10 On the Path of Poland's Globalization

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Introduction

Globalization is not a precise term that can be easily and consistently defined (Brown, 1992; Dicken, 1992; Ohmae, 1995; Parker, 1998). In fact, literature supplies a variety of definitions of globalization. In his recent book on globalization, Streeten (2001) provides a sample of 35 different definitions of the term. For the purpose of this paper globalization will be defined as a worldwide integration of societal and economic activity leading to an increased interdependence between countries and regions. Such process is usually characterized by intensification of cross-border trade and capital flows, driven largely by liberalisation of trade and investment regimes and by advances in information and communication technologies. This, in turn, they lead to a greater integration of national economic systems within the world economy.

The scope of these phenomena is reflected in a given economy's share of world trade and foreign investment. A recent publication of the World Bank (2001) even reduces globalization to only one of these two dimensions, measuring the progress in globalization by a change in the ratio of trade to national income. However, looking at both dimensions – international trade and foreign investment – provides a more balanced picture of a country's level of globalization in its economic aspect.

Since 1990, Poland has been going through the process of systemic transformation. As part of that process, Poland has sought to integrate itself with the world economy. Through its closer integration with the world economy, the country has been trying to accelerate GNP growth and to reduce the economic gap separating it from the European Union (EU), to which Poland is applying for full membership.

Before 1990, Poland was a much less open economy and missed out on many of the benefits of globalization. After the transition process was initiated, the country faced the challenge of how to take advantage of globalization to accelerate the introduction of the necessary changes. It liberalized prices and market regimes, privatized most of the state-owned enterprises, re-directed its trade from the Soviet Union-dominated former COMECON trading bloc towards the EU and opened up its market to foreign investment (Ali, Nowak and Pöschl, 2001).

The purpose of this analysis is to determine whether Poland's integration with the world economy has kept pace with the general rate of globalization during the last decade and where it currently stands. Investigation is confined to two dimensions of such integration – world trade and foreign direct investment. These two dimensions are of critical importance as far as Poland's participation in the global economy is concerned. In a wider context, the role of foreign capital and the country's share in international trade have always been the key development issues for all the transition economies of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).

The analysis first focuses on the evolution of world trade over the decade of 1990 - 2000. Then, Poland's share in world trade over the same period is assessed, using both per capita and total trade volume data, as well as trade to GDP ratios. Thereafter, the analysis moves to foreign direct investment. FDI trends are investigated in the context of different country groups and Poland itself. One of the analytical instruments used in that context is the transnationality index developed by UNCTAD. The subsequent section investigates Poland's external equilibrium. Economic policy implications stemming from the observed trends in foreign trade and FDI constitute the last section of the paper.

Growth Trends in World Trade

The impressive trade growth of the last decade has undoubtedly fuelled the globalization of economic activity. Table 10.1 shows the growth of world merchandise exports and imports in comparison to the growth of GDP during the 1990 - 2000 period. The export volume grew by 96 percent, whereas real GDP growth over the same period was only 25 per cent. In other words, exports increased almost four times as much as the GDP. Although comparable import volume indices for the entire period under investigation are not available, the average growth rate for imports is reported to have been similar to that of exports (WTO, 2001).

Faster growth of world exports compared to world GDP is not a new phenomenon. In fact, the last 50 years have seen trade expand faster than output by a significant margin, increasing the degree to which national economies rely on international trade (WTO, 1998). However, one can observe some acceleration of export growth in recent years. For example, in 2000 exports grew by 12 percent, which is a substantially higher growth rate than the average for the whole decade.

In terms of current prices, the value of world exports amounted to US$ 6,364 billion in 2000, as compared to US$ 3,442 billion recorded at the beginning of the decade. The figures for imports are US$ 6,669 and US$ 3,542 billion, respectively.

Table 10.1 Growth of world merchandise exports, imports and GDP, 1990 - 2000

	Exports			Imports		
Year	US$ billion (Current prices)	Volume Index (Constant prices)	US$ per capita	US$ billion (Current prices)	US$ per capita	GDP (real) index
1990	3,442	100	650	3,542	673	100
1991	3,509	104	660	3,626	682	101
1992	3,759	109	666	3,880	692	102
1993	3,747	113	655	3,859	669	103
1994	4244	124	736	4,369	752	105
1995	5,079	136	861	5,218	876	107
1996	5,347	143	895	5,525	919	110
1997	5,537	158	884	5,720	894	114
1998	5,447	166	857	5,667	902	117
1999	5,662	175	897	5,899	924	120
2000	6,364	196	1051	6,669	1101	125

Note: Per capita figures: own calculations based on population data derived from the World Bank's World Development Indicators databases.

Source: WTO, 2001 (various pages).

When exports of goods are combined with those of services (estimated at US$ 1,435.4 billion), the ratio of world trade to world GDP goes up to 29 percent in 2000. Since 1990, this ratio has increased by 10 percentage points, more than in the two preceding decades combined (WTO, 2001). This represents a further indication of the strengthening of global economic integration in the last decade.

Poland's Position in World Trade

A significant sign of Poland's increased openness to the world after 1989 was its dramatic increase in its foreign trade. As Table 10.2 indicates, Poland's exports grew by an impressive 127 percent between 1990 and 2000 (in real terms). Imports grew even more dramatically (by 426 percent), leading to serious foreign-trade imbalances, compensated for, however, by substantial capital inflows. The growth of exports and, to a smaller degree, imports fluctuated from one year to another. For example, exports grew by more than 25 percent in 2000, but only by 2 percent in 1999.

Table 10.2 Volume indices of imports and exports for Poland, 1990 - 2000*

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2000
	Previous year = 100											1990=100
Exports	100	98	98	99	118	117	110	114	109	102	125	227
Imports	100	138	114	119	113	121	128	122	115	104	111	526
Terms of Trade	100	91	110	108	101	102	97	99	104	101	96	108

Note: *Calculated on the basis of data expressed in Polish zlotys in constant prices.

Source: Central Statistical Office, Poland, 2000 and 2001.

Terms of trade were, for the most part of the decade, favorable for Poland, with the index of 108 for 2000 (as compared to the base year 1990), indicating that the prices of exported goods grew more than those of imported goods.

In reference to the trends in world trade described in the previous section, Poland's share in world exports increased by only 0.1 percent point from 0.4 percent in 1990 to 0.5 percent in 2000. This seemingly insignificant increase translates however into a 25 percent improvement in Poland's position in world trade on the export side. On the import side, the change was much more dramatic. Poland's share increased from 0.3 percent in 1990 to 0.7 percent in 2000. Parallel to that was an increase in the value of exports and imports per capita. The value of exports per capita increased from US$ 376 in 1990 to US$ 820 in 2000, and that of imports grew from US$ 250 to US$ 1268, respectively. In terms of exports per

capita, Poland was slightly below the world average, but its imports per capita exceeded the world average (see Table 10.3).

Table 10.3 Poland's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), imports and exports (current prices)

	GDP		Imports			Exports			
Years	US$ mln[a]	US$ per capita[a]	US$ mln	US$ per capita	% share of world total	US$ mln	US$ per capita	% share of world total	Ratio between exports and GDP
1990	58976	1547	9528	250	0.3	14322	376	0.4	24.3
1991	72924	1998	15522	406	0.4	14903	390	0.4	20.4
1992	84326	2198	15913	415	0.4	13187	344	0.4	15.6
1993	85853	2232	18834	490	0.5	14143	368	0.4	16.5
1994	117978	3057	21569	559	0.5	17240	447	0.4	14.6
1995	126348	3086	29050	753	0.6	22895	593	0.5	18.1
1996	134550	3484	37137	962	0.7	24440	633	0.5	18.2
1997	143066	3702	42308	1094	0.7	25751	666	0,5	18.0
1998	157274	4068	47054	1217	0.9	28229	730	0.6	17.9
1999	155151	4014	45911	1188	0.8	27407	709	0.5	17.7
2000	158839	4110	48940	1268	0.7	31650	820	0.5	19.9

Note: [a] According to official exchange rate.
The exports/GDP ratio: own calculations based on the figures given in the table.

Source: Central Statistical Office, Poland, 2000 and 2001.

However, it would be unjustified to conclude about the seemingly excessive import intensity of the Polish economy. The problem seems to lie more in insufficient exports and less in excessive imports. For example, in 1999 the value of imports per capita in the Czech Republic and Hungary amounted to US$ 2803 and US$ 2782, respectively. The respective figures for exports per capita were US$ 2612 and US$ 2484. It is therefore evident that the gap between exports and imports was not unique to Poland. It also

existed in the other two key Central European economies. However, it must also be noted that exports per capita were 3.7 times higher in the Czech Republic and 3.5 times higher in Hungary than they were in Poland. Similar comparisons for imports per capita show that the Czech Republic had a ratio that was 2.4 times higher than Poland, and Hungary had a ratio 2.3 times higher than Poland. One implication of these comparisons is that the relative gap in export performance was much more acute in the case of Poland than it was in the other two transition economies.

Another indicator requiring comment is the export/GDP ratio. The trend here is not clear. No significant increase of that ratio can be observed when both GDP and export values are expressed in current prices and when the official exchange rates are used. The ratio was the highest in 1990. It decreased substantially in 1992 and 1994 and then stabilized at around 18 percent until last year when it grew to almost 20 percent, due to a sharp increase in the value of exports. However, the latest ratio is still far from its 1990 level. Apparently, currency exchange rate fluctuations at the beginning of the transition period played a role in shaping this unusual trend. Also, a relatively high GDP growth has prevented the ratio from increasing substantially.

In conclusion, one can state that save for the unclear picture with respect to the exports/GDP ratio, all the other indicators were pointing to Poland's continuing integration with the world trade system, after the country initiated its transition to an open market economy. However, integrating with the world economy has so far progressed much faster on the import side than on the export side. Thus there seems to be much room for improvement in the area of Poland's export performance.

World-wide Trends in Foreign Direct Investment

Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows and outflows indicate the extent of host country participation in and contribution to the globalization process. Over the last decade the world has witnessed a tremendous growth in FDI. FDI inflows reached a record US$ 1.27 trillion level in 2000. Compared to US$ 204 billion a decade ago, it represents over 600 per cent increase in the nominal value of FDI (Table 10.4). Of the major country groups shown in the table, Central and Eastern Europe has experienced the most dramatic increase in FDI inflows (approx. 8,500 percent).

FDI inflows into developing countries increased by 700 percent and FDI into developed countries grew by almost 600 percent. The dominance of developed countries in FDI inflows (accounting for 80 percent of the total) has been a constant trend since the end of World War II.

Table 10.4 Inflows and outflows of foreign direct investment in the years 1990-2000 (in US$ billion)

Year	Developed countries		Developing countries		Central-Eastern Europe		All countries	
	Inflow	Outflow	Inflow	Outflow	Inflow	Outflow	Inflow	Outflow
1990	169.8	222.5	33.7	17.8	0.3	0.04	203.8	240.3
1991	114.0	201.9	41.3	8.9	2.5	0.04	157.8	210.8
1992	114.0	181.4	50.4	21.0	3.8	0.1	168.2	202.5
1993	129.3	192.4	73.1	33.0	5.6	0.2	208.0	225.6
1994	132.8	190.9	87.0	38.6	5.9	0.6	225.7	230.1
1995	203.5	305.8	113.3	49.0	14.3	0.5	331.1	355.3
1996	219.7	332.9	152.5	57.6	12.7	1.0	384.9	391.6
1997	271.4	396.9	187.4	65.7	19.2	3.4	477.9	466.0
1998	483.2	672.0	188.4	37.7	21.0	2.1	692.5	711.9
1999	829.8	945.7	222.0	58.0	23.2	2.1	1,075.0	1,005.8
2000	1,005.2	1,046.3	240.2	99.5	25.4	4.0	1,270.8	1,149.9

Source: UNCTAD, 1992, 1996, 1999 and 2001.

The unprecedented growth of FDI inflows into Central and Eastern Europe can be explained by the fact that these inflows were negligible at the beginning of the decade. But even after such a tremendous growth, Central and Eastern Europe's share in the total inflow of foreign direct investment in 2000 amounted to a mere 2 percent. This share has been showing an overall unfavorable trend in the last years decreasing from a high of 4.3 percent in 1995.This might be a reflection of foreign investor perception that until new factors (like the accession of some countries of the region to the EU) are activated the peak of the region's relative attractiveness for FDI has already been reached It should also be noted that the inflows into Central and Eastern Europe were very unevenly distributed across the region, with three countries, Poland, the Czech Republic and Russian Federation (in that order), absorbing two-thirds of the region's total FDI inflows (UNCTAD, 2001).

As far as FDI outflows are concerned, the dominance of developed countries is even more evident. In 2000, these countries accounted for more than 90 percent of the total outflows. Central and Easter Europe's outflows were only US$ 4 billion, also an insignificant 0.3 percent of the total.

However, it is argued that the latter figure is grossly underestimated, as much of the FDI outflow from the Russian Federation goes unreported (UNCTAD, 2001).

Polish Economy and Foreign Direct Investment

The data concerning the value of the inflow of foreign direct investment into Poland are presented in Table 10.5. These data show that in the first half of the nineties the volume of such investment in Poland was not very impressive. In recent years however Poland has become a leader among the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in inward foreign investment. In 2000, Poland attracted over US$ 9 billion in FDI, which represented 37 percent of all the FDI inflows into Central and Easter Europe in that year. The second largest recipient of FDI in the region, the Czech Republic, attracted US$ 4.6 billion (UNCTAD, 2001). The surge of FDI inflow into Poland in 2000 was partly associated with the US$ 4 billion purchase of a majority share in Telekomunikacja Polska S.A. by France Telecom. This purchase is regarded as the region's largest privatization and largest FDI transaction to date.

Table 10.5 Inflow of foreign direct investment into Poland in the years 1990 - 2000 (in US$ million)

FDI Inflow	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	199	2000
Current Year	88	359	678	1715	1875	3659	4498	4908	6365	7270	9342
Cumulative	88	447	1125	2840	4715	8374	12872	17780	24145	31415	40757

Source: National Bank of Poland, 2000 and 2001.

The comparison of Tables 10.5 and 10.4 makes it evident that the growth rate of the FDI inflows into Poland was considerably higher than that for the global FDI inflows in the years 1990 - 2000. In fact, Poland's FDI growth substantially outstripped the average for Central and Eastern Europe, increasing by a whopping 10,600 percent over the same period. Such significant progress in the dynamics of the inflow of foreign direct investment into Poland was above all possible due to the very low initial values at the beginning of the nineties. Poland's share in the world FDI inflow in 1990 amounted to 0.04 percent, but by 2000 it grew to 0.74 percent. It should be noted that in 2000 that indicator exceeded the indicators of Poland's share in the world exports and imports. The latter

observation leads to the conclusion that the Polish economy has been globalizing faster in the FDI dimension than in that of international trade.

Polish Economy and the Transnationality Index

To gauge national economies' level of international openness, UNCTAD uses the transnationality index. The index is calculated as the average of the following four indicators: FDI inflows as a share of gross fixed capital formation; FDI inward stock as a percentage of GDP; value added of foreign affiliates as a percentage of total national value added; and employment of foreign affiliates as a percentage of total employment (UNCTAD, 2001). The transnationality index essentially measures the relative significance of FDI in a given economy. For the 30 developing countries, for which the transnationality index was calculated, it ranged between 3 and 54 percent in 1998, with Hong Kong, China being the most transnationalized country. Among the developed countries, New Zealand held the first position. Seven countries, two developed and five developing ones, had the index value exceeding 30 percent. In Central and Eastern Europe, for which the transnationality index (published in the 2001 World Investment Report) was calculated for the first time, the average index was slightly above 10 percent, lower than the averages for both developed and developing countries. However, this average conceals wide differences between CEE countries. In Estonia and Hungary, the index was close to 25 percent, and in the Czech Republic and Latvia it exceeded 15 percent, indicating a high degree of internationalization of these economies. On the other hand, the index was below 5 percent in one third of the region's countries.

Poland occupied the eighth position among CEE countries, with the transnationality index of about 12 percent, slightly above the regional average (UNCTAD, 2001). One of the reasons for this rather low transnationality index for Poland was the country's very low share of FDI in the gross fixed capital formation in the period for which the index was calculated.

While not undermining the validity of the transnationality index, one cannot help noticing that it is sensitive to the size of the economy. As a rule, although there are exceptions to this rule, smaller countries tend to have higher transnationality indices and bigger ones tend to occupy the bottom of the list. The United States, for example, has the third lowest transnationality index among developed countries. It seems that adjusting the index for the size of the economy could have produced less biased results.

Table 10.6 Current account and merchandise payments, 1991 - 2000 (in US$ million)

Specification	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
1. Current account	-2596	-1515	-2868	677	5310	-1371	-4309	-6862	-11558	-9946
2.Merchandise payments										
Revenues from exports	13355	14039	13598	17024	22878	24453	27229	30122	26347	28256
Payments for imports	13077	13573	16080	17919	24709	32632	38549	43842	40727	41424
3.Merchandise trade balance	278	466	-2482	-895	-1912	-8179	-11320	-13720	-14380	-13168

Source: Central Statistical Office, Poland, 2000 and 20001.

Globalization and Poland's External Equilibrium

Poland's rapid integration with the world economy has not been free from macroeconomic management challenges. One such challenge was to maintain external economic equilibrium. This becomes evident in Table 10.6, which presents Poland's current account and trade balance in the years 1990 - 2000.

The foreign trade deficit was the main factor influencing the current account balance. In 1997, the deficit on the current account amounted to US$ 4.3 billion, which constituted 3.0 percent of the GDP: in 1998 it amounted to US$ 6.9 billion (4.4 percent of the GDP), whereas in 1999 it increased to US$ 11.6 billion (7.5 percent of the GDP). In 2000, the deficit eased somewhat, amounting to 6.3 percent of the GDP.

Factors that tended to neutralize the influence of the high deficit in foreign trade balance were FDI inflows and revenues from the so-called cross-border trade. In spite of a high current account deficit, the balance of payments was positive during most of the decade under consideration.

The phenomenon of cross-border trade consisted of foreigners (mostly Germans on Poland's western border and Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians on Poland's eastern border) visiting Polish cities close to the border and buying cheaper food products and manufactured goods. However, there has been a decrease in the volume of such transactions in recent years, mainly due to administrative restrictions (stringent visa requirements) introduced by Polish authorities and designed to curb the illegal influx of immigrants seeking employment in Poland and subsequently in the countries of Western Europe.

As the role of cross-border trade in compensating for the current account deficit tended to diminish towards the end of the decade, the slack was being picked up by the FDI inflows. In 2000, the FDI filled the current account gap in 94 percent, as opposed to only 55 percent in 1999 (Ali, Nowak and Pöschl, 2001). FDI inflows can also have an indirect compensating effect on the current account deficit by stimulating exports in the long run through helping to upgrade the country's international competitiveness.

The negative trade balance was generated mainly by exchange with the countries of the European Union. According to customs statistics, registering the flow of commodities and not payments actually made, the deficit of trade with the EU increased from US$ 7.3 billion in 1996 to US$ 10.5 billion in 1997 and to US$ 12.9 billion in 1998. Thereafter, i.e. from 1999 to 2000, a decrease in the said deficit was observed. In 1999 it amounted to US$ 10.5 billion and in the year 2000 it went down to US$ 7.8 billion. It should also be noted that a significant factor influencing Poland's

trade balance was foreign trade conducted by foreign-owned firms operating in Poland. This, in turn, was due to considerable import requirements of these firms resulting from modernization of their production capacity (investment imports) and from a high demand for supply imports (Olesinski and Pac-Pomarnacki, 1998). However between 1999 and 2000 a much faster growth of exports than imports of these firms was observed which led to a considerable decrease of their negative trade balance: from US$ –11.5 billion in 1999 to US$ –8.7 billion in 2000 (Durka and Chojna, 2001).

A high deficit on the current account may have created a serious threat to a further stable economic growth of Poland. There is much evidence in related literature that countries, which opened their economies and joined the then existing EEC (Spain, Portugal and Greece) also experienced considerable worsening of the current account balance but they financed it with a surplus on the capital account (Nowicki, 1997). In such a situation, it was necessary to implement an appropriate macroeconomic policy in order to prevent overheating of the economy and increased inflationary pressures.

Another potential danger lies in the loss of confidence of foreign firms undertaking direct investment in Poland due to the perceived excessive deficit on the said current account. Just at what point in relation to the country's GDP can such deficit be considered as being excessive is another issue, but once it is reached it may be very difficult to redress the situation since foreign firms may begin to pull out of the country in increasing numbers.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

The process of integrating Poland's transforming economy with the world economic system can be summarized by the following points:

- Poland took advantage of its opening to the world after 1989 by both increasing its participation in world trade and world FDI;
- Both the value of exports from Poland and imports into Poland grew faster than the corresponding worldwide figures, thus increasing the country's level of integration with the world trade system over the last decade. However, the growth of imports substantially outstripped the growth of exports, leading to serious current account imbalances;
- FDI inflows into Poland grew by an unprecedented 10,600 per cent between 1990 and 2000, with the bulk of this growth occurring in the second part of the decade. This phenomenal growth in FDI was not only faster than the worldwide trend, but also substantially outstripped

the average growth of FDI inflows into the Central and Eastern Europe. As a result, Poland's share in world FDI increased dramatically, from 0.03 per cent in 1990 to 0.75 percent in 2000. By 2000, Poland became the largest FDI recipient in the CEE region in absolute terms;

- The transnationality index, calculated by UNCAD for 1998, which measures the relative significance of FDI in an economy, does not however attest to Poland's strong position in world FDI. The index shows that the country is only slightly above the regional average in terms of its transnationality. One explanation of the discrepancy between the phenomenal growth in FDI inflows into Poland and the country's rather low transnationality index is that the index has a bias in favor of smaller economies. It should also be noted that the growth of FDI inflows started in Poland from a very low level and, in spite of the very high rate of that growth in the last decade, Poland still has a long way to go until it can achieve the transnationality index values comparable to those of the most internationalized economies in the world;
- The much faster growth of imports than exports in the past decade was accompanied by a growing current account deficit that threatens Poland's macroeconomic equilibrium and future growth. So far, the deficit has been financed mainly by FDI inflows and cross-border trade, with the former playing an increasing role over time. As a result, no serious balance-of-payments problems have been experienced yet. However, should FDI inflows slow down, the problems related to the Balance of Payments may become acute. To prevent that from happening, Poland must boost exports and balance its current account. The general problem lies also in finding effective methods of sustaining the growth of FDI;
- The overall conclusion is that over the last decade the Polish economy was rapidly integrating with the world economy, especially on the import and FDI fronts. The growth in exports, although substantially higher than the world average, did not keep pace with the growth in imports and FDI. In this respect, Poland's participation in the globalization process was somewhat unbalanced.

The most important policy implication stems from the last conclusion. However opinions on this issue are not uniform. Two distinct approaches and corresponding economic policy models can be distinguished here (Gorynia, 2000):

- Upgrading the competitiveness of Polish exports on foreign markets (according to the enclave model);

- Moving the whole economy of Poland to a higher competitive level (according to the integral model).

According to the first approach disruptions of the external equilibrium appearing in the process of integrating the Polish economy with its foreign environment justify the use of economic policy measures focused on promoting exports. This also means that the obvious focus of policy makers should be on improving the competitive potential and performance of export industries and firms.

Two basic premises seem to emerge in the context of proposing concrete and desirable policy instruments. Premise number one is that foreign-owned firms do not need direct or indirect support measures designed to boost their competitiveness, as they already have an effective competitive advantage upon deciding to enter the Polish market. At the same time, they play an important, and growing, role in providing export earnings for Poland. Research shows that foreign firms operating in Poland demonstrate better export performance and direct more of their output towards export markets than their domestic counterparts. In 1996, the share of exports in total sales of foreign owned companies was 13.9 percent, whereas for domestic firms it was only 8.8 percent. The share of exports by foreign entrants in the value of Polish exports rose from 25 percent in 1994 to 43 percent in 1997 (Durka and Chojna, 1998). In the following years foreign-owned firms in Poland systematically strengthened their positions in the export sectors. Their share of total Polish exports rose to 52 percent in 1999 and 56 percent in 2000 (Durka and Chojna, 2001).

This came as no surprise. These firms tended to have better quality products, more recognizable brand names, wider access to international distribution channels as well as other advantages not possessed by most of their domestic counterparts. Therefore, foreign firms hardly needed any export-specific policy measures aimed at helping them develop export-orientated products and export markets. Instead, these foreign firms, in order to continue exporting from Poland or to be attracted to invest in Poland, need consistent improvement in the general infrastructure and conditions of doing business in this country. Survey data show that 44.4 percent of foreign-owned firms indicated lack of sufficient infrastructure as an 'important' and 'very important' barrier to establishing successful operations in Poland (Wolniak, 1998).

The second premise, which follows from the first one, is that the focus of export-specific policy measures should be rather on domestic companies, which need to build and upgrade their competitiveness to be able to compete in both domestic and international markets. Expansion of these firms into foreign markets should be supported by education and training,

demonstrating the rationale and benefits of exporting and the benefits of engaging into more advanced forms of international business once the export stage is mastered. This training should also show the ways in which export or international business plans can be developed and implemented. Being usually small and medium-sized entities, these firms often do not have sufficient knowledge and research capabilities to collect foreign market information on their own. Therefore, government support is needed in this area as well in the form of financing foreign market intelligence gathering and dissemination. The government should also co-finance the country-image boosting campaigns in order to offset the possible negative country-of-origin effects. Finally, there is a pressing need for measures, again in the form of direct and indirect financial support, that would stimulate Polish-owned firms to innovate and develop their core competencies which can be embedded in new products and technologies and can possibly form a solid base for developing and maintaining their competitive advantage in the domestic and foreign markets.

According to the second approach identified above, the underlying aim of all policy measures in the area of international trade and investment should be to improve the country's overall international competitiveness so that Polish products can more successfully and more rapidly penetrate the export markets, especially in the European Union, which is now, and will be more so in the future, Poland's most important trade partner (Gorynia, 1998). In the integral model the focus is on raising the competitiveness of the whole economy and not just the export-oriented sectors. This is in line with Poland's main strategic challenge to develop goods and services that will be effectively marketed on both the domestic as well as export markets. Thus, two general guidelines can be suggested in this context (Gorynia, 1998):

- Economic policy should support developing and raising company competitiveness;
- Such competitiveness should be achieved integrally, i.e., without unfounded differentiation of policy measures for exporters and for those focusing their business on the open domestic market.

It is essential to stress that the policy implications outlined above only 'scratch the surface' of these important and complex issues. Further research is needed into various policy models, approaches and instruments that might be applicable to the specific situation of Poland and other transition economies as they attempt to embrace and absorb the complex process of globalization.

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