

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE FAMILY

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**The View of Polish Family
as a Social Institution
in the Light of Empirical Research
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I. Methodological introduction

1. Family – sociological approach

Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, defines the family as marriage of woman and man which have children (KKK 2202, 2203.) This definition should be perceived in the context of the Church's social teachings, the teaching of John Paul II and Benedict XVI in particular. In the sociological approach, the whole society is based on the family, which is understood as the most important basic social group, as an intimate relationship, based on mutual feeling, cooperation and mutual responsibility; reinforcement of the internal relations and interactions are the main focus of the family. According to the systemic approach, the family should be treated as a system, in which a change in his one part brings on a change in its other parts.

The understanding of family as social institution assumes that in the sexual intercourses in this unit should be so long-lasting and normalized enough to guarantee of the renewable reproduction sphere, what requires fulfillment of the sexual-procreative needs of the couple. The family should fulfill two other institutional functions: creation of the economic community and security community. The fourth function is connected with the idea of *civil society*. It means that 'on the *output*' from family as a system, and 'on the *input*' to the social system there should occur the young person who meets the requirements of adaptation to social life and culture of given society, in the case of contemporary participatory democracy – of the *civil society*.

2. The Idea of *Civil Society*

Synthetic model of civil society could be based on the philosophy of Aristotle, continued by Thomas Aquinas, philosophy of Scottish Enlightenment, sociology of A. de Tocqueville as well as the Habermas's concept of public sphere. In this model the *civil society* ('political society for itself'), should be 'community of active' citizens, as distinguished from „*civic society*”, that is to say, a set of all 'formal citizens' of the state. (Th. Pain). It requires 'denationalized economy' and „nationalized state” as well as creating legal conditions of influence of independent citizen organizations on the shape of state.

So created model of civil society should be combined with the philosophy of subsidiarity, naturally way linked to the principle of solidarity

In the contemporary democracy a „formal” citizen should be oriented on values: freedom, equality, justice, tolerance, and respect of the rule of law, what decide about their ‘citizenship’. In the context of idea civil society, citizenship should be additionally marked by comprehension of freedom, connected with dignity, awareness of ‘common agreement about law and rights’, ‘desire to participate in mutual advantages’ and most at all, activity in society (Cicero) as well as an attitude defined by Scottish moralists as ‘civility’. (Bryant). Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas put emphasis on the relationship between freedom of the humane being *in actu* with his dignity and responsibility. Thus, the “autonomy” of the „person *in actu*” as a social human being should enable him to go about his business of everyday live, capable of organizing themselves in higher forms of society, up to *civitas perfecta* (= the state), perceived as ‘common good’. These social characteristic of the ‘person-citizen *in actu*’ is complemented by consequences of the philosophy of subsidiarity, rooted in the Aristotelian-Tomistic tradition, developed by Althusius, summarized by Pope Leo XII, and Pius XI. The sense of subsidiarity principle focused on two aspects:

- the negative: power in general, and the state in particular should not prevent people and social groups from undertaking their own actions, i.e. from the most complete use of their energy, for the sake of completing works through which they gain self-realization for general usefulness as well as for particular interest;
- the positive: the mission of every authority is the stimulation, maintenance and finally, in case of need, the complementation of efforts that are not self-sufficient. ‘For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them’. (Pius XI, *Quadragesimo anno*, 1931, 79)

The subsidiarity principle implies thinking in categories of divided sovereignty; it assumes devolution of power, i.e. building of authorities structures „from the bottom ”, from local, through regional to state power, and even supra-national level. The persons, oriented on the philosophy of subsidiarity, organize themselves into *civil society* not only in order to open up possibility of fulfillment of their dynamically developing needs (economic, culture, security), but also to create a new freedom environment, in which every ‘smaller community’ and every person *in actu* could improve their life; in which the natural egoism of individuals is linked to the natural need for social friendship and solidarity. In this way the subsidiarity principle works as an ethical principle of *civil society*.

So developed notion of ‘*citizenship*’ in the context of civil society idea, linked to

philosophy of subsidiarity, should be closely connected to virtues, attitudes and abilities underlined as components of human capital, social capital as well as *civic culture* according to Almond/Verba's theory of political culture. That theory underlines the *cognitive orientation* of individuals as one of most important component of humane capital. The possession of human capital (knowledge, experiences and ability to put those attributes of the mind into practice), by citizens, even more than physical capital, determines the rational activity of citizens in economic sphere as well as their participation in *civil society*.

In turn, thanks the social capital, citizens have a wide variety of quite specific benefits resulting from trust, reciprocity, consensual approach, and cooperation associated with social networks. The trust (not only to trust, but to believe that others trust me) is the main condition of general agreement on 'common good'. It is perceived in strong connection with another social norm, namely – reciprocity. The norm of reciprocity assumes that the good that we do to someone now will be rewarded to us in the future. It has positive social effects, if the citizens act in the full confidence that their trust will not be abused. It is of special importance in the case of *the citizen engagement bonds*, through which information is transmitted - in particular concerning of reliability of the community's members. It guarantees one would keep their word/promise/contract, and reinforce citizens' beliefs about the honesty of other community's members, which supports social solidarism, build around 'common good'. In the process, an integral part of humane capital is the awareness of benefits from participation in community ('common good'), rejecting mercenary egoism, what is not possible without the spirit of subsidiarity's philosophy.

Without an attitude of trust, social solidarism, reciprocity or even in some specific situations a spirit of generosity, the relations between authorities and citizens, inter-relation among citizens could be regulated only by law (acts), fear of the power and egoistical interest. It requires the third important component of humane capital: the *consensual inclination* which determines of way of person's leading to cooperation with others, which is about the character of the citizen engagement bonds (mainly horizontal), in particular in the framework of public associations. The consensual inclination is determined by politeness or '*civility*' (manners, education and cultivation, according to Scottish moralists), what requires conflicts to be resolved not by force and violence, but by legal solutions and negotiation (discourse). Then, in opposition to traditional society, which was marked by the 'warmth of the close-knit (cordial) community', '*civility*' based on an awareness of individual freedom (individual identity) limited by the freedom of others (tolerance), has 'to do with relations between people of different interests and sensibilities'. (Bryant, : 106). Such created citizen engagement bonds

permit not only 'input', but also 'output' from community without sanctions (loss of life, social status, etc.)

The germ of a humane capital of a person is formed in the private sphere, in family, and then is developed through the system of the public education, as well as through an independent political network of the social communication. What is the most important for the idea of civil society, is *participatory orientation* of citizen indicated by theory of political culture. That orientation is manifested by the will of 'grass-roots' and courageous influence of citizens on the political system— not only through participation in parliamentary election, but also on a daily basis. Civic culture allows a certain measure of *affective orientation* manifested by emotional attitude of citizens towards their communities (pride in achievements of their region, country, etc.). Also a small dose of *evaluative orientation* is enabled, and in consequence, an upturn of the system should be included in the *civic culture*. But that orientation cannot be based on non-reflective faith in solutions prepared by authorities represented the particular interests of some individuals and social groups. That's why the idea of *civil society* rejects:

1. parochial/tribal orientation, because it determines that individual is not aware of the relationship between his immediate environment (village, tribe, etc.), and 'common good' of region, country, etc.; this orientation forms the basis for a „closed circle” culture and creates attitudes of indifference/hostility towards „what is strange, because it is external”;

2. subject/authoritarian orientation, which determines that politically educated individual coop themselves up, ceding full responsibility for their fate and state's fate on authorities. They do not believe in their capabilities to organize themselves in order to fulfill their economic and social needs.

3. Spheres of civil society

The wants, needs and benefits of citizen *in actu* are accomplished in the private, public and political sphere of *civil society*.

The private sphere is based on household (*oikos*), which means that in this private environment, family satisfies their material, spiritual and security wants and needs, as well as an acts to ensure building next generation. Family is the first stage of the socialization process which determines the *citizenship* of the future citizen. The culture type depends on climate and education level in family: if it is a culture closed on society and political world or *civic*

culture, linked to the philosophy of subsidiarity, closely connected to virtues, attitudes and abilities underlined as components of human capital, social capital, creating citizen engagement bonds. The family, as a ‘spiritual union’ of persons, clustered around the household by ‘acts of common assistance and care’, bonded together by blood ties, as well as family and social tradition, cannot be ‘warmth of the close-knit community’. Nevertheless, by principle of participation, as well as protection of individual identity and emotional needs and wants of the family’s members, the relations and inter-relations inside a family require a bigger measure of *parochial* and *affective orientation* than public and political spheres. Without *affective/emotional orientation* the sex-drive would be merely technical act and the procreative function of the couple would be deprived of emotional ties connected with fatherhood and motherhood. For family members, their family home is *sui generis* asylum in the social and political environment where they can recover their mental and emotional equilibrium.

The public sphere should be filled by self-governed associations of citizens *in actu*, independent from political authorities. They create the network of citizen engagement bonds, oriented on the philosophy of subsidiarity, gaining the effectiveness of realization their needs and expressing their will of participation in the whole system of *civil society*. That is why the public sphere rejects first of all the authoritarian and parochial orientation with its ‘closed circle’ culture. The public sphere is ‘the space in which citizens deliberate about their common affairs, hence an institutionalized arena of discursive interaction’. (Bryant : 112)

In turn, the political sphere, a nation-wide, is the realm of public authorities. It is created by relation and inter-relation among central government, authorities of the self-governed communities and citizens. A constitutional state should support the *civil society* by guaranteeing of civil rights and *pax et securitas*.

II. General depiction of Polish Family based on the survey of questionnaire carried out by Pastoral Polish Family Counseling

1. Respondents ' Family in the sociological perspective

In comparison to general public opinion research, the survey of questionnaire shows that it could be representative for Polish family in the key-problems put forward in research project 'Family as the wealth /good for society'. A margin of deviation the minority's opinion from the general picture of investigated families counts for about 2-4 per cent.

The respondents, first of all the middle-aged persons, 30-55 years old (most of 30-35), live mainly in the small and average-sized towns.

Compared to entire Polish population, more respondents works in the public sector; less in the private sector, but more on 'their own account' (18,3 per cent). In that group there are 6,7 per cent of entrepreneurs (p7 and p8); 5,8 per cent - freelance occupation. Unlike the entire Polish population, among the respondents there are decidedly fewer pensioners and people who are unemployed or unfit to do physical work; 1,2 per cent are so rich that they do not have to work. (p7) It means that in comparison to entire Polish population, the respondents represent a higher proportion of the middle class, (basic for *civil society*): entrepreneurs and nearly 60 per cent managers, administrative or office staff, etc., as well as nearly 20 per cent of teachers. Among the respondents there is a lack of farmers (in Poland 13 per cent peoples work in agriculture), and there are only 11 per cent of workers. Hence, unlike in the whole Poland, there are definitely fewer respondents who work in industry. It seems important because according to specialist literature, there are differences between attitudes, inclinations and orientations of members of middle-class and farmers and workers.

Particularly women declared themselves as Rome-catholic (98,3 per cent), in addition, nearly half of them consider themselves as religious persons and attend the Holy Mass once a week; (37,8 per cent - several times a week). 5,5 per cent of them consider themselves as not religious: they attend the Holy Mass once or twice a month, particularly on special occasions. (p. 13). Compared to a general political picture of the Polish family, the respondents' families are more conservative: over 45 per cent respondents express a conservative and over 10 per cent extremely conservative political views; about 21 per cent declare themselves as 'right center'; center – less than 3 per cent, and leftist only 2 per cent.

Nuclear family is typical for investigated respondents: mainly with two children, 17

per cent with one child; childless families only 4,8 per cent. 19 per cent of the 'large families' bring up three children; families with more children are rare. In comparison to an average Polish family, among respondents there are four times fewer single-parent families; there are only less than 3,6 per cent of single people. There are a few extended family (married couple living with their parents). Merely 7 per cent of families live with other relatives.(p2, p3, p14); moreover, there is a lack of information about contacts with further relatives.

The respondents are relatively well-equipped in human capital: 60 per cent have higher education (even doctoral degree); 39 per cent completed secondary education; merely less than 3 per cent - elementary education. (p5) Nearly 20 per cent are the teachers by education, so they have a traditional status of *inteligentia*. As a result, most of the respondents should have cognitive orientation.

2. Interpersonal relations in the family

The respondents' families perform relatively well in the fulfillment of their sexual-procreative needs and emotional parenting wants (fatherhood and motherhood).

Respondents 'married for the first time' dominate in the sample. Merely 5 per cent are 'separated or divorced, lived alone or with another partner'. (p1) Not only 'religious' persons, but even 'non-practicing', on aggregate over 95 per cent of respondents, according to the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, take the view that merely 'a man and a woman joined in matrimony' create a genuine family; 2,2 per cent hold a view that family could be created by the homosexual union. (p16.2)

In the opinion of nearly 80 per cent of respondents, wedding plays key-role in the relationship within married couple (p19). That's why, assuming that those marital unions are harmonious: nearly 90 per cent of respondents express 'satisfaction with relation with his/her partner'; (37 per cent – are absolutely satisfied). (p20) For the maintenance so splendid relations, the straight majority of respondents consider that 'the right relations between their work and family' should be found. (p30.3) That's why the climate in 76,5 per cent of families is 'very optimistic and quiet'.(p15.2)

The respondents treat marriage not only 'formally', but as the consolidated family community act, which requires their serious 'engagement in the stability of the union'.(p17.3, p18.3) It shows that marital unions of respondents are of the intimate and emotional character, as well as are based on 'mutual feeling, cooperation and mutual responsibility', which are

focused on the reinforcement of internal relations and interactions', which is manifested in emotional parenting needs connected with fatherhood and motherhood (*affective/emotional orientation*).

Procreation plays a key role in the Polish family. For nearly 80 per cent of respondents the birth and upbringing of children are the most important goals in the relationship of a married couple. (p17.2) – it is even more important than the 'individual good/benefit the both partners'. There are vast differences in the respondents' assessment of achieving those goals by their parents. (p18.2; p17.1; p18.1).

3. Family as 'security community

The greatest problem for the respondents is to find 'the right equilibrium between their career and family' in order to set aside the interrelationships in the family. For 73,5 per cent of them it is important, for 26 per cent - very important. (p30.3) To keep up this equilibrium is not easy not only for the poor but also for the comfortably well-off part of investigated families.

Nevertheless, the respondents gamely make efforts to turn their nuclear family into a 'security-community', a spiritual union of persons focused on the home-community by mutual acts of care and assistance, particularly determined by emotional ties connected with fatherhood and motherhood, bonded together by blood ties, joined by family tradition. The emotional-expressive functions in a typical middle-class Catholic family are combined with affective orientation, which allows for 'good mental contact among the members of a family'. Husband and wife give each other support in the realization of their aspirations (p30.1), needs (p17.1) as well as in the process of upbringing and developing their children (p30.2). Nearly 89 per cent of respondents declare that their children are given freedom of speech and can express their views on every conversational topic (as many as 70 per cent of respondents attach more importance to that than their parents). (p21b.1; p21.a1) In accordance with such attitudes of the investigated families, an atmosphere of mutual assistance and orientation on common good/benefits are observed. (p15.3; p31; p32; p17.1). The parents spare no effort to find time in order to maintain good relations with each other, as well as with their children, in spite of their workload (as the condition of maintaining an economic community), even at the cost of their own time. (p30.3) As a matter of fact, the straight majority of respondents believe that in their families a great importance is attached to free, yet rational expression of the

personalities of all family members. Still, the rationality of parents is weakened (nearly 20 per cent) in the case of the needs which are expressed by their children (p21a.3). It means that affective orientation has an advantage over cognitive orientation, which slightly weakens the legalized-control functions of parents in a family. So, such families could be perceived as *suis generis* an asylum in the social and political environment, where the family members recover their mental and emotional equilibrium.

4. Family as an economic community and their social-economic problems

Statistical data points out that in 2011 income of about 2 million Polish citizens (2.2 per cent of entire population) does not allow them to meet their most urgent needs; next 5 million (13.15 per cent of the entire population) „must run up a debt”. Most of all members of large families with three or more children live in such terrible conditions. (http://www.pah.org.pl/o-pah/186/ubostwo_i_glod_w_polsce)

In comparison to social-economic situation of an average Polish citizen, the respondents, mainly from the middle class, are more comfortably well-off and have the physical capital(one condition of civil *society*): nearly 49 per cent have economic resources which fulfill the current material-economic needs of the family; as many as over 36 per cent are in a position even to make savings. Merely 12,3 per cent „must run up a debt”. (p9)

In order to maintain the family as an economic community, nearly two thirds of respondents definitely believe that members of their immediate families help each other, ‘they gave their all and everyone pulls their weight’ above in all, in a feeling of moral duty(p15.3) and ‘in the case of emergency’ they can definitely count on their family (p31; p32). In the case of the distant family it is not so unambiguous, because only 65 per cent of respondents consider that providing care of seniors in family is important, and 12 per cent – not important. (p40.4) It is in accordance with the fact that merely one third of respondents’ families can count on grandparents to help them, and as much as over 64 per cent can see no possibility in this matter.(p6)

In the consciousness of the respondents the notion of labour as a duty became a very highly assessed value: they work in order to satisfy their aspirations and above all to provide for their families and to enable their children to get off to a flying start in life. That’s why a half of them gamely ‘try to find the right equilibrium between their career and family’ and ‘prefer their work to family’. Admittedly, about 23 per cent have the reverse preferences, but

they are probably housewives, senior citizens, etc. (p28; p30.1; p30.2;). Such high assessment of a pro-labour attitude is a characteristic feature of middle-class representatives, as well as the idea of a civil society as a form of activity of human beings. This valuable attitude is handed down from generation to generation, as well as in the education process (learning by doing). In this context seeking ‘the right equilibrium between one’s career and family’, means that ‘labour’ has to serve the family as an economic community (in the sense of ‘a good in itself’). The organization inside the family (division of duties) looks relatively good for over 60 per cent of respondents (very good for 10 per cent; bad – for 5 per cent) (p29).

An average Polish Catholic family of the middle-class departs from the traditional model, where only the working husband provided for their family and the non-working wife takes care of the house. Hence, the respondents believe that in ‘the perfect family’ both parents work professionally, however half of the respondents take the view that only one of the couple should work part-time. Nevertheless, about 17 per cent of respondents prefer the traditional model of the family. That group would rise by 10 per cent in the case of increasing the objective possibilities to take care of their children. (p26 and p27)

5. Parents - children relations in the context of upbringing and education process

In terms of cooperation among the members of family over their ‘common good’, the relationships between parents are very important: 52 per cent of respondents are guided above all by an ‘individual good/benefit of both partners’. (p17.1). But what is much more important for the whole family, and particularly for the parents, is their cooperation in the upbringing process, in order to provide their children with ‘a good start in their economic life’.

The efforts of the respondents to achieve this goal are connected with the introduction of their children into suitable social-economic circles: nearly 60 per cent of them emphasize that ‘all their life’, together with other members of the family, they have helped their children to get in touch with the persons whose ‘economic, cultural political, etc.’ backgrounds are very alike with their own. 11 per cent of respondents tried to find contacts with ‘higher society’ members for their children - for 26,5 per cent such efforts have no importance. (p33) At the same time, the respondents do not consider introducing their children to social-economic circles to be the only condition of a lifetime success. (p34) What is much more important for over 92 per cent of them is the recipe for achieving the best place in the society, on account of their economic success, handed down to their children in the upbringing

process: in this context they place particular emphasis on the necessity ‘to clarify to children what they should and should not do in their life’. It should be stressed that this attitude handed down from generation to generation is the greatest difference (over 76 per cent) between the respondents and their (grand)parents.

Such effect could be succeeded, taking into consideration that the investigated families are relatively rich in the resources of humane capital: one third of the respondents estimated their ‘ability to provide assistance in facing up to little and big difficulties in their life’ as ‘very high’ – and ‘high’ in the case of over 82 per cent. (p24)

6. Social capital of the investigated families

The virtues indicated by social capital: trust, consensual inclination as well as honesty and respect to others together with dedication and inclination are the base of citizen engagement bonds and support social solidarism built around ‘common good’ of wider and wider communities. In general, statements of the respondents show that resources of social capital in the investigated families are rather poor.

As many as 75per cent of the respondents believe that such virtues as ‘capability of devotion to others and interest in helping the needy are essential to create a more just society’. (p37) At the same time over 80 per cent of them estimate that a present family ‘in comparison to dating back to their parents’ could be ‘a model of virtues’: honesty, trust, esteem and dedication to a lesser extent. (p38) The respondents underline in their declarations the importance of ‘trust to others, even to strangers and the ability to accept them in order to live in peace and cooperation’. But only about 30 per cent of respondents definitely believe that the family is able to learn that attitude; 10 per cent are skeptical in this matter. (p36)

In the respondents’ consciousness, an attitude of trust, as the main component of social capital, is considered relative in the case of wider communities, and connected with magnanimity, is limited to immediate family. In relation to the members of wider communities, and even further relatives, including grandparents living outside the family home, an attitude of trust of the respondents is associated merely with the norm of reciprocity.

For citizens a neighborhood community is the natural one enabled transition from private to public sphere. In that community emerge the first effects of socialization process in the form of inclination to create of citizen engagement bonds.

Respondents appraise the attitude of trust towards their next-door neighbors is

relatively high in their family; nevertheless nearly 17 per cent of them consider such attitude to be of no value in their families. (p15.1) Moreover, the respondents are not too prone to help them. Only about 20 per cent of respondents are prone to devote their time for people outside their homes, and for the further 10 per cent of them it is not important. (p15,4)

The respondents have the biggest confidence in their own nuclear family. That's why half of them assess the role of family in the development of the country as very high. (p39.6). The investigated respondents focus on the trust connected with the role of institutions operating in social and public spheres in the development of the country. What is interesting is that in this context they assess the role of enterprises/companies as not very high. (p.39.4); the role of banks is not valued (p39.5), maybe because they are perceived as 'foreign'. In terms of institutions, respondents have the biggest confidence in schools, universities and immediately after them the Church, because of the country's development. (p39,2; p39.1).

A weak attitude of trust towards members of communities wider than the family also translates into a relatively weak attitude of this type towards authorities and the political system. For the respondents the present political system plays an unremarkable role in the economic development of the country. (p39.3). They consider the role of mass media and the forces of law and order in this development to be of average importance. (p39.8; p39.9)

Nearly half of the respondents believe that public administration could contribute to the economic development of the country, but as many as 37 per cent of them do not believe in its capabilities.(p39.10) Authorities of self-government bodies are valued by them a little more (p39.7)

7. Preparation of the young generation to leaving the private sphere

A detailed analysis of the questionnaire demonstrates that preparing the young generation by the family and adapting them to social life and participatory civic culture does not look very good. The values and attitudes handed up in the process of upbringing prepares children for social economic life rather than social and axiological one: only less than 30 per cent of respondents, following in their grandparents' footsteps, believe that handing down from parents to children 'by word and example, what really counts in their life' is very important. (p21a.4) It's safe to say that children are rather brought up 'for themselves or their family than for the society'.

Family is the first stage of the socialization process. What depends on the character of

that process is the transition of the young generation from private to public and political spheres of a civic society.

However, parents believe that the tasks associated with upbringing their children are beyond them - even though they both cooperate by 'solving all of the educational or legal problems of their children's development' (p23) and gamely try to find some time for their family relationships in order to ensure 'better development of their children'. (p30.3). The majority of the respondents agree with a view that generally prevails in Poland, which is that educating one's children is a very difficult task. For 70 per cent of the respondents educating their children is 'even more difficult than they supposed' (merely 10% feel they were prepared for this task) (22a, p22b).

The respondents agree that "honesty and respecting the law are personal characteristics which are vital for the common good of the country", but merely nearly 30 per cent of them believe that family is able to teach these attitudes. (p35) For the straight majority of respondents (nearly 80 per cent) family is an integral part of the society, as 'social good' and as 'public value'. Nevertheless, about 18 per cent of the respondents believe that family is merely their private problem (p 16.1) which is the evidence of their parochial orientation, 'closed circle' culture, indifferent to the 'common good' of wider communities (region, country etc.).

As it was investigated, not only the parents' problems with upbringing their children but most of all the lack of a family's orientation on the requirements of civil culture linked to the philosophy of subsidiarity, are the reason why young Polish citizens are not too active in public or political spheres. The respondents are relatively well-equipped in human capital and potentially could present a cognitive orientation, but are oriented most of all on individual or family interest, and they are not too interested in fitting their children with civic knowledge, preparing them to activity in public and political spheres of a civil society.

8. Participation of the respondents in the public sphere of a civil society

According to declarations of the respondents nearly 45,5 per cent of their family members belong to public associations (social, political, culture, religious, etc.), but only nearly 22 per cent of them participate actively in those organizations. Almost 15 per cent of respondents are absolutely not interested in NGO's. (p15.5)

Such a poor extent of active participation of the investigated people in the public

sphere is quite understandable, taking into consideration that their social capital is not developed; that 'on the output' of the private sphere trust as reciprocity and respect for others have no citizen character and other virtues and attitudes declared by the respondents, as well as 'social solidarity', are limited to members of their families. 'On the input' of public and political spheres there are a lack of citizen engagement bonds, oriented on the philosophy and attitudes of subsidiarity as well as inclination and orientation on civic culture. The predominant orientations in the investigated group are authoritarian and parochial, with their 'closed circle' culture, and that is why they are not capable of organizing themselves in higher forms of society. Neither do they express the will of participation in the system of a civil society.

It is particularly visible in the fact that although over three fourths of the respondents believe that a family as social institution could be perceived as 'public value' (p 16.1), 75,2 per cent of the respondents reserve upbringing and education of their children to the competence of family. On the other hand, for nearly 23 per cent of the respondents social education is the task of public institutions. (16.3). Respondents declare their willingness to prepare their children to social life, but rather in economic than social-axiological aspects. (p21a.4) The parents' efforts in the fulfillment of the educative function in the framework of family end when their children pass to the public sphere: 'participation of parents in the life of school and other activities of their children' is important for merely 16 per cent of the respondents, and additionally for three fourths of the investigated families. (p25)

Conclusion

An average Polish Catholic family of the middle-class forms an economic community, as well as a security community, but it is rather a community closed 'for themselves'. Their members are human beings *in actu*, but their action is directed mainly on the common good of the family, without awareness of the benefits of participation in the 'common good' of wider communities. They lack social capital and ability to create citizen engagement bonds. Taking into consideration the theory of civic culture, dominant orientations in the investigated families are cognitive, in accordance with evaluative, together with parochial orientation, which is characteristic of the 'closed circle' culture.

Generally the respondents are not sufficiently prepared to social life, particularly to action in civil society. Though they are very active in the private sphere, they play only a

passive role as citizens *in actu* in the public sphere – they do not believe in effectiveness of action of the self-organizing civil society. But – defending the autonomy of family – they are prone to entrust to state with their important and quite private business and undertaking their own actions. They distinctly count on the state aid. They think the public administration first of all should be ready to hear and to help them resolve their private problems: for nearly 20 per cent it is very important, and for nearly 80 per cent – important. Moreover, 63 per cent of respondents wait also for the aid of public administration in resolving their family and even marital problems. On the other hand about 18 per cent count do not much on such assistance. (p40.1; p40.2) 60 per cent of respondents consider that the aid of public administration in custody of the children is important, while nearly 18 per cent do not count on such assistance. (p40.3) For nearly 57 per cent of respondents the aid of public administration in custody of elderly persons is important. In turn for 23 per cent such assistance is not important. (p40.4)

Their skepticism about the possibility of the public administration arises from the lack of belief (trust) in power and effectiveness of a democratic state. It means that the majority of them are rather of *authoritarian orientation* and do not prone the philosophy of subsidiarity.

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