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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND TAX SYSTEM: IT'S IMPACT ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract. This article analyses the concept of tax system in terms of entrepreneurship promotion given the fact that more and more attention is recently paid to entrepreneurship and promotion of it precisely through the national tax system. This article seeks to prove that: tax system is one of the economic entities' operating conditions enabling to promote or suppress entrepreneurship in the country; both self-employed persons and companies can be entrepreneurial entities; in any case, a state, in promoting or suppressing their entrepreneurship, thus, influences the national economy and its changes.

Keywords: tax system, entrepreneurship, promotion of entrepreneurship

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1. Introduction

Sustainable development of countries, industries, incentives and styles of entrepreneurship of organizations and natural persons is affected by taxation (Bikas *et. al.* 2014; Caurkubule, Rubanovskis 2014; Giriūnienė 2013; Giriūnas, Mackevičius 2014; Dzemyda, Raudeliūnienė 2014; Figurska 2014; Garškaitė-Milvydienė 2014; Prause 2014; Tarabkova 2014; Raudeliūnienė *et. al.* 2014).

It should be noted that various tax systems function in each country, which are different in the entire tax base, i.e., tax composition, structure, rates, tax incentives, whereas a structure of the tax system depends on how successfully taxation objectives are dealt with and tax principles are implemented. However, it should be emphasised that entrepreneurial entities, which are the driving force of all processes in each economy, are burdened not so much by tax rates as by ambiguity in establishing the legal base, complexity in tax accounting procedures, legislative contradictions, inconsistencies, and instability. For this reason, as A. Shah (2004) argues, a country, by employing the tax system entrepreneurship promotion policy, carries out the planned social, economic, and political measures in order to directly influence entrepreneurial entities, as well as the national level of entrepreneurship through various methods and means. It should be pointed out that main relations of a state with entrepreneurial entities are built up namely by virtue of tax system, which enables the state to directly control and influence entrepreneurial entities, the success of their development and growth opportunities. So, it can be said that the tax system, by promoting the selected priorities, accordingly, has an effect on entrepreneurial entities – self-employed persons or companies – thus, influencing the functioning of the national economy, and this

influence may vary depending on the types of taxes, the size, as well as on which entities and what amounts of taxes are collected from. However, it should also be stated that, despite the impact of the tax system on national entrepreneurship, determination of its role in entrepreneurship is an ambiguously defined object of research. Among scientists, who have studied the tax system and its role in terms of the promotion of entrepreneurship, there is worth mentioning Rin *et al.* (2010, 2011), Lee and Gordon (2005), Kanniainen and Panteghini (2013), Gentry (2000, 2004, 2005, 2010), Bruce and Deskins (2004, 2012). Meanwhile, researchers have not focused on this problem to deal with it in Lithuania yet.

The object of research – tax system.

The goal of research – to identify the role of tax system in promotion of entrepreneurship.

The following objectives have been set for successful and credible research:

- After examination of the concept of tax system, to provide the generic definition of it;
- To define the role of tax system in entrepreneurial economy;
- To propose an effect of the tax system's elements on entrepreneurship.

The paper comprises an analysis of Lithuanian and foreign scientific works, empirical research, and economic literature, as well as a practical study on the tax system and its role in the entrepreneurial economy.

2. Scientific discussion and findings

It is worthy of note that that all Lithuanian and foreign researchers and experts unanimously agree that the tax system has a direct impact on entrepreneurship, however, they fail to reach consensus when seeking to find out if existing high tax rates of a country promote or, nevertheless, inhibit entrepreneurship. For example, Carroll (1998), Edwards (1982) argue that higher income tax rates, existing in a country, may even enhance entrepreneurship as business entities in this case are more likely to intensify the use of a variety of tax incentives. Nonetheless, findings of empirical studies, conducted by Hansson (2012), Kim *et al.* (2012), McGowan and Kneller (2012), allow stating that a country's high taxes inhibit entrepreneurship. This argument is supported by Fölster (2002) who has proved that there is a strong negative correlation between the tax burden and the self-employed persons' entrepreneurship level and that the reduction in their tax burden by ten percentage points in a country results in an increase in the number of self-employed persons as many as three times. However, it should be noted that some countries with the overall high level of entrepreneurship, such as Denmark or Sweden, impose relatively high tax rates and extremely low levels of self-employed persons' entrepreneurship be a justification of its role in the development of entrepreneurship promotion, a prerequisite would though be a justification of its role in the development of entrepreneurship economy.

Author	Concept
D.B. Suits (1977)	Tax system – a whole of one or more taxes existing in a country, expressed in certain percentage or absolute terms.
K. Šinkūnienė (2010), E. Buškevičiūtė (2007)	Tax system – a whole of legislated, closely inter-related types of taxes and charges payable to a state or a territorial unit.
A.Lymer, J.Hasseldine (2002)	Tax system – a set of taxes existing in a country.
S. Jones, S. Rhoades-Catanach (2013), A. Miller, L. Oats (2012), S. Jones (2004)	Tax system – a whole of interdependent and mutually influencing taxes, typical for each state and established to address tasks posed to the taxation.
P. Bacchetta, M.P. Espinosa (1995), W. Easterly, S. Rebelo (1993), J.F. Toye (1978)	Tax system – a whole of separate taxes, which expresses the government's social, economic, and fiscal policy.
A. Smith (1937)	Tax system – a systematic collection of a share of earned income from self- employed persons.

Table 1. Variation of tax system concepts

J. Slemrod, C. Gillitzer (2014)	Tax system – a set of taxes, which not only describes the entity taxation rate
	existing in a country, but also performs the function of redistribution among
	taxpayers.

Source: compiled by authors

Findings of the carried out comparative analysis of concepts of the tax system provided in the scientific literature enable the suggest that the term 'tax system' directly depends on its usage context - while all authors speak about the tax system as a whole of national existing taxes, the emphasis is, however, on one or another of its aspects – economic, social, or fiscal. Despite the fact that the concept of tax system is defined differently, with more emphasis on one or the other aspect, the majority of the scientists highlight the economic aspect of this concept. It should be pointed out that although different authors suggest different concepts of the tax system, the vast majority of scientists, however, reach consensus and agree that the tax system is a whole of interdependent, mutually complementary, restricting, and influencing taxes, collectable in a country in accordance with the general principles of taxation including administration of taxes as constituent elements of it. However, it should also be stated that the concept of tax is also presented and treated by different authors in a different way. According to Užubalis (2012), taxes can be treated as a reward for the services provided by the state, unable to be provided by the market because of its imperfection. In the scientific literature, this principle is called the benefit principle of taxation, which is not applied in contemporary tax systems but is important in the theory as a logical construct, which was the beginning for development of other theories of the modern taxation concept. Primarily, the benefit principle, as Užubalis (2012) says, has been the basis of the theory of public goods, which analyzes differences between private and public services and searches for the best correlation. Second, the benefit principle theory has developed into the public choice theory which is based on the assumption that consumers are electors, and entrepreneurs, offering them relevant goods - policy-makers. Despite the difference in prevailing theories, that describe the essence of taxes, there is a unanimous opinion that there are three theories of the taxation concept:

- Taxes the means of payment for services rendered by the government;
- Taxes the means of economic stabilization;
- Taxes the means of income equalisation.

Supporters of the first theory state that taxes are the reward for a state's political, economic, and social activities. This perception of such a taxation concept was largely shaped by the author of the classical tax theory A. Smith, yet, similarly active philosophising about taxes refers to J. Buchanan, J. Hicks, and other scientists. According to Buškevičiūtė (2007), they believed that a state implemented its politics with regard to the interests of the population, while taxes were the price for the government's actions, the inner peace and security. The first theory of the tax concept emphasises that taxes are not just a source of budget revenue, as had been thought to date, but also have clearly defined areas of target use. It should be, though, noted that, upon the rapid development of economic relations, market globalization, the first tax theory had no longer satisfied economists who analyzed them; therefore, there has emerged a need to change the classical theory of taxation. Proponents of the second, neoclassical and Keynesian economic idea justify the inequality of taxation and, through tax measures, seek to increase the pace of economic growth and to transform the structure of social production. A large amount of savings is hampering the national economic growth, thus, the excess amount of money is necessary to collect by means of taxation, thereby, stimulating their circulation in the domestic market. Meanwhile, the third tax defining theory, according to Stačiokas snd Rimas (2004), is aimed to highlight the social and economic nature of taxes, to justify an unequal increase in taxes, to justify specific tax measures, which enhance the pace of economic growth, and to reform the structure of social production. It is important to underline that the third tax theory, unlike the first two ones, separates the concepts of payment and reward, since a taxpayer, having paid taxes, not necessarily receives the tax benefit of the same value. When studying the tax system in terms of entrepreneurship promotion, it is appropriate to refer to the concept of tax, which reflects macro-approach to the tax, i.e., to treat it as a monetary liability in respect of the state imposed on the taxpayer by the tax law, and the tax system – as a whole of taxes collected in a country, including their accounting and administration.

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Bygrave and Zacharakis (2010) argue that many countries implement a combined principle of economy regulation, where the free market mechanism is more or less influenced by the state through the tax system as one of major market regulation measures. All of this takes place by means of three tax functions – fiscal, redistribution, and regulatory. Fiscal tax function indicates that taxes are the main and crucial source of formation of state resources. As Užubalis (2012) states that national budget and target funds' main revenue accumulation means, other than tax revenues, are emission and borrowing. It should be noted that the money emission itself does not generate more value, since the increase in their amount in the market results in their value decline, while borrowing allows supplementing revenues just for a temporary time as debts need to be repaid. All that has a direct impact on the need to increase tax revenue in a further period. So, taxes can be stated to be the major means of a state's revenue accumulation. Redistribution function is often defined as social function in the recent scientific literature since taxes redistribute economic wealth between the population and economic entities. A social legal state respects for the social equality aspect, thus, when distributing tax payment liability between members of society, the liability is differentiated in the tax law according to the actual capacity of a taxpayer. The redistribution function can be argued to be inextricably linked to the fiscal one - taxes carry out the fiscal function, thus, ensuring funding of socio-economic rights, as well as other functions of the state. The third, regulatory function indicates that, by adopting relevant tax laws, a state may promote the country's more rapid economic growth, combat inflation, unemployment, etc. It is worth mentioning that taxes can be no only the means of economic regulation – they can be used to influence the behaviour of individuals, such as discouraging the use of alcohol or tobacco, as well as determine other consumer choices or solve, e.g., problems of the country's energy independence, through excise taxation of petroleum products and promotion of bio-fuel production and use. So, it can be said, that taxes as a fiscal instrument may be aimed to regulate undergoing economic, social processes in the state, to promote beneficial economic areas, to support economic development priorities, to attract capital, investment, or, on the contrary – to inhibit undesirable socio-economic trends (Puzinskaite and Klišauskas 2012).

It should be noted that, despite the existing differences among prevailing tax systems of various countries, they, nevertheless, have common features which are defined in the scientific literature as tax instrumentation. As stated by James (2009), Meade (2011), tax instrumentation indicates that each tax must be allocated to an entity, object, source, taxation unit, rate, tax incentives, collection method, and determination method. Thus, every tax is paid by a natural or legal person, also known as tax entity or simply a taxpayer, provided for by relevant laws or other legal acts regulating the tax payment. According to the classification of taxes, as Grown and Valodia (2010) state, the tax system can be analyzed and evaluated precisely by the type of taxpayers, i.e., a natural or legal person. After all, respective tax laws often provide for a variety of benefits, tax rates, tax differentiation, respectively, to natural and legal persons. It should be emphasised that this tax system evaluation profile is fully consistent with the assessment of entrepreneurship too, since, as Katz and Green (2013), Kuratko (2013) highlight, entrepreneurship is also usually measured according to what kind of person - a natural or legal - is interested in its enforcement. However, in the context of a country's level of entrepreneurship, natural and legal persons mostly take a slightly different name – self-employed persons and companies. It should be stressed that such a division is more logical seeking to assess a country's tax system in terms of entrepreneurship promotion, as not every individual can become a self-employed, i.e., businesses entity, and not every legal entity is a company. It is also necessary to assess the role of the public sector, which can significantly distort the results of the tax system assessment, especially given the fact that legal entities operating in the public sector are characterized by completely different principles and purposes of taxation. So, taking into account that both self-employed persons and companies can be treated as entrepreneurial entities, identification of the role of the tax system also reflects the differences between the entrepreneurial entities. It is worthy of note that the government, which is entrusted to dispose of with the disposal of public funds allocated to the development of science and technology, must act as a smart businessperson and to find as many ways for funding the priority area of the country's economy as possible. One of the most ways is direct or indirect promotion of entrepreneurship, precisely, through the country's tax system, which is resorted to only for redistribution of received state tax revenues among certain economic units, but also, through tax incentives, for promotion of one or the other areas of business, entrepreneurship of self-employed persons or companies (see Figure 1).

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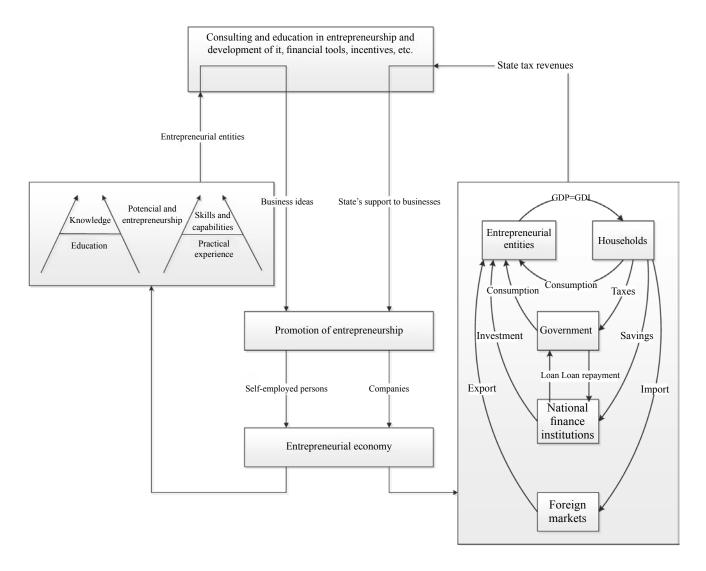


Fig.1. The role of tax system in the entrepreneurial economy development process

Source: developed by authors

It should be emphasised that the tax system plays a very important role in the creation of entrepreneurial economy – namely, by virtue of it, state tax revenues are redistributed among all participants in the economic cycle – households, businesses, and the government. However, we should keep in mind that none country's economic cycle can be closed, therefore, an important role is also attributed to foreign markets - foreign investment, international companies, etc. Thus, upon redistribution by the state of revenue among participants of the economic cycle through the tax system, the number of entrepreneurial entities and an increase in their business volume are highly important for the development of entrepreneurial economy. As stated by Mariotti and Glackin (2011), there consulting and education on the development of entrepreneurial entities, financial tools, tax incentives, etc. are indispensible. So, the tax system's role in creating entrepreneurial economy continues – namely, its elements – tax incentives, tax holidays, tax credits, or similar means help in promoting entrepreneurship in the country. An entrepreneurial entity that intends to become a new business entity – a company or a self-employed person – always opts for a more favourable business environment – a country, business pattern, and so on. Parker (2004) argues that a new business entity, before a venture creation, evaluates all opportunities for the development of the business, however, as evidenced by studies of some researchers, an emphasis is, nevertheless, paid to the national tax system. Though, it should also be stated that the tax system in the context of development of entrepreneurial economy should not be understood only as a collection, but also as an administration of taxes. As stated by Valdez and Richardson (2013), that only the entrepreneurial unit that is mastering sufficient information can generate business ideas and seek to implement them using state support for business.

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It should be emphasised that the state's support of business may have a myriad of forms and expressions, from the very tax incentives, tax holidays to the establishment and funding of business parks, valleys. The European Union's "Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan" is currently considered to be a priority and provides for measures to remove barriers to entrepreneurship: to create ambitious measures to promote start-up's and new businesses, to make business transfers more successful, to improve business access to finance, and to give second chances for honest bankrupts. It also seeks to make tax policies more favourable to businesses, therefore, evaluation of national tax system in terms of entrepreneurship promotion is particularly important currently. This just proves the importance of the tax system's role in the development of entrepreneurial economy. The basis of the entrepreneurial economy, according to Reid (2010), is considered entrepreneurial entities - companies and self-employed persons. It should be noted that self-employed persons' entrepreneurship is highly influenced by internal entrepreneurship-determining factors. As stated by Hsieh et al. (2011), internal factors are extremely important to be divided into two sub-groups – innate and acquired personal characteristics of an individual, since it has an effect on evaluation of efficacy of measures to promote entrepreneurship. Innate characteristics are attributable to such personal qualities as intuition, recklessness, careerism, adventurism, and self-confidence, and they cannot be acquired by learning, training or otherwise. It must be emphasised that this is precisely the reason that possession or lack of innate, entrepreneurship-influencing characteristics explains why only a certain part of society are business people, capable of successfully creating and nurturing their own business. Acquired characteristics are no less important; they can be acquired during studies or work and include, first of all, knowledge and practical experience, business features and motivation. It should be noted that solely innate, entrepreneurship-influencing characteristics are not enough – entrepreneurial entities, having a sufficient degree, amount of knowledge, skills and abilities acquired during practical experience, must obtain sufficient support from third parties. According to Porter (1994), Takeru and Siohong (2011), such support is described and defined in the scientific literature as consulting and education in business development opportunities. However, as noted by Gaspar (2009), Tanas and Audretsch (2011), it is much more important to create right conditions in a country for existence and development of entrepreneurship, and they are most commonly associated with the entrepreneurship development -friendly tax policy making.

Conclusions

An analysis of scientific literature allows to state that although authors suggest different concepts of the tax system, the vast majority of scientists, however, reach consensus and agree that the tax system is a whole of interdependent, mutually complementary, restricting, and influencing taxes, collectable in a country in accordance with the general principles of taxation including administration of taxes as constituent elements of it. Thus, the tax system in the context of development of entrepreneurial economy should not be understood only as a collection, but also as an administration of taxes. It should be emphasised that the tax system plays a very important role in the creation of entrepreneurial economy – namely, by virtue of it, state tax revenues are redistributed among all participants in the economic cycle – households, businesses, and the government. Besides, the tax system elements – tax incentives, tax holidays, tax credits, or similar means – help in promoting entrepreneurship in the country and, thus, the development of entrepreneurial economy.

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