

## GOSPODARSKA OBVEŠČEVALNA DEJAVNOST: NEIZOGIBNA IZBIRA

## ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE: AN INEVITABLE CHOICE

**Povzetek** Od padca berlinskega zidu se je mednarodno okolje močno spremenilo. Globaliziran trg, v katerem so politična zaveznitva vedno bolj krhka, je države prisilil v stalno gospodarsko vojno, v kateri pa prevladujejo le tiste, ki so v zadnjih letih oblikovale primeren sistem za izmenjavo informacij med javnim in zasebnim sektorjem. Gospodarska obveščevalna dejavnost je najbolj napredna teorija državnega upravljanja in predstavlja najprimernejši okvir za zasebno-javno sodelovanje v gospodarstvu. Namen članka je definirati pojem gospodarske obveščevalne dejavnosti in z analizo nekaterih tujih primerov dokazati, da so lahko države konkurenčne in varne le, če sprejmejo primerno gospodarsko-obveščevalno strategijo. Znotraj takšnega scenarija – čeprav predvideva zaščito gospodarskih interesov v Zakonu o Slovenski obveščevalno-varnostni agenciji – Slovenija nima celovite strategije za obrambo oziroma razvoj lastnih gospodarskih interesov prek strukturiranega sistema gospodarske obveščevalne dejavnosti. Oblikovalci politike bodo morali v prihodnosti upoštevati potrebo po reformi, ki bi zagotovila učinkovito in varno prihodnost slovenskemu gospodarstvu ter stabilnost državnega sistema.

**Ključne besede** *Gospodarska obveščevalna dejavnost, tajne službe, varnost, razvoj.*

**Abstract** In a post-Cold War environment countries live in a state of permanent economic warfare. Political alliances are more and more fragile, and while countries have compete every day on the global market in order to survive, only those with a structured system can prevail. Economic intelligence is the most advanced political and economic theory of state management, which also offers the framework for private-public cooperation. In defining economic intelligence and analyzing some examples of structured foreign systems, this article aims to show that in a globalized world countries can be competitive and safe only by adopting an economic

intelligence strategy. Within such a scenario Slovenia, despite contemplating the defence of national economic interests through the Law on Slovenian Intelligence and Security Agency, has no comprehensive strategy to defend or promote its economic interests by a structured economic intelligence system. Policy makers must take into consideration reforms that could guarantee the country's future economic efficiency and security.

**Key words** *Economic intelligence, secret services, security, development.*

**Introduction** The period following WWII was one of geopolitical stability and clear military alliances, with countries having rather limited margins of political and economic freedom. Today, we are facing a situation of a new type of anarchy. The victory scored by the United States in the Cold War has cut off the political relations and trade linked to the period before the fall of the Berlin Wall, and has led to a different type of confrontation: a geo-economic one. The fluidity of international relationships has forced countries to tackle global competition in such a way as to achieve the best possible outcome in terms of profit, development and wealth. In these new economic clashes, the stability of the old political alliances has been undermined and, because of the geo-economic war, governments are required to become guarantors of social stability. This role needs to be based on a strategic vision which fosters economic growth and development.

Within such a framework, countries which for years have been at the centre of criticism, and whose operation, under the load of liberal philosophy, has been reduced to a minimum, return to take on a role of primary importance (Gaiser, 2015). They return to being active co-protagonists of the economy, destined to catalyse and implement strategies of reform that allow the country-systems to remain competitive. The policymakers' goal today is to find the right means of collaboration between state and entrepreneurial systems, as well as implementing the right policies of support of national production – a necessity which develops from the fact that information today has become the most valuable resource (Črnčec, 2009). The research and strategic management of information is an economically relevant and complicated art, which is why companies are forced to implement their own structures of business intelligence; the efficiency of this could be increased by an appropriate national cooperative system, in which, as much defensively as offensively, companies of national security must play a decisive role.

Within the environment of a globalized market the State has become the service provider on which a company can base its success. The State, instead of existing for itself, is forced to transform the machinery of its bureaucracy into an efficient market support system, in order to offer to private and public owned companies the most competitive services (Treverton, 2001). The international success of an enterprise is the success of the hosting country. A country that is not able to be competitive is destined to succumb to others or become non-influential on the world

scene. International competition has increased remarkably. For this reason, country-systems need a more sophisticated, precise and organized means to remain credible, attractive to investments, structurally stable and able to make sound economic choices. We are living in a period that is aware of the fact that territorial conquests and direct control of parts of the globe are, in addition to being politically difficult to accept on the part of democratic public opinions, economically expensive (Luttwak, 1993).

To be in possession of a good “machine of economic war”, both in its active form (penetration of other markets and competitive advantages), and passive form (defence of one’s own national interest), sustained by a credible state structure, is an absolute priority. The continual intensification of international exchanges, together with growing technological independence and the continual flux of information, heavily influences international relations as well as economic systems.

Within this international environment during the last twenty years, a more sophisticated method of economic warfare has been developed: economic intelligence. It dictates the need for cooperation between the public and private sectors, a need which may have been felt in the past, but whose implementation has been only on a comparatively minor scale.

This research demonstrates that the most important countries in the world have already shaped their own system of active collaboration and information- sharing with market-based companies in order to achieve higher levels of competition on the globalized market, while Slovenia is still passive and may miss the window of opportunity to reshape its country-system.

## 1 ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE

### 1.1 Definition

During the 1990s, Edward Luttwak launched the idea that military wars would soon become a memory of the past, substituted by economic wars. In one of his main works, *The Endangered American Dream* (1993), he highlights the fact that, with the pacification of international exchanges, military threats and alliances have lost their importance. Economic priorities are no longer concealed, and move into the foreground. In the future it will be fear of economic consequences that will regulate commercial contestations, and certainly political interventions will be motivated by strategic purposes (Halby, 2003).

According to Luttwak’s geo-economic thought, the time of wars waged for conquest of territories and diplomatic influence has passed. The central objective must be to increase highly qualified work in the leading industries and in services of high added value, with the goal of conquering or preserving an envied position at the heart of the world economy. The invested capital of a country is equivalent to firepower;

subsidies for the development of products correspond to progressions in artillery, while the penetration of markets with the help of the state substitutes the bases and military garrisons displayed abroad and even diplomatic influence. Without a doubt, as Halby writes, the approach developed by Luttwak incontestably produces a useful advancement in the comprehension of the new international architecture and of the game of its constitutive actors. In particular, the appearance of geo-economics as a concept is essential, since it bears witness to its entry in the definition of world geopolitics in accordance with the economic and commercial questions (Halby, 2003).

When the state intervenes and directs, influences or promotes economic choices, we find ourselves in the field of geo-economics. All of this is not a new phenomenon unknown to past generations. Throughout the development of history, international subjects have always played an active role in the economy. The tangible difference in comparison to today's world is that of the intensity or means of determining action. Before, it was the economy which was at service to political power, where now the roles have been reversed. Nowadays, a period in which military conflicts are really becoming *l'ultima ratio regum*, the terrain of international competition is moving increasingly towards the economic sector, and the contemporary world of economics cannot be analyzed only from the point of view of classic market theories. The classic economic theories on international exchanges do not reflect all the aspects of economic international relations, where one can often find the echo of the tactics and strategies of Sun Tzu and Macchiavelli in decision-making, and such decisions often depend in an important way on factors not of the market (Csurgai, 2011, p. 23). It should be pointed out that certain of these factors are strategies of information: a state's influence, indirect state support of the private sector, control of hidden currency and forms of protectionism. In order to survive, the country sees itself as constrained to compete in a highly sophisticated environment and because of this transforms itself, according to the definition of Gyula Csurgai, into a strategic state, whose task it is to persevere or increase its own privileged position in the economic and international political world through the creation of a geo-economic framework of success (Csurgai, 2009).

The strategic state is one of the keys to contemporary economics and has the vital task of adequately developing the concept of economic intelligence so as to maximize the capacities of every actor to acquire market shares. In turn, the development of the strategic state will always be necessarily influenced by the culture, history and anthropological perceptions of the various actors – public and private – involved in the decisional geo-economic processes, that is, in the development and security of the economy. We must highlight, like Jean and Savona, that unlike military intelligence, which has only one user and predefined referent geographical areas, objectives and risks, economic intelligence acts in a more complex context where the plurality of sources, users and goals often triggers the necessity to confront the coordination paradox: everybody asks for coordination, but nobody wants to be coordinated by somebody else (Jean, Savona, 2011, p. 76). The task of economic intelligence is to strategically manage information that allows the country to control, anticipate,

and manage the evolution of various markets, giving life to political choices, both offensive and defensive. The more the interests of a country are extended, the more the strategy must have a global breadth. This means that the apparatus of intelligence must be designed in such a way as to cover every possible sector of interest and – most importantly – to have the capacity to synthesize and process in order to allow the political actors complex and multilevel choices (e.g. judicial, financial, media, scientific, technological, etc.). Such organizations have the increasingly greater task of ‘synthesis of reality’. To the consolidated typical activities of the past – military and political espionage – can be firmly added the need to cover the economic sector.

Economic intelligence consists of gathering and processing information relevant to the economic sector with the intention of making operational choices. Its activities are aimed towards obtaining information, surveillance of competitors, protection of strategic information, and capitalizing on this knowledge in order to influence, determine and control the global economic environment. Economic intelligence is a power tool for countries, in which the private and public spheres are intertwined and communicating.

The historical development of geo-economic relations requires such a high level of specialization of national systems that it is not possible to exclude the secret services, as commonly defined, from the support apparatus of the economy. The economic challenge decreases the spaces available to military war, but the end goal, that of accumulating power and wellbeing, remains unchanged. Information, the highest good, is useful in both understanding situations and sketching out future choices, and is so important that it requires composite strategies that can defend and use it. According to Jean and Savona, economic intelligence is a discipline which, by studying the cycle of information necessary for companies and countries to carry out correct development choices, improves the cognitive and decisive abilities applied to the complexity of the competitive global context. Economic intelligence is at once a system and a methodology of work elevated to be an instrument of collaboration between state and enterprise (Jean, Savona 2011). Its structures are nothing other than the means by which the public and private sectors can collaborate efficiently for the common wellbeing, during a historical period in which, separate, they would be destined to perish. In this way, the entrepreneurial sector maintains its vitality while the state rediscovers a new legitimizing mission. Economic intelligence is a blend of various disciplines and fields of knowledge whose aim it is to increase the competitiveness of businesses and states at an international scale. The methods available to both businesses and the state comprise competitive intelligence, business intelligence, industrial espionage and, in the case of the state, economic counter-intelligence. Data (white, grey or black) is gathered and used in order to increase or at least preserve one's own freedom, to concentrate efforts and to spare energy.

## 1.2 Examples of countries with implemented economic intelligence systems

The fluidity of international relations requires nations to be capable of facing global competition by organizing themselves in such a way as to guarantee the best results for themselves in terms of earnings, development and wellbeing. The gathering and strategic management of information is a complex art with economic relevance. Because of this, companies are forced to establish their own business intelligence units. The efficiency of such units can be improved by appropriate cooperation at the state level, where national security agencies must adopt a decisive role in terms of both protecting and gathering information. The requirements of the purely public intelligence services have become more refined over time and thus have increased in complexity. Intelligence has evolved beyond analyzing military developments and 'simple' industrial spying to serving increasing geo-economic needs. Foreign policy has been increasingly busy establishing international relations in line with the requirements of the economy and in offering support to national businesses. Growth strategies and an efficient exchange of information between the public and private sectors have led to a better management of the economy. Market imperfections and a hypercompetitive international environment force states to actively intervene in the economy in order to optimize the use of the human capital, technological developments and resources of a country. In this way, a state achieves three vitally important objectives: it increases the nation's growth and wealth, achieves stability by having legitimized itself, and accrues power.

Leaving aside those countries that have an economic intelligence system based on a longstanding tradition of informal information sharing between economic, political and intelligence bodies, such as, for example, Germany and Japan, and taking into account only those countries which have officially developed a legal framework for private-public collaboration, we can briefly examine the cases of the USA, France, the United Kingdom and Russia. Their importance lies in the fact that they have been designed since the beginning in a structured way, respecting national specificities, and being today well-established, they present unavoidable benchmarks.

### 1.2.1 The United States of America

According to Duclos (2002), the USA, having the desire to take the place of the European colonial empires, has in the past few decades given life to a strategy of commercial conquest that led them to a geo-political supremacy consisting of a relationship between federal authority and multi-national society and the control of information and technology, as well as cultural domination through soft power, education, and economic and management standards. To this, one must add that the unquestioned American supremacy in the global economy is extrinsic not only by the systems of influence of the market, such as rating, consulting and financial management companies, but also by the preponderant presence of personnel and international organizations, through their financial coverage and control of positions of responsibility (e.g. NATO, OCSE, FMI, the World Bank). The USA is therefore

an international actor which possesses a global approach to its own strategy of power and of economic supremacy. They have a policy of information that is both offensive and defensive, and a HUMINT in the economic sector, effectively based on the synergy between the public and private sectors. The national interest is pursued in every direction.

After the defeat of communism, Bill Clinton was the first politician to demand that state bodies actively cooperate in offering support to the nation's economic system. From then on, the planetary balances – formerly based on political and military clout – began to be shaped by countries' economic results, i.e. by the capacity of their economies to create wealth by exploiting markets that had already become global.

In 1993, the National Economic Council (NEC) was established, which is the heart of economic politics and chaired by the President of the USA himself. This organization was proposed in order to coordinate and control the implementation of presidential directives, and represented the point of conjunction with companies' business intelligence units. It represented the beginning of a new USA global approach summarized a year later in the new National Security Strategy, which ordered the intelligence community to follow political, economic, social and military developments in all parts of the world, in all sectors in which American interests are involved, and where the information from open sources was not sufficient (The White House, 1994). Economic intelligence would play an increasingly important role in helping political decision-makers to understand economic changes, in supporting US negotiators, and in helping to identify possible economic threats to American companies on the part of foreign intelligence or incorrect commercial practices.

Together with the NEC, the National Security Council (NSC) analyzes issues related to economic and industrial counter-espionage by also taking advantage of their collaboration with the National Counter-Intelligence Centre, an organization instituted by the FBI, the CIA and the Department of Defence to cooperate with corporations in such a way as to anticipate or hinder any type of economic espionage on the part of foreign companies. In the same year, the Advocacy Centre, a department within the Department of Commerce, was formed with the task of following and supporting the expansion of US companies around the world. The Advocacy Centre has to constantly hold the development of every type of project in the world, in which any American company has interests, under control. Thanks to continual monitoring of the markets, the active support of American delegations committed abroad, and to the tight collaboration installed with the intelligence community, this represented the principal junction between it and the corporations, for which the information is nevertheless supplied in a discreet way. The DCI (Director of Central Intelligence) is the one who decides if and when to supply information to the private sector. If more companies demonstrate interest, then in the same call for competition everyone must receive the same help and information (Gaiser, 2016).

## 1.2.2 The United Kingdom

In the UK a full-scale law on the secret services, the British Intelligence Services Act, was only produced in 1994, despite the longstanding national intelligence tradition. With legislative text that takes into consideration as much the internal service, the Security Service (known also as MI5), as the external one, the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6), as well as defence (DI – Defence Intelligence Staff) and systems of communications (GCHQ – Government Communications Headquarters), the birth of economic intelligence was made official. According to the official wording, the activities of the Secret Intelligence Service and GCHQ had the goal of preserving the interests of economic wellbeing in the United Kingdom (Article 1). Economic intelligence, or rather economic wellbeing, became an official priority, defined by the law. The services guarantee their support to companies' needs, and the success of the British Intelligence Community is defined every year on the basis of the results obtained in favour of the national economy. MI5 depends on the Home Office, and MI6 and GCHQ on the Foreign Office, to receive directives on the priorities and objectives of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), formed by the undersecretaries of the interested departments and presided over by an undersecretary whose specific role it is to coordinate intelligence and security, responding directly to the Prime Minister. The JIC has the task of defining the goals of the activities, that is, of drafting the 'shopping list', as well as forwarding information to interested companies (Gaiser, 2016). According to the most accurate estimates, at least 60% of the funds of MI6 were already committed to that sector by the end of the 1990s (Marcon, Moinet, 1999, p. 7). In analyzing the United Kingdom, however, one must not forget that the strategy of economic intelligence is not based only on the sensible use of services, but also on the ensemble of institutions responsible for the support of their exports, that is, of investments in and from the country. In this sense, the UKIT – UK Trade and Investment – embedded in the frame of the Foreign Office, represents the standard means by which the government desires to systematically coordinate the approach towards importing and exporting companies as bringers of economic potential. The UKIT is officially a department of the government and is present in more than 100 countries around the world. Supplying professional assistance to companies that desire internationalization, and trying to propose the United Kingdom to companies overseas as partners of global yield, it also acts as a platform of support and a facilitator in favour of the sector of defence and security. The critical infrastructures of the United Kingdom are in turn constantly monitored by the Centre for Protection of National Infrastructure that works in close contact or in coordination with all the involved Ministries and the private economic world.

## 1.2.3 France

In 1994 a report of the Commissariat général du Plan, edited by Henri Martre, came to light, and over time became the milestone for the reform of economic intelligence in France (Gagliano, 2014). According to report outputs in 1995, a 'functional subject' in contact with all the entrepreneurial sectors and state administrations was defined and named: CCSE – Comité pour la Compétitivité et la Sécurité Economique.

It was given tasks comparable to those of the American National Economic Council. Chaired by the Prime Minister, it is made up of seven appointed members, with a mandate of two years as representatives of enterprise managers, Ministries, unions and the academic world. This composition guarantees cooperation and continuous coordination between the public and private sectors.

The General Secretariat for Defence and National Security (SGDSN), the institution coordinating the government's security policies, which incorporates the Inter-ministerial Intelligence Committee (the CIR, Comité Interministériel du Renseignement), offered the CCSE logistic and administrative support. The SGDSN acts as a perfect information sharing platform. It allows the CCSE to be promptly supplied with important data, thanks to the CIR presence. While the DGSE – Direction Général de Sécurité Extérieur – continued, through its Service 7, to bring forward the typical initiatives of espionage in the economic field, over the years the French state has given itself a well-structured setting for economic intelligence by also reducing its activities to regional levels. In 2002, a decree by the Ministry of Economics and Finance of a 'continual mission – mainly defensive – in the sector of economic intelligence' transferred the mission to the Prefects. In 2005 a Ministry of the Interior decree informed regions and other local bodies about the economic intelligence approach the Republic intended to implement. In the end, the whole picture was upgraded in May 2013 by the nomination by the government of an Inter-ministerial Delegate for Economic Intelligence, with the task of coordinating the various branches of public administration towards shared goals.

#### 1.2.4 Russia

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the KGB was restructured by Boris Yeltsin into two branches: the SVR – Sluzhba Vneshney Razvedki – was entrusted with external security, while internal security was delegated to the FSB – Federal'naya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti. Both these services make reference directly to the head of state and to the Security Council of the Russian Federation.

A decree on 11 August 2003 was promulgated by Vladimir Putin to supply the FSB with powers to maintain the unity of the state, combat terrorism and overcome any attempt at destabilization. An earlier decree of 10 January 1996 had given the SVR powers to protect Russian personnel and institutions abroad and to conduct activities of electronic surveillance, but most importantly to bring forward economic, scientific, strategic and technological espionage. It was clear that not even in the most difficult of transitional periods would scientific and technological intelligence ever stop working. In fact, thanks to the growth in scientific exchange and contract opportunities between the East and West, as well as the formation of new joint ventures between Russian and foreign enterprises, the activities of industrial espionage services in the economic sector even increased. During the Cold War priorities were essentially oriented towards the military field and strategic technologies, but now all aspects of the industrial sectors and commercial productions are considered important. It was the same Yeltsin who in 1996 imparted the order 'to give priority to the acquisition

of economic and industrial information'. He also insisted, however, on the fact that efficient coordination between intelligence and its users was lacking, and complained that the Russian industry only used a minimum of the gathered information (Jean, Savona 2011, p. 88). The gap between economic intelligence and its users was much higher than that which existed in the military field, because of the tight symbiosis that existed between the GRU and the arms industry. It was during that period that the political elite began to talk about the constitution in the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Commerce of an office destined to formulate the needs of economic and industrial intelligence and to spread the results to the users.

## **2 SLOVENIA AND ITS LACK OF A STRUCTURED ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM**

Slovenia can be cited as a typical example of a country which, even though it has limited territorial dimensions, still has a good consular and diplomatic network and noteworthy intelligence – both military and civil – services, even within the limits of its dimensions, with deep historical traditions and an economic structure that could easily benefit from a coordinated and systematic action of economic intelligence. This action, however, would be difficult to achieve in a coordinated manner.

Rightly considered in the 1990s as the most westernized of the ex-Yugoslavia countries, with its high-level industrial structure, Slovenia reached the objectives that were set by its foreign policy in 1999 within a few years: it became a member of all of the international organizations – especially of NATO and of the European Union in 2004 – and joined the Eurozone in 2007. The country was able to achieve all this during a period in which its economy was sky-rocketing, so much so that it became a member of the exclusive OECD club in 2010. This positive cycle of growth was based not only on big structural investments, but also on the continuation of industrial and commercial strategies designated by the governments of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia before the dissolution of Yugoslavia, which ended due to an inability to anticipate proactively the immediate consequences of the international financial crisis which erupted in 2007 (Gaiser, 2015).

Immediately after its independence Slovenia could claim a rich web of commercial and political contacts in the world, thanks to the capillary presence of Slovenijales, a company which, even if specializing in the production of lumber derivatives and engineering, could be compared during the Yugoslavian era to the Japanese JETRO in terms of function and importance. The inevitable economic restructuring, and the departure of the state from the corporation, resulted in its downsizing to only Slovenia's internal market, and the country had to wait for the constitution of the Javna Agencija za Podjetnistvo in Tuje Investicije (Public Agency for the Republic of Slovenia for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investments), which occurred in 2005, to regain a presence in the world that was parallel to that of the diplomatic and consular headquarters. The agency, transformed in 2013 into SPIRIT Slovenia following a very critical audit revision of its efficiency carried out by the Slovenian Court of Audit

(RS-RS, 2013), had the goals of supporting the internationalization of Slovenian companies and attracting foreign investments into the country. Currently, SPIRIT Slovenia is framed within the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology. As a state-run agency it collaborates actively with all governmental departments in the promotion of the country abroad, by maintaining a special relationship with the Department of Commercial Diplomacy (part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), with which it prepares delegations during visits abroad.

Nevertheless, the Slovenian Court of Audit has highlighted multiple times that the Ministry of Economics, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Agency do not collaborate sufficiently for the internationalization of national enterprises, and that their annual work programmes do not sufficiently specify the minimum set goals. According to the Court, the results that have been obtained thus far have not justified the financial investment guaranteed by the state budget (RS-RS, 2009).

Today Slovenia is in an economic identity crisis, with a public deficit that has increased by 130% in the five year period from 2008-2013 and an unemployment rate higher than the European average (OECD, 2015). It cannot easily carry out choices of revitalization or repositioning on the international markets, despite the excellence that it possesses in niche sectors such as medicine, pharmaceuticals, energy and lumber.

After having struggled with the negative legacy of the Communist intelligence heritage, Slovenia developed a small, new, modern intelligence system, coordinated by the National Security Council (Prezelj, 2016). The Security Information Service (Varnostno-Informativna Služba), working within the Ministry of the Interior, became an independent governmental agency named SOVA in 1993. This transition strengthened the Prime Minister and the government's role. According to Brejc, the intention of the political leadership of SOVA was to have a small, effective, and trained professional intelligence agency which would be able to collect intelligence information abroad. Transplanting any of the European intelligence models (e.g. the Austrian, German, British, Hungarian, etc.) to the case of Slovenia was not considered at the time due to the persuasion that Slovenia, as a small State, could not afford a large intelligence agency with global goals (Brejc, p. 171). The Law of 1999, amended in 2006, which delineated the competences of the national intelligence agency SOVA, foresaw in Article 2 that it must carry out its own activities, both offensive and defensive, in support of the economic interests of the country. Nevertheless, the Agency is currently required to supply its information only to the Prime Minister and possibly to competent Ministers. An effective connection between the entrepreneurial system and the use of economic interests is lacking. In fact, Slovenia possesses the structures suitable for economic intelligence of good quality, but up to now has not known how to bring them together into a single system.

**Conclusion** Economic intelligence is a collective and offensive measure, formed by the coordinated actions of research, treatment, diffusion and protection of information, obtained legally or through ‘legalized’ systems of state activities, in as much as access to secret information becomes lawful at the moment in which it is authorized. All of this presupposes an organization of networks and specific instruments to preserve or increase the geo-economic power of a state and its sphere of influence. The logic of the balance of power holds the world economy. The national systems must guarantee an environment suitable for the success of their own enterprises – both public and private – and the goal of the state’s economic intelligence is also to change the rules of the game of world competition, adapting the markets to their own needs and creating the conditions for their success even in inferior circumstances.

This coordination occurs in different forms for different countries, and moulds itself on the basis of the local culture of intelligence.

The study of various management systems provides an opportunity to recognize the single historical, cultural and economic pattern-driven particularities of each nation. Without the careful acknowledgement of the underlying anthropological differences there is a high risk of misunderstanding and irrationally implementing strategic information that is unsuitable to the referring environment. Just as a constantly applicable pre-defined solution of economic intelligence does not exist, there also exists no vision of economics that can be precisely defined as neutral.

Slovenia is a market-based economy with still a strong state presence, especially in banking and the industrial system. It is by Constitution (Article 2) a social state. This means that public sector activities will be always oriented towards maximising general wellbeing. Within this scenario it is the decision-makers’ duty to restructure the country’s economic framework and to propose a new development strategy in the near future.

Furthermore, following the examples of the most qualified countries, the Slovenian government should find a workable solution for coordinating the intelligence services with the needs of the economic system. Its economic interests are geographically limited. This means that SOVA’s activities abroad overlap the country’s economic network, and that bilateral relations based on information sharing could be a win-win solution. Moreover, it means that, lacking a political willingness to shape a new strategy, it could be SOVA that highlights the need to develop a comprehensive economic intelligence system and forces the political elites to transform the country to a strategic state as defined by Csurgai.

Economic politics could find greater opportunities if it was decided to establish a full-scale strategy of economic intelligence. The government should give life to a specific institutional framework in which it could conflate, in an official way, information obtained by the Slovenian Intelligence and Security Agency (SOVA) with that obtained by the economic and banking system and by the SID Bank,

responsible for the financing and insuring exports. The very first step could be made by conceiving a special configuration of the National Security Council (Svet za Nacionalno Varnost) to be called on specific economic issues. Today, it is composed of the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Finance and the Director of SOVA; its composition presupposes a standard, old-fashioned, security approach to intelligence. Opening it also to the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, and to representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other specific economic sectors, could transform it into an economic intelligence coordinating body having targets comparable with those entrusted to the American NEC, the French CCSE and the British JIC.

In the absence of other means, the provision of Article 2 of the Law on Slovenian Intelligence and Security Agency could be used as a starting point for positive change. The more social bodies feel that they have a common objective, the more willing they will be to accept organizations and methods aimed at increasing their overall competitiveness. In this sense, it is of the utmost importance that universities and companies study the issue and promote the training of specialized management figures while continuing to spread the knowledge and awareness of intelligence issues among the wider population. Shared security at the service of a nation's general wealth does not only require appropriate organizations, but – first and foremost – qualified people who are able to understand the basics of economic warfare.

It could be said that in any state around the world only the willingness of the public and private sectors is needed in order to understand the advantages derived from reciprocal collaboration and to give life to a strategic vision of their country-systems.

Economic warfare has given countries more options than waging armed conflicts. This has, to some extent, loosened the interdependence between the economy and war. This diverges from the 20th century, where the former was at the service of the latter. As these borders expand over time, the more all countries need to put in place their own economic intelligence units because this will be the tool they are forced to resort to if they are to play on the new chessboard.

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