

Globalization

Globalization - The world's curse or blessing? The further spread and development of globalization is inevitable. No single person, and probably not even a whole country could do something about it, even if they wanted to. But in the following, some positive aspects globalization brings with it will be compared to some negative sides of it.

Starting with the history, historians are of divided opinion when it comes to defining a certain point in time when globalization first began to take place. Some argue that the very first interactions between people from different regions can already be given the term, others advance the view that it only started with the Roman Empire, when great parts of the world, including different continents, were combined not only to an empire, but to an empire that contained the technology to communicate from one end of the empire to the other through the safe roads that were used. Most people today support the idea of the three eras of globalization. The first era describes the imperialism from 1492 until 1800, the second one was caused by multinational companies and technological breakthroughs from 1800 to 2000, while the third era stands for the individual and expands from 2000 up to today.

But the debate was certainly taken to a whole other level, once technological revolutions such as the phone, the plane, or most lately the Internet arrived during the late second era and the

smartphone in the third era of globalization. Through these means of communication, the world has become a very small place in terms of communicating with each other, and is even called a global village by some. Now not only kings or other monarchs can communicate with each other through carriers, but the common people can go from Europe to Asia within one day, or write an e-mail from Alaska to Hong Kong within seconds. All of this changed the world greatly. For the free market economy, the location of the production does no longer make a difference, because everything can be transported so easily, which means the companies can produce their products in parts of the world where the salary of the workers is lower, which leads to cheaper products in the first world countries. Tourists do not have to spend their summer vacation in a tent in the Sauerland anymore, but can fly to the Maldives. Political leaders can make important decisions after dinner in a phone conference instead of having to travel 5 days by horse in order to meet the leader of the neighbor-country, let alone countries at the other end of the world. Consumer in northern parts of the globe can eat sweet bananas and oranges all year around because they can be flown in with ease. People can immigrate to other countries and live there much easier, which brings diversity to the country and better living conditions to the immigrants.

But all these advantages bring some negative aspects and problems with them as well. The first argument primarily anti-globalization humanitarians often bring forward is self-explaining. The low-wage jobs in third world countries do not provide a comfortable living standard to the workers, who have

to work under poor conditions in the sweatshops of multinationals. The over usage of transportation by car, plane, ship, etc. produces CO₂, which pollutes the air and thereby supports the greenhouse effect, and in the long term, leads to global warming, which presents one of the major issues of our time. Another problem of globalization is the integration of the immigrants, especially those who travel around and never settle anywhere for a longer period of time. In the global cities these people, usually business men, can hope to find someone who speaks “Globish” a drastically simplified version of English, developed for people that are not able to learn the original language. But, jokes apart, they can communicate almost everywhere on earth with English, but even though they can communicate with the people, they often are not integrated in the society.

It could be summed up that in the end, the already rich and highly developed countries of the first world profit from globalization, while the less developed countries suffer even more because of it. Conscious people in first world countries whatsoever can do something about that! Or at least something to help their guilty conscience, by for example looking out for Fairtrade products, which claim to be produced under much better working conditions for the farmers but obviously cost more. The movement of the ethical consumerism also shouts out to buy regional food if possible in order to lower the food miles. Another method for first world citizens with a bad conscience is to support the so-called “lean production” which helps to produce less waste, because since packaging gets cheaper and

cheaper and the food has to travel such a long way, companies usually tend to put an extra layer of package around it.

As a general peacekeeping intermediate between all countries on earth, the United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945 in order for its security council to solve global conflicts and to balance inequalities in political and financial regards. The UN also tries to make everybody abide human rights.

All in all I think that it can be argued that globalization is unstoppable, and rightfully so, because each and every member of the developed countries profits greatly from it and we would still live in a world of subsistence agriculture and poverty instead of the world of iPads and airplanes we live in today. All critics of globalization should try to live without it before judging it. But, that's true, they would simply starve and not survive.