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INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCES OF MANAGERS IN THE GLOBALIZATION PROCESS

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The article presents the intercultural competences of managers in international organizations, specifically in relation to the dynamic development of the globalization process. The global economy and the internationalization of management set new standards in the development of managerial skills. The ongoing globalization process is one of the most important factors affecting the organizational behaviour of managers in international organizations. First of all, the new dimension of the modern manager is the “global mind”, flexible towards cultural diversity, constantly improving their intercultural competence.

Keywords: globalization, competences, management

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, managerial skills are defined to a large extent by globalization processes. Seeking effective mechanisms of responding to new challenges establishes new standards in the development of managerial skills that allow the smooth functioning of the intercultural management area. An increasingly stronger conviction is witnessed that, in view of the scale of changes, it is necessary to include the skill of coping in a culturally different environment in the process of improving professional competences. The future belongs to organizations operating globally that are created by managers oriented to the transnational aspect of management.

The objective of this article is to demonstrate the need for changes in the competence profiles of managers, who are thinking and acting globally, and are flexible towards cultural diversity, and constantly improving their intercultural competence. The considerations presented in this article are based on a literature analysis, comparative analysis and logical inference.

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2. THE ESSENCE OF THE GLOBALIZATION PROCESS

The directions in the development of the world economy are becoming increasingly difficult to predict due to the ongoing processes of borders' disappearance not only in the geographical, but also in the economic terms. "Globalization is the multiplicity of ties and reciprocity of influences between the states and societies that form the current world system" (McGrew, 1992, p. 28), it involves establishing a network of relations between the individual participants of economic processes, and unification of products, services, and even cultures. This is a multi-faceted process that involves such domains as political, economic, social and geographical areas, which makes it ubiquitous, and progressive at the same time, and as experience shows - inevitable. Historians seek the origins of this phenomenon in the period as early as the spread of Christianity, Buddhism, or Islam. The eras of great geographical discoveries and development of trade are both also considered important stages, followed by the French Revolution and American Revolution that contributed to the development of industry. The literature distinguishes three basic waves of this phenomenon directly connected with areas involving the flow of people, flow of information, flow of capital and goods. The first wave dates back to 1870-1914, and was connected with the migration of people from Europe to North America. New, faster forms of transport and reduced customs duties resulted in a great increase of exports worldwide. The second wave was noted in 1950-1980, and was characterised by the elimination of trade barriers. The next wave took place after 1980, when the isolated countries started to open their markets to foreign goods (Borowiecki, Siuta-Tokarska, 2012, p. 16). Technological progress, the information revolution, liberalisation of trade, and the free movement of the labour force created new conditions for the modern economy and its entities. The pace and diversity of economic conditions, and the political, social and cultural changes forced organizations to adapt their rules of operation, information systems and organizational structures, and to seek flexible, more intelligent solutions (Borkowska, Bohdziewicz, 1998, p. 33). The favourable changes allow companies, in their international expansion, to seek an opportunity to build a competitive advantage. At the same time, functioning in changeable conditions demands from the organization a quick response, flexibility and adaptation to the changing market conditions. As is emphasized by M.E. Porter (1986), internationalisation is increasingly becoming a necessity for enterprises due to the growing number of global and similar to global sectors. This applies to both large corporations that have ambitions to play an important role in the international arena, and small and medium-sized enterprises seeking new markets for their products.

For many years, it has been observed that the globalization process is becoming increasingly dynamic; currently, some of the researchers air the view that the world economy is under the influence of the so-called *fourth wave* due to, *inter alia*, the growing importance of cooperation on the strategy of global activity, or emergence

of a new order on the world market with the following 3 components: states, corporations and international organizations (Rosińska-Bukowska, 2009, pp. 31-32). Globalisation, also defined as “the process of changing the perspective of perceiving the principles and rules of conduct, events, behaviours, actions, and recognized values from the national to the worldwide perspective” (Gierszewska, Wawrzyniak, 2001, p. 13), is in an advanced and ubiquitous stage. To sum up, it can be concluded that today, the phenomenon is affected by the following (Rosińska-Bukowska, 2009, pp. 31-32):

- deepening of the international division of labour,
- development of the international exchange and global markets,
- increase in the size of companies operating on the global scale,
- international transfer of capital (including international mergers and acquisitions),
- global capital market,
- flow of knowledge, technology and intellectual resources, etc.

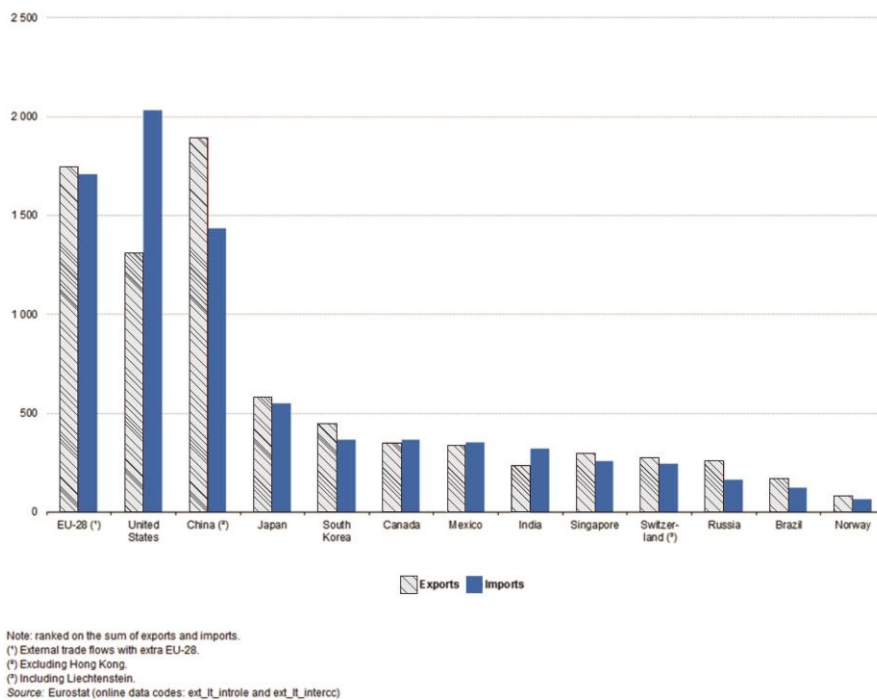
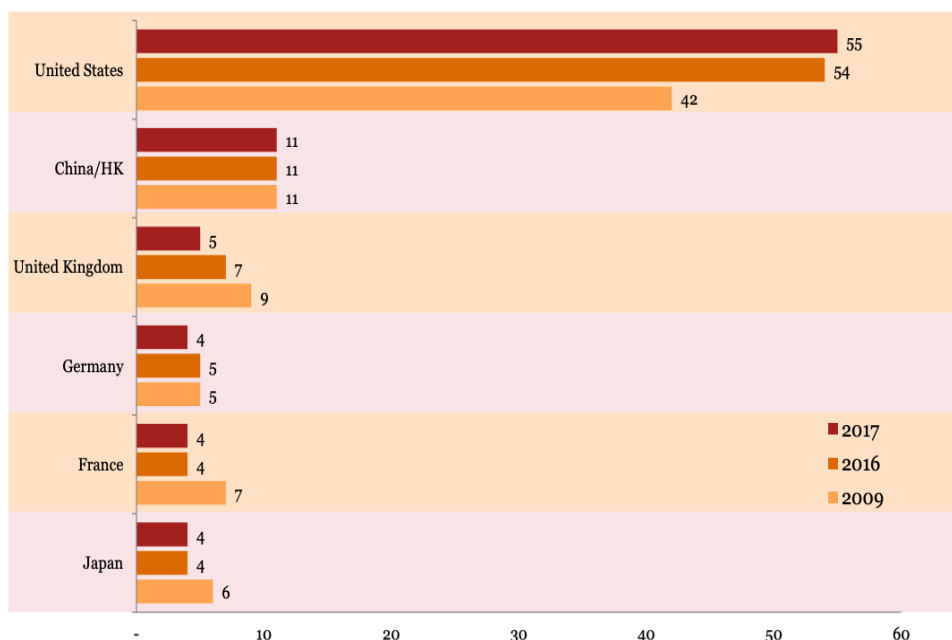


Fig. 1. The main players in international trade in 2016 (in billion EUR) (Eurostat 2016)

Despite numerous risks arising from operating on an unknown foreign market and in the international network of political and economic dependencies, the growing involvement of the company in the processes taking place on foreign markets creates numerous development opportunities. Fig. 1 shows the share of the major actors in the trade on the global market. Years of transformation have led to distin-

guishing the key players in the international trade of goods. These are the United States, China and 28 states that are the members of the European Union. The recent years have brought significant changes in the balance of forces. Japan is no longer a part of the economic triad. Since 2004, it has taken the 4th position. It has lost its previous position to its Asian neighbour.

Year by year the dominance of US corporations is increasing on the world market (see Fig. 2). Already 55 out of the 100 largest global companies come from North America. The year 2017 is another (already sixth) year of Apple's dominance with regard to the value of the company. Organizations from Europe lost their position in the ranking, as a result of the financial crisis, and globalization has only increased the scale of the crisis and enabled its faster spreading.



The number of companies in PwC TOP 100 ranking

Fig. 2. The largest companies globally by country of origin (PriceWaterhomeCoopers 2017)

The objective of present-day companies is to gain a competitive advantage. The changeability of the environment, both on the macro- and micro-scale, determines the continuous modification and reaching for ever more flexible strategies, and creating conditions for their efficient implementation. The changing environment effectively reduces the possibilities, and the scale of companies' impact on this

environment. A company's survival and stable position on the global market depend on the skills to foresee and assess the changes taking place in the environment. Organizations must learn how to make decisions on the methods, forms, pace of implementation and the scope of the restructuring, innovation and development activities (Borowiecki, Rojek, 2000, pp. 187-200). And the managerial staff should be able to make decisions not only related to the current activities and solving crisis situations, but also, and perhaps above all, should be able to make prospective choices in order to ensure and restore balance in the companies. This is consistent with the message of Alvin Toffler who in 1986 stated that "the company of the future will be a dual organization or a polyorganization, an entity with a network character and with the elements of auto-coordination, undertaking various forms of activity, frequently created for the specified period" (Toffler, Toffler, 1986, p. 306). Except that currently we are not speculating about the future. Changeability, uncertainty, and temporality are the conditions in which a modern organization operates, they decide about its shape and form.

3. INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

One of the main determinants of an organization's success in the international environment is its ability to select a competent staff, both in the country and abroad. Therefore, present-day companies are in a sense forced to implement adaptation processes in the management of human resources. M. Armstrong defines the management of human resources as a strategic, consistent and comprehensive look at the problems connected with the management and development of the human resources within the structure of the company, and each aspect of this process is an important element of an organization's management as a whole. In fact, human resources management means an ideology based on the belief that organizations (structures) exist to provide the customers with certain values (goods). Human resources management sees people as a valuable source of the company's success, and does not treat them as variable costs, but rather as fixed assets, and therefore, takes the view that human resources should be provided with the best possible leaders and the opportunities to fully develop their abilities (Armstrong, 1996, p. 9).

International expansion requires, to a large extent, systematic adaptation of strategies to the changing foreign markets and the competition existing on them. International human resources management creates a process, which is a consistent configuration of activities that involve setting long-term objectives, developing policies, plans, and creating and using the human capital of the company in order to gain and maintain a competitive advantage on the global market. One of the areas that should be optimized are the resources in the form of highly-qualified labour, such as managers and professionals, who due to their skills and personal traits will be able to function in a different, most of all culturally different, environment. Peo-

ple and their potential are the most precious value, and at the same time, the main force that is driving the development of the company. Therefore, it is so important to create opportunities to improve the competences, both of individuals and of the whole team. This attitude requires a change in the management style, moving away from typical managerism.

Globalization of the organization affects the complexity of the processes that take place in it. It can be a source of benefits because of the possibility to have access to cheaper factors of production and better use of the existing resources, both financial and non-financial ones. At the same, it involves a great risk in the economic, administrative, cultural and geographical spheres. It also entails a personal risk, connected with, *inter alia*, the transfer, placement and search for suitably qualified staff, and connected with the structure of the international labour market and availability of employees. The effects can manifest in a material - that is, financial form, and an intangible form, e.g. creation of a company's image on the global labour market. To sum up, in order to meet the challenges of a competitive market, the organizations must ensure suitably qualified resources, which is the human capital, whose values will be at the same time consistent with business ethics (Kuc, 2003, p. 460).

The organizations base their operations, *inter alia*, on knowledge. The competences of managers and highly-qualified professionals have become, in the recent years, a determinant of gaining and maintaining a competitive advantage on the international markets. This is the most valuable resource of a modern enterprise, allowing a quick adaptation to the turbulent environment. Globalization requires modern companies follow the path of investing in humans. Success is not possible without acquiring, holding and quickly-processing the knowledge. Currently, it is the initiative of the employees that counts, and their ability to implement the corporate strategy (Wyrzykowska, 2008, pp. 365-367). This would not be possible without the ability to quickly adapt to the changeable, and frequently unfriendly conditions, in which they need to operate. The managers are expected to demonstrate creativity, entrepreneurship, knowledge and leadership to others. The ongoing process of globalization is a challenge for managers; first and foremost, with respect to the continuous adaptation to changes, and also due to functioning in a complex environment, which is created not only by the local employees, partners, competitors, customers and market regulators. The manner of work of a contemporary manager is created by the same groups, but it is multiplied and with countless separate conditions connected with, *inter alia*, cultural diversity or geographical location.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF A MANAGER IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

Managers play a crucial role in the process of managing an organization. Their skills and efforts are the main determinant deciding about the effectiveness of this process. It depends on the managerial staff whether the resources and potential inherent in the environment are optimally used, and hence the innovation of the organization (Pocztowski, 2008).

The literature is increasingly referring to the concept of a global manager. However, this term is not clearly defined. Usually, the global manager is defined as a leader with the skills of the world without borders, and at the same time, under the influence of this world. In organization management, this leader should take into account the global context in which the organization exists, and the organizational culture of the country in which it operates (Woźniak, Wiżyn, 2008).

Moreover, another approach is also prevailing, in which defining the concept of the universal global manager is not possible. Bartlett (2008, p. 156) argues that international organizations require three types of professionals – business managers, country managers and functional managers – and top-rank directors to coordinate the activities of these professionals. Usually the business activity of such an organization is constantly expanding on all continents, regardless of the political divisions, and the task of the managers comes down to efficient and effective management of the companies in the conditions of global expansion.

The considerations on the role played by the managers in international organizations offer various perceptions of this role. Notwithstanding the above, an important task of the manager is to seize the opportunities and respond to risks emerging in the environment of the organization. The managers should inspire the subordinated staff to carry out new projects, adopt innovative and creative solutions, and support the development of both the whole organization and individual employees (Juchnowicz, Rostkowski, Sienkiewicz, 2003). The managerial staff should create such working conditions, which allow efficient human resources management, and ensure their necessary involvement, and the best possible use of the possessed competences and talents to achieve the objectives of the organization (Bieniek, Steinerowska, 2014, pp. 33-46).

The aim of the managers is to care about the future of the organization by means of making the right decisions and organizing the work of the teams, guided by knowledge and skills, and the system of norms and values (Kuc, 2003, p. 460). The managers, through effective management, should unlock the potential of employees to be able to jointly pursue the goals of the utmost importance (Bieniok, 2001).

Presently, a particular challenge for managers is posed by the international space and the knowledge-based economy. The contemporary reality confronts the managerial staff with new tasks in the area of management methods and competences of the managers themselves.

The global reach of the organization, and changes in the rules of competing on the global market, both with respect to the scope and diversity of knowledge acquired by the organization, create those tasks. The managers of global enterprises should ensure an organization's success, not only on the local markets, but above all, on the international markets. It is therefore an essential requirement to continuously improve competences in the areas corresponding to the changes in the global environment (Stor, 2009, pp. 33-42).

With respect to the competences, it is not possible to provide one definition that is universally acknowledged. Generally, they are defined as instructions concerning knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow carrying out professional tasks at an appropriate level (Filipowicz, 2004). The competences include the knowledge used at work, experience, capabilities and predispositions to cooperate in order to accomplish the objectives of the organization, ability to act professionally, and specific cultural values. They refer to both the skills, and knowledge acquired in the process of education and in the professional practice. The competences are, therefore, a concept broader than the qualifications and skills (Bieniek, Steinerowska, 2014, pp. 33-46).

In the context of these considerations, it is worth noting that it is difficult to define a universal profile of an international manager, i.e. one that works for an international organization, regardless of industry, location, and the scope of duties, etc. An international manager acts as the leader working within the confines of different cultures, an international connector and negotiator, the person starting the process of intercultural synergy (Bieniek, Steinerowska, 2014, pp. 33-46).

It is worth pointing out those elements of managers' competences, which allow them to perform the function of the manager at an international organization. The most important competences determining the success of an international manager are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Elements of an international manager's success

Excellent interpersonal skills	
1.	Linguistic capabilities, curiosity and cultural empathy
2.	Motivation to work abroad, tolerance of uncertainty, flexibility and willingness to adapt
3.	Global thinking
4.	Ability to identify and combine the best elements from different cultures
5.	Coping with culture shock
Specialist skills and interculturally-determined knowledge	
1.	High qualifications due to the area and culture of the manager's country of work
2.	Efficiency in management of cultural differences
3.	Ability to introduce a new work culture in multinational teams and dexterity at using practical instruments that prevent cultural clash
4.	Building teams, partnerships, and coalitions, sharing leadership
5.	Enthusiasm for new technologies

Source: author's own compilation.

With respect to both excellent interpersonal skills and specialist skills, the cultural factor is one of the most important variables conditioning the success of international management (Stor, 2009).

Emotional intelligence is an important competence of each manager, particularly, self-awareness, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Sitko-Lutek, 2002, pp. 92-93). Whereas, the international manager, apart from demonstrating those competences, should show, and should continuously develop, a talent for thriving in different cultures in order to successfully work in the international environment. And further, the management of cultural differences should be based on knowing and using them, rather than ignoring the differences or minimizing their importance (Sitko-Lutek, 2002, pp. 92-93).

Global thinking, perception of cultural diversity, building partnerships and coalitions, sharing leadership, and acquisition of technological skills are competences, which have become very desirable in the recent years. International leaders should create such a social architecture that will inspire the organization's members to successfully cooperate and use their creativity in the international arena (Goldsmith, Greenberg, 2007), as mutual understanding and trust gain particular importance for intercultural management (Bieniek, Steinerowska, 2014, pp. 33-46).

An equally serious challenge that a manager at an international organization is faced with is skilfully coping with culture shock, a phenomenon accompanying the dynamic experiences of people staying longer outside their country. Since an international manager is occupying a very responsible position, her/she should particularly accept different conditions by changing the patterns of thinking. Quick adaptation to a new situation requires the appropriate preparation of people supposed to occupy positions abroad in the future (Sidor-Rządowska, 2009).

This preparation should include training prior to the departure, upon arrival at the place of destination, and at the new workplace, undertaken with the local staff. Therefore, it is very important to develop a comprehensive program of acquiring and improving the intercultural competences (Bieniek, Steinerowska, 2014, pp. 33-46).

The specificity of the intercultural competences requires supplementing the training with non-standard areas.

Among them, the most important include the following training (Bieniek, Steinerowska, 2014, pp. 33-46):

- informational training – that involves presenting the managers with the socio-economic conditions that prevail in a given country, and making them aware of the reasons for experiencing culture shock,
- attribute training – that involves cultural assimilation, helping to absorb the international standards through analysing the critical situations,
- cultural awareness training – that involves raising awareness as to the cultural differences by analogy to the values characteristic for the trainee's own culture and teaching the participants the basics of international relations,
- interactive training – that allows the participants to interact with representatives of the countries that are culturally different,

- training related to learning through gaining experience – that involves explaining cultural differences by active participation of the trainees in, for example, simulation games,
- training that modifies conscious behaviour – it involves solving the problems with adaptation.

Apart from training in cultural differences, the following are also important: language courses, courses in new information and communication technologies, or training in disciplines that belong to the international management area, in particular international law, stress management, and *savoir-vivre* in the multicultural business. The purpose of the above-mentioned intercultural training is to create “international minds and attitudes”, which allow the managers to work for international organizations, or on global markets.

5. IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR OF MANAGERS

The dynamism of the organization’s development, in the light of the globalization process, gives rise to deliberations on the future leadership that requires specific organizational behaviour from the managerial staff. It seems that the most desirable attitudes of the intercultural managers should be based on (Potocki, 2004, p. 647):

- developing new, diversified recruitment processes and communication inside the organization in accordance with the principle of equality and justice,
- having a vision of the workplace in the international environment,
- readiness to be sensitive and understanding of the ethnic, cultural and interpersonal differences manifested in the working environment,
- complete and indisputable involvement in the effective use of the culturally diversified staff,
- being a specific safety valve between the organization and the global community.

Most generally, it can be concluded that a fundamental task of the modern manager is to make their company “successful”. It is also commonly believed that there is a close relationship between the success of the organization and its culture, and that these are the managers that exert the greatest influence on the form of the organizational culture. The literature provides many definitions of the organizational culture, and it is understood in various ways.

It can be assumed that development of a specific organizational culture involves the acceptance of some values and behaviours, and rejection of others. At the same time, some behaviours are preferred by the managerial staff of the organization, and deliberately imitated by other employees. Hence, the leadership qualities of the managers play a crucial role in the development of the organizational culture. E. H. Schein (1997, p. 89), one of the leading authorities in this field, enumerates

the following leadership qualities of managers that are necessary to develop the organizational culture of an international organization:

- intuition and ability to perceive culturally-conditioned problems,
- ability to change cultural assumptions,
- ability to revise the cultural stereotypes,
- ability to involve the subordinated employees in resolving cultural diversity-related problems,
- emotional resistance that is essential in the case of absorbing the “fear” of the subordinates in the conditions of crisis of the existing norms and values.

In the light of the foregoing considerations, it can be concluded that in the broad sense, globalization affects the organizational behaviour of managers in such a way that they are trying to change the organizational culture of their company. And in the narrow sense, the globalization process affects the interpersonal skills of managers. Nowadays, every manager can be moved to a foreign environment, either due to transfer to a different country, or in your own country, by working with subordinates raised in other cultures (Robbins, 2001). The requirements of the modern market functioning in the knowledge-based economy, pose completely new challenges before the manager that involve being (Kuc, Żemigala, 2010, p. 460):

- a coach of the winning team,
- a mentor helping to learn,
- a player in the team of employees,
- a mentor of creative work enthusiasts,
- an administrator embracing a complete picture of the situation.

Succeeding in those tasks becomes especially difficult when the manager deals with a multicultural team. Aspiring to the role of a leader in such a team, the manager should demonstrate a high level of emotional and social intelligence, be sensitive to the situation of others, be an organizer and be ahead of their time looking far into the future. The manager is expected to offer culturally unrestrained inventiveness and creativity.

6. CONCLUSION

In the era of the growing number of transnational companies, the aspect of human resources management is gaining particular importance. The global perspective of doing business requires adequate preparation of the managerial staff to perform the international professional roles. Nowadays, the cultural fluency of the organization is an essential determinant deciding about the competitive advantage and success.

Numerous studies undertaken in the context of the technical progress and social changes indicate who is and what should be the manager in an organization. They

emphasize both, the functions performed by the manager and the requirements imposed on them. A new model of the manager has been created, who has high qualifications and expectations for the new tasks. Currently, however, such significant changes in the business environment as globalization, which bring the change of the organizational behaviour – establish new areas for research. It seems that it is necessary to pay due attention to the process of developing a global manager, who demonstrates the intercultural flexibility and sensitivity. It is noticeable that the traditional approach to the management of the managerial staff competences is changing. A contemporary manager should not only possess the universal competences required for the performed functions, but above all, competences enabling efficient functioning in the multicultural environment. First and foremost, a new dimension of the manager is manifested in the global thinking and continuous improvement of their intercultural competence.

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KOMPETENCJE MIĘDZYKULTUROWE MANAGERA W GLOBALNEJ ORGANIZACJI

Streszczenie

Obecnie umiejętności menedżerskie definiowane są w znacznej mierze przez procesy globalizacyjne. Poszukiwanie skutecznych formuł reagowania na nowe wyzwania prowadzi do wyznaczania nowych standardów w zakresie rozwoju umiejętności menedżerskich, które pozwolą na sprawne funkcjonowanie w ramach międzykulturowego obszaru zarządzania. Pojawia się coraz silniejsze przekonanie o tym, że wobec skali zmian konieczne jest włączenie w proces doskonalenia kompetencji zawodowych umiejętności radzenia sobie w środowisku odmiennym kulturowo. Przyszłość należy do organizacji działających globalnie, tworzonych przez menedżerów zorientowanych na transnarodowy aspekt zarządzania.

Celem artykułu jest wskazanie potrzeby zmiany profilu kompetencji menedżera, myślącego i działającego globalnie, elastycznego wobec kulturowej różnorodności, nieustannie doskonalącego swoje kompetencje międzykulturowe. Przedstawione rozważania oparto na analizie literatury, analizie porównawczej oraz logice wnioskowania.

Słowa kluczowe: globalizacja, kompetencje, zarządzanie