CASE STUDY: PROMOTING COMPETITIVENESS OF MSMEs IN THE WINEMAKING SECTOR USING A SPACE MATRIX AND CSR PRINCIPLES WITH EMPHASIS ON GENERATION Y

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the wine-producing businesses' competitive positioning. Its main aim, based on a case study, is to propose recommendations on how to consolidate their market position, yield long-term profits and boost competitiveness, taking into account the current labour market conditions. The ensuing recommendations for the two selected wineries are based on an analysis of the external and internal environment and competition mapping of the wine industry. The micro-enterprise (D) should pursue conservative strategies, i.e., market penetration, concentric diversification and cost minimization. The medium-sized company (C) is advised to adopt aggressive strategies such as new product development, diversification and backward, forward, or horizontal integration. The need to implement CSR policies has also been proved. According to the survey conducted, Generation Y respondents expect activities in the fields of work-life balance, above-standard health and safety care and environmental protection.

Key words: SPACE matrix, wine sector, strategy, MSMEs, Generation Y, corporate social responsibility.

JEL classification: M110, M120

ABSTRAKT

Tato práce se zabývá odvětvím vinařství a jejím hlavním cílem je formulovat doporučení zaměřená na udržení se na trhu, dlouhodobé dosahování zisku a posilování konkurenční pozice. Výsledná doporučení vychází z analýz vnějšího a vnitřního prostředí a kompletního zmapování konkurence v odvětví. Na základě výsledků byly navrženy doporučení pro dva stávající podniky v odvětví. Mikropodnik (podnik D) by se měl soustředit na realizaci konzervativních strategií, mezi něž patří penetrace na trh, koncentrická diverzifikace a minimalizace nákladů, zatímco středně velký podnik (podnik C) na realizaci agresivních strategií, jako je vývoj nových výrobků, diverzifikace, zpětná, dopředná nebo horizontální integrace. Aby mohly podniky rozšiřovat svůj potenciál a zvyšovat svoji konkurenceschopnost, je v odvětví vinařství vhodná implementace nástrojů CSR. Na základě provedeného průzkumu respondenti z generace Y očekávají v oblasti odpovědného chování podniků (CSR) především aktivity spadající do oblasti Work-life balance, péči nad rámec zákonem stanovených požadavků, ochranu životního prostředí.

Klíčová slova: Matice SPACE, odvětví vinařství, strategie, malé a střední podniky, generace Y, společenská odpovědnost

JEL klasifikace: M110, M120

INTRODUCTION

The current market environment is evolving dynamically in response to changing conditions. It is rather difficult for wine businesses to set long-term goals achievable under circumstances that are hard to predict. A sustainable development strategy in the long run is thus necessary in order to unite the efforts to achieve prosperity and competitiveness (Hejmalová, Šperková, 2014).

A firm's competitiveness depends on its ability to meet current economic, social and environmental challenges. There are 1.28 million small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) with up to 250 employees in the Czech Republic, of which almost one million are family businesses (Petr, 2020). In the European Union, SMEs account for 58% of GDP on average. In the Czech Republic, it is approximately 40% and the ratio is increasing steadily. In addition, these companies represent more than half of total Czech exports (Bureš, 2017). As for the wine industry, there are about 700 registered wine producers in 384 winemaking villages and towns. A total of 18.4 thousand grapevine growers are registered in the Czech Republic (Kozelský, 2021).

A key factor in the competitiveness of wine companies is the specialist skills

and qualifications of staff affecting the quality of output. Employers are supposed to be aware of the requirements and expectations of these professionals, being able to devise effective workforce management strategies, principles and procedures (see Śafránková et al., 2020). Due to demographic and other external factors, there is a shortage of these specialists and their recruitment is becoming increasingly difficult (Petr, 2020). Moreover, with the issues of sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR) currently resonating throughout society, firms have to keep pace with the demands of their customers and staff. With ever-increasing demands, both customers and employees expect employers to meet their obligations even beyond legal requirements (cf. Latif, Ong, Meero, Abdul Rahman, Ali, 2022). CSR activities work differently in different types of crises, having proved successful during the COVID-19 pandemic not only for companies, but for society as a whole (Qiu, Jiang, Liu, Chen, Yuan, 2021). In a pandemic, organizations should ask themselves three basic questions - how they can benefit the general public, how they can protect their employees and customers and which of their philanthropic activities might be socially beneficial (see Mahmud, Ding, Hasan, 2021).

Recruiting young skilled labour has become a highly competitive challenge. Current applicants are different from previous generations. Standard promises such as fast career advancement are no longer effective. According to a survey conducted by Deloitte (2020), the value orientation of the company, including the implementation of socially responsible activities, has become an important criterion for the generation of so-called millennials (Generation Y). They are the largest reservoir of labour today; its share will have increased to 75% by 2025 (Diskienė, Stankevičienė, Jurgaitytė, 2017). As the current multi-generational workforce (with a predominance of Generation Y) has brought more complexity to the workplace, efficient management of both new and older staff places higher demands on employers (cf. Haski-Leventhal, 2018). Understanding generational differences is thus an important prerequisite for increasing employee productivity, introducing innovations and applying CSR in companies (Ashraf, 2018).

The aim of the present study is to make recommendations for businesses operating in the wine industry sector in the Czech Republic, focusing on stabilizing the market position and raising competitiveness and long-term profitability with

respect to the current situation on the labour market. Using the principles of human resources management, a SPACE matrix is applied in the analysis and its strategic usability and suitability for winemaking businesses are verified.

1 LITERATURE REVIEW

A winery carries out the processing of grapes, crushes, mash or wines allowed by technology for wine for optimal quality, which can be put into circulation after the corresponding classification and designation. A winemaker is a vine grower and at the same time a wine producer, or just a wine producer if they buy grapes from a vineyard and only deal with their processing (Koráb et al., 2021). A total of 18.4 thousand wine growers were registered in the Czech Republic in 2022 but not all of them are also winemakers and registered wineries (Janšto, 2022).

In the Czech Republic, approximately 700 registered wineries currently process wine, ranging from medium-sized companies to small family businesses and hundreds of micro-enterprises, i.e., small private winemakers (Novák, 2019; Janšto, 2022). There is only one company on the market that can be classified as a large company according to the above methodology, namely Bohemia Sekt, s.r.o. This company is also one of the most important vine growers and at the same time it is the largest processor of grapes in the Czech Republic. It also has the largest market share of 34.45% (Kostovčík, Šrédl, Hommerová, 2019). According to Koráb et al. (2021), within the wine sector, there are many companies that may have different or similar interests, and each can do business on a different basis.

In order to facilitate the understanding of the relative position of an organization between the level of an individual enterprise and the industry, these companies can be clustered into strategic competitive groups based on their similarity, which Blažková & Havlínová did on the basis of market shares and total sales (2016). They thus divided the enterprises operating in the wine sector into 6 competing groups. The first 5 competing groups include a total of 18 companies with the highest market share, which together have a market share of more than 60%. Although these companies have significant strategic and size differences between them, their main objective is to maintain their market position in the long term. According to Králiková & Kubát (2020) and Šperková & Skýpalová (2020), their business and development strategy is aimed at creating a strong and effective-

ly managed company with high-quality production and a powerful system of marketing and distribution leading to strengthening customer loyalty. Based on these common elements, in order to meet the goal of work, it is possible to include enterprises from group 1–5 in the common superset of the largest firms on the market.

Blažková & Havlínová (2016) and Janšto (2022) include the smallest companies with a small market share and low sales in the last, sixth group; they are at the same time characterized by an individual market share of less than 0.20%. It is the most comprehensive group in terms of the number of companies, with an overall market share of less than 40%. These companies do not have sufficient financial background to penetrate regional markets and therefore focus only on local markets, or even on selected customer segments (Koráb et al., 2021).

The creation of strategic alternatives is a demanding process that is based on the analysis of the external environment as well as on intuitive development forecasts. A few tools are available to identify general strategies that are subsequently incorporated in situation-specific plans (Ateke, Didia, 2017), the Strategic Position and Action Evaluation (SPACE) matrix being one of them. It is based on four input dimensions – financial strength, competitive advantage, environment stability and industry strength (see Farajian, Mohammadi, Bigham, Shamsfakhr, 2019).

The Czech Republic is currently making up the deficit in social responsibility caused by 40 years of communist dictatorship (Przytula et al., 2019). According to Skácelík (2010), the current situation in CSR in the Czech Republic can be described as a "phase of awakening", when the topic of CSR becomes part of public awareness and general discussions, and when companies are increasingly aware not only of the fact that there is such a thing as CSR, but also that it is useful and absolutely necessary for successful future progress (Skácelík 2010). Kašparová & Kunz (2013) believe that "social responsibility is no longer the domain of foreign companies in the Czech Republic, but that Czech companies are also trying to implement CSR into their corporate culture" (Kašparová & Kunz, 2013). Well-designed social responsibility (CSR) programmes can significantly improve relations between SME stakeholders (Rozsa et al., 2021). Vrabcová & Urbancová (2021) conducted a survey among Czech agricultural enterprises on the topic

of identifying the approaches of Czech agricultural companies to promoting the concept of sustainable development according to CSR principles. The conclusions of their study state that key approaches to promoting the concept of sustainable development include an emphasis on the process approach, the performance of non-financial corporations and sector stability. The basic factors of competitiveness are good relations with stakeholders and the implementation of an integrated management system. A study aimed at identifying the approaches of Czech business entities to promoting the concept of social responsibility (Maci at al., 2021) shows that 41.3% of respondents focus on the evaluation of processes and projects in terms of their economic, environmental and social aspects and impacts, while the approach of business entities to promoting the concept of social responsibility is not influenced by the sector, size, type or ownership.

The interpretation of SPACE matrix results is based on the evaluation of the situation in the given sector (Todorov, Akbar, 2019). Therefore, emphasis is placed on the process of strategy creation itself, the very selection of key factors indicating the future direction of the company (cf. Elezaj, 2017). Obviously, the SPACE matrix requires a considerable amount of input information while its output may seem too simplistic. However, the exact location of a company's vector can accurately show its position, allowing for the strategies to be adjusted to match the actual placement of the vector, i.e., the real situation of the company (Vincent, Darlington, Ugwuegbu, 2019).

The final formulation of strategies is largely influenced by changes in employee behaviour and requirements. In line with the demographics and the need for skilled staff, baby boomers and Generation X are gradually being replaced by millennials whose requirements are different, insisting predominantly on work-life balance (Zhang, 2016). Satisfied employees are more likely to become ambassadors of the company brand involved in its communication towards the labour market (Skýpalová et al., 2021).

Work-life balance has become a trend among new job seekers who prioritize their private life more than their predecessors. The so-called New Work Approach for the global and digital age focuses on the concepts of free and private time, such as a holiday without email (even for managers), post-work regulations, overtime restrictions or the culture of presenteeism (Doyé, 2016). Directives of the EU Parliament and the EU Council emphasize work-life balance for parents facilitating mothers' return to work (see EU Parliament and Council Directives 2019/1158, 2019).

Human resources departments and corporate HR staff play an important role in implementing the CSR strategy. HR tools help integrate it into the organization and create a management system that contributes to maintaining the company's performance (Gordon, Nelke, 2017). HR management facilitates the cultivation of skills, motivation, values and trust needed for long-term profitability and sustainable health of the organization (Macky, Twenge & Campbell, 2008). The goals of long-term HR management include the equal treatment, development and well-being of employees, and support for environmentally friendly business operations. In this sense, the persistently high psychological burden in the workplace and wage discrimination of women as well as their permanent under-representation in management positions are not acceptable anymore (cf. Cohen, 2017).

HR departments ensure that social responsibility becomes a factor in the successful fulfilment of business objectives (García-Sánchez et al. 2020). Experience indicates that companies integrating CSR activities into their daily workings significantly increase employee satisfaction and loyalty and succeed in attracting quality candidates. CSR proves to be of particular importance for Generation Y, as young people prefer truly responsible employers whose products are sustainable (Wey Smola, Sutton, 2002). Involvement in CSR projects therefore has a significant positive impact on the recruitment and retention of employees, which is duly understood by prudent HR professionals. They avoid incorrect communication which can give a false impression that the aim of CSR activities is only to make money for the company. This prevents the consequent damage to the company's image and reputation in the labour market (Latif, Ong, Meero, Abdul Rahman, Ali, 2022).

The EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD, 2021) eliminates the inconsistent interpretation of CSR principles, setting clear rules for environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) reporting. For companies with more than 250 employees whose turnover and assets exceed 40 and 20 milli-

on euros, respectively, the ESG report are mandatory from 2023, meeting at least two out of three conditions. If CSRD is gradually applied across all companies, being continuously expanded and modified, it will mark a milestone in the CSR implementation (Popkova, DeLo, Sergi, 2021).

2 METHODS

The creation of strategic alternatives is a demanding process with regard to the current structure of the winemaking sector in the Czech Republic and the competitive position of individual winemaking enterprises. Given the wine market structure and strategic group analysis according to Blažková & Havlínová (2016), the paper focuses on the selected representatives of two types of establishments whose core business is wine production (enterprise C and enterprise D).

Also, a questionnaire survey of corporate social responsibility awareness was carried out. In the first phase, structured interviews with managers were conducted in May and June 2021, focusing on CSR activities developing human capital in both enterprises. In the second phase between August and November 2021, representatives of Generation Y were interviewed via social networks. Respondents answered two closed questions. The first one concerned the knowledge of the CSR concept, in the second, the participants chose from nine CSR activities those that, in their view, affect the decision about their future employer (any number of activities could be marked). A total of 317 Generation Y respondents took part in the survey.

The term "Generation Y" was coined in the journal *Advertising Age*. This marketing trade magazine has been credited with first using the term in an editorial in August 1993, as a way to distinguish the group from Generation X (Advertising Age, 1993). Generation Y, also called the Millennium generation as they were born between 1980 and 1995, pursues status and prestige consumption lifestyles, which significantly shapes their consumption behaviour in all areas, including organic products (Perito, Coderoni and Russo, 2020).

Dependency analysis and combined classification were used to process statistical data. The obtained information made it possible to verify whether the CSR activities offered are in compliance with the needs of potential job seekers.

Two research questions were identified:

- Research question 1: What CSR activities are pursued by the monitored companies?
- Research question 2: Are the offered CSR activities in accordance with the needs of potential Generation Y job applicants?

The research was carried out by the authors of the article. Respondents were approached through social networks. Questionnaires were filled by respondents in electronic form. Dependency analysis and combined sorting were used to process statistical data. To answer the above questions, the method of comparing data obtained from the questionnaire survey, professional literature and the press was utilized. Since the data gathered from the latter sources are often of a theoretical nature, sometimes not corresponding to the current situation in the companies and on the labour market, more current websites were consulted. All sources employed are listed below in the literature references.

Having been further examined and evaluated, the collected data along with the outcomes of external environment analysis of the wine sector form the input of particular SPACE matrix dimensions, i.e., financial strength (FS), competitive advantage (CA), environment stability (ES) and industry strength (IS). Subsequently, the position of enterprises C and D within the matrix was determined and individual direction vectors were calculated, indicating the type of recommended strategies.

3 RESULTS

3.1 SELECTED ENTERPRISES

Given the wine market structure and strategic group analysis according to Blaž-ková & Havlínová (2016), the paper focuses on enterprise C and enterprise D. At the request of their owners and management executives, the real names of the enterprises are replaced by the letters C and D.

Enterprise C

It is a company with a long tradition of wine production operating on the market since the early 1990s. It has approximately 70 employees, its annual turnover is around CZK 300m (i.e., ca. EUR 12m), the annual production amounting to about 4m bottles. The headquarters is in one of the wine-growing regions of the Czech Republic. The company offers a wide range of quality, varietal and blended wines as well as sparkling wines. The products are distributed throughout the Czech Republic and abroad (exports reaching a maximum of 2%) through retail chains, restaurants, hotels, wine shops and bars. The company has sufficient financial capital to implement marketing strategies with a nationwide impact, focusing on wine tasting, product differentiation, visual appeal, e-commerce, website design and sponsorship. The company is one of the ten largest wine producers in the Czech Republic and in terms of the above parameters belongs to the group of 18 biggest winemaking companies in the Czech Republic. In terms of the map of the market structure according to Blažková & Havlínová (2016), enterprise C belongs to the second competitive group and thus also among 18 largest companies on the market.

Enterprise D

One of the micro-enterprises that make up 95% of all the winemakers has only been in operation since the early 2010s. It employs 2–5 persons (mainly family members), its annual turnover and production being about CZK 0.2m (i.e., ca. EUR 8,000) and 7,000 bottles, respectively. It is located in a wine-growing region of the Czech Republic. The business offers a limited range of wines sold only on the local market via its own store and an online shop. It has neither its own vineyards nor a sufficient capital background, its equipment being rather outdated and marketing activities limited. In terms of the map of the market structure according to Blažková & Havlínová (2016), enterprise D belongs to the sixth competitive group.

3.2 STRATEGIC CSR IMPLICATIONS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RESOURCES

The objectives such as social responsibility, environmental protection or employee education testify to the value orientation that companies are usually proud of (cf. Rasche, Mette, Moon, 2017). The same conclusion can be drawn from a survey interview with the manager of enterprise D, one of the micro-businesses that learn how to be socially responsible from each other, adopting an approach that is tailored to them. To engage in CSR activities seems easier for smaller establishments that can intertwine their interests more closely with those of society. They are locally anchored, their regional reputation being more important to them than to large firms (see also Schröter, Dutzi, Withanage, 2021). As it is difficult for them to hire skilled staff, they often include CSR principles inadvertently within their employment policy without even being familiar with the concept itself. Intuitively, enterprise D sees CSR as an opportunity to attract new staff recruited from Generation Y in particular.

SMEs generally emphasize the environmental and social aspects – interviews with three managers of the medium-sized enterprise C suggest that CSR is part of its strategy. Companies that pursue a socially responsible policy gain a competitive advantage, as they are generally more attractive to highly qualified candidates who are in short supply in the labour market. It is the search for skilled staff recruited particularly from Generation Y that is the issue urgently addressed by enterprise C (cf. Susso-Sutter, 2014). The survey results of the implementation of socially responsible activities in enterprises C and D are shown in Table 1 below.

Tab. 1 » Corporate social responsibility activities

| | CSR activity | Activities pursued by enterprise C YES/NO | Activities pursued by enterprise D YES/NO | Generation Y's expectation rate (%) |
|----|--|--|--|---|
| 1 | Employee envir. protection training | YES | YES | 53 |
| 2 | Job creation in the region | YES | YES | 45 |
| 3 | Employee work-life balance | NO | NO | 89 |
| 4 | Outplacement assistance for redundant workers | NO | NO | 39 |
| 5 | Workplace equal opportu- nities and diversity policy | YES | YES | 76 |
| 6 | Corporate ethics and culture | YES | YES | 71 |
| 7 | Employee education and retraining | YES | YES | 79 |
| 8 | Corporate philanthropy and employee volunteering | YES | NO | 43 |
| 9 | Local community support | YES | NO | 57 |
| 10 | Environmental protection | YES | YES | 49 |
| 12 | Humanitarian aid and phi- lanthropy | NO | NO | 61 |
| 13 | True communication with customers | YES | YES | 70 |
| 14 | Safety and health protecti- on and fire safety beyond legal requirements | YES | NO | 67 |

Source: authors' own elaboration

Out of the 14 monitored activities, enterprises C and D engage in 9 and 7 activities, respectively, as indicated by the survey outcomes presented in Table 1. Neither of the businesses pay attention to the issue of work-life balance, which is expected most by members of Generation Y, as stated by 87% of respondents. The results also show that the most required activities among Generation Y respondents are:

- Work-life balance (89%)
- Employee education and retraining (79%)
- Workplace equal opportunities and diversity policy (76%)

In contrast, the least expected CSR activities are:

- Outplacement (39%)
- Corporate philanthropy and employee volunteering (43%)
- Regional job creation (45%)

Wine-producing enterprises should also be strongly encouraged to pay more attention to balancing personal and professional lives of employees. For women in particular, it is very challenging to combine work with full-fledged child and family care. Part-time or shared jobs – the latter being widely promoted by the Labour Office – are only exceptional in the wine sector; in monitored enterprises C and D they are not offered at all. According to the European Statistical Office, the Czech Republic still ranks among the countries with the lowest number of part-time jobs in the EU. In the Netherlands and Germany, for instance, part-time work accounts for around 45% of jobs offered, while in the Czech Republic they represent only 7% (CZSO, 2019). None of the above working time adjustments is applied in the two businesses examined.

Employees rotate in the shared position according to a predetermined agreement. Unlike the standard model of work, they should draw up their shift schedules themselves. Details and deadlines are up to their specific agreement. They usually plan shifts for one month and submit their plan to the employer at least a week in advance – so for example, they submit a shift schedule for December in the third week of November. If employees fail to submit the shift schedule themselves within the set deadline, their supervisor is obliged to plan it for them. The schedule may change during the period due to various common complications. In this case, the employees must inform their supervisor in writing in advance.

A shared job offers many benefits, and it is the employees who benefit in particular. By using this scheme, you will primarily create better conditions for employing part-time workers. Employees will be able to better reconcile their work and private lives. Compared to, for example, an agreement to perform a job,

there is an indisputable benefit, as it also includes the right to a paid leave (i.e., its proportional part) and other benefits. However, this will change this year, as the amendment to the Labour Code regulates agreements on work activity and agreements to perform a job. The employer will have to inform the employee of the written working schedule or its change no later than 3 days in advance. The amendment will also bring the regulation of agreements closer to the regulation of employment – employees will be entitled to a leave (after meeting the statutory conditions), time off in the event of obstacles to work on the part of the employer and bonuses for work on public holidays, at night, on weekends and in a difficult working environment.

3.3 SPACE MATRIX

Before building a SPACE matrix, it is necessary to assess the factors of its dimensions. Then, a direction vector is constructed, and appropriate strategies are proposed.

ES and IS dimensions

The factors of environment stability (ES) and industry strength (IS) dimensions relate to the external environment, affecting all companies equally. They are assigned a weight in the interval <0; 1> corresponding to their role in the wine sector, then they are marked in the interval <-1; -6> according to the response of enterprises to individual factors in the dimension, and the total weighted score of the dimension is calculated. Within the environment stability dimension, particular factors are listed in Table 2.

Tab. 2 » ES (Environment stability) dimension factors and their evaluation

| Factor | Weight | Mark | Weighted score |
|--------------------------|--------|------|----------------|
| Technological changes | 0.17 | -2 | -0.34 |
| Inflation rate | 0.15 | -2 | -0.3 |
| Demand variability | 0.16 | -2 | -0.32 |
| Price level | 0.18 | -1 | -0.18 |
| Barriers to market entry | 0.15 | -1 | -0.15 |
| Competitive pressure | 0.19 | -5 | -0.95 |
| Total | 1.00 | | -2.24 |

Source: authors' own elaboration

The assessment of factors presented in Tab. 2 suggests that the wine sector is relatively stable, competitive pressure being the only significant destabilizing factor, especially for the group of the ten most important companies in the market.

For the industry strength dimension, the respective factors are provided in Table 3.

Tab. 3 » IS (Industry strength) dimension factors and their evaluation.

| Factor | Weight | Mark | Weighted score |
|---------------------------------|--------|------|----------------|
| Growth potential | 0.18 | 6 | 1.08 |
| Profit potential | 0.15 | 2 | 0.30 |
| Financial stability | 0.14 | 5 | 0.70 |
| Technological know-how | 0.12 | 1 | 0.12 |
| Use of resources | 0.12 | 4 | 0.48 |
| Market entry opportuni- ties | 0.16 | 5 | 0.80 |
| Productivity, capacity | 0.13 | 2 | 0.26 |
| Total | 1.00 | | 3.74 |

Source: authors' own elaboration

The assessment of factors provided in Tab. 3 indicates that the wine production is a sector of a considerable strength consisting mainly in its – still untapped – market potential (market size, production gap and growth prospects). For the future, the sector is expected to further grow, also due to the easing of restrictions by the EU, thus encouraging backward integration, profitability growth and financial stability.

FS and CA dimensions

The factors of financial strength (FS) and competitive advantage (CA) dimensions describe a company's internal strategic position. It is therefore necessary to assess them for each company separately. Each factor is assigned a weight within the interval <0; 1> corresponding to its importance for the given enterprise, then it is marked in the interval <1; 6> according to its influence on the possible strategy of a particular company, and the total weighted dimension score is calculated.

Enterprise C

The impact of financial strength factors on the internal strategic position of enterprise C is shown in Table 4 below.

Tab. 4 » FS (Financial strength) dimension factors and their evaluation (enterprise C)

| Factor | Weight | Mark | Weighted score |
|---|--------|------|----------------|
| Return on investment | 0.18 | 6 | 1.08 |
| Indebtedness | 0.16 | 4 | 0.64 |
| Liquidity | 0.15 | 5 | 0.75 |
| Working capital | 0,17 | 6 | 1.02 |
| Cash flow | 0,12 | 4 | 0.48 |
| Possibility of withdrawal from the market | 0.07 | 3 | 0.21 |
| Business risk | 0.15 | 5 | 0.75 |
| Total | 1.00 | | 4.93 |

Source: authors' own elaboration

Based on the above-mentioned assumptions for enterprise C, it is clear that the return on investment is the factor with the greatest impact. The company invests in new technologies, which has a positive effect on increasing production efficiency and profits. The planned volume of production, however, suggests that the company will not have enough funds. Therefore, it must anticipate debt growth and reduced liquidity, as evidenced by lower marks for these factors. On the other hand, the company does not face too much business risk, which results not only from its internal dispositions but also from its competitive position in the market, as it is one of the ten largest wine producers in the Czech Republic.

The effect of competitive advantage factors on the internal strategic position of enterprise C is shown in Table 5.

Tab. 5 » CA (Competitive advantage) dimension factors, their evaluation (enterprise C)

| Factor | Weight | Mark | Weighted score |
|--------------------------------------|--------|------|----------------|
| Market share | 0.20 | -1 | -0.2 |
| Product quality | 0.18 | -2 | -0.36 |
| Product life cycle | 0.08 | -1 | -0.08 |
| Customer loyalty | 0.14 | -2 | -0.28 |
| Capacity utilization | 0.12 | -3 | -0.36 |
| Technological know-how | 0.13 | -1 | -0.13 |
| Impact on suppliers and distributors | 0.15 | -3 | -0.45 |
| Total | 1.00 | | -1.86 |

Source: authors' own elaboration

Enterprise C's reaction to these factors highlights the fact that its market share, which in turn affects product quality, know-how and equipment, is crucial. In this case, both the impact on suppliers and distributors and the use of production capacities, which the company can further expand, are only moderately influential factors. The product life cycle seems the least important, as enterprise C is already established in the market and produces the same range of products as its closest competitors.

Enterprise D

Table 6 below shows the influence of financial strength factors on the internal strategic position of enterprise D.

Tab. 6 » FS (Financial strength) dimension factors and their evaluation (enterprise D)

| Factor | Weight | Mark | Weighted score |
|---|--------|------|----------------|
| Return on investment | 0.15 | 4 | 0.6 |
| Indebtedness | 0.19 | 1 | 0.19 |
| Liquidity | 0.11 | 4 | 0.44 |
| Working capital | 0.18 | 3 | 0.54 |
| Cash flow | 0.12 | 5 | 0.6 |
| Possibility of withdrawal from the market | 0.10 | 5 | 0.5 |
| Business risk | 0.15 | 3 | 0.45 |
| Total | 1.00 | | 3.32 |

Source: authors' own elaboration

In the case of enterprise D, which is very small and does not have sufficient funds and liquidity, the debt factor carries the greatest weight. The enterprise is also exposed to a significant business risk that is exacerbated by the risk of bankruptcy unless it has a sufficient number of customers.

The impact of competitive advantage factors on the internal strategic position of enterprise D is presented in Table 7.

Tab. 7 » CA (Competitive advantage) dimension factors, their evaluation (enterprise D)

| Factor | Weight | Mark | Weighted score |
|--------------------------------------|--------|------------|----------------|
| Market share | 0.08 | -6 | -0.48 |
| Product quality | 0.20 | -2 | -0.4 |
| Product life cycle | 0.06 | -4 | -0.24 |
| Customer loyalty | 0.21 | -2 | -0.42 |
| Capacity utilization | 0.16 | - 5 | -0.8 |
| Technological know-how | 0.15 | -6 | -0.9 |
| Impact on suppliers and distributors | 0.14 | -6 | -0.84 |
| Total | 1.00 | | -4.08 |

Source: authors' own elaboration

Enterprise D has a very low market share and competitive strength. However, it focuses on reaching regular customers, offering them high-quality products. It also strives to make full use of its production capacity and know-how. Unfortunately, it does not have enough funds for technological innovations, which limits further streamlining of the production. It also has a minimal influence on suppliers and distributors.

SPACE matrix assembly

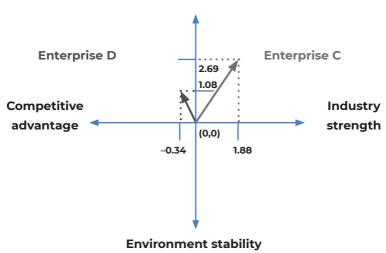
To determine the position of a company within the SPACE matrix, it is necessary to calculate the coordinates of the point to which the direction vector leads from the beginning of the matrix. The point (x, y) coordinates are (1):

| Enterprise C | Enterprise D |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| x = IS + CA | x = IS + CA |
| x = 3.74 - 1.86 | x = 3.74 - 4.08 |
| x = 1.88 | x = -0.34 |
| | |
| y = FS + ES | y = FS + ES |
| y = 4.93 - 2.24 | y = 3.32 - 2.24 |
| y = 2.69 | y = 1.08 |
| | |
| (x,y) = (1.88, 2.69) | (x,y) = (-0.34, 1.08) |
| | (1) |

Figure 1 illustrates the direction vectors of both businesses within the SPACE matrix. In the case of enterprise C, the resulting vector extends into the first quadrant suggesting that the firm should adopt aggressive strategies. For enterprise D, on the other hand, the vector hits the fourth quadrant, which means that the company should follow conservative strategies.

Fig. 1 » SPACE matrix for enterprises C and D





Source: authors' own elaboration

4 RECOMMENDATION PROPOSAL AND DISCUSSION

4.1 ENTERPRISE C

The placement of the direction vector in the SPACE matrix indicates that enterprise C holds a good competitive position in the growing and stable wine industry sector. It should therefore pursue aggressive strategies such as market penetration and development, new product development, diversification, backward, forward and horizontal integration, or a combination of these strategies.

Specifically, the company should strengthen its current market position by enhancing product quality and differentiating from competitors. It is also advisable to increase its marketing efforts, by participating in wine fairs and competitions in particular. The company should innovate the design of bottles and labels – competition awards could serve this purpose. A good financial situation allows for investing in packaging technologies that would enable to offer wine in cans,

PET bottles and bag-in-boxes, thus addressing customers from wineries and entertainment venues.

If the already low purchase price of grapes stabilizes or further declines in the future, the company ought to take advantage of this and increase the volume of production. It should also focus more on integration processes and the acquisition of competitors. This could expand its regional scope and strengthen competitiveness.

In terms of marketing communication, the company should focus on accompanying activities increasing brand awareness among consumers. It is advisable to promote wine tourism, creating, for example, a wine friends association, and to hold seminars and courses for wine professionals and enthusiasts. Due care should be given to a continuous upgrade of the firm's website to better reflect on current trends. The company ought to create a profile on social networks so that it can effectively draw attention to corporate events. It should also consider a nationwide advertising campaign to raise its profile with a wide range of customers.

The company should also take care of its existing customers through loyalty programmes offering incentives such as volume discounts, rewards for purchases or free shipping on larger orders. Relations with large customers could be improved by providing a discount that would significantly reduce debt collection times.

Enterprise C is also recommended to promote work-life balance so that female employees in particular can take full care of their children and families. As there is a shortage of kindergartens and nurseries, their operating hours not adapting to the needs of employed parents (*MLSA*, 2020), the company should set up its own kindergarten or children's group, thus making it easier for women to return to work after maternity leave. It should also introduce part-time work or flexible working hours so that employees can make their own decisions and organize children's daily routines.

4.2 ENTERPRISE D

The direction vector of the SPACE matrix indicates a poor competitive position of enterprise D within a stable, slightly growing wine industry. Therefore, the firm should pursue conservative strategies such as market development and penetration, concentric diversification and cost minimization. However, since the vector

is located on the border of quadrants VI and I, some aggressive strategies falling into quadrant I, especially the development of new products and backward, forward or horizontal integration, are also possible.

Specifically, the business should enhance the quality of production, moving towards specialization in quality wines and wines with attributes, attracting more customers who are looking for quality and willing to pay more for it. It should also try to differentiate itself from competitors, for example, by focusing on flavoured wines whose market space is relatively open and provides a high potential for differentiation.

Since the enterprise is rather small, it has insufficient funds to innovate its outdated production technologies. In order to modernize and expand the production, it would be advisable to apply for support from EU funds or other subsidy programmes. If the application fails, the firm can take out a long-term bank loan. Although the use of loan capital threatens the borrower's financial stability in general, interest rates reduce the tax burden and increase the return on equity, which would ultimately produce a positive effect.

The firm should also use the funds to buy its own vineyard, and – by growing suitable wine varieties – increase its product differentiation. Tight funding also limits its marketing pull strategies. It is important for the business to build on the reputation quality, and place of the product's origin. It should focus on cheaper forms of promotion, especially in local markets, such as participation and presentation in the form of tastings in various events in cooperation with the local community management (e.g., wine festivals, farmers' markets, cultural festivals, fairs and exhibitions). The enterprise should also pay attention to the website design and create a profile on social networks, which is a cheap but effective way of promotion.

It is important for the business to deploy the marketing push strategy and pursue the programmes of the Wine Fund and other institutions operating in the Czech Republic. If its geographical location allows it, it should participate in the Moravian Wine Trail project, which is focused on a comprehensive support of cycling and viticulture in the South Moravian Region. This would attract new customers.

The existing, mostly small customers should not be neglected either. Enterprise D should strengthen their loyalty primarily through the provision of accom-

panying services (e.g., cultural events, reward for purchase, free postage). Due to their low number, regular customers can be contacted by name, invited to various events and offered discounted purchases. In terms of HR management, the firm should consider reduced working hours, thus expanding its employee portfolio.

CONCLUSION

The distribution of competitors in the winemaking sector is rather uneven. There are currently about 700 registered wine producers in the Czech Republic (cf. Novák, 2019 and Kozelský, 2021); only 5% are SMEs and micro-enterprises. The present study compares two different model cases – medium enterprise C and micro-enterprise D. The resulting recommendations were proposed using a SPACE matrix.

Since they are regionally based businesses, a good reputation is crucial for them. In terms of competitiveness, as the survey suggested, they would benefit from the implementation of corporate social responsibility tools. Generation Y respondents mainly expect work-life balance (89%), employee education and retraining (79%), workplace equal opportunities and diversity policy (76%) and corporate ethics and culture (71%). It can be generalized that micro-enterprises (such as enterprise D) inspire each other, choosing tailor-made CSR elements. Adopting CSR principles seems easier for them than for larger organizations (such as enterprise C), because they can operationally reconcile their particular and societal interests.

The differences between the two types of enterprises are reflected in the recommendations made. Enterprise C should focus on the differentiation from competitors, strengthening the market position of its current products by emphasizing their quality, whereas enterprise D should pay attention to the specialization and the quality improvement of production.

The SPACE matrix assembly is based on a time-consuming evaluation of the many external and internal environment factors for the given businesses. However, the resulting position of the direction vectors was very precise, which made it possible to give specific recommendations. The applicability of the SPACE matrix for the wine industry has thus been demonstrated.

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