

WHO WANTS WHAT AND WHY? 'FARMERS' AND 'ENGINEERS' AS GREEN ENTREPRENEURS

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The aim of this paper is to explore green entrepreneurs' motivations and values considering alternative economic models. Two sustainability-oriented developmental models, the green economy and degrowth, shall be described and compared, as well as several green entrepreneurs' typologies. The green economy actors' motives and values, as well as their view on green growth and degrowth are explored through qualitative research. The findings suggest the green entrepreneurs differ in their motivations for the green venture they undertake. It appears 'farmers' values and motives are much closer to the degrowth idea, while 'engineers' are more in line with green economy outlook. These findings point to the importance of socio-contextual aspects that underline the appearance of different green entrepreneurial types.

Keywords: green economy, degrowth, ecopreneurship, green entrepreneurs, ecopreneurs

Cilj tega prispevka je raziskati motivacije in vrednote zelenih podjetnikov, ki upoštevajo alternativne ekonomske modele. Gre za opis in primerjavo dveh razvojnih modelov, usmerjenih v trajnostni razvoj, zeleno gospodarstvo in rast, ter za raziskavo tipologij zelenih podjetnikov. Avtorici preučujeta motive in vrednote akterjev zelene ekonomije ter njihov pogled na zeleno rast in naraščanje s kvalitativno raziskavo. Ugotovitve kažejo, da se zeleni podjetniki v motivaciji za zeleni podvig, ki ga izvajajo, razlikujejo. Zdi se, da so vrednote in motivi kmetov precej bližje ideji odrasti, medtem ko so »inženirji« bolj v skladu z obeti zelene ekonomije. Te ugotovitve kažejo na pomembnost socialno-kontekstualnih vidikov, ki poudarjajo pojav različnih zelenih podjetniških vrst.

Ključne besede: zeleno gospodarstvo, odrast, ekopodjetništvo, zeleni podjetniki, ekopodjetniki

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the rise of ecological problems, conventional ideas of economic progress have been called into question. In the 1980s, the idea that economic growth could ensure well-being was replaced with the concept of sustainable development calling for self-limitation and responsibility for the next generations. In the forthcoming decades the phrase sustainable development was widely used in expert, political, and public debates, with no concrete plan for achieving such development. In the first decade of the new millennium, the American think tank presented a sort of an operational plan for sustainable development in the shape of the Green New Deal which aimed to reduce economic inequalities and ecological degradation through economic stimuli. The Green New Deal was readily accepted by political parties, NGOs and supranational organizations. This paved the way for a “new” green economy that was supported by the old neoliberal narrative, implying the idea of continuous economic growth.¹

However, the concept of green economy carried out by means of neoliberal capitalism soon stumbled upon critiques from more radical scholars and activists who questioned the idea

¹ Green growth is defined as economic growth that preserves productivity of natural resources and enables social welfare (OECD 2011. <http://www.oecd.org/greengrowth/towards-green-growth-9789264111318-en.htm>)

of limitless (green or any whatsoever) economic growth on a limited planet, and called for an overall transformation of economic and social systems that promoted degrowth. Degrowth implies a new post-materialistic lifestyle in developed countries in the global West, leaving space for growth in the poor countries, but again, with both theoretical and practical shortcomings.

Both economic models and their actors, the “green” entrepreneurs, aim to promote sustainable development. What their values are, what motivates them and whether they prefer economy as growing or “de-growing” are topics we examine in this paper. While there is abundant literature on types of green entrepreneurs regarding their motivation and values, there are little sources that aim to explain what helps to shape those motivational differences. Our contribution aims to give one of possible explanations why green entrepreneurs differ. In the following section we present the main theoretical characteristics of the two economic concepts, after which we briefly discuss the green economy actors’ main characteristics. The theoretical framing is followed by presentation of findings from the qualitative research that was conducted with green economy actors (entrepreneurs) discussing possible cause of the established difference of green entrepreneurs regarding their orientation towards green growth or degrowth.

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF THE GREEN ECONOMY AND DEGROWTH CONCEPTS

Many inspiring theoretical concepts have difficulties in upholding significance and credibility over time, and one such relevant contemporary example is the concept of sustainable development. Although it motivated countless numbers of people, communities, policies, and businesses all over the world to rethink their lifestyle towards the more environmentally friendly practices, in a few decades of intensive presence in societal and academic “usage” it simply lost its theoretical strength – if it ever had any, according to authors such as Sachs (1999) – and engagement sharpness which makes room for new and more potent concepts. The absence of relevant socio-economic actors for implementation lead to failure of sustainable development as political strategy (Brand 2012), but the ideas of social change towards more socially just and environmentally sound economy endured and numerous concepts questioning the dominant paradigm developed. As “successors” that emerged from the failed sustainable development concept, there is the green economy on one side, and degrowth as a more radical concept on the other.

The green economy cannot be easily or precisely defined.² The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) stated in its report on the green economy that there was

² The United Nations stated on Rio +20 Conference that “The green economy approach seeks, in principle, to unite under a single banner the entire suite of economic policies and modes of economic analyses of relevance to sustainable development. In practice, this covers a rather broad range of literature and analysis, often with somewhat different starting points” (UN Secretary-General 2010: 15).

a “widespread disillusionment” about our dominant economic paradigm and a recognition of many concurrent crises and market failures in the first decade of the new millennium and, furthermore, spreading of a new economic paradigm – “one in which material wealth is not delivered perforce at the expense of growing environmental risks, ecological scarcities and social disparities” (UNEP, 2011: 1). Other supranational institutions (European Commission, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)) also have plans to transform economy by implementing green economy or green growth strategy regarding resource use reduction, clean technologies, waste reduction, sustainable farming and poverty reduction (EC 2010; OECD 2011; UN DESA 2011).

The strategies and “language” of the green economy highly resemble those of the sustainable development’s two or three decades ago when it had first been presented, although it was more focused on “intensive Western production and consumption patterns” than on “economic growth” (Brand 2012: 29). Criticism towards this new, albeit in its aim an old concept, rests on the fact there is an undoubted confidence in political institutions to carry this process through, as well as a lack of gender perspective in implementing green economy (Brand 2012).

There is an even stronger criticism of green economy which says it is as problematic as sustainable development because it fails to profoundly question the traditional concept of progress as economic and material growth (Kothari et al. 2014). It is argued that the green growth “depoliticizes genuine political antagonisms between alternative visions for the future” (Kallis 2015: 1) and promises technical solutions to environmental problems giving several points to expand the argument. The critics hold that the concept of green economy has numerous flaws, some of them being the lack of the historical and structural analysis on social causes of poverty, hunger, unsustainability and the whole array of social inequalities, from patriarchy to colonialism; insufficient use of direct democracy (e.g. the neglecting the governance of indigenous people and their right to self-determination); not recognizing “the biophysical limits to economic growth”, “continued subservience to private capital” with only voluntary measures and no sanctions for irresponsible corporate behaviour towards the environment; focusing predominantly on modern science and technology to find solutions for environmental problems thus ignoring a democratic, community-based research and development; neglecting “the relation between culture, ethics and spirituality with sustainability and equity”; unquestionable consumerism, lack of focus on “localization and self-reliance” of communities, and finally, “no new architecture of global governance” which should “be far more responsive and accountable to the peoples of the world” (Kothari et al. 2014: 364–5). All these remarks refer to the very bottom of the unsustainability of the present development paradigm and it is unlikely all of these transformations will soon be dealt with in a profound way and/or in the majority of the world’s countries. These remarks also illustrate what D’Amato and associates recognize as the trans-disciplinary challenge for green economy concept since it requires both academic operationalization

and societal implementation, but also requires interdisciplinary approach from different expert communities and science disciplines (D'Amato et al. 2017).

However, there are some new concepts from both developed and developing countries which are starting to gain attention from both the academics and the practitioners interested in transformative social changes. They do not seek to be promoted by (present) supranational institutions nor to be identically implemented in the whole world. Their premise is: the concern and practice towards the environment and society are culturally conditioned and thus should be contextualized within the specific community or society. They thus present “a critique of the homogenization of cultures” (Kothari et al. 2014: 366) unlike Western developmental models, including sustainable development, which imply the same ways and processes for their goals regardless of culture distinctiveness. One of those concepts³ is degrowth which aims to deconstruct conventional concept of progress with its productivism, necessity of economic growth and Western notion of development (Kothari et al. 2014).

Degrowth implies a change of the growth-oriented economy, not only in terms of a GDP decline, but also in the very nature of production and consumption, aiming at social and environmental sustainability. It also questions the consensus on growth and development in parliamentary politics and proposes changes towards more democratic decision making in both choosing a way and aim of the social progress as well as reducing production and consumption in developed countries (Demaria et al. 2013). Degrowth thus should not be seen as a solely economic concept but more as a social concept with multi-contextual and multi-dimensional layers, since it incorporates activism and research in justice, critical analysis of development's relation to utilitarianism, well-being, reformism and radical alternative practices (Ančić and Domazet 2015).

Social change depends on the existence and formation of specific value orientations. To restructure social relations so as to make a shift towards degrowth orientation, certain inter-dependent principles are required according to Latouche: reconceptualizing the key notions such as wealth, poverty, value, scarcity and abundance; restructuring the productive apparatus and social relations to fit these new values; redistributing wealth and access to natural resources between North and South and between classes, generations and individuals; relocalizing means of production on local level thus descending all economic, political and cultural decisions at that level; reducing production and consumption, especially for goods and services with little use value and high environmental impact; re-using products and recycling waste (Latouche 2009).

Critics of Latouche's conception of degrowth argue it fails to provide a viable political agenda needed to confront the addressed problems. Furthermore, it fails to analyse the qualitative aspects of economic growth, e.g. when criticizing growth some desirable

³ Some others are *Buen Vivir* from Latin America (collective name for several philosophical concepts from different indigenous groups), *Ubuntu* from South Africa and *Ecological Swaraj* in India (Kothari et al. 2014).

aspects like growth of solarized infrastructure or globalized information technology are not recognized, even though these could be used for mobilizing people and communities in transnational (degrowth) movement. Finally, putting an emphasis on local autonomy in degrowth initiatives neglects the global scope of ecological problems which calls for the same scale engagement (Schwartzman 2012; van den Bergh 2011). Schwartzman (2012) notes that beside Latouche's conception there are some more potent notions of degrowth, like Martínez-Alier's (2012: 62), who emphasizes the need to research the "environmental, technological, demographic, social and socio-psychological aspects of socially sustainable economic degrowth leading to a steady-state economy in alliance with the environmental justice movements of the South". In other words, these critiques call for a more theoretically and empirically founded conception which could profoundly contribute to concrete and feasible solutions in transition towards multidimensional sustainability.

PLURAL OF GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ITS ACTORS

The green economy and degrowth are two partially contested concepts trying to find plausible ways and means of moving in the direction of future societal sustainability. The former aims at greening the economy within the same general objective to growth and development, and latter aims to question the very foundations of the Western belief in development through growth. We can agree that neither of these concepts can tackle all the challenges the modernity brings, and they should continue to develop and expand their conceptions by enhancing their feasibility and reliability with supporting research. Nonetheless, these concepts, besides their academic articulation, are supported by certain economic activities and actors.

Green entrepreneurs or ecopreneurs and ecopreneurship are the most prominent examples of socio-economic attempts towards sustainability. Environmental entrepreneurship or ecopreneurship is a rather new field of academic inquiry with significant research attention which started in 1990s (Parrish and Tilley 2010). The recognition of the key role of business in combating environmental problems, where change of behaviour and attitudes among the wider population is not sufficient to bring an adequate social transformation, stands in the basis of the ecopreneurship idea (Schaper 2010). In the last decades a premise has been accepted that application of environmentally responsible business practices could enhance entrepreneurial prospects. Schaper (2010: 11) stresses that "ecopreneurship matters because it also has the potential to be a major force in the overall transition to a more sustainable business paradigm". The main features of ecopreneurship are its entrepreneurial form of venture, positive impact on the environment and intentional undertaking towards ecological sustainability, such as mitigation of climate change, or any form of diminishing of environmental pressure (Schaper 2010). However, ecopreneurship comes in plural form, and correspondingly, ecopreneurs differ in some characteristics.

The essential difference between the two expressions of economic practices aiming towards (some scale of) sustainability can be found in those who seek “‘betterment’ via quantitative growth”, focused on market and technological interventions for economic growth, and those who “seek ‘betterment’ via qualitative change”, focused on sustaining the ecosystem as well as human well-being (Parrish and Tilley 2010: 23). Parrish and Tilley (2010) emphasize that the type of entrepreneurship with deepest socio-ecological aim is sustainability entrepreneurship whose forerunners are the social and environmental entrepreneurship, and they are often intertwined. Social entrepreneurship encompasses business principles of non-profit organizations, socially responsible commercial businesses with partnership between different sectors and innovative pursuits, which aim at a social transformation in finding solutions to social problems (Mair and Martí 2006). Similarly, Vodopivec (2018) sees entrepreneurship as a metanarrative of general social development, where social entrepreneurship and social experimentation practices are striving to evolve personal and social responsibility towards environment and other people and communities (from working with vulnerable groups and creating circular economy to horizontal management and organic lifestyles).

Studies on environmental entrepreneurship offer several typologies considering the “amount” of social change it brings or proposes. Isaak (2002) identified terms “green business” and “green green business”, where the first represents a conventional business which explores the marketing advantages of “greening” its activities, and the other is green in all its processes and products, including the intention to transform the social and the economic system towards integrative sustainability. Some of the other typologies include those entrepreneurs who want to make money and those who want to change the world (Linnanen 2002), “eco-dedicated”, “eco-open” and “eco-reluctant” start-ups (Schick, Marxen and Freiman 2002) and two-dimensional typology of motives and social structural influence differing between “economically oriented” and “sustainability oriented” on the one hand, and those having influence on “soft structures” like personal networks or “hard structures” like economic ones, on the other (Walley and Taylor 2002; Parrish and Tilley 2010).

Walley, Taylor and Greig (2010) tested a typology of green entrepreneurs which Taylor and Walley (2004) had developed a few years earlier and which is largely based on Thompson’s paradigm perspective (1998). The study suggested there was about the same share of those businesses with entirely economic motives and those with prevalence of wider sustainability goals; green entrepreneurs were divided into four ideal types. “‘Visionary champion’ type embraces a transformative, sustainability orientation, sets out to change the world towards sustainable future (...); ‘innovative opportunist’ type is a financially-oriented entrepreneur who uses the chance of green niche and has been mainly influenced by hard structural drivers, such as regulation; ‘ethical maverick’ type is influenced predominantly by personal networks and past experience and is value-driven to set up alternative-style business (...); and ‘accidental enviropreneur’, with largely financial motivation, and influenced by personal networks, family and friends” (Walley, Taylor and Greig 2010: 64).

Finally, sustainability entrepreneurship, still in the *status nascendi*, as a practice as well as research subject, aspires to integrate and implement the whole of sustainability aspects – social, economic and environmental (Tilley and Parrish 2006). Parrish and Tilley (2010) note the sustainability entrepreneurship has the strongest intentionality of its holders – ecopreneurs. In other words, values and motives which direct their green businesses towards sustainability are the most important factors for the design and performance of their business ventures.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Studies show ecopreneurs differ in their motives for ecopreneurship, and typologies of ecopreneurs are therefore based on their motives for ecopreneurship. All aforementioned studies offer a valuable insight into the multidimensionality of green entrepreneurship, however, issues they provoke are far from exhausted. Some of the issues that call for further exploration are development of adequate instruments for measuring green economy's impact on overall sustainability, but also exploration of (cultural or paradigmatic) context that stands in the background of green enterprises considering their "leaning" towards green growth or degrowth.

In our research we will try to answer the latter question through describing different types of ecopreneurs in Croatia, and whether they are more representative of the green economy or degrowth? Furthermore, do their environmental and economic values differ with respect to the sector of their enterprise?

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING

The aim of our research was to describe the types of green entrepreneurs in Croatia according to previously presented typology, and to learn about their motivation and value orientation to green business. Investigating green entrepreneurial actors, their opinion on growth, economy (both domestic and global), environmental crisis, their motivation and plans for the future, we discovered beliefs and values that actors share, and which can be identified with some of the aforementioned characteristics of alternative economy concepts, for example with Latouche's key interdependent principles for degrowth, or with some of the characteristic of Parrish and Tilley's categorization of green entrepreneurs. Therefore, the main goal of our study is to empirically explore value orientation and motivation of green economy actors in Croatia and to what extent they meet the green economy (growth oriented) or degrowth principles. Our research questions were: Why do "green entrepreneurs" choose "green" business in the first place? What motivates them? What is their opinion on (de)growth economy factors and do they strive more for green economy as a lighter-change concept or degrowth as greater-change one? To answer these questions, we opted

for a descriptive qualitative methodology which best serves as a procedure for discovering and developing hypothesis, but also to map some of the main structural and explanatory aspects of the researched activity or process (Miles and Huberman 1994; Charmaz 2000). Through in-depth semi-structured interviews, we wanted to explore opinions and attitudes of our interviewees without offering them a set of pre-defined terms and concepts.

The sample was quota⁴ and convenient, consisted of green economy actors listed in the database of Croatian Chamber of Commerce. Total of 28 semi-structured interviews with green economy actors (participants from private sector regardless their firm size or type) were conducted.⁵ This sample scope enabled a satisfactory level of data density and saturation, that is, thematic repetition in the interviewees' answers. The interviews were transcribed and analysed using a computer program for qualitative data analysis (Atlas.ti 7). The procedures we used in the analysis of the transcribed material followed procedures of thematic analysis: simultaneous collection of the material and analysis, multi-level open coding, comparative analysis and conceptual analysis. Thematic analysis explores implicit and explicit meanings within the analytic material by identifying and interpreting patterns of meaning (or "themes") within qualitative data. Through thematic analysis researcher will first get familiar with data by reading and re-reading it, which is followed by initial coding. In our analysis we used open coding which refers to creating tentative labels for parts of data that summarize what is happening within that data (the codes are descriptive which means that they are based on the meaning that emerges from the data, and not based on existing theory). This step is followed by creating and then reviewing the themes. Themes are created by examining the codes and identifying broader patterns of meaning (potential themes) that are significant for research question. Although these phases are sequential, and each builds on the previous, analysis is typically a recursive process, with movement back and forth between different phases. In this manner, we inductively developed fundamental concepts that enabled the research questions to be answered. Interviews were conducted

⁴ There are many categorizations of green economy sectors, and they mostly depend on particular country's overall economy profile. UNEP's program for green economy „Green up“ defines ten green economy sectors: buildings, agriculture, fisheries, energy, tourism, forestry, waste, transport, water and manufacturing & industry (see: <http://www.greenup-unep.org/green-economy/what-is-green-economy.htm?lng=en#.XGFCnVxKg2w>). Sampling was conducted according to this categorization in areas that were covered by entrepreneurs in Croatia, and also, regarding participants' consent. Sectors covered by our sample were: buildings, agriculture, fisheries, energy and manufacturing & industry.

⁵ Of 28 interviewees, 17 were in the business of food production (owners), out of which six are medium to large firms (over ten employees) and the rest are small family owned business (less than ten employees). 11 interviewees are owners of energy related business (one in building sector) out of which two were big firms (over 50 employees) and the rest were small firms and start-ups (with less than ten employees). Interviews were conducted in July and September 2016, and interview participants were beforehand informed about the aim and purpose of this study, about their rights as participants, and they all gave signed consent to participate in the study.

on the following topics: sustainability and green economy, well-being, and relationship between profit and ecological sustainability. Through interviews we describe motivation and values of green entrepreneurs, but also their views on preferable economic models and development strategies, which helped us shed light on different types of green entrepreneurship regarding green growth or degrowth orientation, but also where those differences lay.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is evident from literature that there are differences between developmental paradigms that aim at environmental and overall sustainability, both empirically and theoretically. Differences are most evident in the theoretical dichotomy between those economic models that opportunistically strive to continue to grow where new areas of market appear (and in some cases increase material flow through social metabolism), and those economic models that see survival (of society as a whole) only through overall social change and degrowth of economy. On empirical level differences are placed on a continuum between the two aforementioned poles, and with a clear stance that values and motives of entrepreneurs determine the direction of green entrepreneurship towards one of the mentioned poles (Jahanshahi, Brem and Bhattacharjee 2017). Using open coding we developed 30 codes which we divided into three themes: motivation, values and behaviour.

Theme “Motivation” (Figure 1) assembles seven codes⁶ through which interviewees discuss reasons for choosing green business or a product (codes “reasons for choosing green business / product – value oriented”/ “- profit oriented”). The term “value oriented” in these codes refers to non-material aspect of motivation, in contrast to term “profit oriented” which refers to monetary compensation. Except the immediate reasons, some interviewees talk about a specific event (code “mental switch”) that encouraged their choice, or a need for a social change (code “responsibility for social change”). We considered both codes as manifestations of motivation for being a part of green economy.

When talking about the need for social change, interviewees would describe a desire, or even responsibility to be a part of that change, not only by being a green or ethical consumer, but also by trying to steer a change in both country’s economy and people’s lifestyles. In this regard, there are similarities with Schlange’s sustainable entrepreneur (2007) which aims to influence and bring change on regional level but also with Latouche’s principle to restructure social relations to fit non-materialistic values (see section 3). On the other hand, “mental switch” was the phrase used to describe a specific event, or a series of events that motivated interviewees to change jobs and pursue different (green) careers; and it was usually connected to the sense of good health and one’s physical well-being, which can

⁶ Codes are: mental switch; environmental awareness; reasons for choosing green business – value oriented; - profit oriented; reasons for choosing specific product – value oriented; - profit oriented; social change.

be compared to Willey, Tylor and Greig's (2010) ethical maverick who is driven by past experience and value oriented towards developing alternative businesses. We can illustrate the above with following quotations:

F#1: Everything was about money. That was not my thing...- to dump the prices and put everybody else out of business. If we want to see a change in society, we have to make changes within ourselves.

F#7: I have always worked in smelly halls (...) you forget to drink water, and you have a headache ... when I'm outside, I always have a bottle of water with me, and I don't have a headache anymore. So, for me it was an escape into green, because that's where I felt good.

The need to actively participate in broader social change by choosing to develop alternative (green) entrepreneurship, or awareness of environmental problems can certainly be indicators of degrowth values, however not exclusively, as later in the interviews some of the same participants expressed growth-oriented values. Degrowth orientation (or pro-growth one) becomes more apparent when interviewees describe concrete reasons for choosing to do a green business or make a green product. There is also clear distinction between reasons for choosing to develop green entrepreneurship per se and reasons for choosing specific products. As will later be shown through comparative analysis, the former are decisive for the value and motivational difference between groups of entrepreneurs. There was a clear distinction between groups regarding reasons for choosing to partake in a green business: some were value oriented and others profit oriented, as we illustrate with the following quotations:

E#3: It had to be something trendy and profitable, let's say 'green', something new that will be profitable and successful. There already was a decision to do business in energy sector, and then came a decision for it to be renewable.

F#13: I wake up with sense of purpose. I know that I am doing something that doesn't pollute the environment, makes people healthy... and we all know those charts that show that if more of us would eat soy instead of meat, how much the environment would benefit from it, and that's why I am motivated.

When motivation for doing green business is profit oriented, reasons stated were about the perception of "green" products being trendy, demand on the market is high, and those products are therefore profitable. As we shall see later, that notion is connected with pro-growth attitude regarding economic development. We could say that those are "innovative opportunists" (Walley, Taylor and Greig 2010), or "opportunistic entrepreneurs" (Parrish and Tilley 2010) who fall in the dominant developmental paradigm that views both progress and solution to environmental problems through (green) economic growth. On the other

hand, when motivation is value oriented, reasons started to vary from a notion of need for social change towards a more just society and/or environmentally sustainable economy, the need to preserve tradition or to live “healthy”; whatever the case is, it later translates into a more negative stand towards economic growth, or current neoliberal economic system (see also Petrović, Peternel and Ančić 2020, this issue). Those interviewees could be placed on a spectrum from sustainability driven entrepreneurs who seek greater change than economic one aiming at ecosystem stability and human well-being (Parish and Tilley 2010; Schlange 2007), to visionary champions and ethical mavericks (Walley, Taylor and Greig 2010) who seek to, complementary with Latouche’s degrowth principles, reconceptualise key notions of wealth and poverty, restructure social relations and relocalize means of production, as illustrated in these quotations:

F#5: We are driven by the belief that we can change people’s opinions, that we are giving them better possibilities, an opportunity to choose... because if you don’t have opportunity to choose, you can’t make any changes.

F#7: I was aware that our processing plant wouldn’t affect only our life, but also the lives of people in the area who grow buckwheat and have had a hard time selling their raw material. It [processing plant] had to be built so that whole area can benefit from it.

Closely connected to motives for doing green business are interviewees values. As mentioned previous in this paper “core values are the motivational base and normative standard of their behaviour” (Jahanshahi, Brem and Bhattacharjee 2017: 3). Theme “Values” holds nine codes⁷ (Figure 2). Through these codes we can see further (dis)matching with green growth or degrowth concepts.

Almost all interviewees proclaim a strong sense of business ethics in regard to which all of them show a prominent sense of (self-)pride. In that sense, a responsible and just way of doing business, and having good relations with the employees, are expressed as important. Many of our interviewees express values that are in line with degrowth ideas, such as the care for community, sustainability and non-materialism. Especially prominent are ideas about bringing broader social change and care for community through helping, sharing knowledge, and trying to encourage people to change their lifestyles. Some interviewees express a need to impact the community, or a need to change economy patterns in certain domains (code “small is beautiful”) when asked about their opinion on global economics, conventional entrepreneurship and economic growth; but also when asked about their personal priorities, relationship with the community or with customers, and their business aspirations and plans for future. We can illustrate the latter with following quotations:

⁷ Codes are: work ethic; sustainability; small is beautiful; growth oriented, degrowth; modesty, non-material values; supporting local/domestic economy; care for community.

E#1: For me it is unnecessary to have only big projects. There should be a lot of small projects ... instead of 5 large 1,000 small. /talking about solar power plants/

F#14: If you don't reach a certain number of people, not just customers, if you don't influence people to change... share your knowledge, then everything we do remains small, and the knowledge is lost.

When asked directly about economic growth, some interviewees discussed their attitudes about modern capitalism, and their view on macroeconomics. This is where interviewees showed most differences regarding their values and we can clearly segregate between the growth-oriented and degrowth-oriented ones. When interviewees expressed their satisfaction with having a small business, having more pleasure in, for instance, growing food than making money, or comparing economic growth with a cancerous state; we considered those to be degrowth-oriented ideas and values, for instance:

F#1: If a tree can't grow infinitely, then economy can't either. To make more and more profit, big firms and banks had to depreciate work and resources. Growth is a funny thing, a tumor also grows as long as it has a flesh to feed on – economic growth, it is like a cancerous state.

F#9: For me, to be able to grow food is a much greater wealth than having money. Money is more of a necessary evil (...) It all depends on our goals – and 'Family Agricultural Businesses' don't have to be based on making profit in the first place.

These quotations again serve as an illustration for some of Latouche's key principles of degrowth, such as reconceptualising key notions of wealth and poverty, and reducing the production and consumption. They also serve as further examples of visionary champions and sustainable entrepreneurs that aim at social betterment via qualitative change.

On the other hand, some interviewees expressed more positive views on economic growth, considering it to be the best indicator of development:

E#5: Well, it's a logical sentence [economic growth], I mean... it doesn't have to be, there are other factors too, but it is the best and the fastest indicator of progress. The market is big, and economy can only grow.

These kinds of answers serve as an illustration of the green entrepreneurs classified in literature as innovative opportunists, or responsible and/or opportunistic entrepreneurs who are financially motivated to use the market's green niche, but (some) still strive to solve (or contribute to solving) environmental problems.

Third theme, "Behaviour" holds eight codes: long-term thinking, willingness to give up profit, willingness to take risks, multitasking, responsibility for social change, PEB, PEB

plans, quality of life⁸. Through those codes we further interpret interviewees' similarities and differences, but also look into prominence of pro-environmental behaviour amongst the green entrepreneurs. However, previously shown differences regarding green growth and degrowth ideas are least visible in this theme. Therefore, we didn't include this theme in comparative analysis, since it does not offer any insight into the research question.

When asked about their day to day actions, interviewees were mostly talking about their work habits and responsibilities. Expressed traits were those typical of an entrepreneur (green or any other): willingness to take risks, long-term thinking, long working hours, job satisfaction and multitasking. They also express willingness to give up profit in order to prosper in the long term. We also wanted to know about their lifestyle and pro-environmental behaviour (PEB), and got answers predominantly about waste recycling and to some extent energy efficiency in their households, but none expressed or described more radical sustainable lifestyle like off the grid housing, not using cars, or using electric cars and the like. Habits and lifestyle of interviewees appeared to be somewhat different than values those interviewees had expressed, that is, their lifestyle is not as radically sustainable as some interviewees would like the society to be. This discrepancy can be explained with the lack of (social) infrastructure for sustainable lifestyle, but also with existential priorities of some interviewees who, as small firm owners, strive to find a place in the market and keep their firm open in order to assure monthly sustenance.

Values and motivation point to the general stance on the need for social transformation that actors of green economy have, which can point to transformative potential of green economy in Croatia. However, interviewees express both green growth and degrowth ideas. We therefore wondered if there was a clearer distinction between groups of actors considering the differences in values and motivation, also we assumed those differences would be evident if we divided our subjects into medium and big business (more than ten employees) and small business (up to ten employees) groups. We hypothesized that interviewees from the bigger firms will have profit/growth-oriented values and motivation, and interviewees from small firms will be degrowth oriented. We were looking for codes that appear only in one group, since those are the codes that can differentiate groups of entrepreneurs / interviewees with no bias. However, when codes were grouped and divided between two groups of interviewees there was no difference between them. Codes that were pointing to growth-oriented motivation/values and degrowth oriented ones were appearing in both big and small firm owners' groups. With further comparative analysis, we discovered that differences we were wondering about lie between the interviewees that were in food production/processing firms (we name them "farmers"), and those in industry/energy sector (named "engineers"), as shown in tables below. As shown in Table 1 code "degrowth" only appears among those interviewees who deal with food production/processing (predominantly

⁸ Since there was no interconnectedness of the codes in this theme we considered that figure for code map was not necessary since it wouldn't show how codes interact, unlike for previous two themes.

owners of small family organic farms), and code “growth oriented” only appears among interviewees from the energy or industry sector. Similar thing occurs when we look at codes “Reasons for choosing green business – profit oriented” and “Reasons for choosing green business – value oriented” (Table 2).

THEME “VALUES”	
CODE	APPEARANCE OF CODE
Care for community	Farmers, Engineers
Supporting local economy	Farmers, Engineers
Modesty	Farmers
Degrowth	Farmers
Growth oriented	Engineers
Non-material values	Farmers, Engineers
Small is beautiful	Engineers
Sustainability	Farmers, Engineers
Business ethic	Farmers, Engineers

Table 1. Appearance of codes in two groups – theme “Values”

THEME “MOTIVATION”	
CODE	APPEARANCE OF CODE
Environmental awareness	Farmers, Engineers
Mental switch	Farmers
Reasons for choosing green business – profit oriented	Engineers
Reasons for choosing green business – value oriented	Farmers
Reasons for choosing specific product – profit oriented	Farmers, Engineers
Reasons for choosing specific product – value oriented	Farmers, Engineers
Responsibility for social change	Farmers

Table 2. Appearance of codes in two groups – theme “Motivation”

Motivation to develop green entrepreneurship proved to be a decisive trait which differentiates entrepreneurs in the sense that “farmers” are exclusively value driven, and engineers profit driven, while codes “reasons for choosing specific product” have proved to be both value driven and a practical choice, and therefore not a distinguishing trait amongst groups of entrepreneurs.

Differences between groups could be explained with different professional contexts and different narratives arising from those contexts. Organic farming, especially on a small scale, does not require cutting-edge technology, and its practitioners often use narratives that rest on values of preservation (of nature), modesty (in using resources), indigenous

knowledge, and self-reliance – values that are in contrast with the modern age consumerism and growth-oriented economy (Geiger 2009.). On the other hand, someone in energy sector business of, for instance, solar panels, is more likely to believe in technological fixes, and to perceive technical innovation as a solution for environmental problems, rather than social innovation (such as degrowth); a narrative in line with Bina's (2013) greening discourse for future development which aims to achieve resource efficient growth and has roots in technoscientific paradigm. There's another parallel that can be drawn. Unlike "farmers" that come from different educational backgrounds, almost all "engineers" that we talked to hold a degree from engineering universities. According to research conducted by Brajdić Vuković (2017) researchers from technical and biotechnical sciences (i. e. engineers) hold a more anthropocentric worldview (in the context of cosmological domain of dominant social paradigm) than other researchers, but also significantly more than general public. The author concludes that this is underlined by techno-scientific narrative which young researchers internalize during their education, whereby the world, and problems in it, are seen through technical and mechanical comprehension, therefore solutions are perceived as such as well. Bell and Stellingwerf (2012), found in their study that sustainable entrepreneurs value profit first, and this inclination is explained with "means to an end" argument (entrepreneurs need the profit to solve the environmental problem they are focused on). Since this case study was conducted only among firms in renewable energy industry, it in part corresponds with our findings. Considering the comparative analysis we conducted, it is plausible to conclude, in line with Brajdić Vuković's findings, that interviewees in this research who are inclined towards technological solutions and perpetuation of economic model based on growth (one that is mainstream and established in the dominant social paradigm) are (green) growth oriented partially due to educational socialization. On the other hand, organic agriculture questions the system of production (and thought) that is based on abundance and consumerist habits; ideal principles of organic farming are post-materialistic, and reflect a way of (food) production through closed cycle of organic matter, direct connections between producers and consumers, trust, solidarity and therefore develop ethical principles that become part of a lifestyle (Geiger and Zeman 2010; Puđak and Bokan 2011). In that way organic farming, and apparently organic farmers from this research, are resisting not only the conventional, intensive agriculture, but also corporate capitalism.

CONCLUSION

With this paper we tried to contribute to the understanding of the green entrepreneurs' values and motivation and whether there were any more radical tendencies regarding the transformation of the present economic model. The research has shown that values and motivation amongst the green entrepreneurs in Croatia are closely connected, and that

they do indeed steer the direction of a given company/enterprise. The main finding of the research is the value and motivation distinction between interviewees from agriculture related enterprises, and the ones from energy and building related enterprises that we named “farmers” and “engineers.” When choosing the green business in the first place, farmers seem to be value oriented and engineers profit oriented.. In addition, regarding the type of values, farmers appear to be degrowthers, and engineers pro-growthers. We hold that this distinction in value orientation and motivation between actors from various economy sectors is due to the very nature of each economy sector; energy sector is much more “sci-tech” and profit driven than the organic farming which is based on the environmental sustainability and moderation, as well as opposition to the culture of abundance seen in post-industrial agriculture and overall society.

Regarding motivation and values, we can see there is overlapping with some of the principles Latouche mentions: reconceptualisation of key notions such as wealth, poverty and value; relocalization of means of production, and recycling (PEB on individual level). Mentioned only in a few interviews, hence calling for further exploration, there is also leaning towards restructuring of productive apparatus and transforming social relations to achieve transition towards degrowth society. It should also be noted that typology of green entrepreneurs in Croatia is much more complex and multifaceted, and we could not reduce it to two types considering their values and views on green growth / degrowth. However, for the purpose of this research and research question we were predominantly interested in those characteristics. Those questions, and the one of transformative potential of green actors, entrepreneurs as well as others, we leave to future research.

There are also certain limitations to this research that need to be addressed. Although there are a lot of codes in line with degrowth ideas, that is somewhat due to sample. The fact that values (or codes) that match degrowth ideas are more numerous could prompt reader to consider degrowth values to be more representative of interviewees views. However, that is not the case since in our sample there were more family-oriented businesses in food production (as well as in country's green economy sector) which has been, by comparative analysis, proven to be important for expressing degrowth ideas. Having that in mind, the overall “degrowth” tendencies are not prominent amongst all Croatian green entrepreneurs, and it would be hard to conclude about the transformative potential of green entrepreneurship in Croatia. Degrowth principles have proved to be more traceable amongst small agricultural businesses. It should also be mentioned that Slovenian authors have reached somewhat opposing conclusion conducting case study on organic farming that point to existence of profit motivation amongst organic farmers (Bartulović and Kozorog 2014). This indicates that regional legislative and developmental framework needs to be taken into account to help further explain described differences. Also, given the nature of the qualitative research, the generalization of results is limited. However, considering the overlapping of results and conclusions with previous research that was presented in this paper, partial generalization in similar populations can apply.

This research has also opened new areas for both qualitative and quantitative research to develop precise instruments for further explanation of all the relevant aspects that participants of this research accentuate, and also of the underlying processes that make for the differences in each sector. If the distinction between farmers and engineers proves to be empirically significant it opens new questions regarding research objectives, as well as social transformation potential.

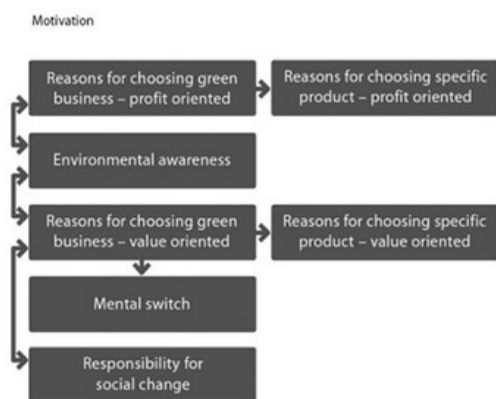


Figure 1: Theme “Motivation” – ascribed code map

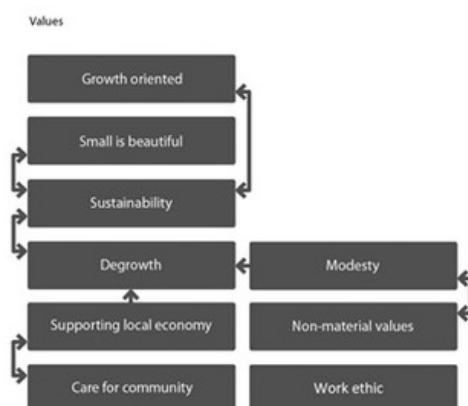


Figure 2: Theme “Values” – ascribed code map

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KDO KAJ ŽELI IN ZAKAJ? “KMETJE” IN “INŽENIRJI” KOT ZELENİ PODJETNIKI

Koncept zelene ekonomije, ki se izvaja s pomočjo neoliberalnega kapitalizma, že dolgo kritizirajo radikalnejši znanstveniki in aktivisti, ki dvomijo o ideji neomejene gospodarski rasti na omejenem planetu in pozivajo k celoviti preobrazbi gospodarskih in socialnih sistemov v smeri modela trajnosti in odrasti. „Zeleni“ podjetniki si prizadevajo za spodbujanje razvoja, ki bi bil ekološki, družbeno-kulturni in gospodarsko trajnosten. Kakšne so njihove vrednote, kaj jih motivira in ali imajo raje ekonomijo rasti ali “odrasti”, so teme, ki jih avtorici preučujeta v razpravi.

Veliko je literature o vrstah zelenih podjetnikov o njihovi motivaciji in vrednotah, ni pa veliko raziskav o tem, kaj pomaga oblikovati te motivacijske razlike. V raziskavi sta avtorici pokazali, da so vrednote in motivacija med zelenimi podjetniki na Hrvaškem tesno povezane in da dejansko usmerjajo določeno podjetje. Kar zadeva motivacijo in vrednote, rezultati raziskave kažejo, da se nekatera načela odrasti prekrivajo; Latouche omenja rekonceptualizacijo osrednjih pojmov, npr. bogastvo, revščino, selitev sredstev za proizvodnjo in recikliranje. Z nadaljnjo primerjalno analizo smo ugotovili, da obstaja motivacijska razlika, ki izhaja iz strukturnega konteksta in se pojavlja med akterji iz različnih gospodarskih sektorjev. Glavna ugotovitev raziskave kaže, da so glede na motivacijo za vključitev v zeleni posel „kmetje“ drugače vrednotno usmerjeni kot inženirji.

Mogoče je trditi, da je to razlikovanje v vrednotni naravnosti in motivaciji posledica različnih poklicnih kontekstov in različnih pripovedi. Ekološko kmetovanje, zlasti v majhnem obsegu, ne zahteva vrhunske tehnologije, njegovi praktiki pa pogosto uporabljajo pripovedi, ki temeljijo na vrednotah ohranjanja (narave), skromnosti (pri uporabi virov), avtohtonem znanju in zanašanju nase, to je vrednotah, ki so v nasprotju s sodobnim potrošništvom in gospodarstvom, usmerjenim v rast. Na podlagi primerjalne analize je mogoče sklepati, da so tisti anketiranci, ki so nagnjeni k tehnološkim rešitvam in trajanju ekonomskega modela rasti, tako usmerjeni tudi zaradi izobrazbene socializacije in konteksta stroke.

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