants
University of Turku (FI)	Harri Melin, Professor Päivi Naumanen, PhD	Contractor Research Assistant
University of Padova (IT)	Alisa Del Re, Professor Devi Sacchetto, PhD Valentina Longo Francesca Vianello	Contractor Research Assistants

Vytautas Magnus University of Kaunas (LH)	Kestutis Pukelis, Professor Kristina Juraite, PhD Inga Mikutaviciene Sonata Maciulskyte	Contractor Research Assistants
Loughborough University (UK)	Jeremy Leaman, PhD Christina Kokoroskou	Contractor Research Assistant
Free University Berlin (DE) University of Łódź (PL) University of Georgia (USA)	Nikolai Genov, Professor Zdzisława Janowska, Professor Lynda Henley Walters, Professor	Members of Advisory Bard

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND ADDED VALUE OF THE PROFIT PROJECT

The Profit project is policy oriented. It was conducted in eight European countries: Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and United Kingdom. In each country one medium size town was selected to carry out the fieldwork. Also top level politicians in each country were asked about their perception of intergenerational inheritance of inequalities and ways how to counteract the process.

The main findings of the PROFIT project can be summarized as follows:

- The risk of intergenerational inheritance of inequalities/poverty is real in European countries.
- It is a political issue in that countries differ in patterns of poverty and social problems composition that impact on the risk of inequality inheritance. The risk of Ilofl seems to be the lowest in Finland and Germany and the highest in new member states and Italy.
- Education is perceived as two-edged sword in the process of inequality transmission.
- The understanding of the problem and its conceptualization differs among top and local level actors:
 - top-level policy makers perceive inequality transmission as a 'private' matter, affecting particular families rather than society as a whole. Sometimes urban-rural division was mentioned.
 - Local stakeholders are aware that persistent poverty, of which the most severe form is poverty reproduction, affects the whole

- community and poses challenges to local authorities and all municipality residents;
- social services workers and NGOs are able to point out the geography of poverty and name people who are vulnerable to poverty transmission. They try to tailor social programs, projects and activities to local needs.
- Improved coordination between national and local level of administration and between sectors (public, private, non-governmental) is believed to be effective way of counteracting of Ilofl.
 - In each town under study there are many examples of practices applied to counteract Ilofl
 - however, due to financial restrictions and the political cycle, projects are of small size and terminated when funding is over
 - to act effectively, disaggregating of statistics is needed to formulate well-targeted support and long-term strategies in municipalities in order to use more effective projects and programs.
 - Politicians from new Member States generally considered EU's rules and regulations (not to mention its financial resources) as helpful in counteracting the inheritance of inequality/poverty. It was underlined that:
 - EU encourages and induces national authorities to set up a viable system of social protection that secures citizens' basic needs and impacts the cycle of poverty's break-up
 - the Commission creates the need for taking action in building bridges between education and employment and in elaborating harmonised qualification standards what will contribute to improved employment of young people
 - that ideas of solidarity, universalism and equal rights widespread in EU will impose new political culture on national political elites
 - intra-European migration will contribute to breaking up the cycle of poverty, as people are able to find jobs and seek higher income.

The added value of the project is to be seen in:

- contextualizing the problem of inequality transmission among generations,
- initiating of mutual learning between researchers and stakeholders in municipalities,

- contributing to improvement of academic skills and competences among young researchers.

The project tried to contextualize the problem of inequality/poverty inheritance taking into account that the process of transmission proceeds in the wider social environment constituted by community (meso level) and society (macro level), which are considered important 'players'. They determine the context for transmission of different kinds of capitals/disadvantages between generations. Unlike quantitative cross-national studies in which the term 'residents of medium size towns' denotes nothing else but statistical category in the Profit project it were real municipalities and real respondents living and working there. Researchers had an opportunity to gain knowledge what social infrastructure is in offer, what are the housing conditions there, which programmes are in operation, what people know and think about poverty/inequality incidence and reproduction as well as about management of social risks.

Carrying out research in real municipality enabled giving a voice to all sides "involved" in some way in the process of counteracting of Hofl, being those who "design"(top level politicians) "implement" (local politicians, social services' workers, social administrators, NGOs' representatives) and "experience" (young adults) policies and practices. It initiated mutual learning process between researchers and local stakeholders as well as between different groups of local stakeholders. The national research teams, having elaborated reports combining the results achieved at all stages of the field work, presented project findings in the front of local authorities and representatives of different social bodies to get feedback and provoke discussion about inequality/poverty reproduction. These meetings could be considered as a good starting point for further cooperation between academics and practitioners and between various groups of practitioners. The process of mutual learning has been initiated and is believed to continue. It seems that in some towns under study researchers will be engaged while developing and monitoring local strategies of counteracting social problems.

The final dissemination conference organized in April 2007 having gathered practitioners and academics from all participating countries was a platform for exchanging ideas and experiences of stakeholders from all towns which participated in the research.

Another important added value of the PROFIT project is that it enabled young researchers from eight European countries to work together in international advanced research project. It was a unique opportunity for them to gain experience and new skills during realization of the fieldwork, as well as during specially designed methodological trainings (on comparative research, on qualitative

research and computer assisted data analysis). They were encouraged to participate in conferences and publish papers presenting particular results of the project. Several doctoral dissertations are expected to build on PROFIT results.

Wielisława Warzywoda-Kruszyńska

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(Summary)

European Union's Framework Programmes are the primary source of funding of international research initiatives in today's Europe. The author of the article specifies the localization of the PROFIT research project within the structure of the Sixth Framework Programme and portrays the international consortium of the project, comprising of scholars from different academic and research institutions in eight European countries, representing various fields of study. The article indicates main findings of the PROFIT project and points to the added value of the project's results.

PROJEKT PROFIT W 6 PROGRAMIE RAMOWYM UE
I PODSUMOWANIE JEGO GŁÓWNYCH WYNIKÓW

(Streszczenie)

Ramowe programy badawcze Unii Europejskiej stanowią podstawowe źródło finansowania międzynarodowych badań naukowych we współczesnej Europie. Autorka artykułu prezentuje umiejscowienie projektu PROFIT w strukturze 6 Programu Ramowego, a także międzynarodowe konsorcjum badawcze, w skład którego weszli naukowcy, reprezentujący różne dyscypliny, z instytucji akademickich i badawczych rozlokowanych w ośmiu krajach. Artykuł sygnalizuje główne wyniki projektu Profit oraz wskazuje wartość dodaną projektu.