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# Bank that value people

**In the third issue of The Global News I would like to present the case of Triodos Bank. Triodos Bank is the financial institution. They come from the Netherlands and employ circa 350 workers. They seem to be regular, small bank. But when we go into details we can see the difference.**

Triodos Bank

The name, Triodos comes from Greek and means "three-way approach". It expresses the three pillars of Triodos Bank: people, environment and finance. In their mission we can read: *"Triodos Bank finances companies, institutions and projects that add cultural value and benefit people and the environment, with the support of depositors and investors who want to encourage corporate social responsibility and a sustainable society."*

Triodos Bank has created the concept of conscious investment. It is the clue of the bank and the interpretational hint for all kinds of financial decicions. Triodos Bank presents conscious investment together with ethical investment. The second idea is a little bit outdated nowadays. Ethical investement protects only against financing the worst forms of environmental destruction or social injustice. It is negative approach. On the other hand conscious investment is the step forward. It is the whole policy which is based on describing customers awareness of their money and the way how their money is used.

This information strategy connected with conscious investment is a revolutionary glance at the customers. So far, bank clients were giving their money for interest rates and it was the end the history with bank. Now clients have insight in the credit policy of the bank. There is the 100% guarantee that the bank is completely clear. What is more, Triodos is the only commercial bank in the UK that provides an annual list of all the loans the bank has made. This 100% conscious investment model is the possitive approach of investment and it is the realization of the bank mission.

Triodos bank operates on the market and they must obey market rules. They offer regular high quality services. But their focal point are small and medium sized institutions, businesses and charities that are in some way useful for the society. The size matters. They do want to have a close connection with the people who run these organisations.

The activity of Triodos Bank in the field of e.g. services for social business sector is impressive. Lots of the subjects that are operated by Triodos Bank would probably never achieve financial and know-how support. I think we would agree that help in creation of the society that promotes people's quality of life and that has human dignity at its core is the final goal of every kind of public institution. Today it is the goal for banks as well.

Friends of the Earth, the international network of environmental organizations, claims that transferring 10,000 euros in savings from a "climate laggard" such as ABN Amro to Triodos would effectively result in a carbon dioxide emissions saving equivalent to what you would achieve by not driving your car for six months. Does bank matter?

*Michal Majdanski*