

Attitudes Towards Work and the Market Economy in Poland

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1. Introduction

The results of the June, 1989 elections demonstrated the willingness of a majority of the Polish people to initiate the change from a one-party regime to political pluralism. While the past has been rejected, replacing a centrally planned economy with a market economy can neither be achieved overnight nor by simply by voting for it. The traces of the previous centrally planned economy as well as those of the autocratic political system still remain embedded in Polish work-organizations and institutions. Fragments of the former system have survived in the structure of the institutions, in daily routines and habits, and in the minds and conventions of the people.

The transition of the economy has begun, but as yet not much of a market system exists. The word "transition" emphasizes that Poland is in a period between two situations: Although the leaders of the centrally planned economy lost their power, some type of market system still needs to be established. This makes Poland and the other Eastern European countries different than Western countries and those in the third world. The absence of a free-market means that Western models of

economic development might not apply, because they take the existence of some kind of market economy as a precondition.

The lack of a market system also implies that the kinds of economic behavior which are successful under Western conditions cannot be expected to function in the identical way in today's Polish society. Neither the cues in the environment which elicit the behavior nor the reward system which encourages it are yet in place.

Another complication emerges from the fact that the Eastern and Central European countries have to concentrate their efforts on two major goals simultaneously. They need to establish democratic institutions and, at the same time, try to achieve a functioning market economy soon. Obstacles arising on the road to the economic goal may cause Poland to lose what it already has achieved in the development of the political system. Unemployment, unstable prices, stagnation in the standard of living, all may harm its nascent democratic achievements.

By definition a democracy and a market economy cannot be constructed by elites alone. Support in terms of mass behavior and attitudes is essential. Individuals must develop the capacity to behave independently of the state. They must generate the behavior that can exploit the degree of freedom they have won in order to form and put the system to life. Individual attitudes, knowledge, and intentions make a substantial difference in the transition phase because they determine the type of behaviors that can be expected and the types of changes that will be accepted or resisted.

This is the starting point of the technical assistance program of the Bureau of International Labor Affairs. It assumes that the many years under the former system have left large segments of the population ill prepared to actively participate in changing the political and economic systems. Thus, in order to enable the Polish workers to play their role in the process of change, what is needed is a better understanding of their attitudes and expectations regarding the benefits they hope to achieve and the new obligations and risks they are willing to accept, as well as their apprehension about potential deprivations they might experience from employment displacement and the transitional loss of purchasing power. The approach addresses the transition process in Poland from an individual point of view. The primary focus is understanding and helping individuals to cope with the obstacles they face and, by doing so, facilitating the change process at the societal level.

To gain insights into the attitudes and expectation of Polish workers, a survey instrument was developed to interview a random probability sample of the Polish population between 16 and 65 years of age. In total, 1085 persons were interviewed in December 1991.

The following paragraph briefly outlines the approach used which guided the instrument construction and the analysis so as to identify the major factors influencing acceptance and/or resistance to change.

2. Understanding human behavior in periods of change

Past research on innovation has improved our understanding of the important factors influencing the acceptance of change. Among these are perceived fairness of the change process (procedural fairness), confidence, involvement, support, knowledge, goal congruence and the individual evaluation of change in terms of what the person has to give and what is received in return (referred to as input/output relation in equity-theory).

The equity model enables us to predict individuals resistance to change. Simply stated, the basic idea of equity theory is that individuals evaluate outcomes of change and that those changes considered favorable will be welcomed, while those seen as unfavorable ones will be resisted.

Individuals are concerned about their own inputs and outcomes, and the fairness of the exchange between them. If due to a change, the inputs and outcomes shift, the net gain or loss is assessed. If this assessment results in a decline of the net gain, a person will feel distressed and is likely to resist the change. Resistance to change also results when a person perceives inequity compared to others. Those who perceive an increase in the net gain (of the input/outcome function) and/or in equity are likely to welcome the change.

Resistance to change can be expressed by minimizing one's own inputs and/or outcomes of others as well as by trying to increase the inputs of others.

Three levels of individual assessment of change can be distinguished:

A. Resulting change in net gains.

Relation of changes in individual inputs to individual outcomes.

B. Fair sharing of benefits.

Focus on profits or other benefit, and whether they are shared proportionally between different parties, such as between employees and employers or elites and the mass.

C. Social comparison

Comparison of one's own outcomes with those of a reference group.

Finally, the equity approach suggests the means of assisting the process of change.

As a first step, possible equity concerns have to be identified. Once this is done two methods can be specified to reduce resistance and enhance acceptance:

A. Altering actual inputs and outcomes

B. Altering vis-a-vis those of others individual perceptions of their own inputs and outcomes.

3. Identification of equity concerns in Polish society

3.1 Preferred Economic system

A substantial majority of the respondents prefers either a free-market economy (45%) or a mixed socialist/free-market model (38%). Only a few say they either prefer a pure socialist economy (5%) or a communist one (1.9%) (Q87).

When we compare respondents by educational level, we find less support for the free-market system among those with the least education (incomplete and primary education), although this is mainly due to a higher percentage of "don't know" answers among them. A larger percentage of the respondents at the higher educational levels support the mixed economic model. Seventy-five percent of the respondents who prefer the socialist or communist model have only reached the basic vocational or other lower level of education.

There is only a small gender difference, with a slightly higher percentage of male respondents (52.3% as compared to 39.2% of the females) preferring the free-market model, while more females answer "don't know" (13.2% as compared to 5.6% of the males).

The older respondents tend to be more in favor of the mixed model and less in favor of the free-market model as compared to the younger Poles (see table below).

Q87 Preferred economic system by age-groups (column percentages) N=902

	Age-groups				
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65
economic system					
free-market	49.4%	52.0%	45.9%	41.7%	37.2%
mixed	33.5%	34.6%	37.6%	41.1%	43.6%

The different opinions in support of the free-market and mixed models are partly due to the fact that seventy percent believe that a free-market economy will make only a few people rich (Q88) rather than allowing a better standard of living for everybody (20%). Thus, the majority of people (92-95%) who prefer a mixed, socialist, or communist market model, share the opinion that a free-market economy makes only few people rich, while for the respondents preferring free-markets the attitude is nearly even distributed (see table below).

Percentage of respondents preferring a certain market model and having a negative attitude towards the free-market model. (column percentages)

	Q87 preferred economic system ...			
	socialist	free-market	mixed	communist
Q88 a free-market economy...				
produces a better standard of living for all	8%	40%	8%	5%
just makes few people rich	92%	60%	92%	95%

The results clearly indicate that there is some confusion among the Poles regarding economic market models, their distinguishing criteria and their advantages and disadvantages. This confusion can be especially found among

the less educated, as indicated by the frequent "don't know" answers. An information program to promote a better understanding of these models should especially be aimed at workers in lower educational groups. The following section explores some of the issues which should be included in such an informational effort.

3.2 Knowledge and Understanding of Market issues

What do the Poles visualize when they express a preference for a free-market or a mixed market economy? What should and should not be part of the Polish economy? The important issues here are privatization, ownership, and the distribution of revenues.

About 10 percent of the Polish think that all businesses should be privatized (Q89), while 41 percent think most businesses should become private. On the other hand, 34 percent would like to privatize only small businesses. Opposition to privatization is particularly high among the older and the less educated respondents.

Three-fourths (77%) agree that people should be allowed to become rich (Q90), and over half (58%) believe that salaries, should be determined by market forces. When it comes to individual ownership of large businesses, only half of the respondents (48%) agrees that this should be part of the Polish economic system. Still less support can be found for individual ownership of large parcels of land (36%), foreign ownership of companies (32%), and foreign ownership of real estate (17%).

For all the above statements agreement is lower among the Poles with less education and for most of them lower among females (the exception being ownership of large business, where no gender difference is found). Younger respondents are generally more in favor of privatization, with the exception of foreign investment and ownership, which is about equally opposed by all age groups.

Finally, we always find the highest proportion against private ownership among the respondents preferring a socialist or communist market model, less opposition among the ones preferring a mixed model and still less among those who prefer a free-market economy. However, foreign ownership of real estate is opposed by three quarters (74%) of the respondents who prefer a free-market system, 87% of those preferring a mixed model, and 92% of those preferring a socialist or communist economy.

A majority of the Polish respondents agree that most or all restaurants (Q105) should be owned privately (63%). Thirty-seven percent also think this should be the case for home construction companies, and 32 percent for TV-stations. Less support is found for the privatization of the public transportation system (24%), dental service stations (18%), the postal service (11%), electric plants (6%), and secondary schools (5%). Again, those generally more in favor of state ownership are the older and less educated Poles, as well as those living in rural areas or villages.

Support for the privatization is correlated with the opinion that secondary schools (Q112) should be totally free (52%) or mostly free (22%) and that medical care (Q113) should be either entirely cost-free (44%) or mostly cost-free (25%).

In the matter of wages and salaries, something over half of the respondents (62%) would like to see minimum wage levels set by the state (Q106), and a somewhat smaller percentage thinks the state should prescribe salaries (Q107) in every case (29%) or in most cases (25%). Only few would not like to see the state intervene at all (6%) or only in rare cases (10%).

Fifty-seven percent would like to see no upper limit for the money one can earn in work (Q114) as opposed to 33 percent who think there should be a limit. Higher frequencies of respondents who want to see an upper limit on earnings are found among the older, the less educated, residents of rural areas, and among the employees of state, as opposed to private, companies. Only three percent would prefer everybody to earn the same (Q115) while 60 percent would like to see some differences in earnings, and 30 percent think there should be no limit to the differences.

Similar opinions are found regarding state prescribed prices (Q108), which are seen favorably by 67 percent of the respondents (which in part might be a reaction to the recent years of rapid inflation in Poland). Only five percent think that prices should not be controlled by the state. Again, prescribed prices are seen favorably by less educated, older, female, and rural respondents. There is a relationship between the amount of salary a

respondent earns (or the total household income) and a respondent's opinion about prescribed prices. Those who currently make less money are more in favor of state prescribed prices.

Finally about half of the respondents (51%) supports a progressive income tax (Q109), which is more often opposed by the younger than the older respondents. There is no relation, however to the amount of income a respondent receives.

Most respondents holding a "conservative" view on these issues (i.e. retaining the old and opposing the new regarding privatization, salaries, and ownership) are found among the older and less educated Poles and those living in rural areas. These are the groups which, though difficult to reach, clearly can benefit from more information.

3.3 Western Assistance

About half (55%) of the respondents feel that the U.S. has given a lot or at least some economic assistance to Poland, while only four percent judge this economic assistance as inconsequential (Q93). Similarly 65 percent favorably evaluate U.S. political attention (Q94). This is reinforced by the opinion of half (51%) that the U.S. has continued its involvement after the communist were out (Q95).

When asked about the type of Western aid that is most important for Poland (Q92), technical assistance (83%), training people in common business practices (82%) and educational assistance (75%) are seen as most

important.

Over a half of the respondents believe that bringing in Western specialists (68%) and increased Western economic aid (64%) will help the economy (Q91). Following in order of importance are removing the nomenclatura from management posts (64%) and implementing free-market policies fast (58%).

Apart from Western financial aid (Q96), three quarters of the respondents oppose Western assistance in the development (Q96) of political parties (74%) or the parliament (74%), and over half do not want assistance in developing their judiciary system (61%). Conversely, a majority (66%) like the West to help in the development of their media.

Thus, resistance to change can be predicted should any Western country attempt to strongly influence the Polish political parties, the parliament or the judiciary system. This is also reflected in Polish law, which forbids political groups and parties from accepting foreign assistance. In general, opposition to Western assistance for these institutions becomes more frequent among the respondents at higher educational levels, is more frequent among males as compared to females, and more or less evenly distributed over the different age groups. (This picture is different, however, in the case of the media, where younger respondents are more acceptant of Western assistance than older ones). There is no relation between the rejection of Western assistance for political parties, the parliament or judiciary and the media and how respondents position themselves on a

political left-right scale.

3.4 Economic situation of the country

Nineteen percent of the respondents say that the economic situation of the country has improved as opposed to 60 percent who think it has gotten worse since the 1989 elections (Q99). The view that the situation has deteriorated is more frequently held by respondents who are older, who live in rural areas, and who have low incomes. In this case, there is a tendency for respondents who hold this negative view to assign themselves to the left side of a political left-right scale.

While, 29 percent believe the economic situation will improve in the future or at least stay the same (27%), one-third (33%) believes it will get worse in the coming years (Q100). Among the later we find more of the older respondents and, again, more of those who sympathize with parties on the left of the political scale.

3.5 Personal economic situation

When comparing one's own current economic situation to what it was before the 1989 elections, fifty-six percent see it as the same and 32 percent as worse (Q97). These respondents are mainly older, less-educated Poles who live in rural areas and have a lower personal income as well as household income. Again they show a tendency towards the left side of the political scale. Only eleven percent feel that their personal situation improved.

Asked about the biggest problems faced (Q98) the respondents rank salary (32%) first than unemployment (31%), and inflation (23%).

Inflation is a greater concern among the older respondents, males, the better educated, residents of cities, and those employed by private companies. Unemployment is more frequently a concern for the younger, less educated, and rural respondents. Finally salary is of equal concern to all of the groups except those employed by private enterprises.

3.6 Unemployment

While 23 percent think that no unemployment at all should exist in Poland (Q110), nearly half (44%) believe that unemployment should decrease a little in order to not harm Poland. Twenty-three percent believe Poland can live with the current unemployment or even with a little more.

Asked whether economically inefficient work places should be preserved (Q116) the majority (56%) disagreed. In addition, 47 percent agree that "unemployment benefits should be low, in order to drive people to look for a job" (Q117) and 68 percent agree that inefficient workers should be fired.

The statement "unemployment is a good means to secure a positive attitude of workers towards work" divides the respondents in roughly equal groups; Thirty-six percent agree, 35 percent disagree, and 25 percent are indifferent.

How are the unemployed viewed (Q124)? Almost a majority believes that

unemployed are the victims of the country's economic situation (48%) or of wrong politics (34%). Individual responsibilities like the behavior of the unemployed person (6%) or low qualifications (4%), or the incompetence of the former employer (4%) are seldom mentioned relatively.

This attribution of responsibility is also found in reactions to the question "who or what might cause possible future unemployment of the respondent" (Q86B). Only 7 percent see their own behavior as the main cause, while 59 percent think it will be caused mainly by other persons and groups, and 34 percent see it as fate or bad luck.

This feeling of not being in control or having little power is also reflected in the opinion that the future of one's working life lies only to a very small or small degree in one's own hands (Q120), a belief which is shared by half (50%) of the respondents. Only 11 percent believe that they control their future working life to a large degree.

3.7 Future Outlook and Behavior Intentions

Seventy-nine percent of the Poles interviewed express the view that it will be very difficult or at least somewhat difficult to find a job with another employer (Q31). This opinion is more frequently held by the low-income respondents, and by female respondents. Interestingly we do not find differences among the age-groups or differences related to living community size (rural versus city). However, respondents employed by private companies believe finding a similar job with a different employer will be

easier than those currently employed by a state company or cooperative.

About 13 percent of the sample say that they intend to change jobs within the next twelve month (Q32). This intention to change is found more frequently among part-time and seasonal workers compared to the full-time employed, and more frequent among the respondents with higher education (especially post-secondary and above). Younger Poles and those living in cities or large towns are more often willing to change jobs.

Undergoing retraining (Q33_1) is refused by nearly half (47%) of the sample. But fifty-three percent of the Poles would be willing to undergo retraining if forced to by the economic situation or other conditions. Here, there is a strong relationship to age: the younger respondents are more likely to accept retraining than the older ones.

Q33_1 Willingness to be retrained by age-groups (column percentages) N=569.

	Age-groups				
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-65
no, under no condition	31.6%	37.7%	42.3%	58.6%	88.6%
if forced by economic condition	57.9%	50.9%	48.3%	34.2%	6.8%
under certain other conditions	10.5%	11.4%	9.5%	7.2%	4.5%

However, no difference in willingness to undergo retraining are found between men and woman, among educational groups, or according to community size.

Finally, the acceptance of retraining is more common among state employees (58%) than those employed by private companies (46%) or cooperatives (40%).

Concerning the utility of current skills for future employment (Q79), 17 percent feel that their skills will not be useful at all, while 14 percent think of their skills as only somewhat useful. Respondents with negative estimations of their skills are mainly older, female, less educated respondents, and members of lower income groups.

Unfortunately, we find no relationship between respondents' perception of the usefulness of their skills for future employment and their willingness to be retrained. This finding suggests the importance of better informing Polish workers of the possibilities for and advantages of retraining programs.

Asked to judge the likelihood that any of eight different events might happen in the near future, the highest probability was given to "becoming unemployed". This was followed by "starting one's own business", "poorer work relations", "increased standard of living", "company changing ownership", "difficulties with work demands", "change in company ownership" and, finally, "moving to a different region".

Among these events the only two desired are an increase in living standards and starting one's own business. The event ranked most likely (becoming unemployed) is also the most feared. Least desired are the expectation of

poorer work relations and upcoming difficulties with the work demands. A change of company ownership, changes in the own occupation, and moving to a different region of the country are also disliked, although less strongly. Thus, in the near future many Poles fear being confronted with two events (unemployment and poorer work relations) and at the same time they hope to have a better standard of living and perhaps start their own business. This positive attitude towards self employment is reflected again in its being ranked first as preferred work (Q83). Following are "physical work" at a midpoint position and "secretarial", "sales", and "assembly line work" as disliked work activities, with "work as a miner", strongly disliked by most respondents.

4. Work related attitudes and values

4.1 Important Work Goals

As stated before, assessing the goals respondents try to achieve in their work organizations and in their work life is an important step in predicting possible sources of distress arising from individual disappointments. In addition, knowledge about these goals is useful in motivating workers and in creating a rewarding environment.

Asked to rank how important each of 16 work goals are for one's own working life, respondents indicated "good pay" as the most important. Following good pay are "a fair amount of recognition", "good job security", "good employee benefits", "interesting work", "contribution to society", "good relations with the supervisor", "good relations with colleagues", "good physical working conditions", "a lot of autonomy". Of lesser importance are "an influential position in the organization", "opportunities to learn new things", "a good match between job requirements and own abilities and experience", "a lot of variety", "convenient work hours", and, finally, "good opportunities for upgrading or promotion".

Compared these results to a similar procedure used in a survey of the American work force (England 1991), we find both similarities and differences. Similar are the high rankings of pay and security, the general importance of interesting work, the mid-point position of social relations, and the relative low importance of convenient work hours.

The main differences from the American findings are the lower importance the Polish respondents give to learning possibilities, variety, good match of job requirements and abilities, and promotion opportunities, and the higher importance attributed to physical working conditions. This last difference encourages us not forget that physical working conditions in Poland are currently at a standard equivalent to what Western countries were accustomed to some decades ago.

The following table illustrates how analyses can be done to highlight the differences in work-goal importance among different groups of interest.

Table Importance of Work Goals (Q71-72 Mean-Ranks)

WORK GOAL	TOTAL SAMPLE	Age 15-24	Education below secondary	living place city	living place not city
PAY	12.0	11.2	12.2	11.9	12.1
RECOGNITION	11.4	11.7	11.2	11.5	11.4
SECURITY	11.0	10.3	11.2	10.4	11.3
BENEFITS	10.4	9.9	10.4	10.2	10.4
INTERESTING WORK	10.3	10.9	9.7	10.8	10.1
CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY	9.6	9.5	9.6	9.2	9.7
RELATIONS TO SUPERVISOR	9.3	9.5	9.3	9.3	9.3
RELATIONS TO CO-WORKERS	9.3	9.3	9.2	9.4	9.2
PHYSICAL CONDITIONS	9.2	9.6	9.6	8.9	9.4
AUTONOMY	8.9	8.8	8.5	9.3	8.7
INFLUENTIAL POSITION	8.4	9.1	8.4	8.4	8.4
LEARN	8.3	10.1	8.0	8.8	8.1
MATCH	8.2	8.1	7.8	8.2	8.1
VARIETY	8.0	8.3	7.7	8.5	7.7
CONVENIENT HOURS	7.6	7.6	7.9	7.2	7.8
PROMOTION	6.7	7.5	6.6	7.0	6.6

4.2 Work centrality

To assess the importance of work in the lives of the respondents they were asked to distribute 100 points to indicate the importance to them of each of five different life domains. The points given can be interpreted like percentages. If a respondent assigns 100 points to an area, it means that this life area is of exclusive importance to that person. Similarly, 50 points would mean that half of the individual's attention is focused on that area. As previous research by the author has shown, this measure can be used to assess one important condition for work involvement.

The total sample ranked family (38.7 points) first in importance and work (27.2 points) second, followed by leisure (17.4 points), religion (12.9 points), and finally community (4.1 points).

Looking now only at the respondents who have a single job of sixteen or more working hours per week (i.e. excluding students, pensioners, homemakers, unemployed) found in the second column of the table, we find much the same rank ordering of domains, albeit with a slight decrease in the points given to work and family. The third column of the table presents the values of respondents who have both a primary job and, in addition, a secondary job. Here we find slightly higher value attributed to the work domain and a slightly lower one to family.

The fourth column of the table presents the values of the unemployed respondents. Again these values do not differ much from the others, suggesting that unemployment is still a new experience in Poland, without the effects, like resignation, which accompany long-term unemployment in the West.

To get a better idea of the significance of these values, these findings can again be compared to similar data from a representative survey conducted in the U.S., presented in the last column of the table (England 1991). As we can see, the mean importance the Polish respondents attach to work is higher than that given by American respondents. Thus, the results suggest that the Polish respondents have a reasonably high potential to develop involvement in the work domain.

Another interesting finding is the relative low value community receives in Poland, which can be related to the experiences Poles had under the former system and which continue to influence their thinking today.

Q68 Points given to life areas to express their importance at the present time

	P total Sample	O L working one job	A N working two jobs	D un- employed	U.S.A total Sample
N	1085	596	121	94	1002
Percentage of Sample	100%	54.9%	10.9%	8.5%	100%
FAMILY	38.7	39.6	36.9	38.0	35.9
WORK	27.2	29.8	30.8	30.5	21.7
LEISURE	17.4	16.5	17.6	16.7	15.2
RELIGION	12.9	11.0	11.0	9.8	15.1
COMMUNITY	4.1	3.2	3.5	5.1	8.6

5. Conclusions

Survey data provide a snapshot-picture of societies at a single point in time. Knowing where a society stands today is a precondition for understanding change and its dynamics. The fact, that surveys like this can now be conducted in Eastern and Central European countries is itself a strong evidence of the changes that have occurred.

The results presented here clearly document the dissatisfaction of Poles with their former system. Being the initial motor for change, this dissatisfaction continues until today to be cognitively present among most of the survey respondents and serves as the main point of reference. As long as this remains the case, the danger for a return to the former status quo ante has a low probability because a majority of the Poles, conscious of their former conditions with all their negative implications, would value improvements achieved recent years and would strongly oppose any regression.

The limited resources Polish society has available and the need to reallocate them imply that not everybody can gain immediately, especially with regard to individual economic conditions. During the transition both new privileges and benefits as well as new burdens and hardships will be distributed among the Poles, and will remain present for some indefinite period of time. This will inevitably lead to feelings of inequality among certain societal groups.

Our data allow us to identify the individuals within the Polish society who have experienced relative deprivation during the transition phase and have begun to

develop negative views towards the change process. They are the ones who might be the first, when comparing their life under the former system and their current situation, to develop negative attitudes, and if a critical point is reached in their distress, express resistance towards change.

We might expect to find this result among the disadvantaged, the unemployed, the retired, the less educated, and the rural population, and the results confirm the expectation. In addition, however, the survey results show that up to now the feeling of distress is relatively moderate among these groups. The reason for this is that the Polish market economy still partly functions as a "uncivil market". This means that under the former system Poles learned to develop distinctive, partly unofficial and unsanctioned, methods of surviving economically. Except for private farming the Polish version of a command market left little room for official, private economic behavior, although such activity constituted an important part of the actual economic behavior of individuals and of organizations. These individual activities included household production of food and other consumer goods, networking and social exchange among friends and relatives, patronage and clientelism with bribes, and deals with hard foreign currency. In the West these activities are referred to as a "black economy", "shadow economy" or "rainbow-colored economy". What is important to understand is that in Poland the extent and dimensions of this economy go far beyond what we are accustomed to in Western countries.

In conclusion, most Poles habitually satisfied their material needs through a diversity of economic activities which until now have never been manifested in official statistics. This remains the case today and it actually helps momentarily

economic-disadvantaged societal groups, like the retired and the unemployed, to cushion the losses they experience in the official market economy (i.e. their "official" jobs). Pensioners and the unemployed, although technically not having "official" jobs, continue to work in "black market" jobs or are otherwise active outside the official economy in order to satisfy their needs. Eight percent of the unemployed and twenty percent of the retired respondents admitted to earn money having one or more jobs.

While this practice has the advantage of cushioning economic hardship, it presents the problem of how to integrate these valuable economic activities into the official market. Up to now even some of Poland's entrepreneurial activities remain hidden in the unofficial market. Given that controlling institutions are not functioning yet, new taxes or economic laws may even discourage individuals from integrating their activities into the official market.

What must be understood from this situation is that we cannot expect Polish workers to copy Western economic behavior strategies because the system as it exist in the transition phase does not yet support and reinforce this kind of behavior. Times of transition call for system adaptations, and these in turn require individual adaptations. On the path from the conditions of a communist planned economy to the goal of a market economy, Poles have to develop strategies which allow them to both survive the current transitional obstacles and develop the behavior needed once a market economy becomes reality. This route might entail many detours enroute to the final goal but these are necessary for coping and survival.

In considering the design of a technical assistance program, this means that the task ahead is much more complex than merely transferring knowledge and expertise and helping Polish workers to gain a better understanding of how a free-market system functions and to develop new competencies for the activities appropriate to free-market conditions, although this necessarily is part of the task. If the aim is to get new behaviors established, what is needed are strategies and behavior appropriate to what already is being reinforced under the actual conditions of the transition phase. Therefore, a participatory and interactive approach is recommended, one which allows mesh between the aspirations, anxieties, and concerns of Polish workers and the needs of a free-market economy. This would allow us to better understand and appreciate the daily problems of Poles and to help them develop solutions which already are functional and helpful today, and in addition remain partly or equally valid once the economic system has been stabilized. Assistance should seek to enable Polish workers to help themselves, and this can only be achieved if we exploit the strategies and practices which allow them to cope with the obstacles of the transition phase without losing sight of the final goal.

Survey data like those presented help make the current situation more interpretable, assist in identifying current problems, and allow us to better define the most basic needs and facilitate the process finding the means for their satisfaction.