

## INTEGRACJA NA RYNKU USŁUG POCZTOWYCH CONVERGENCE AT THE POSTAL MARKET

*Artykuł omawia oddziaływanie zmian technologicznych na strategię rynków usług pocztowych. Głównym tematem jest integracja technologii, usług i tworzenia nowych form kooperacji przedsiębiorstw—pionowych i poziomych sojuszy firm. Termin „integracja” (ang. convergence) rozumiany jest w odniesieniu do technologii, zawartości usług, oraz wymiaru ekonomicznego i instytucjonalnego.*

**Słowa kluczowe:** integracja, poczta, usługi, technologia informacyjna, strategia, operator.

*The paper deals with impacts of technology change on the strategy of postal markets. It concentrates on the convergence of technology, services and creation of new forms of firm cooperation – vertical and horizontal alliances. The term “convergence” is defined in relation with technology, content, economic and institutional dimensions.*

**Keywords:** convergence, post, services, information technology, strategy, operator.

Current world economic environment can be characterized as knowledge technologies arrival, accompanied by mobility development and capital liquidity, as well as regulation and liberalization reforms in wide dynamic international economic sectors, especially in the area of financing, business and information technologies. Science and technique results and institutional innovations in the area of transport and telecommunications are not related only to distance shortening, time barriers elimination and restrictions, but all this information mentioned represent also the core of world economy development of global production systems of knowledge. Global markets with an extensive outsourcing and just-in-time deliveries demand considerable increase semi-finished products transportation, components and goods between the production and logistical centers all over the world. Tempo of product obsolescence and service obsolescence remain in demand and supply. Spatial distribution is changed extensively concerning the subject, manner and the area of transportation.

In connection with these changes, the term convergence is more often used in economics and management description:

- processes of adjusting various economics indexes differences within the group of countries or the process of run highly developed countries down and standard of living individual countries adjustment,
- processes of changes, traditionally not connected areas, or the dismantling of borders between traditional branches and markets.

From the systematic point of view and convergence change analysis expressions, it is possible to initiate these four areas [1]:

1. technology convergence,
2. content convergence, or product convergence,
3. economic convergence,
4. institutional convergence.

Technique and technology convergence concern the possibilities of the postal network usage, for the innovative services or new services providing, as well as, new markets entering [11].

Content convergence and product convergence result from the existence of product in material and immaterial form, or

the content in digital form and the multiple use possibility, its storage etc. [5,6].

Institutional convergence can be observed in an administration and political level. This convergence is especially connected with an economic and fiscal policy, integration alignments forming and common legislative frame development. The particular demonstrations of institutional convergence at the post can be seen at regulation frame determination. It depends whether it is connected with regulator assignments, market access, universal service content and scope, quality assurance, price making progress, etc.

Technique and technology convergence caused changes in the meaning of knowledge, human capital and financial capital utilization comprehension [3, 4, 8]. This gives rise to join the enterprises in corporation, alliances and fusions. Strong firms act all over the world like a „global players“. Economics activities are based on various regulation rules, norms and laws. Harmonization is not easy, for the reason of disparity in national interest. Free trade with a free competition represents a threat for a national production and an employment, especially for the fast industrial development.

In term of economic real and nominal convergence is differentiated [2,10]. Nominal convergence especially means the convergence of specific economics indicators of grade (or of specific reference value for the indicators defined) engaging stability at the economic integrated area. The real convergence from an individual point of view implies, if it is possible to gain the same quantity of goods and services like in a highly-developed countries when the prices are comparable. On the other hand, this means, that employee has to produce the same value per one foot-poundal as an employee in the highly-developed economic. Comparability economic efficiency analysis, comparability wage scale analysis, productivity and prices are considered as the basic measurable coefficients of the real convergence.

Total revenue analysis of the universal postal service provider has shown some common tendencies, presented in the figure 1a and 1b [7]. Consecutive total revenue increase reduction has occurred in V4 countries as well as in Balt countries. Whereby, an absolute revenue decrease occurred in Czech Republic and

Estonia in the year 2000. But this effect was not characteristic for all the European countries.

These two convergences are the processes methodological starting point of the economic convergence observation [9]:

- beta convergence, the consequence of currently poor countries tend to reach gradually the economic coefficients of wealthy countries,
- sigma convergence focus on economic coefficients variability between the countries. This is expressed in economic coefficient logarithms standard deviation fall between the countries. Further, this implicates lowering the gap abreast of economics coefficients.

Beta convergence validity observation in condition of European countries in term of universal service provider revenues is presented in fig. 2-3. Horizontal line expresses general returns starting point, or postal service returns, universal service provider per capita in logarithms. Vertical line expresses average growth rate of this coefficient during the years 1998 – 2002.

From the figure 2, beta convergence validity results, whereas regression axis has got negative trend, this means oncoming the less developed countries to developed countries. Coefficient of determination is 29,7 %. Most of the countries, which entered the EU in the years of 2004 or 2007, are in the left side of the graph, with the exception of CR, Slovenia, Malta. These countries make the shed between the countries. All these countries mentioned abreast of Spain and Portugal. Concurrent, it is clear, that countries with a long-term going market economy are at the right side of the graph. Differences in the coefficient level between the countries entering the EU in 2004 and also in the year of 2007 are more expressive, and it is not possible to expressly assert the variability decrease in the search period,

nor the sigma convergence validity. Analogical conclusion can be done following the analysis in the figures 3 and 4.

Postal market analyses results support forecast changes in postal environment. Trends bring new ways of looking on overall conception of postal services and operator networks, technology suppliers and especially customers. In a worldwide basis, thanks to internet popularity and e-business applications increase, the demand for data communication and transport-logistics services rises. According to analysts, the situation will have persisted in the near future of 3 or 4 years, and probably in a space of time 7 to 10 years. This fact is one of the key facts in creating traditional postal operator business plans as well as the new operators at the postal market.

New postal operators have to come up with new services and new possibilities for their customers to have theirs way at the postal market and attract customers. Postal operators have to make their supply (of the postal services) more attractive. Network building succumbs to all these conditions. There is an advantage for new subjects in building the networks from the core. Therefore, question of contact points abolishing is not needed to handle with any more. Network draft and submission can be built to respect operator's business intention and especially meets the customer needs.

For reasons given, convergence utterances at the post or at the postal markets are possible to follow, in term of capital corporations, customer structures, or consumers, infrastructure, investments, individual choice etc. Global operator strategies reflect a convergence trend, in the term of technology, content, economics or management.

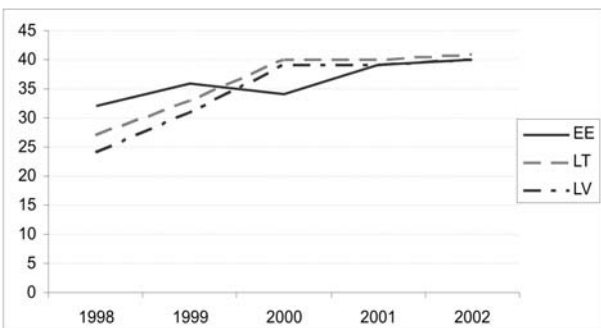
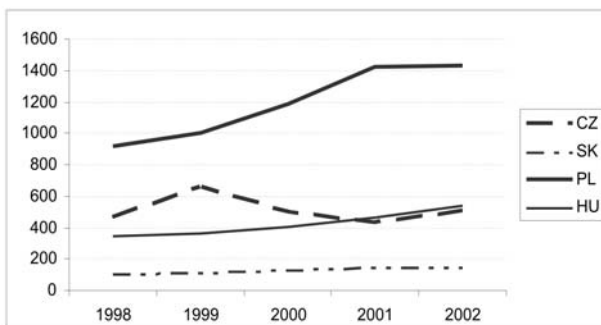


Fig. 1. a) USP revenue in mil Euro in V4 countries, b) USP revenues in mil Euro in Balt countries: Key: CZ – Czech Republic, SR – Slovak Republic, HU – Hungary, PL – Poland, EE – Estonia, LT – Latvia, LV – Lithuania

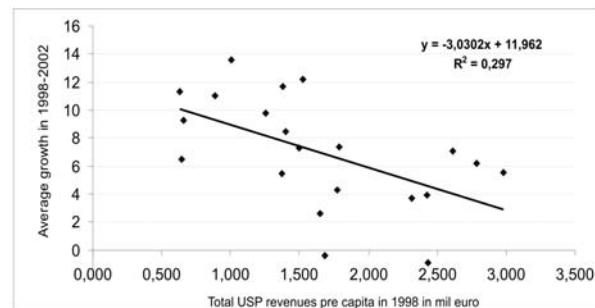
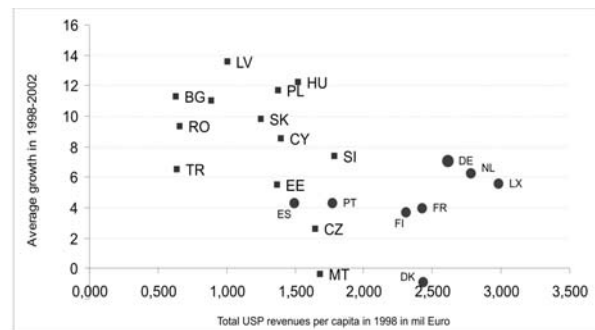


Fig. 2. Linear function of beta convergence: Key: CZ – Czech Republic, SR – Slovak Republic, HU – Hungary, PL – Poland, EE – Estonia, LT – Latvia, LV – Lithuania, BG – Bulgaria, CY – Cyprus, MT – Malta, RU – Romania, SI – Slovenia, DK – Denmark, DE – Germany, ES – Spain, FI – Finland, FR – France, LX – Luxembourg, NL – Nedherlands, PT – Portugal

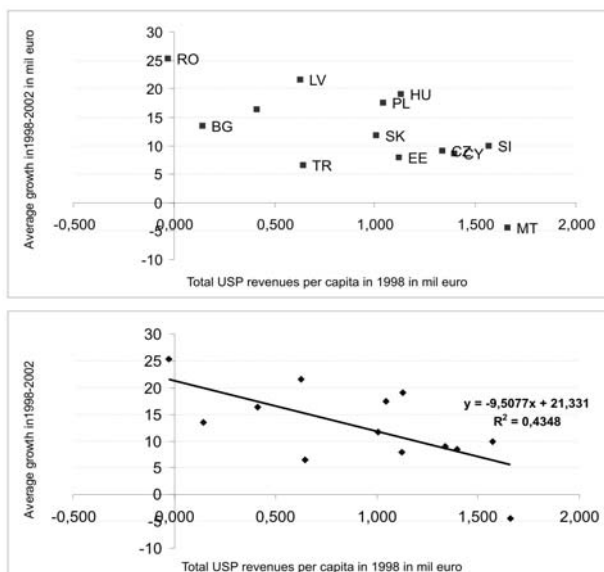


Fig. 3. Linear function beta convergence

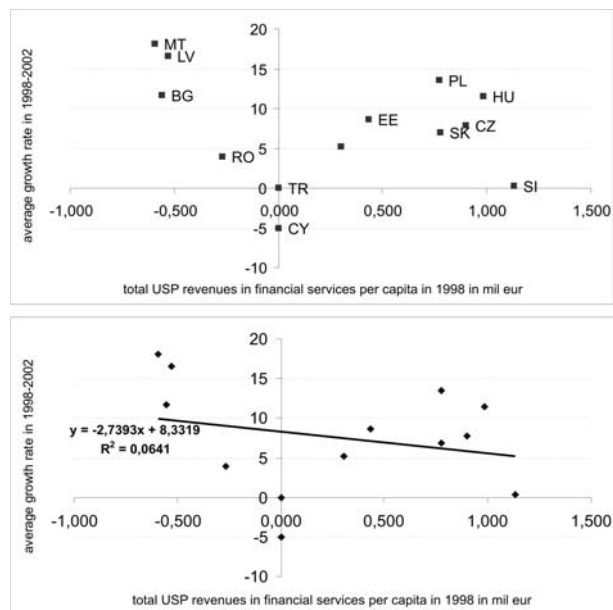


Fig. 4. Linear function of beta convergence

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