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Influence of COVID-19 Crisis on Foreign Direct Investments and Future Trends

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Abstract

Foreign Direct Investments (hereinafter referred as FDI) are one of the drivers of economic development for many countries. Global FDI recorded in 2019 was \$1.54 trillion. However, due to COVID-19 crisis, global FDI performance is expected to drop by 40% in 2020 and it will be affected in years to come. The paper is bringing the analysis of the effects of COVID-19 crisis on performance of global FDI and the outlook for future FDI performance. The effect of the crisis on different types of FDI activities and regional predictions will be presented. Consequently, the crisis will change future developments of international production. The paper is presenting the expectations on new trends in setting up international production with more emphasis on nearshoring the operations. National investment promotion agencies (hereinafter referred as IPA) whose one of the main tasks is to attract FDI had to react to the crisis as well. The paper will present the initial response by the IPAs and the expectation on future trends. It is expected that in the new normal, countries will invest more in aftercare services for investors, in promoting new investments of existing domestic and foreign companies and invest in country branding not just as good business and investment destination but as being effective in fighting COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: FDI, IPA, COVID-19, future trends

1. INTRODUCTION

The paper examines the impact of COVID-19 crisis on global foreign direct investments (hereinafter referred as: FDI) performance, future outlook and what countries and national investment promotion agencies are doing in order to attract more FDI. The aim of the paper is to determine the trends in FDI and best practice in attracting FDI in the rapidly changing environment, highly affected by Covid-19 crisis. Since the danger of pandemic of the new virus caused countries to react and adopt fast, to close down the borders what intervened and highly affected global value chains and global production. With the experience of the ongoing pandemic, nations and companies are reevaluating investment and investment promotion, and attraction strategies in order to be better prepared for new circumstances. The paper will analyze new trends in global FDI positioning, new investment strategies of companies and what countries and IPAs are doing in order to attract the type of FDI which they mainly see missing during the current pandemic.

2. ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

2.1. Analysis of GDP performance

Investments including foreign direct investments are significant part of gross domestic product (hereinafter referred as GDP) calculation. When we analyze global GDP performance, we notice significant disturbances. The current crisis caused by Covid-19 changed the world and global economy dramatically. There is no country or territory that is not affected. Besides human casualties caused by the new illness for the mankind, which are counted each second by national authorities and the World Health Organization, economic consequences are harder to count. Countries' performance in terms of GDP in second quarter of 2020 turned many economies in red. Winners are those with minimum drop and only rare number of countries did not record negative figures.

When we examine top World's economies, under umbrella of OECD, who experienced 9,8% drop in GDP in Q2 2020, the biggest drop ever recorded in OECD area, we see the danger of the situation for global economy. The table below lists economic areas and their GDP performance a quarter before the announcement of the pandemic and full 2020 by quarters, in comparison to the previous period to illustrate the seriousness of the moment. (OECD, 2021)

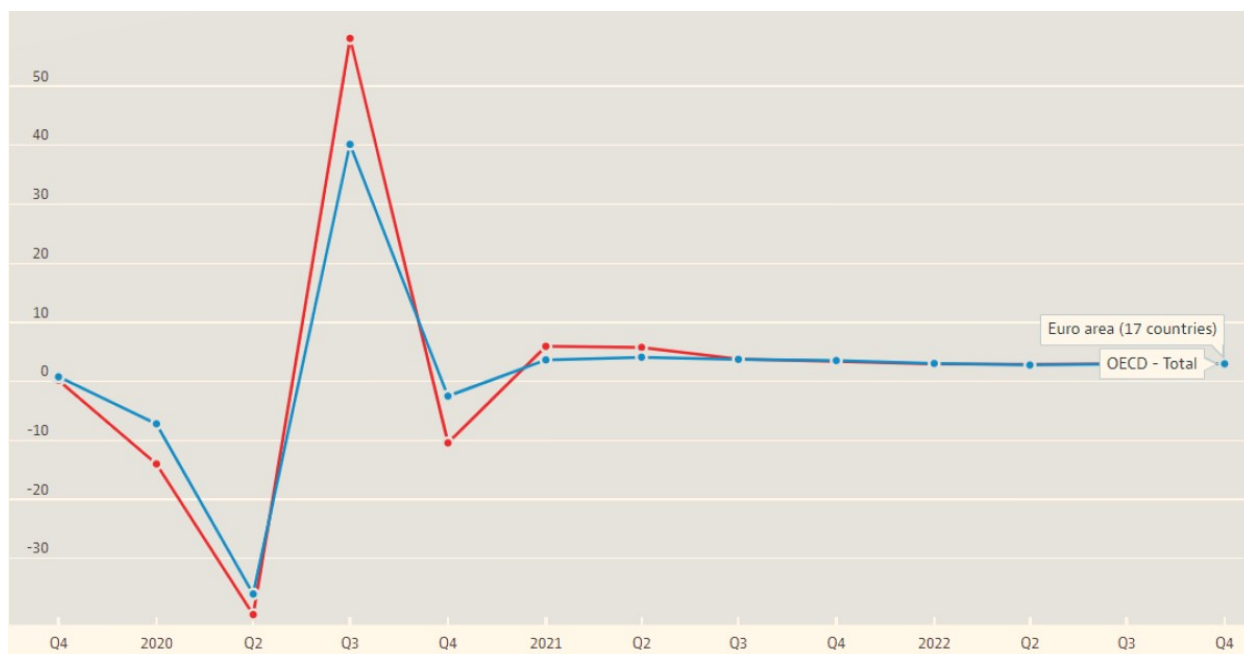
Table 1 GDP performance - percentage change, previous period

BRICS	2019 Q4	2020 Q1	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q4
BRAZIL	0,2	-1,5	-9,6	7,7	/
CHINA	1,2	-9,7	11,6	3,0	2,6
INDIA	0,9	0,7	-25,2	21,9	/
RUSSIA	-0,7	-0,9	-3,2	1,5	/
SOUTH AFRICA	-0,4	-0,4	-16,6	13,5	/
G7	2019 Q4	2020 Q1	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q4
CANADA	0,1	-1,9	-11,3	8,9	1,9
FRANCE	-0,2	-5,9	-13,7	18,5	-1,3
GERMANY	-0,0	-2,0	-9,7	8,5	0,3
ITALY	-0,4	-5,5	-13,0	16,0	-2,0
JAPAN	-1,8	-0,6	-8,3	5,3	3,0
UK	0,0	-2,9	-19,0	16,1	1,0
USA	0,6	-1,3	-9,0	7,5	1,0

(OECD, 2021)

Forecasting real GDP rates for next two years, OECD's outlook, based on figures in 2020 seems optimistic. Figure 1 below brings real GDP forecast developed by OECD.

Figure 1 Real GDP forecast, annual growth rate (%), Q4 2019 – Q4 2020



(OECD, 2021)

However, when one sees World’s top economies underperforming, one thing might be certain and that is global recession. The only hope for global economy is that the medicine will either find the cure soon or we will have to accept the new reality and should not expect recovery soon.

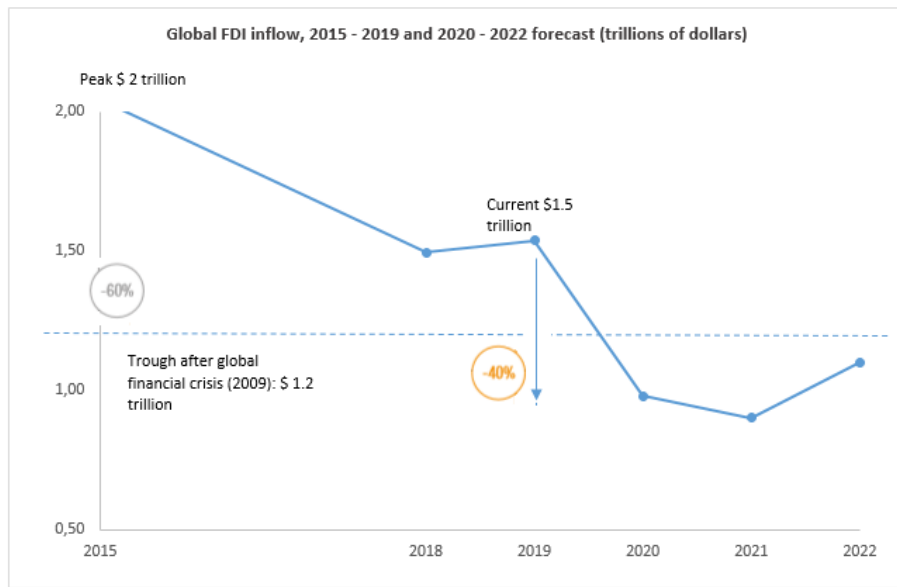
2.2 Analysis of FDI performance and the impact of COVID-19 to global FDI

With the drop in GDP, one of the components of GDP that is the most likely to be immediately affected by global turmoil are investments or foreign direct investments who’s drop will definitely follow. Like tourism, investments and mostly FDI are one of the things that react to every bad news with extreme caution.

Therefore, initial predictions in spring 2020 of global FDI performance by UNCTAD was drop by 40% in 2020, from the value of \$1,54 trillion in 2019. This significant decrease in FDI will cause its first drop below \$1 trillion since 2005. If global economic outlook does not experience more severe disruption in 2021, it is expected that FDI in 2021 will drop another five to ten percent on the annual basis.

The expected drop in FDI is actually continuation of negative trend in global FDI performance. Recent years were marked with disruptions and negative rhetorics in trade relations among biggest global economic powers, what negatively affected cross boarder investments. With current trends and future perspective, reaching figures from 2015 of global FDI being on the level of \$2 trillion seems long term goal, hard to be seen in next couple of years. (UNCTAD, 2020)

Figure 2 Global FDI inflows, 2015-2019 and 2020-2022 forecast, in trillions of dollars

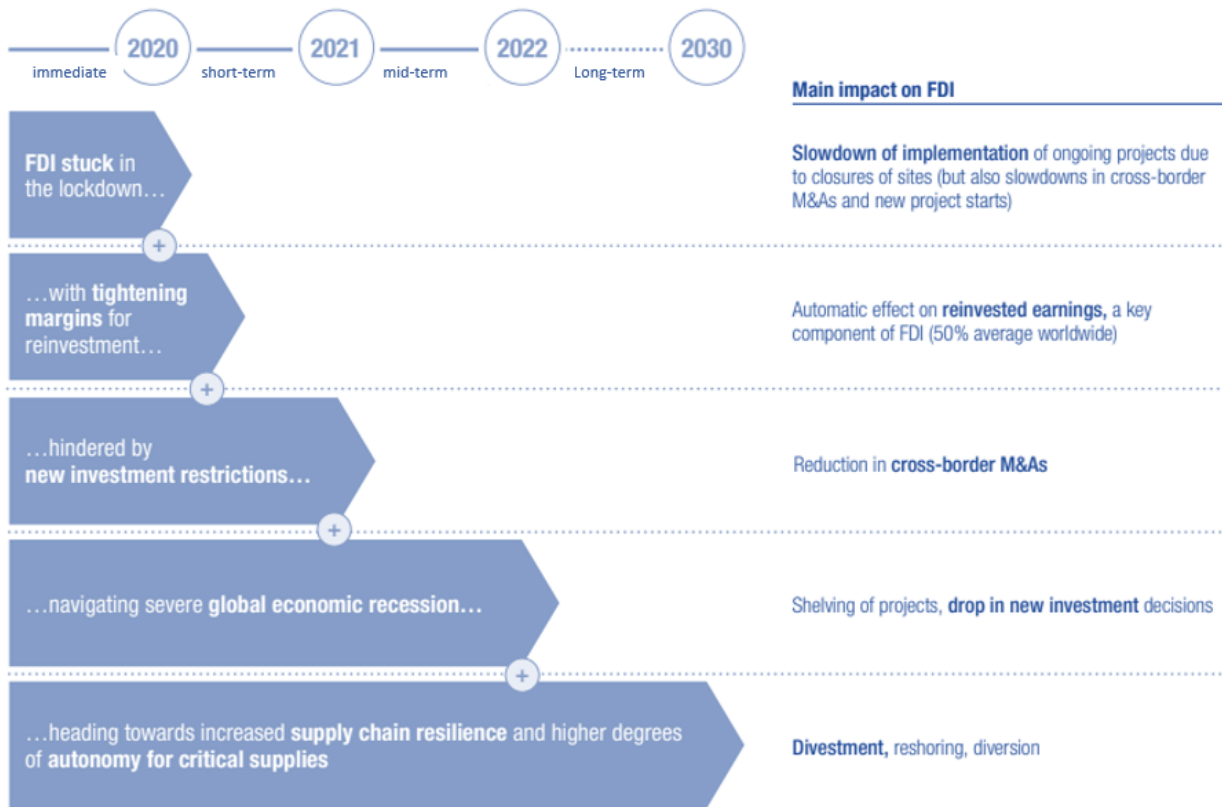


(UNCTAD, 2020)

When pandemic hit hard, one of the nations’ first responses were lockdown, closing down boarders, closing down regions and cities. Besides interference on global trade, what was relatively short period for most of the territories, impact on FDI and especially on new FDI prospects like greenfield projects was more severe. This situation is going to continue until the treat is eliminated and global situation calms down. Even mergers and acquisitions are affected, with financial markets pricing down the stocks of companies whose merger was not approved before the crisis by regulators.

Figure 3 presents the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on global FDI and bring transmission mechanisms.

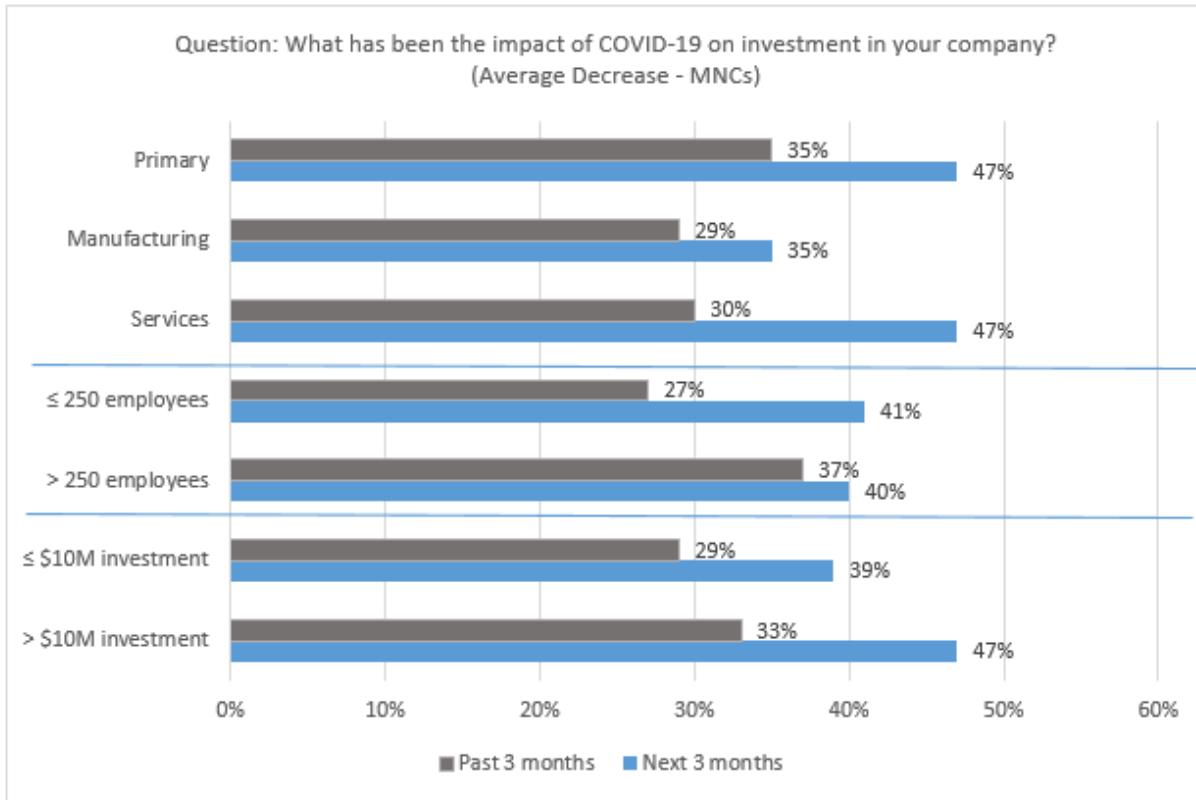
Figure 3 Impact of the pandemic on FDI: transmission mechanisms



(UNCTAD, 2020)

When we analyze survey conducted by the World Bank among investors in April 2020 and the impact of Covid-19 on investments in their companies, we see that high uncertainty caused by the pandemic will have significant impact on investment plans of their companies. Additionally, many multinational companies report much lower earnings in 2020, estimating drop by an average of 30%. One of the largest component of FDI is reinvested earning; one can expect that significant decrease in earning will have negative effect on re-investments. Figure 4 shows how global crisis results in severe decline of planned investments by companies in the World Bank’s survey. (World Bank Group, 2020)

Figure 4 Survey on the impact of Covid-19 on investments by companies



(World Bank Group, 2020)

3. EXPECTATIONS ON THE NEW TRENDS IN SETING INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTION

With the new normal, nations and companies are evaluating different strategies in order to adopt to new circumstances and to be better prepared for more serious lockdown or even greater threat.

In a short term, nations are increasing stocks of vital products for citizens, like food, medicine, energy resources or even weapons. Retail companies are increasing stocks in order to secure supply in complete lockdown. Production companies are increasing stocks for the products that proved to be essential in past period in order to be able to produce and sell during another lockdown.

Ongoing and growing economic nationalism, imperative on sustainability and new industrial revolution were all hard challenges for international production and they are now emphasized more than ever. On top of this Covid-19 pandemic changed the prospects and created the *new normal*.

In a long run, in the new normal, international production will go under significant change in structure and the way the decisions are made. It is expected that four major was for transformation of international production that include: reshoring, diversification, regionalization and replication.

Reshoring, which was already noted trend with the cost of production raising in Asian destinations, concern over intellectual property and global turmoil in trade relations, will be one of the dominant trends in international production. With the experience of offshoring production from developed countries and negative consequences for host economies in recent decades, more companies implement strategy to invest near headquarters everything that is high-tech, robotics-enabled, digital and automatic. This strategy preserves higher value added in local economies and enables companies to easily control and preserve intellectual property.

Diversification will bring wider range of economic activities. The most affected area will be services and intensive manufacturing activities. This will create opportunities for new economies and new companies in global value chains.

Regionalization will shorten transit time and therefore reaction time. It will give more opportunities to countries in vicinity and more control over the subsidiaries for companies. Therefore, regional economic cooperation will have high impact on future FDI trends. This will probably be more recognized in country unions like European Union for instance.

Replication will bring shorter interactions and create new production stages. This might bring the transition from large investments into industrial infrastructure to more lean production sites and distributed manufacturing.

New normal will bring more challenges and more opportunities for nations and companies. It depends on the way and speed one will adopt to the challenges. The availability of new technologies and ability to implement those will define winners and losers. (UNCTAD, 2020)

4. COUNTRIES AND NATIONAL INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCIES RESPONSES

With rapid change in economic environment caused by Covid-19 pandemic and adjustment strategies by companies to survive and develop in the crisis, national investment promotion agencies (hereinafter referred as: IPA) had to adapt their service and attraction strategies as well.

In order to investigate what IPAs around the globe are doing as the initial response to the outbreak, The World Bank Group conducted survey of IPAs. Survey was sent to 162 national IPAs, with only 41 IPAs responding to the survey in the period from April 1 to April 10, 2020.

As a first sight of the Covid-19 outbreak, IPAs responded by prioritizing services like informing investors on operational measures for daily business activities, worked as agent helping to resolve operational issues investors had, advocating measures to support business operations, companies and workplaces. Additionally, in order to improve business environment, IPAs continued to advocate business environment reforms.

The survey conducted, showed that 25% of IPAs reported negative trends by investors in their respective countries, in terms of negative impacts on sales, lower demand, disturbed supply chains and lower investment volumes. Since the survey was conducted in the early stages of the pandemic, during the lockdown of the most of the world, the impact and trends as we see from GDP figures in second quarter are much more negative.

Therefore, the World Bank Group's survey analysis recommends some important actions IPAs should undertake in order to retain strategic investors and to mitigate negative effects of the crisis to labor market, supply chains and support fast recovery. The recommendations include better online presence, good daily communication to investors, address individual issues investors are facing immediately and advocate between public and private sector in order to solve issues that are affecting private sector and consequently the economy in general. (World Bank Group, 2020)

One of the ideas how to update and develop investment attraction strategies of countries and IPAs is developed through framework designed by IBM – Plant Location International that suggests the following:

- Different scenarios how the crisis may impact futures strategies of companies and how should governments react
- Review drivers of transformation, like technology, society, exogenous factors and economics and their impact on FDI
- Classify FDI impact by sector
- Evaluate the effect of these impacts on location offering and on targeted sectors

Based on the IBM – Plant Location International offerings through the document *Upgrade Investment Attraction Strategy in response to COVID-19 crisis*, these transformation drivers can alter companies' behavior, modify location decisions and generate new FDI areas or sectors. (IBM - Plant Location International, 2020)

Different categories of transformation drivers are presented in Figure 5, with the subset presented in Table 2.

Figure 5 Transformation drivers across different categories



(IBM - Plant Location International, 2020)

Table 2 Subset of transformation drivers

TRANSFORMATION DRIVERS (SUBSET)	MARKET	TALENT	EFFICIENCY	RISK
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE		+	-	+
CLOUD TECHNOLOGY	+		+	+
ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS	+	+	-	+
GLOBALIZATION	+		-	+
HEALTH RISK AWARENESS	+		-	+
ROBOTICS AND AUTOMATION		+	-	
TRADE WARS	+		-	+

(IBM - Plant Location International, 2020)

5. CONCLUSION

Business environment changed significantly after the Covid-19 outbreak. Countries, IPAs and investors are changing their strategies and upcoming period is developing new normal. Countries and IPAs will target projects that will serve a short-term goal to reduce supply shortages of vital products, help build resistance for the crisis and that will replace the necessity of importing vital products to the country. Companies, like always will have to react fast and adjust smart in order to resist and continue to operate. With the new circumstances, application of new strategies for all participating on global scene is must. Countries should act fast in order to position themselves better in the new normal, business and attractiveness wise. Focus should be more on investment attraction with clear focus and goal, modify marketing strategies and invest more in securing vital production and services within their borders. In the time of rising state protectionism, smart countries should act smart, not to depend on foreign factors as much as it is in globalized world possible. Of course, the aim of this paper is not to encourage protectionism and trade wars, but for countries, territories and companies to prepare for all possible scenarios. It is always better to be safe than sorry.

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Comparison Between Offline Learning and Online Learning

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Abstract

Due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, many sectors were affected, especially in the education sector. Institutions were forced to adopt distance learning techniques and in many parts of the world, online learning was implemented and many Ed-Tech startups came up with new education applications to aid in distance learning. Many instructors question whether online learning method is as effective as the offline method. In this article, our focus was to see whether there is a significant difference in students' achievement between online and offline modes of instruction. A total of 62, 7th-grade students from Nurorda school in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, chose their preferred instructional method, 39 students choosing offline studies and 23 students selecting online studies. A final test was administered at the end of the five weeks by the teachers testing all the areas covered in the topic to both groups in one period. The averages of the scores of students in offline learning were compared to the average of students in online learning and an independent t-test was also conducted and analyzed by the researchers. The results showed that there isn't a significant difference in students' achievement when they take offline or when they take online studies. Both methods were found to be equally effective in enhancing student understanding and comprehension of the topics.

Keywords: Online education, offline education, academic achievement, instruction method

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, education has been evolving at a very fast pace. Initially, education was used to teach principles and behaviors in children to provide skills and abilities that would help them in life in doing basic social and economic duties. The system of education has changed from using chalkboards to whiteboards and even notebooks have been replaced by iPads and laptops. The purpose of education also changed over time and became more advanced with more skillful techniques being taught with the aim of empowering students by giving them access to different fields as well. The education revolution has enabled teachers to move from the traditional lecture-based education system into a modern education system through Active Learning.

The evolution of Education came along through Howard Gardner and other Scholars who promoted the agile teacher model of teaching where learning is through traditional classrooms instructed by teachers or coaches and speakers or mentors. Since the beginning of the 21st Century, various teaching methods have been introduced to enhance the system of education and ensure that Learners get the most out of Education in this modern world. One of the methods of Education used is the online system which is sometimes referred to as eLearning.

Offline education, commonly referred to as the traditional system of education, is a lecture-based instruction method where learners are taught in classrooms by the instructors within the institution. Leisi Pei and Hongbin Wu, (2019) argue that time management, student motivation, technical issues, and limited internet access are some of the main contributors of offline education making it still the most popular mode of instruction. In an offline mode of instruction, learners are expected to physically attend lessons enhancing face-to-face instruction, however, students from distant places are forced to move closer to the institution to student houses or dormitories.

Offline learning is undergoing enhancements as well with various researchers proposing new innovative methods and modes of classroom teaching to promote active learning and the incorporation of multimedia and technology in education within classrooms.

Social interactions and one-on-one communications remain as one of the most important aspects of offline education despite the growing demand for online courses in the digital world.

The growing demand for the online mode of instruction has forced many institutions to partly offer their lessons using the online system. Growing technologies have enabled new applications and software to be developed to support this growing demand for online studies in all fields from primary school education to higher education. Online education has helped students to easily balance work, family, and education making education a lifelong process that doesn't stop because of the easy access and effective technologies promoting online education. Hiltz and Turoff, (2005) predict that many institutions will be affected by this growing demand for online education, and the institutions that will survive the fall are those that will be able to blend online and traditional systems effectively offering a wider range of high-quality learning opportunities to their students.

Kebritchi et al, (2015) state that institutions need to provide professional development for their teachers, learners, and the technical support team to ensure the effectiveness of online learning and maximize learners' understanding and comprehension. Allen and Seaman (2014) state that online education will keep increasing in popularity over the years and more people prefer to take online courses than offline courses every year. However, researchers still encourage a systematic approach to implement online education by providing adequate support for the technical and technological issues and promoting multimedia integration in the further enhancement of online education.

In the wake of the global pandemic, Covid-19 has led to the increase in demand for online instruction as more and more institutions look to diversify their education approaches to suit the needs of their learners in current this situation. Education application and software developers have also designed effective programs that are easy and comfortable to use for both students and instructors making online instruction popular in this era. Zoom and Webex teleconferencing sites, Google classroom, Moodle, EdX, Coursera, and several other online educational sites have gained popularity and keep growing in size. Several institutions have also integrated both online and offline education in their curriculum offering a wider range of educational approaches to their students to counter the changing and unpredictable market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Palvia, Shailendra, et al, (2018) in their article on worldwide status, challenges, trends, and implications, stated that online education has been growing in popularity globally as a result of the integration of technology in the labor market and the intensified use of the internet in social and economic growth. They incorporated data from different parts of the globe in relation to the adoption of online learning and they concluded that more research was needed to determine the most effective mode of online instruction. They however suggested the continued use of the blended instruction method, commonly referred to as flipped education, to strike an optimal balance between e-learning and traditional learning. This is consistent with the study done by Callaway, (2012) where he argued that the right mix between online and traditional modes of instruction is essential for addressing the disparity between convenient and high-quality education between the two instructional methods. They argued that a flipped learning method would be able to solve the problem of social media addiction and provide a healthy lifestyle for learners. Palvia, Shailendra, et al, (2018) also suggested that online education should be studied by more researchers and given the same importance and attention as the traditional system of education.

Bartley, Sharon, and Jennifer, (2004) in their article on the evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of online and offline learning provide a relatively concise and precise tabulation of the costs of online and traditional instructions by looking at the history and changes in the education sector. They argue that the potential opportunities offered by online studies include time and travel costs conservation as it does not require traveling as students can attend the classes regardless of geographical location. This timelessness, scalability, and convenience have made online education popular globally.

Shivangi Dhawan, (2020) in his article on online learning, terming it as a panacea in the time of the Covid-19 crisis, states how a pandemic forced education systems globally to embrace online learning while some still stuck with the offline system. Shivangi Dhawan, (2020) stated the outburst of Ed-tech startups to promote online learning and integrate multimedia in education. He argues that despite this boom of online learning, human touch and student-teacher communication is lost with very many technical difficulties as well as lack of motivation from the students posing a serious threat to online education compared to offline studies. However, he states that the outburst of EdTech startups is an opportunity to develop online learning and solve most of these problems with better innovations and research conducted on a daily basis making learning comfortable, effective, and interactive for both students and instructors. Natural disasters such as the pandemic have made education systems more resilient and promoted online learning as more institutions are moving from offline classes to flipped classrooms.

Parkes, Stein, and Reading, (2015) in their article explore how prepared higher learning institutions are in the implementation of e-learning, they state that while students seem to be prepared to deal with the technology employed in online classes, they aren't as prepared as they seem. The students lacked critical thinking skills in handling the competencies of the technology used in online learning such as planning strategies, precision, and concision in responses and synthesis of ideas.

Hung, Min-Ling, et al, (2010) in their article on learner readiness for online learning by observing student perceptions and the scale development, state that the main factors found to favor offline learning are learner control and self-directed learning. When it comes to students with lower learner control, they suggested orientation of learners by teachers, showing and demonstrating to students the use of online tools and responding promptly to student inquiries to preserve learners' motivation.

Yang, Chia-Chi, et al, (2006) in their article titled 'Exploring the relationships between students' academic motivation and social ability in online environments', found a direct relationship between students' perceptions of each other's presence within online platforms.

Parkes, Mitchell, Christine Reading, and Sarah Stein, (2013) argue that there is a disconnect between what theory states and what e-learning stakeholders actually believe in practice regarding social interactions and constructivism in online learning.

Margaryan, Anoush, Allison, and Gabrielle, (2011) state that there is evidence to conclude that the younger generation is better knowledgeable on online education resources than the older generation. However, they state that this does not mean all young people are digitally empowered since many learners use a limited range of online technologies and have less knowledge of operating these technologies. Instructors are also less skilled in using online technologies because they require more technical support and experience to be able to teach effectively online using digital technologies.

Dabbagh, Nada and Brenda (2005) state that interaction in online learning is between: learners and other learners, instructor, and learners and the instructors and learners and the technology being used. This interaction is very important in online learning to achieve similar results as offline learning.

Heiman, Heather L., et al, (2012) concluded that online mode of instruction, together with deliberate practice greatly improved the students' oral presentation skills. Singh, Shweta, David H. Rylander, and Tina C. Mims (2012) state in their article on the efficiency of online versus offline learning, investigated the efficiency of learners who took part in online studies and compared it to students who took part in offline studies. They found that online learning was more effective than offline learning. They found the mean for online learning to be at 78 while the average for offline studies was at 70. They also concluded that students were more satisfied with online classes compared to offline classes. While only 38% of students in offline classes reported being satisfied with the mode of instruction, 56% of students in the online group reported being satisfied with their mode of instruction. The data in this study was collected from a total of 70 students, 26 students enrolled in the offline system while 44 students were used for the online system.

RACHMAH, N., (2020) states that more students prefer offline learning to online learning because the students are more involved in the lesson making them understand the topics better in the classrooms. He argues that students' communication skills are also enhanced through offline classrooms.

Wright, B. M., (2017) states that the majority of students felt motivated when using the offline system than the online system. A total of 64.3% of the students felt more motivated in offline classes while 57.1% of students felt more motivated in online classes. Allen, M., Bourhis, J., Burrell, N., & Mabry, E. (2002) in their study state that the replacement of offline learning will cause a slight reduction in student satisfaction due to different preferences in choosing a learning method. However, they stated that students find distance-learning just as satisfactory as offline learning generally and this doesn't cause any attitude drops.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of the research was to compare the differences in achievement between online and offline instruction methods among 7th-grade students in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. Is there a significant difference in students' achievement between the incorporation of the online instruction method and usage of the offline instruction method in high schools?

METHODOLOGY

The students from 7th grade were asked to select their preferred mode of instruction before teaching started, the first group consisting of 39 students selected the offline mode of instruction within the classroom with instructors while the second group consisting of 23 students selected and attended classes through the online platforms such as zoom and utilized other educational technologies as well in their studies. The study was conducted for a period of 5 weeks during the pandemic period. The first group used full offline instruction while the second group conducted all their classes using the online format. The study was conducted in Nurorda school in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan and the students had two instructors conducting the lessons but covering the same topics.

INSTRUMENT

Final test: The students' academic achievement was measured using a final test that was prepared by the researchers and the instructors. The test was comprehensive and measured students' understanding and application of the entire topic that was taught to the students in the entire 5 weeks period. The teachers minimized cheating from both the online group and the offline group by having different variants of questions. Each set constituted of 10 questions.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data was collected from 7th-grade students in a mathematics class. A total of 62 students from a mathematics class participated in the study, 39 students took the class in an offline instructional system while 23 students were taught using the online system. The students were taught for a period of 5 weeks with 5 periods of mathematics lesson in a week each lasting 40 minutes.

PROCEDURE

The students selected their instructional method before the beginning of the term, one in the offline format while the other in an online format, and were being taught by two instructors. The students in the offline format attended classes as usual from school and were being taught in class by one of the instructors while the learners participating in the online classes were being instructed through Zoom application and IXL software. The instructors tried to ensure that both groups covered the topics at the same pace and undertook the same projects and quizzes to enhance similar topic coverage. At the end of the 5-week period, the instructors and the researchers prepared a final test that covered the whole topic and tested the students' understanding of the topic. The offline group did the test in school while the online group did the test through an online format. The system of the questions and the number of questions was similar for both groups to ensure uniformity in data collection. The test was conducted during one of the mathematics periods in the last week of the study and lasted 40 minutes.

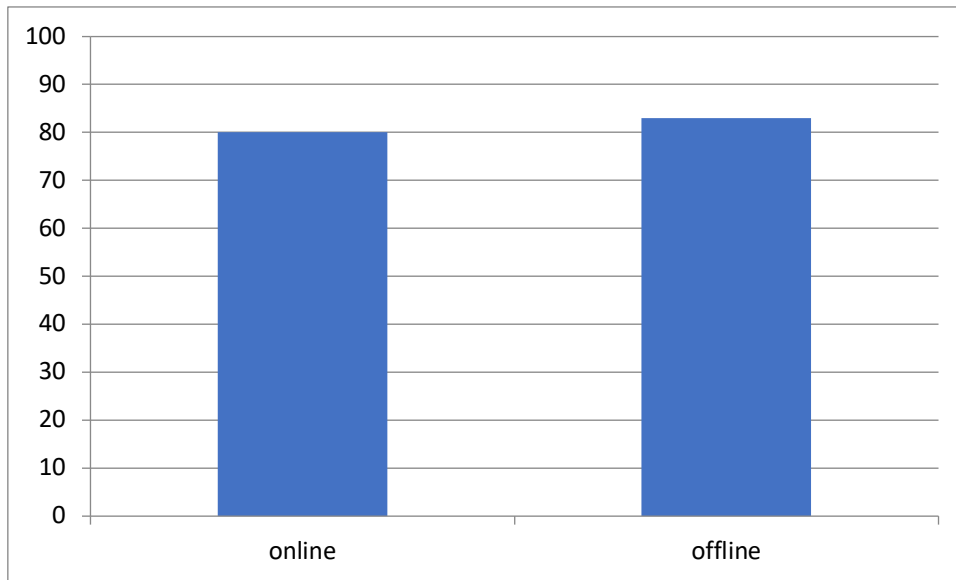
RESULTS

Table 1: Group Statistics

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
test scores	offline	39	83,10	16,367	2,621
	online	23	80,43	12,515	2,610

Table 1 indicates that the offline group's scores are higher than that of the online group.

Figure 1. Mean score of online and offline lesson scores.



As seen in Figure 1, the mean score in the scores of the offline group (83.10) is higher than that of the online group (80.43). This indicates the superiority of face-to-face teaching however descriptive statistics can be misleading. That is why we conducted inferential statistics (that is independent t-test) to reveal any statistically significant differences.

Table Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
scores	4,071	,048	,673	60	,503	2,668	3,962	-5,257	10,593
Equal variances assumed									
Equal variances not assumed			,721	55,861	,474	2,668	3,698	-4,741	10,077

From the results, the mean for the offline format class was 83 while the mean for the online class was 80 (see table 1). This shows that the student achievement in the offline system was slightly higher than in the online system however statistical significance was also found.

When we look at the analysis of the statistical data obtained, there was no significant difference between online and offline learning whether equal variances are assumed or not since $p=0.503$; $p>0.05$.

DISCUSSION

From the analysis and just focusing on the means of both groups, the average of the offline format seems to slightly surpass the mean of the online format group. However, when we conduct an independent t-test on the mean scores to compare them statistically,

we discovered that there is no statistical difference since $p= 0.503$; $p> 0.05$. From this analysis, there was no significant difference between the students' achievement in the offline group and the online group since there was a similarity in their statistical scores. This could be because both modes of instruction were equally effective in enhancing student understanding. Aston University Online, (6 March 2017) argues that the final achievement when undertaking an online or offline class depends solely on the students and not the mode of instruction showing there should not be any significant differences between the instructional methods.

CONCLUSION

In this present study, we concluded that there was no significant difference in students' achievement between offline mode of instruction and online mode of instruction. Both methods were equally effective in enhancing student understanding and comprehension of the topic. The t-test scores and the means of both groups indicated that there was no significant advantage of one mode of instruction over the other, showing that students in online platforms undertaking online courses learn just as effectively as students attending classes from the institutions offline. We however recommend more research to be done on online and offline studies to identify more effective ways of implementing both methods to maximize student satisfaction and education. The use of flipped classrooms with both online and offline formats is such an important step in promoting digitalization in the education system, increasing student development.

Limitations

This study period was five weeks and this may not be enough time to clearly show a relation between online and offline education outcomes. The study was done with a sample group that may not represent the real outcome of the instructional methods globally because the sample is very small. The mode of implementation of online and offline learning has to be standardized so that there is no confusion in implementation styles as it maybe greatly affect the outcome of the study. The instrument used may have also not been effective enough to determine the real difference between online and offline studies on a wider scale. More studies have to be done to improve online learning and the implementation of offline learning.

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The appearance of Hungarian cultural memory in the military protocol after the change of regime in 1989

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Abstract

Cultural memory is the appearance of symbols, signs, and emblems that define the memory and identity of a nation for generations. The fast-paced, dynamic changes of 20th century Hungarian history have largely determined the memory of our time. Examined at the level of symbols, we need to highlight the national holidays as well as the protocol elements associated with the military venerations that appear on these occasions. The influence of the 20th century, as well as the role of the military, can be observed mostly through the feast of King St. Stephen, which is also the day of the founding of the state. The 32nd National Honvéd Parade Unit is the epitome and symbol of the national and cultural memory of our society.

Keywords: symbol, emblem, cultural memory, military protocol, national day, national identity.

1. The role of symbols in society

One of the fundamental means of expression of human existence and culture can be seen as a system of symbols, signs, and emblems that connect a nation for generations to come. Viewed at the level of metacommunication, in the performance of their function, they have an impact on the further perpetuation of cultural and historical memory, as well as on its interpretation in different eras. In the life of every nation, the historical past preserves values that define for generations the social memory that underpins cultural and national identity. One of the means of this is the symbols and symbols formed during history, their joint system, which are the meaning-bearing elements of the repository of non-verbal communication.

Belgian-born French sociologist, ethnologist and anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss says of the relationship between culture and symbols that all cultures can be seen as a set of symbolic systems. The most important of these are language, marriage rules, economic relations, art, science, religion. All these systems seek to express certain aspects of physical reality and social reality, but even more so to express the relationships between these two types of reality, unlike the relationships between symbolic systems (Lévi-Strauss 2001). Based on the statement made by Levi-Strauss, we can state that symbols play an important role in the life of society. Their ability to carry meaning plays a key role in communication. For example, at an event held with military homage, all items appearing - uniforms, use of space, flags, etc. - speaks in his own nonverbal language to the participants of the event.

Geert Hofstede, a Dutch social psychologist, an expert on the interactions of national and organizational cultures. Regarding the relationship between culture and the symbols that define it, he stated that in the study of a cultural layer, the symbols can be interpreted as the outer envelope of the layers. These symbols define words with special meanings, objects (e.g. flags, architecture), gestures (e.g. nod of yes), status symbols that can change rapidly as society shapes (Hofstede 2001). Relying on Hofstede's relationship between culture and symbols, we can say that Hungary's history underwent not only significant, but rather rapid, dynamic changes during the 20th century, which affected the nation's identity and the system of symbols used.

Memory can be distinguished among different levels: that are inner, social and cultural levels. The current research focuses on the cultural level which can be understood as a form of collective memory. It is shared by a number of people that belong to the same community, therefore share the same cultural background and national identity. In the following, I will briefly describe the periods of great changes that determine Hungary's contemporary national identity and cultural memory. The research focuses on the situation of the Hungarian Armed Forces, the changes in its symbols, which appear partly on uniforms and partly during service in protocol events.

Memory itself, in the ordinary sense, exists in the individual's own consciousness, or perhaps a group shares the memory of events that have taken place. According to Jan Assmann, an Egyptologist of German descent, individual, inner experience is clearly not enough to define and expand memory, cultural and social influences determine how long it lasts in consciousness, what ideas are

associated with it. Assmann distinguishes four areas of the external dimension of memory — mimetic memory¹, object memory, communicative memory, and cultural memory (Assmann 2018) — and within this, he explains the fundamental differences between communicative and cultural memory under the umbrella of collective memory. Both concepts deal with the interpretation of the past, its effect on the present, but the difference between the two is reflected in the way of remembering, its duration and lifespan. Assmann says that communicative memory itself essentially includes memories of the recent past. That is, we preserve memories that we share with our contemporaries. (Assmann 2018) Remembrance is thus realized on an individual or group level, its lifespan is usually limited to one generation, thus it only survives in the short term, it does not become part of our long-term stored memories, which may have a canonical character (Assmann 2018).

In contrast to communicative memory, according to Assmann's interpretation, cultural memory is created in a much more complex process, a kind of fusion between mimetic memory, memory of objects, and communicative memory. This kind of memory builds on the already solidified points of history, the past becomes different symbolic shapes into which memory will cling (Assmann 2018). What is important for cultural memory is not the specific events of history, but their message, thus not the actual event itself becoming part of society, but the underlying meaning content being passed on from generation to generation and slowly becoming a myth. Remembrance most often persists in the form of celebrations, so it is distant from the everyday, that is, it takes on a ceremonial character to define the collective identity of a group (Assmann 2018).

2. Cultural memory and symbols of the Hungarian Army in the 20th century

Events and historical turning points of the 20th century - World War I, World War II, change of the regime in 1989 - played a decisive role in the development of our collective cultural and historical memory. The 20th century Hungarian history is full of crucial historical events that have defined the symbols and emblems of the Hungarian consciousness for generations. In examining the formation of our national identity and memory, in my opinion, we can divide the examined historical period into (at least) five periods; the age of dualism, the Horthy era, the Rákosi era, the Kádár era and regime change in 1989.

The cultural and historical memory of a nation is most noticeable in its state and national holidays. During the demonstration of the rapid pace of ideological change of the named eras, I refer several times to the state holiday of our founding father King St. Stephen. The holiday dates on 20 August, is actually the oldest Hungarian holiday, therefore has become an independent symbol. In interpreting the holiday, I strictly confine myself to its symbol system, ideological background, and the peculiarities of military involvement. It is originally an ecclesiastical, secularized holiday, that underwent changes and content renewal during the 20th century in accordance with the values conveyed by the ruling political power.

The role of the development and past of the military protocol is decisive in the further perpetuation of the collective and cultural memory. In Hungary, the 32nd National Honvéd Parade Unit is dedicated to this noble task. In order to emphasize their significance, it is essential to know its history, formation, combat and ceremonial or parade tasks. As highlighted earlier the dominant political eras of the 20th century - the Horthy period (1919-1944), the Rákosi period (1945-1956), the Kádár period (1957-1989) - cannot be ignored for the contemporary role of the corps in examining the value of the displayed symbols.

Following the losses of World War I, Governor Miklós Horthy de Nagybánya founded his revisionist ideology based on the national trauma caused by the Treaty of Trianon. His politics closely connected the Hungarians, who had suffered many kinds of pain. Following the Treaty of Trianon, national content was added to the previously primarily ecclesiastical holiday. A common national goal has emerged for the Hungarians, who have significantly decreased in their territory and population. Hungary in the time of St. Stephen and before the Great War became a symbol. He was a central player in the commemoration each time he gave. The celebration on August 20 was extended with an inauguration, a solemn change of guard, and the nurturing of folk traditions. In terms of its symbolism, for the revisionist policy of the Horthy era, it draws even from the symbols of the dualist, Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, which is reflected, among other things, in the details of military uniforms.

In the history of Hungary, after the end of World War I., up until the period of the change of regime, two political state systems and three eras can be delineated. The Horthy period between the two world wars and the Rákosi and Kádár eras, modeled on the Soviet state after the Second World War, are opposed to each other. The Horthy-era revolutionary policy of respecting national self-consciousness gave the military a prominent role.

The serious consequences of the Treaty of Trianon prompted the governor to unite the Hungarian people, which is why he named St. Stephen and the Memorial Day as the country's public holiday. The Royal Hungarian Army performed protocol service on state and national holidays. Their clothing evoked a glorious past. Miklós Horthy's policy was based on the recollection of the past, and he wanted to carry out the revision at all costs. However, after the tragic events of World War II and the invasion of the Soviet Red Army, the relationship between politics and the military changed.

¹ *mimetic memory*: the word originally means a concept related to travel, it refers to the transfer and preservation of a certain level of experience gained in the field of culture

The period starting in April 1945, as well as the 1950s, is largely connected to the name and person of Mátyás Rákosi. The communist-type regime he also ruled restricted citizens in their freedom and prosperity, and the military policy they pursued was also really characteristic, as the ratio of soldiers (few) to politics (many) was questionable. The communist parties that came to power after World War II developed a peculiar system. For the first time, the old army was taken to pieces, partly due to the fact that after the Second World War, the importance of the military became less and less important, and the disarmament of soldiers came to the fore - not only of civilians, but also of permanent officers. They, in turn, acknowledged the need for the military to run the country and set up a mass army, as well as to win over officers (Okvách 1999). In this sense, as well as compared to the Horthy era, the role of the military was also reinterpreted. Its protocol role remained, as can be seen in the archive footage of the contemporary Film News, the change as a milieu of celebrations and, in a narrower sense, the transformation of the military.

On the one hand, the emphasis was on monumentality, with the largest possible representation, the increase of the parade seemingly came to the fore, and the strengthening of the Soviet-Hungarian unity can also be observed by studying the elements of changed clothing, drill and parade. Changes under the Soviet dictatorship had a significant impact on old holidays that were transformed and therefore new ones were created. Protocol tasks the military performed represented the newly established soviet type ideology at state ceremonies - especially on August 20 and April 4 -, further changes and modifications were applied in the formal and clothing regulations regarding clothing, drill, honors.

After the politicization of the army and its becoming a party army, this sign also changed, from 1949 the use of the Kossuth coat of arms was not allowed, instead the new state coat of arms had to be provided with the clothes of our soldiers. The coat of arms of the Hungarian People's Republic - a badge in the shape of a disc, decorated with a national border and a five-pointed red star in the middle - was placed on the buttons and plate caps (Ságvári 2010). The uniforms were also redesigned, with a pigeon-gray jacket and boots and black boots set in Soviet style, supplemented by the wearing of a plate cap for colonels and generals. The uniform of the cavalry was the same as the Hussar uniform of 1848 and served the purpose of evoking the inspiring spirit of the War of Independence and reminding the people that the army served the defense interests of the people (Szabad nép, 1952).

Following the events of the 1956 revolution - the outbreak of which is attributed to the harsh dictatorship of the Rákosi era - and its fall, the government led by Mátyás Rákosi also failed, change was needed. Khrushchev appointed János Kádár to head the country. In 1957, party-state rule returned, and the dictatorship became even stronger in order to re-establish the weakening of power caused by the revolution.

Historians who have been researching the thirty-three years of János Kádár believe that age cannot be viewed as a unit and the same conclusions drawn. Regarding his style of exercising power, we can state that János Kádár used the political and institutional system of the Rákosi era, but embedded it in a so-called soft dictatorship, so it was better accepted by the people. The petty bourgeoisification observed in the Kádár era was not based on the Western pattern, but on the citizens of the 20th century (Szegő). The negatives of the era - agents, intellectual oppression, ideology - were pushed into the background by the positive changes, because at that time, although it was possible to grow slowly, the percentage of the unemployed was low because there was work.

Examining the era from a military perspective, it was determined by the aftermath of the events of 1956. The 1956 revolution and the war of independence were followed by a period of retaliation, of which the military was no exception, so the cleansing of the armed army began. The resulting reduced army was reorganized, becoming completely subordinate to the leadership of the party leadership. The same process and strategy can be observed, which we could already learn about in the Rákosi system. The new era required a new and reliable force, for which the old had to be demolished first in order to organize a new one that was completely under the control of party power.

The festivities continued as usual in the spirit of the Rákosi era, the church did not play a role in state events, the religious, historical and ideological idea of the feast of St. Stephen continued to be taboo and the new bread and constitution were celebrated instead of statehood. The holidays accepted by the Soviet dictatorship remained April 4 and May 1. Therefore celebrations of the Kádár era did not differ much from the scenario of the celebrations consolidated by Mátyás Rákosi in terms of their elements and structural structure. In a series of recurring and ceremonial state events, the celebration of the founding of the state was held as the day of the constitution, without the involvement of the church and by obscuring the ideas associated with St. Stephen, suppressing its actual meaning.

In the Kádár era, on August 20, in addition to the celebration of the constitution and the consecration of the new bread, additional content was added to this day, with many handovers, inaugurations of military officers, and air parades. With the new festive elements, the government in power sought to prove to the people the positive benefits of the system. The public inauguration ceremony of young officers was first reported in *Népszabadság*, published on August 21, 1969. Unlike in the Horthy era, the inauguration did not take place at the usual venue (which was at Orczy Park behind the building of Ludovica Military Academy), but moved to Kossuth Square, in front of the parliament building, the underlying content of which was the ceremonial hoisting of the country's flag was the perfect occasion.

The formation of the new government also affected the state coat of arms, the former Kossuth coat of arms was replaced by a cut coat of arms with a red and red-white-green ribbon representing the unity of the Hungarian People's Republic and the Soviet Union,

with a red star on top. This new coat of arms was visible on all the clothes of the Hungarian People's Army, and from 1965 it was also placed on decorative belts and general hats (Udovecz 2008).

3. The emergence of Hungarian national symbols and cultural memory after the change of regime

The year 1989, the year of the change of regime, is of fundamental importance in the turbulent and tumultuous history of Hungary, which concludes a decisive period in the history of our country. With the change of regime, the Hungarian state basically became a democratic state. To this end, he broke with the party state, its cultural and ideological relations. With this step, the state socialist system was abolished, and Hungary was peacefully transformed into a democratic, republican, European state.

Apart from weather and other catastrophic situations, civil society and the military in Hungary have long been in contact at state and national holiday events. It is worth noting how much our cultural and historical memory has changed throughout history, as a result of different political arrangements. In some eras, the number of holidays may have varied, but it was also impossible that we remembered certain days differently. Changes can also be detected in the reporting period of protocol military involvement.

The Hungarian flag is one of the national symbols of Hungary and also the official state symbol of the Republic of Hungary. One of the outstanding elements of the Hungarian military value tradition is the tricolor, which developed during a long development and gained its current form and appearance. Perhaps unique in Europe is its history of development, as evidenced by the historical flag series of 23 flags, which consists of the most characteristic flag types of the Hungarian military past and flags related to the most famous periods of Hungarian military history.

The use of the historic flag line was described in the 2004 CV. Act - which provides for national defense and the Hungarian Armed Forces - regulates and states that on the occasion of designated events it may be deployed with military respect (2004. évi CV. törvény, 2004). One of these notable occasions is the inauguration of the state on August 20, the day of the founding of the state, and the inauguration of King St. Stephen on Kossuth Square. The eyes of the high-ranking state leaders present, the invited guests and the population present on this significant occasion are focused on the officers to be inaugurated. According to the order and scenario of the ceremony, the 32nd National Honvéd Parade Unit will hoist the flag of Hungary with military respect, and will line up our historical flags in front of the Parliament. At the same time, it represents the past and the present.

The military officer cadets to be inaugurated take the oath of command in front of the three flags of equal width, red, white, green and horizontal stripes, one of the national symbols of Hungarians and the national symbol of the Republic of Hungary. The text of the oath reflects the romantic interpretation of the 19th century, according to which the red bar is meant to symbolize strength, white the loyalty, and green the color. The flag of the nation and the military oath before the historical flag line are a seal of the constitutional obligations to protect the country, a sense of professionalism, a commitment to the protection of civil society, and a symbol of national unity.

The change of regime brought a renewal to the life of the nation in all respects. Following the Soviet-type dictatorship, Hungary became one of the countries with a democratic state system, which manifested itself not only in the restructuring of a radical change in political ideology. It has also affected our national and cultural memory, which is reflected in the number of our national holidays and the nature of the events. Following the change of regime, from 1989 it became possible again to hold the procession of St. Right with a church presence at St. Stephen's Basilica (Múlt-kor, 2013). In 1991, the first freely elected Parliament raised the day of King St. Stephen, the founder of the state, as an official state holiday. The Basic Law, adopted in 2011, mentions national holidays, including August 20, as a public holiday in the country in a separate article.

Due to the change of regime, a kind of identity search started. Being a democratic state, Hungary broke with the ideas and traditions of the party-state system. This made it possible to re-insert the memories of our historical past into national and state holidays. The mentioned search for identity can also be felt in the program elements of the August 20 ceremony series. Some of the components of the dualist celebration of the Horthy era can be found, which are supplemented by customs and ceremonies established in the communist system. In this way, the element called the Feast of New Bread until 1949, which placed the feast held with the harvest balls and the harvest procession, the "working peasantry", could have survived (Múlt-kor, 2012).

Considerable changes can also be observed from the point of view of the performance of military tasks. All Soviet elements - clothing, decorative steps, symbols - were logically removed from the palette, and we returned to the previous decorative steps instead. Uniforms regularized until World War II are only represented at the ceremonies at the level of preservation of tradition, as they have been replaced by the "Tihany" type uniform, which unifies the stock of the parade unit.

3.1 A brief history of the 32nd National Honvéd² Parade Unit

² honvéd: original meaning is form the 19th century and refers to *a soldier without a rank*

Each nation has its own unit of parade, which is partly responsible for maintaining security, but more importantly, they perform protocol tasks. A tourist arriving in a given country will not see soldiers stationed on the battlefields or serving in NATO peacekeeping missions for the first time, but units stationed in the mainland performing bodyguard, decoration and protocol tasks. They are the first military contact of a country with the world, tourists recall their historical studies, their current knowledge - which includes the political views of the given country, its role in the world - and draw further conclusions about their destinations.

If we examine the role of the military, in a narrower sense, in decorative politics in different historical periods, we usually observe the same functions - demonstration of strength, intimidation, strengthening national self-awareness, representation of political ideas, but in a given period these “uses” represent different proportions. In Hungary the unit to play this role is the 32nd National Honvéd Parade Unit, along with its long history and traditions dating back to the time of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy

The history of the 32nd National Honvéd Parade Unit dates back to the 18th century, more precisely to the reign of Maria Theresa, the only female ruler of the Habsburg dominions. Before the change of regime the military protocol and service tasks of the Hungarian Defence Forces in Hungary provided in certain state celebrations greatly depended on the ideological system of political leadership that dominated the era. This short detour in the past is needed in order to get a comprehensive picture of the unit itself, and by learning about its past, understanding its present and importance regarding national identity and collective memory might be even more clear.

The past of the parade unit dates back to the 18th century. On October 30, 1741, Ignác Ghymes Forgách received an order from Queen Maria Theresa of Hungary to set up an infantry regiment in order to stop the enemy threatening Vienna and Prague. The regiment thus formed was named after its commander. The soldiers serving in the Forgách regiment came from Hungarian lands and wore Hungarian clothing. The unit, later renamed the 32nd Infantry Regiment, dates back to the 19th century. by the end of the twentieth century, he had defended the country in a total of 14 wars and 135 battles. The regiment fought in smaller parts in World War I. On November 18, 1918, the heavily battered and greatly reduced number from the Italian front returned. Following the disposition of the government formed during the Asteroid Revolution, it was no longer the 32nd Royal and Imperial Regiment, only the 32nd Infantry Regiment was retained. The battles of World War II once again decimated the regiment's stock, which was disbanded at the end of World War II. Subsequently, it was reorganized by the Provisional Government formed in Debrecen, and after further reorganisations, the Budapest Honvéd Battalion was established in October 1946, which was reorganized in 1948. Their most important task was to guard the objects belonging to the Ministry of Defense and the Military Penitentiary, and in some cases they also had to perform decoration duties (Vastagh 2011).

After World War II, the largest and most important national holiday in Hungary was April 4, 1945, which is only one day out of many for the growing generation today. There is no idea or holiday associated with it, since in 1990 a new era in the history of Hungary began with the change of regime, as a result of which the events of April 4, 1945 lost their significance, and now we can only learn about the events. which tell the end of the last World War II acts in Hungary.

With the entry of the Soviet Red Army, a new era began in Hungary, centered around a new ideology. This overwrote the previous one, and in order to consolidate the new idea, the leadership of the country designated new holidays in addition to the existing ones, or abolished those consolidated by the previous leadership. As a result, from 1950 until the change of regime, April 4 was commemorated as the day of liberation, when Soviet Red Army troops from the east “liberated” Hungary and expelled the last German troops stationed in the country.

At the beginning of the Rákosi era, the regiment was reorganized several times, and its structure was as follows with relative stability: 4 companies, each one with four divisions and one machine gun division, and one company with a transport, supply division (Král n.d.). The corps was present at the reception of several high-ranking foreign delegations, and they took part in the parade, as well. During the Kádár era, they were honored to be part of the return of the Holy Crown and “receiving the coronation jewel with respect to the Hungarian head of state”.(Král n.d.).

3.2 Contemporary role of the 32nd National Honvéd Parade Unit

In Hungary, the task of the soldiers serving in the 32nd National Honvéd Parade Unit is primarily focused on performing protocol and ceremonial tasks at events held with military presence, and secondly on building the country's image and preserving and recalling cultural memory. Every day we can see our soldiers fulfilling their duties in front of the Parliament in Kossuth Square, in the Dome Hall inside the Parliament building, guarding the Holy Crown from two sides, and the unit is present in front of Sándor Palace where they also provide protocol work.

The Unit was established on November 1, 2011. Considering its purpose, it is the military organization of the Hungarian Defence Forces whose subunits - before the country and the world - display the national unity and ancient institution. They represent the ancient and present glory of today's Hungarian army on the holidays and mourning days of the nation, at state and military events, by providing ceremonial services at designated objects - such as the Sándor Palace - , the moral foundations of the Hungarian soldier.

The Honvéd Crown Guard was established in order to provide protection to the Holy Crown has the right to use weapons in the Parliament - or in a designated place - to guard the Holy Crown and the withdrawn national flag, and participates in national and state holidays, diplomatic and ecclesiastical events. Its historical legal predecessor is the Hungarian Royal Crown Guard. The Honvéd Palace Guard performs military decoration tasks related to the state and protocol duties of the President of the Republic of Hungary, performs a guard service in the Sándor Palace, which houses the Office of the President of the Republic, and participates in national and state holidays and diplomatic events. Its historical legal predecessor is the Hungarian Royal Bodyguard. The Honvéd Parade Battalion displays the Hungarian Armed Forces at Hungary's national and state celebrations, diplomatic, social and military events and reverence events, performs honorary services at the flag of Hungary, performs tasks related to military honors, receives foreign state and military leaders with military honors, reverence duties under its measure. Its historical predecessors are the late house regiment of Budapest, the 32nd Imperial and Royal Infantry Regiment "Maria Theresa" and the 32nd Guard and Ceremonial Regiment of the Hungarian Armed Forces. (32. Nemzeti Honvéd Díszegység, n.d.)

In addition to performing the protocol duties of the 32nd National Honvéd Parade Unit was also given a truly noble task that is not really stated on any occasion when they appear in public. In fact, looking at the subunits separately, the course may not seem uninitiated at first glance, but seeing the crews of the subunits as a unit, everyone will notice the tricolor that appears on the clothing items. Each subunit has its own color - red, white and green - as a living representation of the flag of Hungary, one of the symbols of our country, which is meant to strengthen the national unity and belonging.

In terms of their clothing, a unified look and a return to historical traditions and roots can be noticed. A boot version of the "Tihany" type uniform was defined for all three subunits (Vitézséggel és hűséggel! 2011). According to their tasks, the subunits were given a unique arm signal and slogan to strengthen their professionalism. I believe that reorganizing the parade unit into one and a unit is definitely a noble thing, which also plays an important role in building the image of the country, as the crew were placed at tourist-frequented objects, it is impossible to avoid them during a sightseeing tour. Perhaps we can say that for Hungary they are like the Scottish Guards who guard Buckingham Palace in the United Kingdom, although their reputation is not yet so great, but their role is decisive. Tourists coming to our country do not see what is happening in the barracks, in the training. The image of the Hungarian army is what the decorative unit shows them, although this statement is obviously valid for all citizens of our country, since according to the constitution it is the duty of all of us to ensure the development and protection of the country.

Looking at their multifaceted tasks, we can conclude that the parade unit serves a wide range of services. In addition to maintaining and strengthening cultural and social memory, its relationship with the population serves to strengthen the consciousness of national unity, and by guarding the priority objects, they also create a kind of security awareness in the population. On the occasion of the protocol reception of high-ranking state and military leaders visiting Hungary, in addition to paying homage, the image of the fortress described in previous eras also appears not too exaggerated.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the decisive period of Hungary's history and national identity is the 20th century, which, with its twists and turns and changes in political ideology, laid the foundation of society's cultural memory for generations. Of course, the past cannot be nullified or erased. For most of Hungary's history, it was a kingdom with a royalist state system. The traumatic turns of the 20th century partially, but not entirely, overwrote the burn-in that took place through the cultural events of an approximately thousand-year-old royalist national identity.

As a result of the ideological change of 1989, the state and ecclesiastical holidays of August 20, associated with the name of King St. Stephen, the founding of the state, are organized according to old traditions and customs. The program of the series of ceremonies mixes old and less old traditions and customs, resulting from the dynamic changes of the 20th century, the burning of each era into national and historical memory. The reorganization of the country, as well as the army, has had an impact on military identity in a national and narrower sense, as the past cannot be forgotten. Generations have preserved them in their cultural memory and passed on more important moments in the events of history. In doing so, enabling the underlying meaning of the actual event to create value for society through remembrance. With the transmission of traditions from generation to generation, community memory was formed from memories, historical experiences and experiences.

Contemporary Hungarian cultural memory, as has been emphasized several times before, is largely determined by the development of the history of the 20th century. In addition to the transformation of the army several times, our national symbols, the coat of arms, also repeatedly reflected the values to be followed in accordance with the changes in the current political ideology. According to our history and the idea of our time, we commemorate three important national and state holidays in Hungary every year on March 15, October 23 and August 20. The largest of these three famous days is August 20, the day of the founding of the state, which is not only our oldest holiday, but also the founding of the Christian Hungarian state and the day of remembrance of King St. Stephen. The celebration of the founding of the state occupied a prominent place in all eras, even when, during the Soviet-type dictatorship, the distance from the Christian church did not allow the usual ceremony to be followed. Old values and cultural, collective memories

have been relegated to the background, but have not been completely forgotten, but rather an interesting fusion has taken place. During state and national holidays, the national flag, as a symbol of togetherness, has always been given a role, and regardless of the expectations of the prevailing political ideology, it has retained its function of representing national unity. The preservation and display of the listed monuments and heritage is the responsibility of the 32nd National Honvéd Parade Unit.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES INTO CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

In this article, we zoom in the issue of voluntary environmental management practices and their adoption by companies. Based on comprehensive literature review of previous theoretical and empirical studies, we would like to outline environmental management practices in business, focusing on voluntary standards for environmental management system (EMS), particularly on EMAS and ISO 14001 as the internationally accepted and the most common standards in European region. Following general definition of EMS, we aim to summarize the view on motivations of firms to voluntarily adopt EMS standards, as well as the view on implications of EMS standards adoption. We deal with following questions in this study: what are EMSs and what do they serve for, why firms choose to implement voluntary EMS standards into their corporate management processes and what are expected and real costs and benefits related to EMS standards adoption by firms.

Keywords: corporate environmental management, EMS, EMAS, ISO 14001, financial performance, firm performance.

Introduction

Environmental activities of firms have been originally declared within corporate social responsibility (CSR) framework. They have arisen in response to pressures of different types of stakeholders within the rising attention on environmental protection issues in society. However, the more emphasis has been put recently on responsibility of firms, especially with increasingly emerging warnings about the broad-spectrum consequences of climate change. Firms should consider environmental aspects of their businesses both with intention to mitigate negative environmental consequences of their business activities and to adopt themselves to rising environment - related impacts on their business activities.

Corporate environmental practices are no more just a source of public firm's reputation, but they are becoming subject of corporate strategy as they are perceived to be a source of influence on firm and financial performance, competitive position, level of creditworthiness and overall corporate sustainability. Companies are responding by developing and implementing of new corporate environmental strategies, practices and programs. Integration of environmental management systems (furtherly EMS) into corporate management and adoption of generally accepted standards issued by reputable third – party platforms or organisations is perceived one of the possible ways for firms to realize proactive environmental approach in business. EMS standards are adopted by companies as tools that help them meet requirements from recently rising regulatory, market and social pressures related to commitment of companies to take care of environmental issues in respect to their business activities. They also help mitigate negative environmental impact of businesses and to adopt to newly emerging consequences of climate change on business and society.

Within rising emphasis on environmental issues inter alia in business environment, we seek to answer the questions: What is the background and the role of voluntary standards for EMS adopted by firms, what are factors leading to decisions to adopt voluntary EMS standards and what could be expected and real consequences of EMS standards adoption at firm level? Our observations and discussions consider stakeholder and legitimacy theory. Stakeholder theory argues that business goals are to be defined in respect to various groups of stakeholders, in order to achieve long-term growth and prosperity (Schwab & Kroos, 1971), rather than in the lines of traditional view focusing only on the needs of shareholders. Legitimacy theory is based on the notion, that entities strive to achieve legitimacy within the society in order to survive in a jumpy and turbulent environment (Schiopoiu Burlea & Popa, 2013).

This article contributes to literature by providing a summarized general understanding of the context of EMS standards integration into business management processes.

1. Corporate Environmental Management Practices and voluntary EMS standards

Environmental management approaches and practises are developed by companies themselves, or their development can be supported by well-established guidance of third – party organisations, or platforms. Companies, by demonstrating environmental take-carrying activities, signal to different stakeholders their engagement in corporate social responsibility (CSR) and environmental performance improvement (Simpson & Sroufe, 2014). Implementation of corporate environmental approach in - house is less common, or applied more by large firms (Mueller et al., 2009; Ozusaglam et al., 2018; Simpson et al., 2007). At the same time, when financial possibilities or consideration of costs in relation to expected benefits influence the demand for certification, some companies choose to produce an annual environmental, sustainability or CSR reports, demonstrating their environmental commitment and improvements in business. EMSs represent another already well elaborated type of environmental approach in business field. Regarding certification, there exist several standards for EMSs, developed and provided by third-party reputable organisations and platforms. These organisations and platforms offer systematic guidance for adoption of environmental management practices as well as their certification. Several academicians emphasize EMS standards as a non-market policy instrument for firms serving for adoption of management practices focused on pollution reduction, transparency and efficiency in business, as well as improvement of environmental performance (e.g. Coglianesi & Nash, 2001; Khanna & Anton, 2002; Melnyk et al., 2003; mentioned in Haque, 2020). Thus, standards for EMS have intention to demonstrate credibility of adopted EMSs to all the firm’s stakeholders.

Different types of environmental standards have been developed, among them for example U.S. environmental programs developed by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, British 7750 standards developed by British Institute, ISO 14001 standards developed by International Standards Organisation, Eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) developed by European Union. As the EMAS is well known at the European level and ISO 14001 is globally the most common environmental standard with strong foundation in Europe at the same time, we turn our attention particularly on these two standards.

The demand emerging in 80’s and 90’s of the 20th century to keep emission limits under control was the initial impulse for the emergence of environmental standards. The discussion in 90’s resulted in the start-up in 1993 of an ISO Technical Committee (TC207), whose task was “standardization in the field of environmental management tools and systems.” In 1996, the ISO accepted ISO 14001, “Environmental management systems specification with guidance for use,” as its formal international standard. (Nakamura et al., 2001). EMAS is another management instrument developed by European Commission in 1995 for companies to evaluate, report and improve their environmental performance enhancement.

Type of EMS standard		ISO 14001	EMAS
Objective		Sound, credible, transparent and efficient environmental management	Sound, credible, transparent and efficient environmental management
In operation since		1996	1995
Legal basis		Under private law	Under legal basis
Suitability		All types, sectors, size. Internationally accepted.	All types, sectors, size, within and out of EU since 2009.
Improvement of environmental performance		Periodically, periodicity not exactly defined	On a yearly basis
Number of valid certifications and registered sites in 2019	Certifications	312,580 ths.	3,694 ths.
	Sites	487,950 ths.	12,664 ths.

Table 1: Key features of EMAS and ISO 14001 standards. Source: own processed by gathering information from official sites of ISO and EMAS: <https://www.iso.org/iso-14001-environmental-management.html>; https://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/index_en.htm

Some key features of both ISO 14001 and EMAS standards are presented in the Table 1. Both standards share identical objectives, however, EMAS considers additional elements in setting up EMSs and it declares ISO 14001 to be a supporting tool on a way to be certified according to EMAS. These two standards are not mutually exclusive and it is possible to gain and maintain both ISO 14001 certification and EMAS verification at the same time. However, there is a huge difference in the amount of EMAS and ISO 14001 certifications. There were total of 312,580 ths. valid ISO 14001 certifications with 487,950 ths. registered sites worldwide in 2019, while total amount of EMAS certifications was 3,694 ths. with 12,664 ths. registered sites in 2019. There are several potential explanations of disproportion in the EMAS and ISO 14001 valid certificates. Some argue, that EMAS conditions are stricter and therefore more difficult to fulfill. The important is also the fact, that ISO 14001 has been very well recognized and accepted in international business since its formation. However, we have to also consider different history of both standards. EMAS was not constructed universally, but it served first for industrial sector. Since 2001 it was suitable for all economic sectors, but still restricted just for organizations within EU. Since 2009 it has been expanded to both organizations within and outside EU (Horváthová, 2020a). Maybe the mix of all these factors is behind a different development of EMAS and ISO 14001 certifications till now.

2. Motivations of firms to adopt corporate EMS standards

There are several studies examining factors associated with decision to participate in voluntary corporate environmental activities, which are certified by third-parties. In this section, we summarize the knowledge gained from several empirical studies, dedicated to factors of adoption of EMS standards by companies, considering particularly ISO 14001 and EMAS standards.

We can study motivations and circumstances of environmental management systems implementation by firms from several theoretical perspectives. Basically, there are two types of models explaining positive choice for implementation of EMS standards. The first is based on simple profit maximization theory, focused on economic incentives, i.e. motivations to decrease costs and increase revenues. This type of models focuses on analysing firm characteristics, that affect capacities of firms, or their resources (e.g. Nakamura et al., 2001; Ozusaglam et al., 2018). It is based on theoretical statement, that adoption of EMS standards brings costs and potential benefits to companies, and so it analyses, what level of impact do firm's capabilities (like knowledge-based skills, technological, financial capacities) have on corporate EMS standards adoption, when considering, that corporate environmental approaches bring competitive advantage to firms. Firms can benefit from reduced costs of operation, greater legitimacy and better relationships with stakeholders (Nishitani, 2009). The second type of models is based on institutional theory framework, which is focused on the impact of the institutional conditions in a country context. It analyses external pressures from market and non-market constituents on firm's environmental efforts (Ervin et al., 2013). Impact of selected variables is examined in economic perspective, that is defined as "the rules of the game" that influence firms' behaviour. These rules of game are comprised of formal aspects (i.e. rules, law, constitutions), informal aspects (i.e. norms of behaviour, conventions, codes of conduct) and their enforcement characteristics (North, 1990; mentioned in Haque, 2020).

By adoption of EMS standards, firms often communicate their environmental activities to different stakeholders in order to achieve or keep their legitimacy. In this context, the impact of various factors on EMS implementation is often explained within the stakeholder and legitimacy theory frameworks, too.

After all, although several theories are considered in analyses of motivations of firms to implement environmental management practices into business management and to adopt EMS standards, results of most studies suggest, that level of stakeholders' environmental pressures together with firms' characteristics mutually affect environmental actions of companies (Nishitani, 2009).

As illustrated on Figure 1, we can distinguish between internal and external factors influencing adoption of EMS standards by companies (Haque, 2020). The most analysed factor influencing the decision to adopt corporate environmental management system is size of the company. Certifications generate significant costs, and these costs are proportionally less significant for larger firms than for smaller ones, because of economies of scale (Nakamura et al., 2001). Size of the company reflects therefore capacity of the company to implement environmental practices to business. This is in line with profit maximization theory. Another explanation is that larger firms are more visible to public and so in effort to respond to stakeholders' pressure and to legitimate their business activities they have more motivation to demonstrate their environmental initiatives (Kouloukoui et al., 2019). It is also in line with legitimacy theory, that organisations are always trying to legitimate their activities within the environment they exist. Industry classification is mainly discussed as a proxy to level of pollution. Studies suggest that companies with higher environmental burden tend to adopt voluntary EMS for getting the legitimacy within the environment they act (Nishitani, 2009). In case of profitability,

many studies have provided inconsistent results. The basic assumption is that more profitable companies are more financially flexible so they are able use internal funds and external funds to adopt voluntary EMS standards. However, only few studies could find significant relationship between profitability and voluntary adoption of EMS standards (e.g. Nakamura et al., 2001; Nishitani, 2009). Some studies haven't found any significant relationship (e.g. Horváthová, 2020). Level of indebtedness could, on the other hand, also affect financial flexibility of the company. Several empirical studies suggested negative relationship between level of indebtedness and adoption of EMS standards (e.g. Kouloukoui et al., 2019; Lu & Abeysekera, 2014; Nakamura et al., 2001; Nishitani, 2009). These findings are in line with profit maximization theory with potential explanation that firms with higher credit burden don't have enough financial capacities to adopt EMS standards. But there are also suggestions based on the influence of stakeholders, in this case banks or financing institutions, suggesting that level of indebtedness is a proxy to level of creditors power over the firm, on which firms respond by environmental performance enhancement. If this is the case, then, influence of creditors as external stakeholders should be furtherly analysed in the context of institutional theory. There are also another internal factors related to firms, that have been analysed in relation to the impact on voluntary adoption of environmental management practices by companies. We provide the list of several examples of internal factors in Figure 1. There are also studies analysing the impact of external factors, or external business conditions, on the development of environmental conduct in firms. They are based on assumptions, that firms are motivated by market-driven, regulation-driven and societal-driven factors (Haque, 2020). These factors range from institutional pressures to gain legitimacy and to avoid threats of liability (governments, creditors), motivations to enhance reputation and improve competitiveness (customers, suppliers, society) and to increase firm value and maintain sustainability in business (investors/ shareholders). Some studies even consider competitors of the firm to be relevant stakeholders of firm, that may impact level of pro-environmental activities by firms.

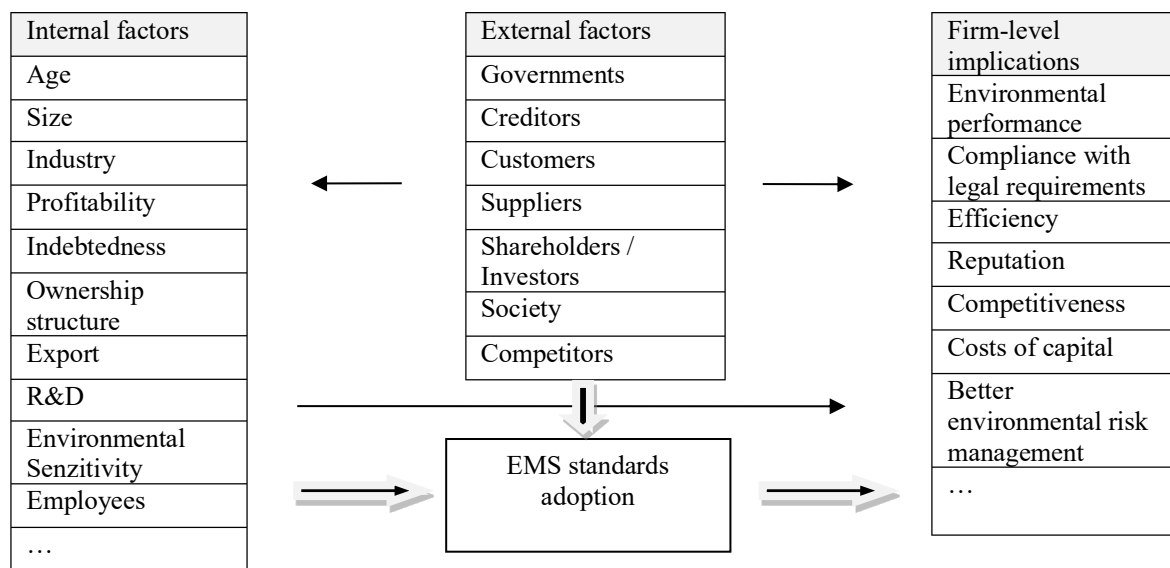


Figure 6: The scheme visualizing the impact of internal & external factors on EMS standards adoption and the impact of EMS standards adoption on firm-level implications, source: own processed by synthesizing knowledge of previous research studies

3. Implications of corporate EMS standards adoption

There are several potential implications of EMS standards adoption, as illustrated in Figure 1. These implications are advocated by official sites of standards developers (ISO, EMAS) as benefits of EMS standards adoption. In addition to improvement of business environmental performance, EMS standards supporters argue, that EMS standards are tools that help in example achieve better production efficiency, operational efficiency, enhance reputation & competitive advantage, access better financing possibilities and meet legal requirements related to businesses. Third-party certification of EMSs is a way to signal to all firm's stakeholders that EMS has been implemented properly into management processes.

The effect of EMS's implementation on legal requirements fulfilment means, that systematic corporate environmental management deals with complying with the applicable laws and regulations, so it serves to avoid fines, which could significantly burden the business.

The effect of EMS's implementation on financial performance is probably the most discussed item within the research of implications of EMS standards adoption. The general assumption is, that proactive business environmental management can enhance firm's financial and economic performance by reducing costs of operation, improving production and operational efficiency and so increasing profitability of firm, as improving environmental performance of firm by systematic environmental management leads to more efficient use of firm's resources. However, empirical research results are inconclusive (de Jong et al., 2014; Melnyk et al., 2003; Wagner, 2010; Zeng et al., 2010) and this idea has been controversial in research community. Conventional view is, that environmental activities in firms represent additional costs and therefore are considered by firms to be highly risky (Nakamura et al., 2001). They are associated with additional costs, that do not seem to be directly related to main business goals of the firm. However, some authors find overall positive relationship between cleaner production and business performance (e.g. Zeng et al., 2010). There are also studies emphasizing, that better environmental performance lead among other to better credit standings of borrowing firms benefiting from higher credit ratings, better access to capital and lower costs of debt (Bauer & Hann, 2010; Sharfman & Fernando, 2008). Likewise, a firm's sustainability practices have been found to influence its creditworthiness as part of its financial performance (Weber et al., 2010) as institutional investors increasingly exert pressure by demanding data on companies' emissions and related reduction strategies (Funk, 2003, cited in Sprengel & Busch, 2011).

We suggest, that real implications of EMS standards depend on enforcement characteristics of external business environment, e.g. if there are strong customer pressures, competitiveness of firms can be significantly affected by presenting environmental pro-activity of firms. Regarding one of the objectives of corporate EMS to enhance production efficiency and better use of resources, company can benefit from reduced costs, and so from higher efficiency and better financial performance. On the other hand, there are also studies suggesting, that if EMS standards are adopted rather symbolically, real production efficiency cannot be achieved (Haque, 2020), distorting therefore potential positive impacts on firm and financial performance.

There are several studies suggesting significant spread of environmental demand in the whole supply chain (e.g. González et al., 2008; Nishitani, 2010). In addition, Montiel and Husted (2009) argue that many large firms tend to be a part of smaller industry associations and that those firms have more economic, intellectual, and political resources to adopt a voluntary EMSs. These firms may act as institutional entrepreneurs and not only certifying early but also playing an active role in the promotion of voluntary EMSs. In doing so, larger firms could virtually set new barriers to entry for small entrants, which could help the former consolidate their strategic position within the industry. (Ozusaglam et al., 2018). Haque (2020) emphasizes the importance, that have recognized multinational companies in EMS adoption to their business strategy, as they see the EMS as instruments to minimize their environmental impact, enhance their environmental performance, and so enhance their reputation towards all stakeholders groups (supported by several studies, e.g. Christmann, 2004; Rugman & Verbeke, 1998; Yang & Rivers, 2009).

4. Conclusions

In this article, we strived to synthesize the knowledge on adoption of voluntary EMS standards by firms. We presented motivations of firms from several theoretical perspectives and suggested potential implications of integrated EMS standards to firms and financial performance. By developing a deeper understanding of circumstances of EMSs standards adoption from perspectives presented in this article, we entry into discussion related to the role of voluntary EMSs at firm level. We suggest further discussion to be oriented on providing appropriate reason to business environment to participate on voluntary environmental issues in today's world. Considering negative consequences of climate change impacts on business, research should furtherly focus on finding out the conditions under which EMS standards, as one single component of business environmental engagement, are appropriate tools for firms, in consideration of costs and benefits they bring at firm-level. Firms in need to realize that environmental pro-activity can result in significant benefits to them, to environment and to society at large, which gives them additional incentives to adopt these initiatives, however, like very aptly mentioned in the study of Sharfman & Fernando (2008), we should consider a question for further discussion, in which cases environmental expenditures represent inappropriate costs or appropriate investments for firms. This question is important for policy makers interested in climate action, that is getting more and more importance in today's world.

Nomenclature

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EMS	Environmental Management System
EMAS	EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme
ISO	International Standards Organization

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Human rights deprivation of Roma community in Bitola, Republic of North Macedonia

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Abstract

People from Roma population in Bitola live in very bad living conditions. One part of the Roma community lives on the verge of humanitarian catastrophe, without basic utilities such as water supply, sewage, electricity and road infrastructure. These people are citizens of the country, but because they live in illegal dwellings, are deprived of the right to register residence, a prerequisite to obtain citizen identification card (ID). The people who are citizens of the country but have no ID are seriously deprived of their human rights, because their access to social and healthcare insurance is denied, cannot be legally employed, cannot vote, cannot open bank account, are unable to use municipal assistance and support programs etc. The consequences of deprivation of human rights of this vulnerable group of people are comprehensive and include: Public health risks; Unequal access to education and segregation in schools; Dramatically fewer opportunities in life; Widening of the social gap between the communities; Strengthening prejudices and stigmatization. The awareness for this problem is very low, since the Roma community is not well integrated, has no visibility to the general population and has low political impact due to poverty and lack of education. This article discusses the ethical issues and efforts of various interested parties and stakeholders, in solving the administrative problems that so far lead to human rights deprivation.

Keywords: Roma community, Human rights, Poverty, Social injustice

Introduction

We all witness various forms of prejudice in our immediate environment. Misconceptions have been ingrained for so long and are so widespread that some of them are no longer seen as prejudice but as an already widely accepted "true" characteristic. Although wrong, these perceptions affect people's attitudes towards different groups of people.

The Roma population in the Republic of North Macedonia is the most vulnerable minority in the country, a community facing institutional discrimination and a number of social prejudices.

According to the last census, (2.7 percent) identified themselves as Roma, although the actual number is probably significantly higher, especially given the fact that Roma are the fastest growing population in the country with the highest birth rate and natural increase. (UNICEF, 2016)

However, as in many other countries, they live in difficult conditions, with very poor and underdeveloped community infrastructure. According to research, about 28% of Roma live in slums with improvised homes. (Spitalski, 2018). The facilities, and sometimes the entire neighborhood, are not legally registered. The socio-economic conditions in which such Roma families live directly affect their health and wellbeing, leading to premature death compared to the general population. Poverty prevents access to adequate housing, food, education, transportation and participation in community life.

Here, in fact, lies the genesis of social and institutional marginalization, unequal treatment and unequal access to justice, as well as violations of basic human rights, which are still current topics in North Macedonia, especially when it comes to members of the Roma ethnic community. Roma in North Macedonia still face problems such as: lack of personal documents / citizenship, limited access to goods and services, education and employment, health, housing.

The awareness for this problem is very low, since the Roma community is not well integrated, has no visibility to the general population and has low political impact due to poverty and lack of education. Regarding the Roma as an ethnic community, the country has made a significant positive step, compared to other countries, however, in the mentioned context we are not an

exception. On the contrary, so far there is a lack of consistent and coordinated policy to meet the specific needs and consequences that are manifested in reality.

Roma community in Bitola

The city of Bitola has around 86.408 inhabitants, according to the census in 2002 (Census of population, households and dwellings in the Republic of Macedonia, 2002). According to the same census, 2594 people declared themselves of Roma ethnicity or 3% of the total population.³

Most of the Roma families in Bitola are of Muslim religion. More than 90% of the Roma community in Bitola, lives on the North side of the city in an area known as 'Goren Bair'. The name comes from a Turkish word that means high ground or hill.

The living conditions as well as the economic situation of inhabitants decreases as one moves to the top of the hill. The area itself is an integral part of the city, in its main fabric.

The lower parts of Bair are very close to Bitola central area. In the lower part of Bair, people live in houses that are legal. They have water, electricity, sewage and they pay their communal bills. In the slope of the hill, there are Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish families that live intermingled with Roma families. The Roma families in the slope of the hill, more often than not have completed at least elementary school, at least one member of the family is formally employed, and the children strive towards higher levels of education and better living conditions and opportunities. Their access to the basic civil rights are the same as the other ethnic entities.

As one goes further up the hill, the situation changes tremendously. The visitor suddenly finds him/herself in a completely different circumstances. Roads become narrow, tiny streets, there is no sign of an urban planning. All around are houses built illegally, without architectural planning, nor any standards. In many narrow streets it is impossible for an ambulance vehicle or fire protection vehicle to approach the houses. The hill is completely inhabited by Roma families, on the top of the hill an outsider can tangibly feel the ghettoization.

Because the city planning of infrastructure development is not possible to be done in this neighborhood, the families who live on the top of the hill have no water supply,⁴ They also don't have legal access to electricity, as well as fecal and atmospheric sewage. A big problem in this part is the proper treatment of the waste generated by these households. (AEKOM, 2019)

The beginning of this Roma settlement is somewhere in the middle of 20th century, but it grew uninterrupted by the authorities during the last decades. In the 1980s and 1990s apartments for socially vulnerable families have been built. Some of the Roma families have lived in those "social apartments", but most of them, unfortunately got back in the Bair. Ever since, the authorities have turned a blind eye to this illegal expansion of the city, without finding a solution for the socially vulnerable people who live there. Also, the stakeholders are not investing in a long-term solution. In the meantime, the Roma ghetto becomes bigger and bigger.

Human rights deprivation of Roma community in Bitola

Roma in Bair-Bitola, predominantly live in improvised and so-called "Cardboard dwellings" and even if they have an interest, they are not able to legalize them because the municipality has not developed a detailed urban plan for this part of the city. (Habitat- Macedonia, 2012)

Related to this problem Roma have been facing an additional problem for decades, and that is the inability to obtain personal identification documents.

Having an identity document means being registered in the country where you live. These documents provide a person with access to the most basic rights, such as the right to education, social protection, employment, health insurance, and other state provided benefits. Adequate civil status and obtaining personal identification documents are, in fact, a prerequisite for respect for human and civil rights.

³ Since the data from the last census no longer correlates with the ethnic distribution of residents of Republic of North Macedonia in 2021, we will also mark the information from Roma NGO, who speculate that the number of Roma citizens is much higher. According the publication "Between fiction and reality" by Mr. Elmazovski Ashmet from 2003, the total Roma population in the country is 135.490 and in Bitola 5.000 people. The Strategy for Roma people in Republic of Macedonia created in 2005 also refers to other NGO data, such as the Roma NGO Center for Education "Darhija" Zoon who estimate this number to be 80,000 or 3.9% of the total population.

⁴ The NGO Geosfera estimates that 250-300 households, around 1500-1800 people on the Bair in Bitola have no access to safe drinking water. (Geosfera, 2020)

Contrary to the provided conditions, in order for these vulnerable categories to obtain a valid ID card, the Law stipulates that they must personally submit an Application to the Ministry of Interior according to the area in which the citizen resides. Such request shall be submitted on a prescribed form, in which, among other things, the personal identification number and the address of the registered residence of the person shall be entered.⁵

On the other hand, the Law on registration of residence and temporary residence of citizens treats the ownership or lease of the place of residence as the only legal basis for registering at a certain address, as a residential address.⁶ These grounds are a problem for Roma living in illegally constructed buildings or makeshift houses, so due to the inability to register their place of residence, they are not even able to obtain a valid ID card. On the other hand, the acquisition of ownership or lease of a place of residence requires valid personal documents. Thus, these people were caught in a vicious circle that was very difficult to break.

The Law on unregistered people in the birth registry, adopted by the Assembly in 2020, in principle provides an institutional and legal framework for these people to finally obtain a civil identity. The purpose of this law is the people who are not registered in the birth register to be registered in a special birth register, after which they will receive an identification document (identity card) for exercising the right to education, health and social protection as well as employment with compulsory social insurance. The new law will allow people who do not have and can not report a residential address for various reasons, such as an illegal object or lack of a property certificate, to report a residential address and register at the center address for social work in their place of residence, so as to exercise their rights.⁷

The functionality of this law was related to the adoption of numerous regulations. Some of them, a year after the adoption of the law, have not yet been adopted, which again on the other hand indicates the urgency of the institutions to deal with this problem in a timely and adequate manner.⁸

This entire set of institutional and legal labyrinths leads to numerous ethical problems, such as living without paying the utility costs or costs related to arranging construction land during the construction of an illegal facility, etc., but also to human rights violations. These people face risks to public health, unfair access and segregation in education, drastically fewer opportunities in life, especially employment opportunities and increased prejudice and stigma.

The disadvantage of Roma in the **labor market** is shown both in the quantity and in the quality of employment available to them. The employment rate of Roma in Bitola is much lower than that of the non-Roma population, but, nevertheless, the disadvantage of Roma is most clearly seen in the quality of employment. The number of Roma men employed in the shadow economy is three times higher than that of men from the non-Roma population, which means that they do not even have social, health or pension insurance. In part, this problem lies again in the lack of documents (Higgins, 2014). Formal employment is very difficult without ID, because person with no ID can not issue bank account, can not enroll in the Employment agency etc. On the other hand, the salaries of Roma employees are significantly lower and they are employed in low-paid occupations and industries. This trend shows that Roma are becoming increasingly dependent on the social assistance they receive, because they are powerless to improve their current position, but on the other hand, those without an ID card cannot enjoy even that right.⁹

One common explanation for the difference between the Roma and non-Roma population, in terms of labor market participation, relates to the level of **education**. In most countries, higher education creates benefits for the person in terms of the ease with which he or she can find employment and a good salary once employed. (Sianesi and Van Rinen, 2003). From this aspect, one of the reasons for the relatively poor employment opportunities for Roma is their low level of education.¹⁰

The reason for the low level of education is, among other things, the quiet segregation in the elementary education in Bitola. Almost all Roma children are enrolled in "Gjorgji Sugarev" where children from Macedonian ethnicity avoid to enroll, even if they live right next to the school. The Roma children when segregated receive less quality education, and do not learn how to adjust in an ethnically mixed environment. (Memeti, Regepi, 2017). In the Municipality of Bitola, Roma students rarely continue their education, although it is mandatory and provided by law. In those rare cases, they are most often enrolled in vocational schools in which there are a large number of Roma. The number of students enrolled in gymnasium high school is small due to the fact that they have very poor success in primary education.

Poverty is another obstacle for the education of Roma in Bitola. Many parents do not have enough money to buy clothes, shoes or school supplies for their children, and the poorest Roma households who do not have access to running water also have

⁵ Law on personal identification card- unofficial consolidated text, art.4, 5

⁶Law on registration of residence and temporary residence of citizens- unofficial consolidated text, art.2, par.2

⁷ Law on unregistered people in the birth registry, Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no.42/2020, art. 2 and art. 5, par.5

⁸ For more information on law enforcement and drafting bylaws, see: <https://myla.org.mk>

⁹ Roma civil society organizations estimate that currently, about 87% of Roma are beneficiaries of social assistance (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, 2005)

¹⁰ The drop-out of elementary school is more common for Roma girls, that leads to child marriages. In the poorest families in the Bair settlement, child marriage and teenage mothers is a common phenomenon. (Mircevska S. 2015).

problems maintaining hygiene, so parents choose not to send their children to school to get them protected from harassment. Distance to schools, especially in winter, is also a big problem. Some children do not even have the necessary documentation to be able to go to school or get a certificate of completion, and some of them are not even fully aware of the rights guaranteed by law. In this way, without education they can not get out of the vicious circle of poverty and marginalization.

As a consequence of the unfavorable socio-economic living conditions, the difficult access to **health care** services and their quality, as well as the difficult access to justice, especially in terms of health care rights, compared to the majority population, Roma in Bitola, have unfavorable health status and shorter life expectancy. The most common reason for not having health insurance is again the lack of identification documents and unregulated employment status, and many of them have not chosen a family doctor for the same reason. (UNICEF, 2016).

As it is always the case, throughout this magical circle of poverty, exclusion and marginalization, comes higher rates of **criminal activities**.¹¹ However, the root of the problem needs to be analyzed in order to be properly addressed. No one is born a criminal, you become a criminal. It is the social circumstances that influence the Roma to resort to crime, because, as we have seen, they are plunged into a hopeless situation and have to fight for their lives. Therefore, when the stereotypes "all Roma are thieves" or "Roma are unclean" are in circulation, we should be aware of their living conditions and whether they have consciously chosen to live that way.

Conclusions and recommendations

Roma are the most endangered national minority that is often confronted with prejudice, discrimination and is perceived as "different", especially as a group that does not belong to the society where they live.

Roma in North Macedonia, despite attempts at paper, continue to face prejudice and stigma in practice from an early age. These questions are often interrelated. Segregation in schools and poor quality teaching contribute to high drop-out rates. This, in turn, makes it harder for them to find work, which creates reliance on social benefits. High levels of unemployment and limited resources are forcing many to live in substandard housing, while shortages of electricity, safe drinking water and sanitation have resulted in poor health. All of this, together with the difficult access to adequate personal documents and discriminatory access to public services, ultimately leads to a shorter lifespan. At present, despite some progress in some areas, Roma continue to face lifelong discrimination and, on average, die earlier than their non-Roma peers.

Therefore, the national government and local authorities should take firm steps to break down the existing legal and formal barriers, and the whole concept should be based on the following principles:

Building trust – after years of discrimination, poverty and social exclusion as well as the many failed inclusion efforts, managing expectations and building trust among the Roma is the key to successful integration. This involves keeping everyone informed and finding out what they most need.

Meaningful participation – participation can take many forms from simply being invited to meetings through to helping to implement actions. However, whatever shape it takes, Roma should be involved as equals, rather than as a token gesture. For this, it is important to agree on specific goals that will deliver concrete meaningful results. This helps ensure local participation of the Roma community and motivates them to remain engaged.

Empowering people – giving Roma the chance to engage in dialogue with local authorities empowers them to claim their rights. By listening to each other's views, a shared understanding is created and expectations are better managed. In this way stereotypes can be broken and the Roma will feel respected and stand up for the rights.

Learning from the past – a deeper understanding of the reasons for successes and failures can help shape future efforts. By learning lessons, and being open about what went wrong and why, challenges can be overcome and future projects, policies and approaches adjusted. Ultimately this can improve the chances of success.

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¹¹ From the available data regarding the adult perpetrators of crimes, it is evident that of the total number of convicted people, on average 10% are of Roma nationality, and nearly 2/3 of all crimes committed by Roma are in the area of property crime. (Center for Legal Research and Analysis, 2015)

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The crisis management strategy of the UN family against the impacts of the new coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19)

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Abstract

The new coronavirus pandemic has brought one of the worst health and economic crises of our time resulting in more than two million deaths cases and the loss of hundreds of millions of jobs. Moreover, the crisis has pushed millions of families into poverty, especially in the least developed countries. As a result of national restrictions, international tourism has also come to an almost complete halt, and domestic tourism has been hampered by restrictions within countries. The unprecedented spread of the virus and the crisis it caused has made the international community aware of the need for comprehensive solutions to the global problems. The WHO led international crisis management is brought together by the United Nations family and its partners. Experts from all relevant United Nations' bodies, financial foundations and specialized bodies have compiled a rapid response plan and a knowledge base covering all sectors, regions and social groups as a guideline for developing national crisis management strategies. To implement all the programmes the UN needs \$34.8 billion from which \$22.5 billion has been raised so far.

Keywords: coronavirus, crisis management, United Nations

Introduction

The first cases of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) were recorded in December 2019 in China. Since then, the virus has spread around the world challenging the health care systems as well as diminishing the performance of national economies worldwide. As of 21 March 2021, a total of 123.7 million infected people, 2.7 million deaths cases, and 99.6 million recovered patients were registered globally. The most affected countries based on the number of infections are currently the United States, India, Brazil, Russia and the United Kingdom (Worldometers, 2021). Governments and international organizations are looking for solutions at local, national and global levels to halt the spread of the virus and to treat those infected. The present study focuses on the crisis management activities of the United Nations (hereinafter: UN) representing the global level.

National restrictive measures to stop the spread of the virus and to protect the international health situation have a serious impact on the development of the national economies and on world trade. Demand for non-essential goods and services has fallen suddenly causing the temporary or permanent closure of many small and medium-sized enterprises which led to the loss of millions of jobs. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 305 million jobs disappeared by April 2020, and that number kept rising to 400 million by July 2020 (UN News, 2020a). Former global crises have shown that governments alone are not able to overcome the global challenges. Regarding the unprecedented nature of the crisis caused by the new coronavirus pandemic, international dialogue and cooperation between the governments and society have become more important than ever.

In a non-exhaustive manner, the study addresses the crisis management strategies of the UN family as well as its partners, and presents the economic sectors, the social groups and the geographical regions that are most affected by the crisis.

Strategies of the UN family and its partners

The pandemic has not only embodied a health challenge, but has also led to a humanitarian-, security-, human rights- and economic crisis that requires a comprehensive approach. For this reason, the UN is trying to help decision-makers by creating a knowledge base in which experts examine the various effects of the pandemic by presenting relevant information, advice and good examples.

Many financial funds in the UN family, as well as all specialized agencies and related organizations have a strategy in place to deal with the pandemic. The UN's central response strategy is brought together and directed by the World Health Organization (WHO). The contents of the strategies and policy documents established by the UN bodies are not binding for the Member States, they can only be interpreted as recommendations and assistance, as well as the UN General Assembly Resolution 74/270 of 2 April

2020 on global solidarity in the fight against the coronavirus. In contrast, UN Security Council (in the following: UNSC) resolutions can be legally binding or also recommendatory. Experience has shown that, due to the political weight of a superpower's resolution, Member States generally consider the UNSC's decisions to be binding on them even if they are only recommendatory in nature (Hárs, 2018, pp.4-7). Therefore, the commitment of the UNSC, in this regard, is crucial to mitigate the peace and security consequences of the pandemic. On 1 July 2020, UNSC in its resolution No. 2532 called for a 90-day global ceasefire from which only those military operations carried out in the context of counter-terrorism were exempted (UN Press, 2020). Therefore, personnel of the UN peacekeeping and political missions in the least developed states are also focusing their efforts on pandemic management (UN, 2020a, pp.7-8).

As part of the crisis management of the UN family and its partners, UN Secretary-General António Guterres issued a document titled 'United Nations Comprehensive Response to COVID-19' on 25 June 2020, followed by an updated copy in September 2020. The documents present two crisis management packages, the first is a comprehensive three-point UN response package and the other is a joint crisis management package by the UN family and its partners.

The UN comprehensive response package identifies three closely interlinked and interacting areas through which the organization can address the impacts of the pandemic. The first is the WHO-led health response, the second is the revitalization of the socio-economic sector, namely the creation of jobs and immediate humanitarian support to the most vulnerable countries, the third is a transformative recovery process which aims to lead to a more sustainable world. Recovery from the crisis offers an opportunity to manage among others the climate change, the inequalities, the exclusion and the shortcomings of social protection systems in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The joint crisis management package of the UN family and its partners also focuses on three main areas, namely on the WHO-led immediate health assistance, on the mitigation of the effects of the virus in the most vulnerable countries, and thirdly on the creation of a financial fund for the socio-economic recovery of low- and middle-income countries. To support the above mentioned three areas, by December 2020 the UN has requested more than 13 billion dollar as a financial contribution from the member states and from the international organizations (UN, 2020a, pp.9-10). Of the requested 13.05 billion dollar aid, 1.74 billion is planned for immediate health care to support the most vulnerable countries, 10.25 billion dollar is planned for humanitarian response plan and 1 billion dollar was allocated to boost the socio-economic sector. Based on data as of 21 March 2021 93% of the immediate health care budget, 33% of the humanitarian response plan budget and 6% of the socio-economic budget were met. (UNInfo, 2020). The aforementioned data can be tracked by anyone on the 'Covid-19 Data Portal' website set up by the organization. Despite the fact that the portal updates every day, based on my personal observation the data has unchanged on the Portal since 1 November 2020. Based on that, it is not possible to identify whether there were no other contributions or just the data has not been updated recently.

In addition, UN experts are preparing policy briefings on numerous other topics to help member states to manage the crisis caused by the pandemic. The UN divided its policy briefings into sectors, social groups and regions. The next part of the study discusses tourism and hospitality from the sectors, refugees, displaced persons and migrants from social groups and Africa as the most fragile area of all continents.

Tourism

According to the report of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in April 2020, all countries in the world had introduced restrictions that had negatively affected travelling and tourism to some degree (UNWTO, 2020). As a result, international tourism has come to almost a complete halt, and domestic tourism has been hampered by the national restrictions.

Tourism is a significant sector in the world economy. In 2019, tourism accounted for 29% of the world service exports and created about 300 million jobs worldwide (UNCTAD, 2020, p.6). According to the UNWTO, international tourism – based on the number of overnight visitors – fell by 74% in 2020 compared to 2019 that is accounting for 1 billion fewer international arrivals due to the travel restrictions and the huge drop in demand worldwide. The aforementioned decline in international tourism represents an estimated loss of 1.3 trillion dollar – that is accounting for 1.5% of the global GDP – in export revenues that is more than eleven times the loss recorded during the 2009 global economic crisis (UNWTO, 2021a).

As Figure 1 shows Asia and the Pacific recorded an 84% fall in international arrivals in 2020, about 300 million less than in 2019. The Middle East and Africa both experienced a 75% decline in international tourists. In Europe arrivals dropped with 70%, representing over 500 million fewer visitors, while the in the Americas the decline was 69% (UNWTO, 2021b).

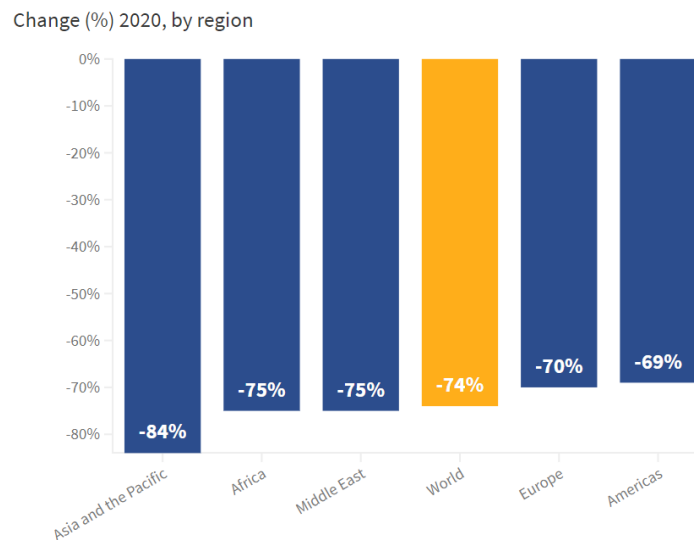


Figure 1.: International Tourist Arrivals, overall change (%) in 2020, by region (WTO, 2021b)

Based on the estimation of UNCTAD, if the downtime lasts until July 2021, world tourism will experience a decrease of 3.3 trillion dollar (UNWTO, 2021b). The decline in the turnover of tourism last year has meant the loss of more than 100 million jobs worldwide (Statista, 2020). The UN issued its plan on the impact of the global pandemic on tourism and the rebirth of tourism on 5 August 2020. The document recommends a roadmap and offers solutions for countries on how to make tourism a more crisis-resistant and competitive sector, how to protect jobs and businesses, how to introduce innovation and sustainability into tourism, and what health measures should be put in place to make tourism safe (UN, 2020b, pp.16-26).

Displaced persons, refugees and migrants

Displaced persons, refugees and migrants are particularly vulnerable to the indirect and direct effects of the pandemic. From a socio-economic point of view, refugees and migrants work mainly in the black economy, without a secure job, and those forced to leave their place of residence will need to find other means to make a living (UN, 2020c, pp.2-4). In 2019, the number of migrants reached 272 million, representing approximately 4% of the Earth's population (UN News, 2020b). In the same year, armed conflicts and natural disasters forced more than 33 million people to leave their homes, work and schools (IDMC, 2020). Migrants held in detention facilities or in migrant camps are more likely to get infected by the virus since these facilities are often overcrowded and do not meet the hygiene conditions considered appropriate, not to mention the risk of sexual violence and abuse (UN, 2020d).

One of the UN's policy papers issued in July 2020 provides good examples on how a state can reduce the health risk of the pandemic from the point of view of refugees, migrants and displaced persons. For example, in July 2020 the United Kingdom did not charge foreign nationals for detecting and treating the presence of a new coronavirus in a human body, regardless of the reason for their stay in the country. Furthermore, in the same year Bahrain obliged employers to provide adequate accommodation for immigrants working in the private sector during the pandemic (UN, 2020c, p.14).

The strategic response of the International Organization of Migration (IOM) has focused on supporting the most vulnerable groups among migrants. In the Central American, North American and Caribbean region, the programmes of IOM also include translating information over the pandemic into the languages spoken by the migrant communities as well as providing food, personal hygiene kits, cleaning supplies and furniture for them (IOM, n.d.).

Africa

Two-thirds of the 47 states designated by the UN as the least developed countries (LDCs) are located in Africa (UN DESA). It has always been difficult to measure the continent's development indicators since there are many barriers for data collection and data record, thus there are no accurate infection statistics. All the UN's specialized agencies, as well as peacekeeping and political missions operating in Africa, deal with the identification and management of infected people and the reduction of the indirect effects of the pandemic, such as food crisis.

The virus has pushed 71 million people into poverty worldwide in 2020, of which 29 million in Africa. The virus has kept 500 million children away from learning opportunities globally, of which 310 million are in Africa (UN, 2020e, p.19), and made the world face one of the worst economic recessions of our time (UN, 2020f, pp.6-24). The developing world has been hit the hardest by the earlier mentioned consequences of the pandemic. Measures adopted by the national governments in Africa include, for

instance, tax incentives, freezing the payment of utility bills, food and water distribution and regulations restricting redundancies (Development Reimagined, 2020). In addition to the measures on governmental level, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also supports fragile states to mitigate the effects of the pandemic. For instance, in Zimbabwe the organization helps farmers to sell their products, in Madagascar they send medical support to hospitals or in Guinea Bissau UNDP helps the strengthening of the healthcare system (UNDP, Africa, n.d.).

Fighting the pandemic, COVAX, formally known as the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access Facility – backed by the WHO and other multilateral bodies – aims to supply 600 million doses to Africa in 2021 that is enough to vaccinate at least 20% of the population. The programme so far delivered more than 16 million vaccine doses to 27 countries in Africa (Mwai, 2021, p.4).

Strategy of the ILO

The most apparent and urgent problems to be resolved, beyond health risks, are job losses and the closure of companies. A common element of the challenges of the sectors, mentioned in the previous sections of the study, is that national economies and the world economy has been facing a severe recession, therefore it is essential to pay special attention to protection and creation of jobs. In May 2020, the ILO developed a policy framework to address the economic and social impacts of the pandemic. The four pillars of the policy document are based on international labour standards that ensure fair and decent working conditions for workers, employers and governments. Such a norm is, for example, compliance with labour agreements, health protection, the fight against discrimination and guaranteeing social security (ILO, 2020).

The first pillar examines the stimulation of the economy and the employment. According to the ILO recommendation, the focus primarily should be on the following: one is to develop an immediate incentive package to strengthen the health sector, the other is to mitigate the negative impact of the crisis on the economy and the labor market mainly through financial support for small businesses and through income support for workers. Following the spread of the virus and the resumption of pre-pandemic life, direct government intervention will be needed by providing loans and financial support to strategic sectors, and the creation of a demand-driven employment plan to increase jobs in strategically important sectors.

The second pillar concerns the support for businesses, jobs and incomes. In this pillar, the ILO draws the attention of the governments to the survival of businesses, the retention of jobs and the payment of wages in accordance with their capacity, so that those who became unemployed can return to their original jobs after the crisis. The pillar also emphasizes the importance of the extending social protection, which is assessed by the ILO based on the number of measures taken for social protection.

The third pillar deals with the health protection of workers operating on the frontlines of the virus and with the psychological protection of workers isolated in their homes. The pillar focuses on the proper hygiene of workplaces, as well as the early detection and isolation of those infected. It draws attention to the prevention of the stigmatization of those infected and the expansion of health care for all social groups. It emphasizes the increase of the number of days taken off as ordinary or sick leave, so that the infected workers will be able to protect their environment without losing their jobs.

The fourth pillar emphasizes the importance of social dialogue in tackling the problems caused by the pandemic, and draws the attention of the governments to workers, experts and aid organizations from different sectors, both from the side of the employers and the employees.

Summary

The pandemic has made the world face one of the worst economic recessions of our time. As a result of the crises, hundreds of millions of people have lost their jobs, pushing millions of families into poverty, especially in the least developed countries and due to the national restrictions, international tourism has also come to an almost complete halt severely affecting domestic tourism as well. The paper presented one of the sectors, social groups and regions most affected by the crisis, that were tourism, Africa and migrants. The decline in the turnover of tourism in 2020 has meant the loss of more than 100 million jobs worldwide. Furthermore, migrants who held in immigration detention facilities or in migrant camps are more likely to get infected by Covid-19 since these facilities are often overcrowded and lack of sanitation and hygiene facilities, not to mention the risk of sexual violence and abuse. Lastly, the developing world has been hit the hardest by the pandemic. The virus has pushed more than 70 million people into poverty worldwide in 2020, of which almost 30 million in Africa, and it has kept 500 million children away from learning opportunities globally, of which more than 300 million are in Africa.

The new coronavirus pandemic has set an unprecedented challenge to the world, increased the need for multilateralism and international dialogue and demonstrated that global problems require comprehensive solutions. The spread of the virus and the crisis it has caused have warned the international community that without cross-border, cross-sectoral and cross-social cooperation, it is not possible to give adequate answers to the crisis that has arisen. The UN, as the main custodian of multilateralism, has drawn up a WHO-led crisis management package covering the main economic sectors, social groups and geographical regions concerned in

the crises, in which experts from all relevant UN bodies, financial foundations and specialized agencies present their research on the impacts of the virus and make strategies and recommendations for the states to address it.

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Industry 4.0: The position of EU member states in the mains indicators

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Abstract

Next- generation technologies are rapidly changing the structure and nature of the economy around the world. The three previous industrial revolution were caused by the expansion of mechanical production equipment, the removal and subsequent use of the steam engine, the gradual electrification of factories and the rapid development of ICT in production. The fourth industrial revolution is forcing a new societal change on large scale. From changes in digitalization, automation, education, research and development, technological standardization to the labor market. The digital age brings new technologies, innovation and trends. They create pressure on the economy and dynamically change the world and affect all areas of life. The aim of this article is to provide a comparative view of EU member states in areas that are primarily determined by the ongoing industrial revolution. The use of available statistical data summarizes selected indicators thus evaluates the position of individual countries in the areas of greatest impact Industry 4.0.

Keywords: Industry 4.0, innovation, digitalization, ICT, R&D

1. Introduction

The industrial revolution brings new trends and affect the country's economy, trade, industry and production activities. The revolution brings a marked change in the paradigm of the functioning of the economy. During the gradual development of the economy and the organization of trade, we have witnessed three great milestones which are referred to as the industrial revolutions. The effect that flowed from them affected the whole society and turned some of its sectors beyond recognition. The biggest changes have always been socio- economic. These were paradigmatic changes in the way of life, changes in education, the international division of labor and organization of production. Economic changes in the field of taxation, both human labor and capital. The changes did not bypass the labor market and the associated increased interest in migration, whether qualified employees or even less qualified ones. And thus, they pushed the labor market to its current state. All these changes have come under the guise of the ongoing industrial revolutions. In order to understand and correctly define the factors that are decisive within Industry 4.0, it is necessary to map previous industrial revolutions. We present a brief overview of the historical development of industrial revolutions in the next chapter. We deal specifically with the ongoing fourth industrial revolution and the factor that determine, create and influence it.

The fourth- generation industrial revolution is currently underway, conceptualized as Industry 4.0. It represents the worldwide expansion and gradual interconnection of digital and physical technologies Schwab (2016). Industry 4.0 creates precondition of new generation technologies. It is an expansion of innovation in the field of ICT, digitalization, research and development and changes in the field of education and training of workforce. In the case of ICT, it is clear that their growth, speed, efficiency and massive expansion confirm that this is a new industrial revolution, despite the fact that this type of technology has been here for several decades. Developed countries have understood and correctly captured these changes and new trends and have taken systematic action. It is essential that EU countries respond to these trends, as they present new opportunities to increase productivity and competitiveness. Industry 4.0 requires the connection of the physical and digital worlds. Therefore, it is necessary to build new capacities especially in the field of intangible knowledge. It is about the level of digital technologies, the way and form of increasing the knowledge of the workforce, the support of basic and applied research and its connections with the industrial sector. The country's innovation potential is an important assumption for the successful use and drawing of benefits in the ongoing Industry 4.0.

The article is structured as follows. In the theoretical part we deal with the historical development of industrial revolutions and the currently ongoing Industry 4.0. We pay attention to the main preconditions of its manifestation, it is primarily an innovation

activity, as a key precondition of this revolution, the digitalization, the quality of human capital and the level of ICT. In the second part, we present the methodological basis and data used. Within the result of the work, we present an overview of selected determinants of Industry 4.0 within the EU member states and their position. Finally, we present a summary of analyzes and rankings of countries in the context of Industry 4.0.

2. Literature Review

The first industrial revolution is from the period 1760 to 1820, where there was a transition from manual production to machinery through the use of water and steam energy. *The second revolution*, also known as the technological revolution, dates from 1870 to 1914 and is characterized by productivity growth and a period of great economic growth. The main milestone was the invention of electricity, which ensured the electrification of factories and the operation of a modern production line. Another benefit is the extensive development of the railway network and the development of the telegraph, which have made it possible to spread ideas and transfer goods and people more quickly. An important change is the gradual development of the international division of labor. A negative phenomenon of rapid changes was the increase in unemployment which was the result of gradual replacement of work by machines previously implemented by man Industry 4.0 (2021). *The third is the digital revolution*, otherwise referred to as the data revolution, which is still taking place to a large extent and in a different form today. Significant progress is being made in the field of information and communication technologies (ICT) and computer technology Patro (2018). There is a massive use of computer and communication technologies in production processes and so machines began to eliminate the need for manpower. At the same time industrialization is declining compared to previous revolutions.

The fourth industrial revolution is called „Industry 4.0“ and was introduced in 2012. However, it became known to the general public only in 2016 through the World Economic Forum in Davos. Industry 4.0 was initially defined as the strategy of Germany government in the informatization of production under the acronym „Industry 4.0“. The reason for its presentation is due to the decline in industrial production and productivity, paradoxically in the most industrialized countries, which expect from it an increase in global competitiveness, especially compared to the so-called emerging economies. The main objective of this initiative was to help rebuild and increase the performance of European Union industry, the so-called „reindustrialization „, based on the tradition of EU industry and its new innovation potential Anderl et al. (2016). The legitimacy of this initiative for EU industrial policy is also confirmed by the European Commission in its 2012 strategic material EUCOM (2012).

The strategy has invoked a response in a number of countries, which have gradually begun to develop their own comprehensive concepts for the smart industry. We present an overview of strategic in selected countries. In the USA, it was a 2012 initiative from companies and consortia *General Electric Company, Smart Manufacturing Leadership Coalition, Industrial Internet Consortium*. In France the *Industrie du Future* concept was introduced in 2015. In China, the adopted and implemented concept of the smart industry from 2015 is referred to as *Made in China 2025*, which is significantly inspired by the German strategic concept. At the same time, other concepts for the development of industrial policies in various countries were adopted in cooperation with the public and private sectors. In Korea it is referred to as *Manufacturing Industry Innovation 3.0* in Japan it is the *Industrial Value Chain Initiative* Popjakova, Mintalova (2019).

It is important to note that between the first and the second industrial revolution, more than a hundred years passed, between the third and the current revolution only thirty years. We are already seeing a rapid increase in progress more or less online. The assumption is that this trend will culminate over the next decade. The current setting of the use of technology in everyday life is a dramatic step in society on the path to progress and is unparalleled in history.

At present it is already necessary to understand Industry 4.0 in a global context, whereas in terms of scale, scope and complexity, this transformation will be as fundamental to humanity as any other technological change in the history WEF (2015).

Industry 4.0

Professor Klaus Schwab confirms that the global economy is facing a new wave of technological change. The general interpretation is that a whole range of new technologies will represent an industrial revolution by combining the physical and the intangible, ie the digital world. It will gradually affect all disciplines of economics and industry Schwab (2016).

The current industrial revolution is the only one of three previous revolutions to be a planned concept that is stimulated by the state. The main goal is the development of industrial production. Industry is a crucial sector in the economy, as its decline, development or modernization affects the direction of the economy, such as trade, transport and others. The concept of Industry 4.0 comes from region of the western EU, where industry was developed and richest region in the world. In general, the most

economically advanced economies with a high share of the world economy are characterized by a relatively high share of industrial production in gross domestic product and employment Popjakova, Mintalova (2019).

Industry 4.0 is essentially a trend in the field of automation, exchange and use of large volume of data in production technologies and in the production and business process. In the case of automation, Industry 4.0 can disrupt traditional labor cost advantage. If robots are seen as a form of capital and thus investment, as a close substitute for a less skilled workforce, then their increasing use reduces the share of human labor in total production costs. Therefore, we can argue that Industry 4.0 favors capital providers over labor. And this can have an impact on less developed economies. The use of large volume of data in the production process, or in the case of business activities, takes post-production activities to a new personalized level Anderl et al. (2016)

Industry 4.0 and how it takes advantage of its opportunities vary widely around the world. In the case of Germany, the focus is on integrating information and production technologies into smart societies. On the other side of the Atlantic and in China Industry 4.0 is most often associated with intelligent product, solutions, new business models that are directly linked to them Gao et al. (2016), Anderl et al. (2016), Brun et al. (2019).

Industry 4.0 also includes the integration of business partners and customers around the world. Its expected benefits are highly efficient manufactory production, which is coordinated in real time and optimization. The result is the emergence of new services and business models. There is agreement in the professional not only academic environment on the defining factor and trends of the fourth- generation industrial revolution. These are new materials, the use of Big data, Internet of Things and Internet of Services, Artificial intelligence (AI), sensors and microchips, cyber- physical solutions and systems, new technologies, automation and autonomy of production, robots, „clouding“, 3D printers, virtual reality Jeck (2017).

The use and development of new technologies is currently only at an early stage and we know for sure only their theoretical potential, which these technologies can achieve in full use. In terms of the co-called Amara law, in the short term we tend to overestimate the impact of new technology and in the long run we underestimate it. Nevertheless, it is difficult to underestimate the future global impact of Industry 4.0, which will occur in most areas of business, socio- economic, tax, consumer behavior, employment, education and other areas De Beule, Nauwelaerts (2018). From our point of view, an important complex macroeconomic aspect that stakeholders need to prepare for it show to ensure attractiveness for new investment and achieve a sustainable level of accumulation in order to reap all their potential benefits without losing their global competitiveness.

Industry 4.0 is putting pressure on the traditional advanced economies of the Western world in their global competitiveness, as the industrial powers we have known, such as the USA and the EU, are gradually beginning to lose their global dominance in competition with new countries in the world market such as China and India. On the one hand, we are seeing a decline in the number of workers in the EU industrial sector, on the other hand an increase in the number of workers in China and Brazil CEOFORUM (2020). The way is to introduce new technological gains from the ongoing industrial revolution and thus maintain its position on the world market.

From the historical development of industry in the most developed economies in the world, it is possible to relatively accurately identify the stages of development in which industrial production achieved fundamentally different manifestations, where it change the nature and strategic goals of production. In the case of the most developed countries, it is possible to accurately identify the changes that are taking place as a result of the industrial revolutions. This largely depends on the level of technological progress, the need for demand, the organization of production and the quality of human capital. The result has always been an appropriate sectoral structure and spatial differentiation of the economy and industry. However, the revolution is also putting great pressure on developing and emerging economies. Redirection of production according to De Backer et al. (2017) from these countries, may lead to a decline in the development of the global value chains as an industrial strategy for developing economies.

The changes that result from the main elements of Industry 4.0 are mainly new technologies, the field of digitalization and ICT are already an integral part of the economies of the EU member states. Technologies are as common as possible in economies and their impact on various areas is constantly growing. We try to map the extent and intensive of these new factors and trends to EU member states from the available statistical and analytical sources. The main goal is to analyze the various indicators and indexes of the Industry 4.0 and based on them to evaluate the countries that are most prepared for the ongoing industrial revolution and which effectively use of the opportunities arising from it. The main areas are the development and position of innovation, digitalization, research and development and other factors.

3. Methodology and Results

Countries around the world are implementing their smart industry strategic concepts to maximize the positive impact of the revolution and take advantage of the opportunities that arise as a result of Industry 4.0. It is in our interest to evaluate which countries are the most successful. The aim of this article is not econometrically quantifying the manifestations of Industry 4.0 and to determine causal bilateral relations with labor productivity. Our goal is to use analytical and statistical data to provide a comparative view of EU member states in the context of Industry 4.0 indicators. We express basic indicators in the form of indexes, which are demonstration of the industrial revolution. They show how successful countries are in seizing the opportunities of Industry 4.0.

In the analytical part we use statistical and analytical data that are public available. These are mainly from EUROSTAT and OECD databases. We follow indexes that comprehensively map individual areas of Industry 4.0. We use the Innovation Index TGII (2020) to indicate innovation performance. We are monitoring the shift of EU member state from 2012 to 2019. The second index shows the level of digitalization in 2019. It is the Digital Economy and Society Index DESI (2020). The last index used in this article is the ICT Development Index, which shows the level of ICT infrastructure in individual EU member states in 2010 and 2017. In the case of research and development indicators, we use data from the EUROSTAT and OECD databases, where we monitor the volume of private and public expenditure on research and development BERD¹² a GERD¹³. In the case of expenditure on research and development, we express the difference between the monitored years, which indicates to us how the country has moved. We express the quality of human capital primarily in the area of R&D in three share indicators. We use data from the EUROSTAT database. We express labor productivity as a GDP per capita. We draw data from the OECD databases. The competitiveness Index for 2019 GCI (2020) is published by the World Economic Forum. These available data will give us an insight into how successful countries are under Industry 4.0.

RESULTS

In this section, we present analytical results that provide a comparative assessment of the research, innovation and digital performance of EU member states. The aim is to draw attention to those countries that are leading the way in these areas. Consequently, it is possible to focus the efforts of less successful countries on increasing their innovation, digitalization and research performance. We follow four basic areas that represent the determinants of the industrial revolution. This is the area of innovation performance, digitalization, R&D and quality of human capital and ICT. Within the individual areas, we attach basic indexes and indicators which describe the position and development in the field of Industry 4.0 for individual EU member states.

Innovation

One of the possibilities for a comparative analysis of innovation performance is the implementation of the Innovation Index created by the European Commission. Its aim is to quantify the innovation potential of individual countries. In 2019, the innovation performance of EU countries increases year-on-year in almost all countries. The EU's innovation leader is Sweden, which reached an index value of 153 in 2019. The largest increase in the observed period from 2012 to 2019 is shown by Lithuania, Latvia, Greece and Portugal. Compared the EU – 15 countries to the CEE region are in a sling and have been reaching below-average values for a long time and occupying the last rungs of the Innovation Index. The leader from CEE countries is Estonia with an index value of 107 and Slovenia with a value of 92. This is despite the fact that Slovenia decreased in its innovation activity during the period under review¹⁴. There is a gradual, albeit low, process of convergence of countries with low innovation performance to countries with higher innovation performance. However, countries like Romania, Bulgaria reach a quarter of the index compared to the EU's innovation leaders and this is where we see an opportunity to improve the CEE countries.

¹² Business Enterprise Expenditure on R&D

¹³ Government Expenditure on R&D

¹⁴ Romania also saw a decline occupying the last ranks of innovation performance for a long time.

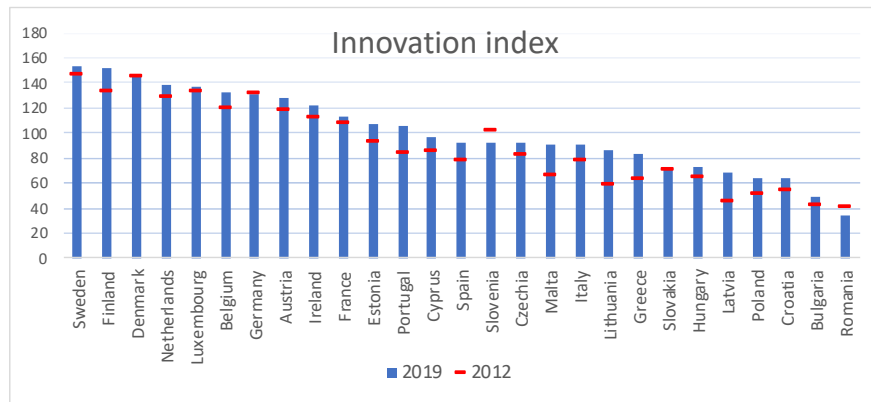


Figure 7 Innovation index- member EU states 2012, 2019. Source Innovation Index

Digital Economy

The interest of many countries in the field of digitalization is focused on the conceptual development of their digital potential. The topic of digitalization and digital transformation is currently one of the most important components in building and managing a strategy for countries and businesses. The most visible display of digitalization is the digitalization of public administration services. Together with the rise of ICT, they create positive effects in the public sector. As part of the cooperation, the private sector also draws on it. The European Union monitors the level of digital economy through the Digital Economy and Society Index. It is one of the main analytical tools to provide a basis for assessing the digital development of individual member states as well as the EU as a whole. It also serves as a basis for deciding in which areas it is necessary to allocate investments that increase the level of the digital economy. The index tracks five basic areas:

- connectivity,
- human capital,
- use of internet,
- integration of digital technology and
- digital public services.

Digital Economy and Society Index shown in Figure 2, provides several indicators through which we can assess the position of digitalization and compare countries. The leaders of the Digital Economy and Society Index for 2019 are countries that also achieve a high degree of innovation performance. There are Finland and Sweden. The V4 countries reach below-average values in 2019 in all areas covered by the Digital Economy and Society. They reach the lowest values in the areas of digital technology integration and the quality of human capital. The difference between the first and the last country in the case of the integration of digital technologies is approximately fourfold.

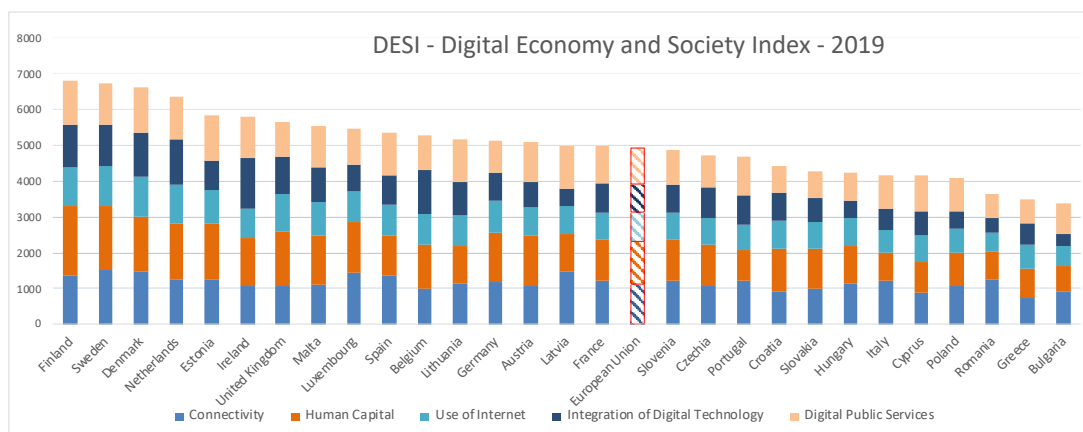


Figure 8 Digital Economy and Society Index – 2019 – member EU states, Source DESI 2019

Research and development

Research and development (R&D) are an integral part of Industry 4.0. It creates the necessary precondition for the country to actively participate in innovation. The structure, robustness and quality of the national research and development environment and its connectivity with the business sector will thus play an irreplaceable role in maintaining the performance and competitiveness of the country. In Table 1, we attach the share of private and public expenditure to the R&D sector for the last available year 2019 for all EU member countries. We compare it with 2010 and we can see that in 2019 the highest volume of 3.39 % of government expenditure on R&D (GERD) is in Sweden and conversely, the lowest volume in Romania, where it shows only 0.48 %. In the case of business enterprise expenditure on R&D (BERD) in 2019 Sweden also shows the highest value of 2.44 %. Latvia has the lowest value of 0.17 %. The EU – 15 countries have higher values for the BERD than the EU average. High activity of private R&D investment is visible in the EU -15 countries. In contrast, CEE region has not long reported R&D expenditure (private and government) that are close to the EU average. Slovenia and Estonia are exceptions and achieve roughly comparable results to the EU average. The good news is that in total expenditure (BERD and GERD) the EU shows long-term growth between 2010 and 2019. The average increase in expenditure for each country represented an increase of 0.23 % for BERD and an increase of 0.22 % for GERD. This confirms that a good R&D environment is in the interest of the vast majority of EU countries. This presupposes that the EU as a whole has an active interest in participating in new innovations. The results of an effective innovation environment are the development of new patents which are then implemented in industrial production and manufacturing. Therefore, it is important to monitor the development of new registered patents within R&D.

From 2010 to 2018 the number of new patents filed as a result of new innovation in the EU reached almost 60,000. Germany was the largest contributor, accounting for about 38 % of all new patents filed. It was followed by France with a share of 15 % and Sweden with a share of almost 10 % from total EU patents. In 2018, the EU – 15 countries directly filed average 3,526 patents. On the other hand, CEE region filed an average of only 172 new patents in the same year. In the case of patents in the field of ICT for the period from 2010 to 2018 the share of Germany ICT patents reached 27 % with a total 781 patents. It was followed by France with a share of almost 18 % in total ICT patents in EU. Innovation performance is directly linked to the quality of the research and development environment, which results in registered patents. We see that Germany represent the EU hegemon and far exceeds other countries. We confirm that the EU – 15 countries have a better R&D environment and an incomparable proportion of new patents filed.

Table 3 GERD and BERD - 2010, 2019. Source EUROSTAT

	2019		2010		Diff: 2019 - 2010	
	BERD	GERD	BERD	GERD	BERD	GERD
Sweden	2,44%	3,39%	2,18%	3,17%	0,26%	0,22%
Austria	2,23%	3,19%	1,87%	2,73%	0,36%	0,46%
Germany	2,19%	3,17%	1,83%	2,73%	0,36%	0,44%
Denmark	1,86%	2,96%	1,96%	2,92%	-0,10%	0,04%
Belgium	2,04%	2,89%	1,38%	2,06%	0,66%	0,83%
Finland	1,83%	2,79%	2,58%	3,71%	0,75%	-0,92%
France	1,44%	2,19%	1,38%	2,18%	0,06%	0,01%
Netherlands	1,46%	2,16%	0,82%	1,70%	0,64%	0,46%
European Union 28	1,42%	2,14%	1,19%	1,92%	0,23%	0,22%
Slovenia	1,51%	2,04%	1,39%	2,05%	0,12%	-0,01%
Czech Republic	1,20%	1,94%	0,77%	1,33%	0,43%	0,61%
Estonia	0,86%	1,61%	0,79%	1,57%	0,07%	0,04%
Hungary	1,11%	1,48%	0,68%	1,13%	0,43%	0,35%
Italy	0,91%	1,45%	0,66%	1,22%	0,25%	0,23%
Portugal	0,74%	1,40%	0,71%	1,54%	0,03%	-0,14%
Poland	0,83%	1,32%	0,19%	0,72%	0,64%	0,60%
Greece	0,59%	1,27%	0,24%	0,60%	0,35%	0,67%
Spain	0,70%	1,25%	0,70%	1,36%	0,00%	-0,11%
Luxembourg	0,60%	1,19%	1,00%	1,50%	-0,40%	-0,31%
Croatia	0,54%	1,11%	0,33%	0,74%	0,21%	0,37%
Lithuania	0,43%	0,99%	0,23%	0,78%	0,20%	0,21%

Bulgaria	0,56%	0,84%	0,29%	0,57%	0,27%	0,27%
Slovakia	0,45%	0,83%	0,26%	0,61%	0,19%	0,22%
Ireland	0,51%	0,78%	1,09%	1,59%	-0,58%	-0,81%
Latvia	0,17%	0,64%	0,23%	0,61%	-0,06%	0,03%
Cyprus	0,26%	0,63%	0,08%	0,44%	0,18%	0,19%
Malta	0,38%	0,61%	0,36%	0,59%	0,02%	0,02%
Romania	0,28%	0,48%	0,18%	0,46%	0,10%	0,02%

An essential part of increasing the performance of R&D environment is the availability of public and private investment in R&D, but also the quality of human capital in this sector. In Table 2, we attach the basic indicators that indicate the quality of human capital in research and development. We monitor three indicators. It is the share of workers, with tertiary education in science and technology, persons employed in science and technology and number of scientists and engineers. Values are expressed as a percentage of total population. An important indicator is the number of scientists and engineers. They are the ones who contribute the most to the country's innovation potential. Here we see an opportunity for CEE region to improve. The EU – 15 average is significantly higher than in the CEE and exceeds the overall EU average.

Table 4 *Human resources in science and technology. Source EUROSTAT*

	Persons with tertiary education (ISCED) and/or employed in science and technology	Persons employed in science and technology	Scientists and engineers
EU	38,57%	25,91%	5,64%
EU - 15	42,58%	29,09%	6,62%
CEE	34,34%	22,36%	4,52%

Information and communication technologies

Information and communication technologies play a key role in the ongoing Industry 4.0 revolution. The most comprehensive indicator through which we can evaluate and compare the information and communication infrastructure of individual countries is The ICT Development Index (IDI). Within it, one reference indicator is published which consists of eleven partial indicators. The indicator provides us with an insight into the development of ICT infrastructure over time. The index is not only focused on developed countries but is a global indicator that provides an overview of the digital divide between countries, in terms of the level of ICT development and its potential. Eleven indicators are grouped into three areas, which cover the entire infrastructure, skills and results of information and communication technologies. An important part is the skills of the workforce that uses these technologies. These areas are:

1. ICT readiness – contains data on the level of infrastructure and availability of ICT,
2. ICT intensity – contains data on the use of ICT in society,
3. ICT impact – contains data on the achieved results of more efficient use of ICT (ITU 2021).

Figure 3 shows the ranking of EU member states within The ICT Development Index (IDI) for 2017, as well as the shift compared to 2010. We monitor the development of ICT in 2017 and compare it with the achieved values from 2010. The country that has reached the highest position in the ICT Index is Denmark, which has reached an index value of 8.71. On the contrary, the country with the lowest level of infrastructure skills is Romania with a value of 6.48. Below the EU average are 13 member states mostly from CEE region. Estonia achieved the largest increase in the period under review, with almost two index points.

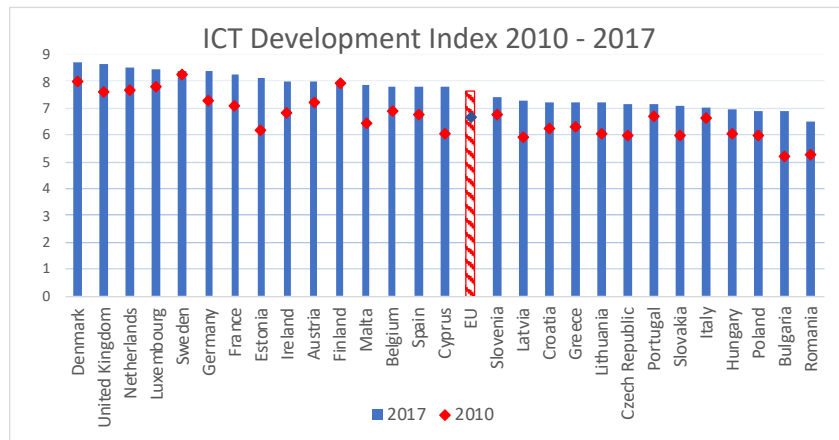


Figure 9 ICT Development Index 2010, 2017 – EU members states. Source ICT development index

Successful countries that are at the forefront of Industry 4.0 index and measurement indicators are Denmark Netherlands, Sweden, Germany and Finland. Estonia has great potential, which is rapidly moving in the monitored indicators and thus taking advantage of the opportunities arising from Industry 4.0. Countries that show above-average performance in terms of innovation potential, digitalization, ICT and R&D spending achieve high level of labor productivity expressed in Figure 4, in terms of GDP per capita.

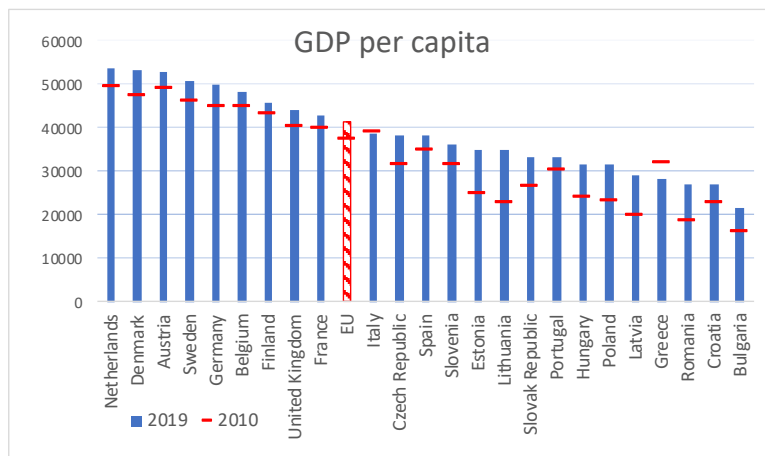


Figure 10 GDP per capita – 2010, 2019. Source OECD

The same is true for competitiveness, which we quantify through the Global Competitiveness Index published annually by the World Economic Forum. The countries with the highest degree of competitiveness expressed in the form of an index are countries with a high degree of innovation potential, a high degree of digitalization, a quality R&D environment and ICT infrastructure. Where among the EU countries the Netherlands has the most competitive economy in 2019, which reached the 4th place in the global measurement with an index value of 83.4. Germany placed 7th place with a value of 81.8. On the contrary, the worst country among the EU countries is Croatia, which reached 53rd place.

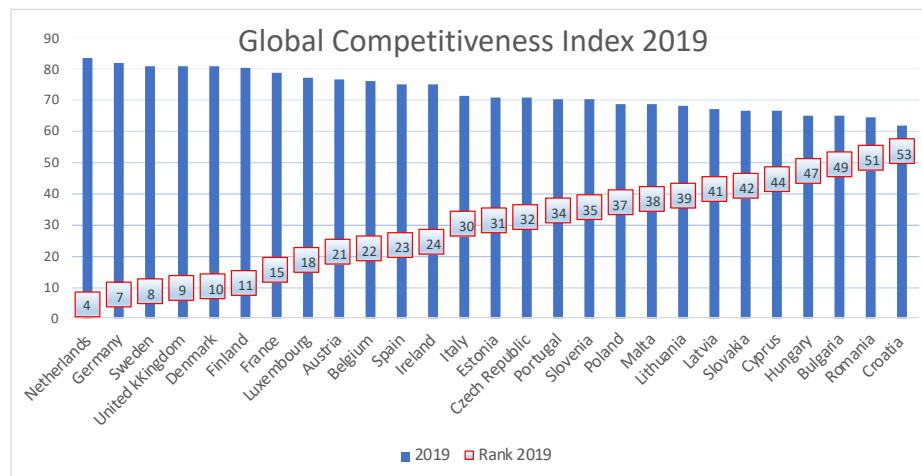


Figure 11 *Global Competitiveness Index 2019*. Source GCI 2019

5. Conclusions

With every industrial revolution, there are risk that can uncover the well- established functioning of economic and production processes, change the way we behave and live. On the other hand, they create opportunities, which if used, can bring several positive effects for the country. With a theoretical overview of the development of industrial revolutions, we have identified the main risks and opportunities associated with them. The ongoing industrial revolution, known as Industry 4.0 brings many opportunities. Properly captured, the country can rapidly increase its productivity, competitiveness and take advantage of all the positive externalities for the economy. The readiness of the economy for Industry 4.0 is characterized mainly by the quality of the internet and digital environment. In this article, we analyzed the basic indicators that are closely related to Industry 4.0. these are innovation potential, digitalization, research and development and information and communication technologies. A functioning and strong innovation system combined with one of the necessary prerequisites for effective involvement in Industry 4.0 processes. Digitalization and ICT represent an important display of intangible resp. digital manifestation of the industrial revolution.

The aim of this article was to provide a comparative view of EU member states through Industry 4.0 indicators based on available analytical and statistical data. By expressing basic indicators, in the form of index, we have shown countries that are successful in seizing the opportunities of Industry 4.0. These countries thus achieve a high level of labor productivity and competitiveness. In the case of successful countries, there is a strong penetration of new generation technologies into the economy and the everyday life of the population. They show a high innovation potential for efficient digitalization, a quality research and development system and developed information and communication technology infrastructure.

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Distance Learning in the Shadow of Pandemic Covid - 19 in Greece

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Abstract

In general, pandemics start at some point in time, progress in duration and space, with increasing intensity cause individual and collective crises and move towards closure. They exert pressure on societies and their structures, causing crises. After the Second World War, the normality of people around the world was no longer disturbed until the pandemic Covid-19. Then at the speed of light, the pandemic Covid-19 traveled to Greece from the city of Wuhan at the beginning of March 2020, disrupting our regularity and the operation of our social systems. This was followed by the forced closure of all educational institutions in the country at all levels. E-learning which was developed years ago was the most powerful weapon to support distance education which was the mediating link between educators and students in order to continue the learning process and reduce the cost and impact of the pandemic on educational events. Greece continued its educational work with the slogan "We learn at home". The aim of the present study is to investigate the effects of distance education mainly on children during the first period of their confinement at home.

Keywords: E - Learning, Distance Learning, Covid - 19 Pandemic.

Introduction

This study aims to explore elements and parameters of educational matters in a historically critical period for the world due to the Covid 19 pandemic that has dramatically and rapidly changed the lives of all of us. This huge social trauma, the health crisis, has also caused a social, economic and psychological crisis in all societies, disrupting structures and systems. Education could not remain unaffected. In order to continue functioning, it used e-learning and distance education. Through this new learning form, aspects and parameters emerged that aim to assist with educational activities in order to minimize obstacles and difficulties, on both sides (teachers and students) and to promote, as well as possible, the learning process.

1. The COVID- 19 pandemic

Since the Second World War, the normalcy of the people in the world has not been disturbed, and never since then have educational institutions of all levels been faced with such disruption, such challenges of time and pressure, to maintain the quality of learning and of educational interaction. According to Rosenberg (1989), in general, " epidemics start at a moment in time, move to a scene limited in space and duration, follow a graphic line of increasing revealing intensity, move to a crisis of individual and collective character and then move towards closure". They exert forces of pressure and tension on societies and their structures causing social crises (Jones, 2020). Epidemics are a huge ordeal for humans by implanting " heterophobia, exclusion and entrenchment " (Komis, 2005). According to experts, a strong and widespread epidemic of unexpected intensity is defined as a "pandemic" when it spreads over a large geographical area, has increased movement, transmission, with contaminating elements and during which the population can barely withstand and avoid the infection (McMillen, 2020: 14-20). However, the meaning of the term "pandemic", derived from "pan" and "municipality", in the whole population, shows exactly the rapid spread of the infectious disease throughout the population of an area (Babinotis, 2002).

According to experts a strong and widespread epidemic of unexpected intensity is defined as "a pandemic" when it spreads over a large geographical area, has increased activity in movement, transmission and infectious elements, and during which few of the

respective population can withstand and avoid infection. Each pandemic as a particular health and social phenomenon affects and is influenced by social conditions, is characterized by terror, fear and panic and causes a number of unprecedented changes (McMillen, 2020: 14-20). During each pandemic the pressures exerted on people psychosomatically are strong, increasing stress, pressure and reducing the mood for sociability, contact and interaction (Giavrimis & Nikolaou, 2020). The pandemic puts to the test the resilience and limits of all the structures of a society and inevitably of education as well.

The new pandemic facing humanity at the beginning of the 21st century, traveling at the speed of light from the city of Wuhan, came to Greece in early March 2020 causing disturbances in our daily lives, structures and social systems, disrupting our normalcy. All students of all levels forcibly stopped their educational activities and were confronted with distance education. The internet became the field on which the whole cognitive spectrum is now based. Collaborative actions and projects, a series of seminars, lectures and platforms play a leading role in this unexpectedly difficult time period at all stages of life. The resilience of teachers and students has been sorely tested, as well as individual commitment to the success of educational activity through a process where the main goal is autonomous study and individual initiative. Students are asked to develop their individual skills and collaborative behaviors and teachers to become facilitators of the whole process. Distance education in the light of the extraordinary, the necessary, the unprepared, the unplanned, with both sides of the learning process (trainers-trainees) locked at home, highlighting inequalities, weaknesses, peculiarities, needs. The pandemic Covid - 19 now equates with a social and educational gamble, a challenge but also an invitation to meet the social changes that have occurred (Dietrich et. al., 2020).

2. E – Learning

By the early 1990s digital data had become synonymous with the social and educational field and the distance between the digital and industrial age was a fact. The 21st century is the century of the explosion and speed of digital breakthroughs in all areas of our society such as work, economy, education, culture. New requirements, new priorities, new educational objectives invade learning and e-learning daily and e - learning or electronic learning is part of the 'environment' of educational images of the 21st century (Tzimogiannis, 2017: 30). According to Dichanz (2001, as cited Sofos-Kron, 2010: 134-5) the term e - learning involves two approaches: a). the organizational and technological framework in which the material to be taught in schools, colleges is available electronically (on line) and b). the etymological - psychological context that touches on the "substantial dimension and reality" through which the basis of the learning is given from beginning to end, with its focal point Humans and the live - long term brainstorming process and quest for knowledge which is a feature of human nature. In many cases the term " networked learning " is used and the interactions of those taking part in the learning situations may or may not be synchronized.

E-learning is the complement of "interconnection" and "asynchronous communication" enriched with the elements of interdependent and flexible learning in new learning environments. It is therefore a new "educational platform" around which primary, secondary and tertiary education, professional knowledge and skills, various learning associations and various networks are united. Thus e-learning becomes "innovative", subversive and " disruptive " in the sense of the new introduction of things. It revolves around two axes, the technological that touches on digital media and their capabilities and the learning that is equivalent to the planning and implementation of educational material. Digital technologies and the world of pedagogical thinking come together in order to expand existing knowledge and reproduce new, more innovative ones (Tzimogiannis, 2017: 28). It is a "sharing" of knowledge that aims to develop and cultivate individuals without gaps and interruptions, to contribute to interactive situations, to lead to progress and to incorporate new ideas and knowledge (Goodyear, 2001, as cited in Tzimogiannis, 2017: 31). E-learning is based on five axes that build its value: a) . Learning is "an active building process" that interprets and explains things and situations b). Learning is associated with human "behavior" c). E-learning is a way of "social negotiation of ideas" d). Learning is "framed" e). The knowledge is shared on various networks to meet the cognitive demands (Tzimogiannis, 2017: 136). E- learning proves to be a security measure, a powerful empowerment tool and continuation of educational activity and the most powerful knowledge diffusion mechanism, now with the pandemic, more necessary than ever (Murphy, 2020).

2.1 Categories of E-Learning

Asynchronous Learning

In asynchronous learning, the two parties, teachers and students, make use of asynchronous technologies in order to achieve the communication framework and the interaction without a simultaneous connection. The student is in a position of flexibility with room for maneuver to connect with the electronic environment whenever and as long as he can and comfortably manage the

educational material he holds. The e-mail (electronic communication messages) and the forum (discussion) were the first asynchronous media (Tzimogiannis, 2017: 46).

Synchronous Learning

In synchronous learning the connected parties, students and teachers, use modern forms of technology and the connection concerns real time during which knowledge, views and ideas are exchanged between the teacher and the students or the trainees. All this interaction takes place in a well-organized context. The most basic tools of synchronous learning and knowledge exchange are video conferencing (videoconference) and the so-called chat rooms, in instant conversations in the context of electronic application (Tzimogiannis, 2017: 46). The most important element of these two forms, synchronous and asynchronous learning, is the fact that they can and do store what the participants have to offer and that the "history" introduced by the design of asynchronous environments is preserved. Blogs, wikis, e-portfolios, social media, content sharing applications (media sharing) are the Web application 2.0 (Web 2.0) which changed the way of communication, access and sharing of knowledge and learning material. In the technological world, new digital tools have been added, such as those of mobile services and devices (Twitter etc.) which assist in modern discussions and the transfer of educational resources and which lead to the expansion of application limits. According to Tzimogiannis (2017: 47) there are four "generations" of e-learning:

A . Content Distribution in which educational material is provided by the web framework. The teacher provides guidelines and instructions for reading but also delivery of assignments in the context of students' obligations for personal study and effort.

B. Interactive learning in which various electronic platforms and frameworks that process and manage the cognitive material operate, not to provide educational material but to form the ground for the development of dialogue and communication between the teacher and the students. The aim is to carry out individual or collective activity.

C. Self-directed and collaborative learning in which broad collaborative efforts are promoted by new internet systems which thus promotes independent (autonomous) and personal -self-directed learning.

D. Open educational environments that have limited learning methods and frameworks in which they exploit "open material resources" and "knowledge networks" of the internet.

3. Distance Education

Many and varied definitions with many elements in common interpret distance education from the same perspective. The different definitions are compiled each time according to what those involved need but also according to how the transmitters of information are adjusted each time, in the means as well as the educational concerns (Lionarakis, 2006). The D. Garrison - D. Shale (1987, as cited in Keegan, 2001: 67), consider that the prerequisite for distance learning is the "two-way communication between teachers and students in the accomplishment of the learning process." The contribution of technology is crucial. Moore (1990 and Portway- C. Lane (1994), as cited in Keegan, 2001: 68), said that distance education is defined as the result of technology-assisted educational processes by educators and students geographically at a distance.

They defined distance education according to three of their own parameters necessary for the complete application of this method (Lionarakis, 2006: 5):

- Distance learning indicates that there is no single structure and there are no interruptions.
- Distance learning must be two-way in order to facilitate and support, in it must be used by both parties.
- Distance education does not exist without the help of technology.

Lionarakis (2006: 2) in an effort to define the term "distance education" said the axis on which this specific form of education is developed and carried out is not purely pedagogical but "it is a complete fragile subsystem, which feeds the institutional, organizational and operational applications of distance education". He even emphasized its non-one-dimensional form and the multiple applications it has, as well as the opportunities it provides to adapt to different contexts each time. Since 1998, Lionarakis (1998) has promoted the concept of "diversity" as an evolution of the elements of the definitions that had been established in the field of science until then. It somehow went beyond the definition of "physical distance of transmitter and some receivers". According to Keegan (2001: 68) distance education has six (6) basics characteristics:

- 1). The "distance" between teacher and students, something that shapes it completely differently compared to traditional, live teaching.

- 2). The main role of the educational organization and its activities in the realization of the learning process (planning, preparation, support of those who receive learning through educational material) something that suggests organization.
- 3). The application of means of technology in order to transfer printed educational material.
- 4). The establishment of a form of communication according to which there is communicative dialogue, learning and a general benefit to the educational interaction.
- 5). Occasional meetings of the students, for didactic and social reasons, something that implies that the learning process is done individually and not necessarily in groups.
- 6). Technical modernization as a new form of distance education.

4. Distance Education and Covid- 19 Pandemic in Greece

"Distance education" is synonymous with the absence of the teacher as a physical entity from any educational organization to which he belongs and for which he is obliged to design learning material, in a textbook with the help of digital media and online tools. It is multifaceted learning with elements and behaviors of flexibility and interaction (Lionarakis, 2001: 2). Distance education comes to invade socially as an innovation - a product of a "creative catastrophe" according to Joseph Alois Schumpeter (1942, as cited Tzifopoulos, 2020). The points of difference of distance education during the Covid -19 pandemic from the well-designed and planned online learning experience, is on the one hand the urgency of the situation and on the other hand the speed of knowledge transfer and transition to the internet in stressful conditions. It is a "redefined" teaching that will require different, advanced skills and literacy (Tzifopoulos, 2020: 12). The transfer of the learning experience to the internet is by nature flexible and improvised but needs the support of specialists and special designs in order for online education or "learning" or "teaching" to be effective (Hodges et. al., 2020: 3). To be defined as qualitative and effective in its objectives, online education should involve a plan for the lessons, which in the exceptional pandemic was impossible to achieve. Extraordinary online learning can in no way recreate the "educational ecosystem" that exists in live learning but is a rapid, temporary, special support for continuing learning (Hodges et. al., 2020: 6). "High technology needs high touch" according to Naisbitt (1984, as cited Tzifopoulos , 2020 : 9) which means that it is not possible to automate education through digital media, nor of course can technology replace the role of the teacher. But in order for an educator to be effective and properly equipped to meet the new demands he must first have been properly trained in the field of technology. The fact that teachers today send learning material to the platforms does not imply their professional enrichment with knowledge, nor their identification with digital training, nor with their contribution to the improvement of the digital personality of the people they teach (Tzifopoulos, 2020: 11).

In Greece, the health crisis of Covid 19 caused the closure of all educational institutions in the country at all levels and the exact number of students affected by this closure is 2,204,532, at both public and private schools (Athens-Macedonian News Agency, 2020, Unesco, 2020a, as indicated in Papazoglou, Koutouzis , 2020). Greece with the slogan "We learn at home" continued the educational process by means of distance education. Greek students began to use digital tools as something innovative in educational activities in order to continue their learning. The announcement of the closure of Greek schools was made on March 10 and the Ministry of Education of the Greek Government ordered the launch of courses through Digital Platforms and electronic learning tools to students of all levels. Synchronous learning has become part of the daily friction and contact between students and teachers, with collaboration and interaction, but asynchronous learning has also been an important aid for teachers as well as platforms and digital tools such as Interactive School Books (<http://ebooks.edu.gr/new/>), the Fotodentro repository (<http://photodentro.edu.gr/agregator/>), the Aesop educational scripting platform (<http://aesop.iep.edu.gr/Educational>) television programs (<http://www.edutv.gr/>) and the free digital library (<https://www.ebooks4greeks.gr/>) becoming a powerful "weapon" in their hands. The wealth of digital tools adopts-includes various e-learning videos that help students with extra knowledge and answers to questions and which can be referred to at any time of the day. In addition, the digital platforms, e - class, e-me and Open Classes, enabled the students to completely follow their lessons. The Greek schools adapted to the sudden and pressing change of data due to the Covid -19 pandemic with 112,872 teachers creating innovative digital classrooms. A total of 532.251 digital lessons and 36 million minutes of modern digital lessons were realized. In the field of asynchronous learning, 1.099.421 students and 193,062 teachers put their stamp on the Greek School Network electronically, according to data from the Ministry of Education of Greece (Papazoglou, Koutouzis, 2020).

From the basic data of the first research that was published (Lakasas, 2020) and with a large enough number of students and teachers as a sample (2,548 students and 963 public school teachers) black colors and elements of negativity dominate the way high school students experience this new educational scene. The absence of the school as an organization but also as a means of socialization, contact, socializing and interaction was and is intense. Through E- learning it is impossible to meet the demands of

students and teachers and to equate with the dynamics of live teaching. Particular problems and difficulties related to insufficient equipment, poor connections, mainly through the platform We - Bex, the inadequate training of teachers and their difficulty in directing the lesson correctly, as well as a pronounced lack of the elements of live teaching, mainly its interaction and immediacy. A consequence of the discouragement of students to attend online lessons and their lack of attention, meant that consistently less than 60% of students attended classes, according to the survey data. In the same axis, the anxiety and dissatisfaction of the students with all the realistic-practical but also the psychological difficulties that they experienced, intensified their negative mood and attitude to distance education. During this period, the lack of training of teachers in technology came to light, which does not facilitate educational matters at the special time of pandemic Covid-19 (Lakasas, 2021). According to the above research, what alleviated the difficulties and anxieties of the students throughout the teaching and distance learning, was cooperation and mutual support, elements that form the structure of e-learning, in distance learning.

However, one should not overlook the fact that distance learning was and remains necessary throughout the phase of the pandemic. The possibility of learning from home, learning without moving outside, without physical presence in the classroom, safeguards human existence and protects the health of children and their families. On the other hand, one cannot help but worry about the findings that report sadness, anxiety and loneliness, or loneliness of the person in front of the computer screen, of so many children and teachers who spend a lot of time every day missing the immediacy and creativity of live teaching. The "small school rituals" of the children, which once provided them with liveliness, friendly moods, an appetite for study and communication, have been replaced by anger, sadness in their faces and souls and anguish for the end of this unprecedented situation (Nikolaou, 2020).

It is also noteworthy that the parents are busy with their own issues and their own work needs, which are also met through the computer from home, leaving the students alone with themselves to continue the path of distance learning. It is judged that the impact of this new form of learning will have an effect on every student in the future at a social, psychological and scientific level (Giavrimis & Nikolaou, 2020).

Conclusions

Learning is a multifactorial phenomenon and result that occurs through changes in the way one expresses or is able to express oneself or comes about as a product of exercise/practice or multiple experiences. The interpretation of learning as a concept is approached through various criteria such as behavior, "change for ability in behavior", the duration of the above phenomenon in time, learning as a product of various empirical situations or through exercise experiences. In the scientific field, the impact of the learning process on the personality of each individual is studied separately and not necessarily in the level of cognitive abilities and performance. A number of components build the framework around which the concept of Learning moves. The fact that learning is a personal matter, is attained through cognitive processes and contributes to molding the personality profile of each individual means biological maturity and a personal level of preparedness are prerequisites, not only the specific environment and the control exerted in the learning process. Learning is a process with goals and is identified by the way in which it transforms human behavior and attitudes toward things (Dimou, 2001: 30-33).

However, in the situation we are experiencing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been found from the research so far that for learning, interaction and social interaction in a specific space and time are necessary. And this proves once again that man as a social being needs daily social contact and interaction with his peers, because without them socialization cannot take place and at the same time man cannot evolve mentally and intellectually. For this reason, it is advisable to thoroughly investigate the effect of social isolation, especially on children in the short and long term, in order to immerse ourselves in those elements of the child's development that will be lagging behind after the end of the pandemic, and to contribute to overcoming them.

On the other hand, there is a risk that after the end of the pandemic, distance education and e-learning will be introduced, a form of education that perpetuates educational inequalities, excluding students from education. Without rejecting all forms of e-learning, the risk of learning inequalities due to the introduction of emergency e-learning is highlighted. Therefore, in the field of distance education, the issue of access to education for all students always remains open and topical, especially when broadband is not available to all students and when the digital divide is the new form of inequality in the western world. (Weeden & Cornwell, 2020; Farhadi, 2019).

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Social Sciences and Intercultural Education in the Greek Primary School: The case of Social and Political Education

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Abstract

The present paper focused on drawing attention to the importance and the role of the social sciences in the diffusion of the values of Intercultural Education at school and in the wider social environment. More specifically, what was explored was the possibility of promoting and accepting the basic principles of Intercultural Education through the subject of Social and Political Education taught in Greek primary schools. Therefore, an attempt was made both to highlight the importance of the subject of Social and Political Education as one of the most important subjects of social sciences in Primary school, although in the school schedule it occupies a position that degrades and marginalizes it, and to present the basic principles and values of Intercultural Education, such as empathy, solidarity, intercultural respect and the anti-ethnocentric / anti-nationalist way of thinking and their connection with basic units of the subject of Social and Political Education. The method used was content analysis and the findings demonstrated the importance and usefulness of the subject of Social and Political Education for the cultivation and promotion of the principles of Intercultural Education.

Keywords: Social Sciences, Intercultural Education, Social and Political Education, Greek Primary School.

1. Introduction

Multiculturalism, namely the coexistence of people belonging to different cultural groups (ethnic, linguistic, religious, etc.) in the same geographical area, being one of the main features of modern societies, has, inevitably, reflected their composition. This social reality could not leave intact the school, which, as a social creation, has also become multicultural. This situation results in new demands by both teachers and the school as a whole, since the school is responsible for cultivating these values that will make students interculturally competent, able to live in harmony with their culturally different classmates today and their fellow citizens in the near future. Therefore, it is clear that the need of society itself, as well as of the school, for the smooth coexistence of culturally different citizens and students, respectively, “imposed” the development of that scientific pedagogical field, which focuses on the study, research and application of the specific “mission”, namely intercultural education.

However, with regard to the issue discussed in this paper, it is important, first of all, to determine the answer to a very specific question: what are these values, the fostering of which can promote intercultural education and make students “interculturally competent”? In answering this question, we could say that the main goal and the core, or otherwise the essence, of intercultural education has been consolidated. Helmut Essinger (1988, pp. 58-72; 1990, pp. 22-31) has contributed crucially in the effort to highlight the basic values and principles of intercultural education as follows: a) **empathy education**: the individual learns to understand others and see problems in their own light, b) **education for solidarity**: the individual co-constructs collective consciousness, neglecting social inequalities and injustices and transcending the boundaries of race and state, c) **education for intercultural respect**: openness to others is an invitation to participate in our culture, thus, cultivating respect for cultural diversity, d) **anti-ethnocentric/anti-nationalist way of thinking**: the individual tries to get rid of national stereotypes and prejudices that prevent him from communicating with other peoples. In conclusion, we would say that the basic values that intercultural education must cultivate in order to make students “interculturally competent” are empathy, solidarity, intercultural respect and the anti-ethnocentric/anti-nationalist way of thinking.

At this point, another reasonable question, which may be addressed more urgently by the teachers of the practice, is “how”: how the school will be able to “work” in the direction of cultivating the above values. Thus, as it may be clear, intercultural education

must provide an effective answer to this question, insofar as it is not just a discourse for otherness, but also a practice for managing it. For this very reason, in the present research we will attempt to investigate the textbooks of Social and Political Education of the 5th and 6th grade of the Greek Primary School, in order to determine whether these textbooks, apart from their mission to provide the students with political knowledge, can be used in the direction of instilling the “intercultural values” mentioned above. However, why do we choose to explore the subject of Social and Political Education and, moreover, why textbooks?

In trying to answer the first question, we would like to point out the crucial role of social science subjects in general, as well as their teaching in education - and especially in the first level of education, which concerns us more here. Social sciences, because of their purpose, which is none other than the study and interpretation -among other things- of social phenomena, can “illuminate” the causes of migration, asylum, etc. That is, they are able to explain and highlight in the best way possible the reasons that led some people flee their homelands. In this way, by initially giving students the “overview”, interpreting the “why” of a situation, we have already contributed to the “representation” they have created for it, so that we can then cultivate their attitudes and beliefs in the desired direction. We, therefore, consider it clear that social sciences are the appropriate “ground” in, through and on which the values of empathy, solidarity, intercultural respect and anti-ethnocentrism/anti-nationalist way of thinking can emerge and be cultivated. As far as the subject of Social and Political Education in particular is concerned, it is worth noting, first of all, the fact that it is a subject that is quite marginalized in the Greek educational system. This is not a random position, but is based on the fact that it is taught in the last two grades of elementary school (5th and 6th grade), for one hour a week. This degradation of a subject, which is responsible for the education of the citizen, but also in general with the social and political integration of the students, is at least problematic. Thus, in the context of the forthcoming renewal of the study programs, it is more than necessary to reconsider its position in the timetable. In addition, based on all the above, it would be extremely interesting to investigate whether the principles of intercultural education, such as the cultivation of empathy, education for solidarity, intercultural respect and against the ethnocentric/nationalist way of thinking (Essinger, 1988, pp. 58-72; 1990, pp. 22-31) are sufficiently disseminated in the textbooks of Social and Political Education.

Regarding the “why” we have specifically chosen the textbooks of this course as the subject of our research, it is worth noting that the content of the textbooks of this subject has been the subject of research many times so far (see Nikolaou, Papa, & Papa, 2020; Karakatsani, 2004; Mousena, 2004; Ntagiakis, 2000; Kontogiannopoulou-Polydoridi, 1995). That is why we would prefer to emphasize “why school textbooks?” as a whole. Thus, it is worth noting that textbooks are a particularly important tool of school education (see Johnsen, 1993; Olechowski, 1995), as in addition to being a means of teaching and learning, they are considered, especially in the context of the Marxist (critical) tradition, to be a political product, one whose content expresses and disseminates the dominant ideology and aims at its reproduction (see Bonidis, 2009; Neumann et al., 1974; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). Therefore, it is clear that this is not a neutral and, if we are allowed to put it that way, a “passive” means, but, on the contrary, an “active” body of knowledge shaping the students’ personalities. In this light, we consider that the answer to “why textbooks?” is sufficiently obvious and clear.

Aims and Objectives

The main purpose of our research, therefore, is to investigate the subject of Social and Political Education of the Greek Primary School, and in particular the textbooks, in order to determine whether they can be used in the direction of the cultivation of “intercultural” principles of empathy, solidarity, intercultural respect and opposition to ethnocentric/nationalist way of thinking, as formulated by Helmut Essinger (1988, pp. 58-72; 1990, pp. 22-31). Starting from the above reflection, our research focuses on the role the subject of Social and Political Education in the Greek Primary School plays or could play. As discussed earlier, in our opinion, the subject of Social and Political Education is sidelined from the school timetable. Indeed, if we take into account both its importance and its usefulness in constructing future citizens identity, then the magnitude of this degradation seems to be, potentially, extremely detrimental to both the students themselves and to society as a whole.

Based on all the above, the main research questions that arise in the context of this research are the following:

- a) Do Social and Political Education textbooks promote the principles of intercultural education?
- b) What is the position of the subject of Social and Political Education in the Greek Primary School?

2. Methodology

The research methodology chosen, taking into account similar research of school textbooks (see Fragoudaki, 1979; Achlis, 1983; Meek, 1988; Bonidis & Chontolidou, 1997; Xochellis et al., 2000; Wong, 2002; Nikolaou, 2009), is content analysis using the interpretive method.

In particular, given that our research focuses on whether the textbooks of Social and Political Education promote intercultural values, concepts that have a rich conceptual content and their meaning is not limited to the use of the word, these cannot be rendered

solely quantitatively, only in the light of the frequency of their appearance as specific words in the text. It is clear that, although the categories are to some extent given (e.g., empathy, solidarity, etc.), the process of matching “content” with “category” becomes a demanding and thorough interpretive process. Therefore, the interpretation of the results is necessary in order to achieve the fullest possible investigation of the content of the textbooks (see Bonidis, 2009).

At this point, it is worth elaborating on the role and importance of the concept of “interpretive” for content analysis, before proceeding to the presentation of the technical parts of the process. Referring briefly to the interpretive method, which was extensively developed during the period of Humanism and the Renaissance (see Wulf, 1978) and, during the past two centuries (19th - 20th), was developed and evolved further mainly by Schleiermacher (1959), Dilthey (1961, 1990) and Gadamer (1982, 1990, 1998), “can be used both in the analysis of the text and in the analysis of its illustration” (Bonidis, 2004, p. 88). Therefore, we understand that the analysis of content, in the light of interpretation, concerns not only the written text, but also the images. In addition, what we should point out is that understanding, as Dilthey (1961) has argued, is a process which, starting from the points outside (expression, directly sensory data) seeks to recognize something inside (meaning, significance). In particular, we focus on the following: “In this context, ‘signs’ means the ‘objects of interpretation’ and the externalizations of life in duration and fixed form (dauernd fixierte Lebensausserungen), in which the human spirit has been ‘objectified’. Thus, through the process of comprehension, starting from the outside of the point, the expression, the given in the sense, its internal meaning, its meaning is recognized” (Bonidis, 2004, p. 85).

Having completed the above theoretical presentation of the way we work in the context of this research, we conclude the part of “methodology” referring to the way of processing our material. Initially, regarding the textbook for the 5th grade of Primary School, this was examined per **Unit**, and each **Unit** per *chapter*. The specific school textbook consists of four (4) units, the first (A) consisting of eight (8) chapters, the second (B) of four (4) chapters, the third (C) of five (5) chapters, while the fourth (D) and last unit of four (4) chapters. Additionally, the textbook for the 6th grade of the Primary School was examined by thematic units, each consisting of units, while each unit was further divided into chapters. More specifically, the 1st thematic unit consists of four (4) units, in which the first unit consists of three (3) chapters, the second of two (2) chapters, as well as the third, while the fourth consisted of five (5) chapters. The 2nd thematic unit consists of two units, with the first unit consisting of five (5) chapters and the second unit of four (4). The 3rd thematic unit consists of two (2) units, with the first unit consisting of three (3) chapters and the second unit of two (2), while, finally, the 4th thematic unit also consists of two (2) units, where both the first and the second consist of two (2) chapters each.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of the research of the textbooks of Social and Political Education of the Greek Primary School, are presented discussing whether it is possible, through this subject, to cultivate the values of intercultural education (empathy, solidarity, intercultural respect, anti-ethnocentric/anti-nationalist way of thinking). The paper presents the results per unit and per chapter, first the school textbook for the 5th grade and then that for the 6th grade.

5th Grade School Textbook

In “**Unit A**”, entitled: “We are all citizens”, students are invited to discuss the groups to which they belong, the rights and obligations they have as members, to explore the idea of the citizen, throughout time, as well as the rights and obligations arising from it, to learn what nation and state is and how to become a citizen of the Greek state. They are expected to discuss and express views about the citizen in the world today, analyze the problems faced by people in Greece and elsewhere, while, finally, suggest ways to involve students themselves in solving these problems (Florou, Stefanopoulos, & Christopoulou, 2008, p. 7). *Chapter 1*, entitled “Where do I belong?”, refers to the family, to the school, but also to the Eastern Orthodox Church, as well as, in general, to the social role of religion, with explicit reference, however, to the fact that everyone has the right to choose their religion, a right which is preserved in all civilized societies (Ibid., pp. 8-9). There is, therefore, a clear reference to respect for the choice of the “Other”. In *Chapter 2*, entitled: “Names are more than words...”, the text deals with the meaning of “citizenship” and cites the case of Khalil, who, although born in Egypt, lives in Greece and acquired Greek citizenship through a process which is presented to students (Ibid., p. 13). Hence, an introduction to both the concept of “citizenship” and that of the “citizen” is made. Moving on to *Chapter 3*, entitled: “We all live together in Greece”, students come in contact with the “life stories” of two adults, a native and a foreigner (Ibid., p. 16), with central point of reference the rights and obligations of citizens, while in *Chapter 5*, entitled: “The state and the nation” (Ibid., pp. 23-27), reference is made to the relationship of the state with the citizens, as well as to the possibilities of cooperation between people even if they belong to different nations. In *Chapter 6*, entitled: “We are citizens of Greece, Europe and the world”, students come in contact with the concept of “European Union”, what being a European citizen means, the common elements they share European citizens, etc. (Ibid., pp. 28-33).

In “Unit B”, entitled: “We have rights and obligations”, students discuss their rights and the obligations they entail, they get to know the important declarations that guarantee all people’s rights, they explore how human rights are protected in our country, Greece, while, finally, they contact and discuss with the “Ombudsman for Children” who protects children's rights (Ibid., p. 45). In particular, in *Chapter 1*, entitled: “We know our rights, we undertake our obligations”, students discuss the dialectical relationship between rights and obligations, and asked to comment if they believe that different people have different needs (Ibid., p. 47). Here, students, through empathy, can enter the place of the “Other”, to find that people's needs are common, despite any external - and/or internal - elements that differentiate them. *Chapter 2*, entitled: “We defend our rights”, refers both to the French Revolution of 1789, in order to show that rights were not always guaranteed to the people, but were won through struggle and sacrifice (Ibid., p. 49). Reference is also made to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by all member states of the United Nations on 10/12/1948, which sets out the basic rights that all people should have, such as the right to life, liberty, freedom of thought, religion, food and residence (Ibid.). Finally, students participate in the role-playing games suggested by the textbook. They have to take the place of a child, a parent or a Unicef representative (Ibid., p. 52), a clear intention of cultivating students' empathy. In *Chapter 3*, entitled: “The Greek state protects our rights”, reference is made to the individual, social and political rights, which concern all Greek citizens, with particular reference to the rights of foreigners, which are protected by international conventions, but also in Article 5 of the Constitution, which prohibits discrimination based on racial, linguistic or religious criteria (Ibid., p. 53). At this point, it is clear that solidarity towards the “Other”, intercultural respect, as well as anti-ethnocentrism and anti-nationalism are preferred, since there is definite indication that the Greek Constitution itself does not discriminate against the “different Other”.

In “Unit C”, entitled: “We live in democracy”, students learn what democracy is and what its differences are from dictatorship, get to know the government of our country and the functions of the Greek Parliament, and, finally, explore and think about democracy in everyday life, at school, in the neighborhood, in our country (Ibid., p. 61). In *Chapter 1*, entitled: “What is democracy?”, *Chapter 2*, entitled: “The democratic state of Greece”, as well as *Chapter 3*, entitled: “How does the Greek Parliament work”, students familiarise with the concept of “democracy”, its differences from dictatorship, investigate the structure and functioning of the democratic state in Greece, as well as the mode of operation of the Greek Parliament (Ibid., pp. 62-70). In addition, in *Chapter 4*, entitled: “Democracy in everyday life”, students are taught that democracy is inherent in our daily behavior, in relationships between people (Ibid., p. 71). Students are given a case in which there are students in a classroom whose attitude towards their foreign classmates is negative, since the latter have just come from other countries and therefore speak a different language, have a different religion, as well as different habits (Ibid., p. 72). As an antidote to such divisive and racist attitudes, democratic behavior is proposed, which favors the harmonious coexistence of people, regardless of cultural characteristics, in a democratic society. Thus, in this context, both empathy and solidarity with the “different Others” are cultivated, as well as the value of intercultural respect as an inherent quality and characteristic of democracy itself.

In “Unit D”, which is the last Unit of the 5th grade textbook, entitled: “We participate in decision making”, students explore how decisions on either personal issues or in associations and the local community are made, reflect on and discuss the concept of “active citizen”. Particularly important for the essence of this Unit is *Chapter 3*, entitled: “The active citizen decides, participates, acts”, which consolidates all the knowledge that students have received, from the beginning of the textbook to this point, as the importance of dialogue in decision-making, the importance of exchanging views, the right and obligation of the active citizen to co-decide, participate and act in social life is highlighted. Active participation, of course, concerns all citizens, regardless of particular cultural characteristics, a fact which once again credits the defense of intercultural respect against ethnocentrism and intolerance.

In conclusion, having made the above analysis, we believe that so far it has become clear that the textbook of Social and Political Education for the 5th grade of the Greek Primary School has elements of interculturalism, respect for the “different Other” and is inspired by a clear anti-nationalism and anti-ethnocentrism intention. The concept of “citizen” could be said to be at the core of the textbook editing and for this reason can be used as a link for the effort of smooth coexistence between natives and foreigners, both at school and in society.

6th Grade School Textbook

1st Thematic Unit: The individual and society

Unit A: The family

Unit A of the 1st Thematic Unit is dedicated to the Family, the roles and rights of family members, as well as the difficulties that the family is facing today. In particular, in *Chapter 1*, entitled: “The family, its members and the relations between them”, the family is approached as a social institution in which ties and relations are created between members, who face difficulties of everyday life (Nikolaou, Vatsitsi, Daniilidou, & Paschaliori, 2010, p. 7). In *Chapter 2*, entitled: “Roles, rights and obligations of family members” (Ibid., P. 10), there is an extensive reference to the dialectic of rights - obligations, while in *Chapter 3*, entitled: “Difficulties faced by the family”, the emphasis is given to the difficult situations that a family has to deal with, pointing out, at the same time, ways of coping with these difficulties, the most important of which is the “willingness to cooperate”, “discussion”, “understand and help

each other” (Ibid., p. 14). Given the above, it is clear that the emphasis is on empathy and solidarity, which should govern the members of a family, as the connecting link of the family is “unity” and “care and love for each other”.

Unit B: The educational system

Turning now to **Unit B**, this focuses on the education system, which, as it has already been stated, is the way in which the state provides the goods of education and training to its citizens. It is organized under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Religions in stages, each having its own administration, while its aim is to provide equal learning opportunities to all children (Ibid., p. 16). In particular, in *Chapter 1*, entitled: “The education system and the school”, students are taught the structure and levels of education in our country (Ibid., pp. 17-18). In addition, a comparative presentation is made, as the education systems of India, Germany and the USA are presented in the form of examples (Ibid., pp. 18-19). In this way, students are given the opportunity to acquire a vision of education that goes beyond the ethnocentric perception. Also, in *Chapter 2*, entitled: “A school for all”, students read the stories of Maria, an 11-year-old Roma, and Alia, a 10-year-old Albanian student who have recently come to Greece (Ibid., p. 21). In addition, important elements of article 16 (paragraph 2) of the Constitution, which refers to education in Greece, are presented and students come in contact with the operation and importance of the Departments of Integration, Reception Classes and Special Schools (Ibid.). Therefore, the textbook provides the elements that the teacher can use in an intercultural direction, as the examples given urge students' reflection on specific issues aiming at them not only developing empathy but performing in a perspective that approaches the unconditional acceptance of the different.

Unit C: The church

With regard to **Unit C**, the role of the Church is presented, which constitutes the congregation of the Christian faith, has a specific organization, with hierarchically structured degrees of priesthood, and performs spiritual, humanitarian and social work (Ibid., p. 23). In particular, in *Chapter 1*, entitled: “The Church of Greece”, an introduction is made to the structure, organization and operation of the Church, as well as to the basic points of the Christian faith (Ibid., pp. 24-25), while *Chapter 2*, entitled: “Other religions in Greece”, refers, on the one hand, to the fact that the Eastern Orthodox Church is the predominant religion in Greece and, on the other hand, clarifies the principle of secularism as enshrined in the Constitution of Greece (Ibid., p. 26). Here, we can again distinguish an intercultural direction, in the form of respect for the different religious beliefs of the “Other”.

-2nd Thematic Unit: The individual and the state

Unit A: State and regime

Unit A of the 2nd Thematic Unit is dedicated to the state and the state of Greece. More specifically, in *Chapter 1*, entitled: “The state”, an introduction is made to the concept of “state”, as well as to the three basic elements that it includes: the land, the people and the power (Ibid., P. 42). In *Chapter 2*, entitled: “The state and its forms”, the various forms of government are presented, such as democracy, monarchy and oligarchy (Ibid., pp. 43-44), while *Chapter 3*, entitled: “The Democratic State”, refers to ancient Greece, from where democracy derives, with the emphasis, however, put to the structure of democracy in Greece, with parallel references to other forms of democracy (Ibid., pp. 45-46). Finally, reference is made to the basic values of democracy, such as freedom and equality (Ibid., p. 47). In *Chapter 4*, entitled: “The functions of state power”, there is a reference and extensive approach to the three basic powers, namely the Legislative, Executive and Judicial powers (Ibid., pp. 48-50), while, finally, in *Chapter 5*, entitled: “The Greek Constitution”, the Constitution is presented, highlighting its function and importance (Ibid., p. 51-52). Based on what has been presented so far, it is clear that **Unit A** of the 2nd Thematic Unit promotes intercultural values, and in particular respect for the “Other”, with a characteristic point in *Chapter 3*, where special attention is drawn to the freedom and equality of people, regardless of cultural or other characteristics or traits, as well as anti-ethnocentrism, since analyses always take into account the conditions prevailing in other countries.

Unit B: The State and the citizen

In **Unit B** what is explicitly demonstrated is the concept of “citizen”, who is a member of society, has rights and obligations and supports the state politically, economically and socially (Ibid., P. 53). In particular, in *Chapter 1*, entitled: “Citizens' rights and obligations”, students come into contact with the “categories” of rights, and, in particular, with individual and social rights, as well as with political and copyright (Ibid., pp. 54-55). In addition, the obligations are mentioned, as dialectically interdependent with the rights, with the “respect for the society as a whole” (Ibid., p. 55) having a primary role among the most important obligations of the citizen. There is also a rough reference to the phenomenon of racism and its definition is given (Ibid., p. 56), in order for students to come into a first contact with this phenomenon. In *Chapter 2*, entitled: “Copyright”, special mention is made to intellectual property, noting that in a democratic society intellectual property must be respected, as well as the rules that protect the work of the creator and ensure fair cooperation (Ibid., p. 57). It is clear, then, that respect for the “Other” is once again a priority in a democratic society. Finally, *Chapter 3*, entitled: “Civil defense and Civil protection”, develops the ways in which the organized state protects citizens

from all kinds of dangers, natural or not, as well as the services responsible for it (Ibid., pp. 58-60), while *Chapter 4*, entitled: “Citizen information”, presents the role of the media in a democratic society, as well as the importance of all citizens' right to express themselves freely and learn what is happening in the world (Ibid., pp. 61-62). Here, it is clear that *Chapter 3* highlights the necessity and importance of solidarity realised by state mechanisms towards citizens, while *Chapter 4* promotes the idea of equality and equality of citizens, regardless of cultural characteristics, towards information and freedom of expression.

-3rd Thematic Unit: The individual and the European Union

Unit A: The European Union and Greece

Unit A of the 3rd Thematic Unit concerns the relationship of the European Union with Greece. In particular, *Chapter 1*, entitled: “The European Union: its institutions and functions”, presents the role, importance and structure of the European Union, the 27 member states (as formed by 2008), the role of the European Parliament, the European Court of Justice, and the European Commission (Ibid., pp. 65-68). In addition, its position is given, as the following is stated: “The **European Union** as a union of states relies on the cooperation of its members on common issues, such as **peace, economic and social prosperity, security, democracy, stability, justice and solidarity**. The main institutions of the European Union are the **European Parliament, the Council of Ministers of the European Union, the European Council, the European Commission and the European Court of Justice**” (Ibid., p. 68). It is, therefore, clear that an attempt is made to highlight the core values of the European Union, including the values of intercultural education (e.g. solidarity). Also, in *Chapter 2*, entitled: “Greece in the European Union”, the relations of Greece with Europe are mentioned, as well as the history of the accession of Greece to the Union (Ibid., p. 69), while, finally, *Chapter 3*, entitled “Relations between the Member States of the European Union”, emphasizes the values of **participation and cooperation**, which should be governed by the Member States of the European Union (Ibid., p. 72). One, can easily realize that the basic principles of the European Union, promoted by the textbook, aim at the harmonious coexistence of the Member States, taking distances from ethnocentric and elitist views, giving prominence to democratic values.

Unit B: European citizens

Unit B presents the concept of the “European citizen”, who is a citizen of the European Union, has rights and obligations and unites with other European citizens through their common history and common social and cultural roots (Ibid., p. 73). More specifically, *Chapter 1*, entitled: “Peoples and cultures of the European Union”, introduces the different cultures that make up the European Union, as well as the different languages spoken by the peoples of the European Union (Ibid., pp. 74-75). Here, perhaps more than anywhere else, the intercultural relations that govern the coexistence of the various Member States of the European Union are highlighted. The emergence of commonalities between cultures, if not left exclusively there, can be a prime opportunity and occasion for intercultural understanding. The highlighting of the common matrix, the dialectically related past of the peoples and the co-formation of the individual cultures give a significant impetus to intercultural respect and anti-ethnocentrism and anti-nationalism, as well as to the effort to understand the “Other” through one's own understanding. At the same time, feelings of solidarity and will for joint coexistence and creation are being developed. At the end of **Unit B**, in *Chapter 2*, entitled: “Rights and obligations of European citizens”, the “**Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union**” is highlighted, as it contains the rights of European citizens (Ibid., p. 76). However, reiterating the dialectical relationship between rights and obligations, the textbook makes the following reference: “But in order to enjoy these rights, the citizens of the European Union also have obligations. Such obligations, for example, are the respect of the culture, language, history and traditions of each people of any country of the European Union, the observance of the laws and special rules that apply in each state, etc.” (Ibid.). Here, the intercultural trend of the European Union becomes quite obvious. The textbook, apparently, does not fail to refer to it. Thus, proposing the position of the European Union, which considers it an obligation of European citizens to respect the culture, language, history and traditions of each people, especially among the Member States, highlights the opportunity given to the teacher to work interculturally. Possibility, of course, which is triggered by the content of the textbook itself.

-4th Thematic Unit: The individual and the International Community

Unit A: International Organizations and Organizations

In **Unit A** of the 4th Thematic Unit, reference is made to the International Organizations and Organizations. First, there is an introduction to the concept of the “International Community”, which faces global problems, defends human rights and creates international organizations and organizations (Ibid., p. 80). In particular, *Chapter 1*, entitled: “Global Problems”, lists some of the most difficult problems people around the world face, namely lack of drinking water, refugees, lack of medical care, hunger, war, etc. (Ibid., p. 81). Here the students' attempt to cultivate empathy is evident, as they are asked to put themselves in the shoes of others, to broaden their horizons beyond their immediate (own) environment, and to reflect on the various challenges a part of humanity is confronting daily. *Chapter 2*, entitled: “The role of international organizations”, states that “the main task of these organizations is to safeguard international **peace and security**” (Ibid., p. 83). Finally, reference is made to Article 1 of the **Charter**

of the United Nations, as well as a rough approach to the role and contribution to the International Community of Unesco, Unicef, Action Aid, Médecins Sans Frontières, WWF and the Red Cross (Ibid., pp. 84, 86). In conclusion, we would say that the key point in the presentation of the International Organizations here, and what is attempted to emerge from the textbook, is nothing more than the **solidarity** realised by all the aforementioned organizations. Undoubtedly, the value of solidarity is at their heart, and in an anti-nationalist way, as the international community provides its services wherever and whenever the need arises, regardless of cultural characteristics. Therefore, we would say that in **Unit A**, one of the main purposes, as it follows from the textbook itself, is to promote and cultivate the values of **empathy, solidarity and anti-ethnocentrism**, which indicates intercultural orientation of this **Unit** as well.

Unit B: Human Rights

In **Unit B** the emphasis is on human rights. Specifically, in *Chapter 1*, entitled: “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, the topic is introduced highlighting the need to protect human **life, dignity, security, freedom, education, equal protection by law**, especially after the two world wars (Ibid., p. 89). Thus, special reference is made to the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** “by which states recognized the individual, cultural, economic, political and social rights of man” (Ibid.). “In this way”, the textbook states, “it is ensured that human rights are respected by all states and apply to all citizens, regardless of their gender, language, origin or religion” (Ibid.). Here, again, it is stated firmly that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has common goals and objectives with the intercultural approach. After all, it is no coincidence that intercultural education emphasizes human rights and the need to safeguard them. In this case, again, the teacher is given the opportunity to work in an intercultural direction, imparting the values of empathy, solidarity, intercultural respect and anti-ethnocentrism/anti-nationalism to students. *Chapter 2* of **Unit B**, entitled: “The Rights of the Child”, students learn about 54-article Unicef **Convention on the Rights of the Child**, which was introduced in 1990 and includes the basic rights of the child, namely the right to **life, housing, food and medicine**, the right to **be safe, not to be abused, neglected, exploited**, the **right to education and play**, and the right to **think and express their opinions freely** (Ibid., p. 93). The emphasis on the rights of the child, in addition to the obvious, which is nothing more than the **need** to respect and ensure them for children around the world, also involves an implicit and “dark” aspect, which lies in the fact that in many areas children's rights are violated or, even worse, are non-existent. Thus, students, in order to realize the essence, usefulness and necessity of the Rights of the Child, must go beyond the narrow confines of the ethnocentric perception and develop their empathic ability, in order to be able to understand what exactly is the necessity of existence and guarantee of these rights. Therefore, it is again clear that the teacher is given the opportunity to work in the light of intercultural education, a fact which could only have a positive contribution and outcome.

4. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to investigate whether the subject of Social and Political Education of the Greek Primary School can favor and promote the cultivation of the core values that intercultural education seeks to promote, namely **empathy, solidarity, intercultural respect** and the **anti-ethnocentric/anti-nationalist way of thinking**. For this purpose, we chose to proceed with the analysis of the content of the textbooks of the given course. In addition, our intentions include the effort to evaluate the position of the subject of Social and Political Education in the Greek school, since its position in the timetable (1 hour/week) indicates its marginalization.

As regards the results of the analysis of the 5th Grade textbook, it is clear that there are elements in it that can be used to fulfill the aims and aspirations of intercultural education. More specifically, in **Unit A**, with the clear references to the respect of the choices of the “Other” as well as to the possibilities of cooperation between people belonging in different nations, emphasizing the common elements shared by European citizens, students are urged to develop both intercultural respect and solidarity towards different peoples. In addition, highlighting the common elements shared by European citizens contributes to the development of an anti-ethnocentric way of thinking. Then, in **Unit B** special emphasis is given to the approach of the “Other” through empathy, as students are challenged to take the place of the “Other” to find that people's needs are common, despite their differences. Furthermore, through the promotion of rights, which concern all citizens, regardless of cultural characteristics, one is protected by both international conventions and Article 5 of the Constitution, which prohibits discrimination based on racial, linguistic or religious criteria, favors solidarity towards the “Other”, intercultural respect, as well as anti-ethnocentrism and anti-nationalism. In **Unit C** democratic behavior is proposed as the antithesis of separatist and racist attitudes, as it favors the harmonious coexistence of people in a democratic society. Thus, the cultivation of both empathy and solidarity with the “different Others” is promoted as well as intercultural respect as inherent qualities and characteristics of democracy itself. Finally, **Unit D** highlights the importance of dialogue in decision-making, the importance of exchange of views, the right and obligation of the active citizen to co-decide, participate and act in social life. Active participation, precisely because it concerns all citizens regardless of particular characteristics, can be used to defend intercultural respect for ethnocentrism and intolerance.

As far as the **6th Grade** textbook is concerned, we can say that this is orientated in the same direction. In particular, the 1st Thematic Unit, firstly, promotes empathy and solidarity through the presentation of the relationships that govern a family; secondly, comparative presentation of different educational systems is made, among which the Greek one, giving students the opportunity to gain a perspective, both for education and in general, with a view to escaping the ethnocentric conception; finally, reference is made to the principle of secularism, enshrined in the Constitution, having at its core the different religious beliefs of the “Other” promotes intercultural respect. In addition, in the 2nd Thematic Unit, the reference to the basic values of democracy (freedom, equality), as well as the emphasis that in a democratic society fair cooperation between people must be ensured, since this is a priority, makes it possible to cultivate respect for the “Other”, while the reference to the obligation of the state to protect its citizens from any danger, through state mechanisms, highlights solidarity as the central pillar of democracy, while emphasizing its necessity. In the 3rd Thematic Unit, through highlighting the role of the European Union and its institutions, solidarity emerges as a key pillar of the European Union, while emphasis is placed on the values of participation and cooperation, by which the Member States are governed, these identify the harmonious coexistence of the Member States as the goal of the European Union, thus, featuring its anti-ethnocentric character. In addition, the emergence of commonalities between cultures can be the occasion for the cultivation of intercultural understanding, favoring its cultivation in intercultural respect, anti-ethnocentrism and anti-nationalism, as well as the effort to understand the “Other” through its own side (empathy). Finally, in the 4th Thematic Unit, an attempt is made to cultivate the students' empathy, since they are asked to expand the horizon of their world beyond the directly given environment and to ask about the various situations a part of humanity is facing daily (lack of drinking water, refugees, hunger, wars, etc.) and put themselves in that position. Also, the special reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which concerns all people regardless of gender, language, origin or religion, enables the teacher to work in an intercultural direction, cultivating the values of empathy, solidarity, intercultural respect and anti-ethnocentrism/anti-nationalism. The same is true of the reference to the Rights of the Child, as students, in order to realize the essence, usefulness and necessity of the Rights of the Child, must go beyond the narrow confines of the ethnocentric perception and develop their empathy, so as to be able to understand exactly what the need is for these rights to exist and be guaranteed.

Studying the above, two main conclusions can be drawn, which also answer the research questions of our research. Firstly, the subject of Social and Political Education of the Greek Primary School **promotes and fosters the basic values of intercultural education**, namely **empathy, solidarity, intercultural respect** and the **anti-ethnocentric/anti-nationalist way of thinking to students**. Secondly, it is necessary to review the role of the Social and Political Education subject in the Primary School timetable. As it emerged from all content analysis, the subject contributes to the social and political integration of students, introduces them to the world of democracy and democratic society, dialogue and participation in decisions. Therefore, it becomes necessary to re-evaluate its place in the school curriculum, taking into account that the longer it is marginalized, the greater the damage caused to society as a whole by the lack of preparation that students receive for their future integration into Civil Society.

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Ethnographic Artifacts and Visual Art: An Anthropological Approach

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Abstract

Anthropological interest in cultural diversity is the most important point behind the creation of large collections of artifacts from all regions of the world. Usually these artifacts are stored and exhibited in museums built specifically for this purpose. Especially these collected works can be in complete contrast with the works of art that define the national heritage of a particular region in ethnographic collections. But since artworks are a visual document that sheds light on the cultural life of the era, the preservation and presentation of these works is a very important issue for all countries. The unique culture of each region of the world has been lived by the people for centuries and passed on to the next generations. At the same time, the works of the societies, which have a rich cultural feature and transferred to the next generations, have become important works that serve as documents and evidence today. These local artifacts, which have rich cultural characteristics, are ethnographic artifacts that are also used in daily life, such as clothes, fabrics, textiles, rosaries, tombs, kitchen tools.

This study aims to highlight the subtle differences that exist between cultural heritage, ethnographic artifacts, popular traditions, national collections, and high arts. These classifications are placed side by side to understand the contextual perceptions associated with various cultural productions from different parts of the world. The study will focus especially on ethnographic artifacts, visual arts with an anthropological approach.

Keywords: Visual art, Clothing culture, Ethnographic artifacts, Anthropological approach, Culture

1. Introduction

Art, along with the existence of art as a social concept, its ontology stands side by side with all the realities of life. The existence of art is meaningful in terms of showing the dimensions of the relationship between human and society. These dimensions are one of the dynamics that establish the link between art and culture.

As our communication styles change with the globalization process, our lifestyles also change and culture gains a different perspective. The fact that modernism does not care about culture, in other words, culture is not one of the most vital concepts, is interpreted together with the development of modern cultural anthropology and the understanding of primitivism at the beginning of the 20th century (Eagleton, 2011: 22-41).

Ethnography, which is a social and cultural branch, is anthropologically based and directly affects human behavior and exists in the social environment in which it develops. It focuses on the definition of cultural elements such as social structure, values, norms, and social functioning. According to the Polish anthropologist Malinowski, the main task of ethnography is "to catch the point of view of the native in his relationship with life, to grasp his world with his view." (Kottak, 2001: 36) Therefore, when conducting an ethnographic research, it is important to look from the "native's" point of view. While defining ethnographic culture is based on direct observation, it becomes inevitable that ethnographers have to spend some time in that society in order to understand the culture of a society.

The concept of culture has formed the basis of anthropology for a long time. Social anthropology is a subject covered by fields such as history, sociology and ethnology-ethnography. Cultural anthropology, also known as socio-cultural anthropology, examines

society, culture, similarities and differences. The definition of culture can be made not only in a social context but also in the context of the intellectual and the formation processes of culture.

The first approach to the anthropological theory of art determines an intercultural and even a transcultural aesthetic thought (Geertz, 2007: 108-109).

Unlike other social scientists, anthropologists examine art both in form (reliance on ethnographic method) and content (focus on marginalized and exotic societies). The difference lies here. Anthropologists almost always use ethnography as a research methodology (Lansing, 1991).

Ethnography, which focuses on the concept of culture, is the oldest tradition of qualitative research, focusing on the individual and group through in-depth interviews and large-scale observation, in which the researcher enters daily life through most participatory observation (Creswell, 2013). Among the many types of qualitative research, ethnography is the type of research most familiar to researchers. The history of ethnography can be traced back to 19th century anthropologists dealing with participatory observation 'in the field'.

In this study, cultural heritage and ethnographic artifacts are especially emphasized, and ethnographic artifacts and visual arts are focused with an anthropological approach. This study also sought answers to the following questions.

- What is the difference between art and artifact in the aesthetic discourse?
- What is the quality of artifacts in places where they are presented as "popular culture"?
- What are the implications that determine the differentiation the high art of ethnographic and folk art?

2. Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage is a treasure that tells members of a society about their common past and strengthens the feelings of solidarity and unity between them. The continuity of the experiences and traditions that people have accumulated throughout history ensures the correct establishment of the future.

All societies contribute to world culture. For this reason, it is very important to protect and respect all cultural heritage with national laws and international agreements.

Conservation of cultural heritage has become one of the issues of interest to states and societies today. This issue has entered the working areas of bodies such as the European Union and the Council of Europe, and many international regulations and practices have been implemented for this purpose.

Culture, which is formed around the social life, traditions and customs of a society, leaves legacies from its own period to the future with concrete and intangible facts in the historical flow. Societies are defined by identity around their historical and cultural heritage. Therefore, societies that protect their heritage can build solid foundations in order to sustain their existence in the future.

Cultural resources are formed as a result of human interaction with the natural environment (Pearson and Sullivan, 1995: 4). One of these sources is material culture resources. Material culture covers what the period and society left tangible. Understanding of art, craft objects, clothing, various hand tools, technological advances, architectural material culture can be exemplified.

Cultural heritage is not limited to concrete objects that we see and touch. There are also abstract elements that contribute to the formation of this heritage: such as traditions passed down from generation to generation within a society, oral history, performing arts, practices in society, traditional craft, ceremonies, knowledge and skills (Gökçalp, 2018).

As Graham and Howard (2008: 6) point out, cultural heritage is not a legacy of the past, because not every cultural element of the past is remembered or kept alive as cultural heritage. Which cultural elements will be chosen as heritage and in which contexts the real meanings and values will be attributed to them are shaped in line with current socio-political demands and reasons (Graham et al., 2000).

The processes of creating cultural heritage are therefore always exclusive and complex (Byrne, 2009: 230).

Conservation of cultural heritage, on the other hand, is related to the concept of importance or value. Because people protect what they care about or value. In this sense, the question arises, why do we protect cultural heritage, or in other words why cultural

heritage is important. The most important thing to remember about cultural heritage is that it belongs to a society that values it. Cultural heritage is for the people, otherwise there would be no interest or use against it.

The cultural heritage created by movable and immovable cultural assets is one of the most concrete and most expressive documents that convey information about past life to us. Many important information such as the life styles, relationships, aesthetic perceptions, level of building and decoration art of the previous generations, etc. can only be obtained through structures and objects. For this reason, these witnesses of the past should be protected based on many reasons such as learning the past, benefiting from their experiences, taking examples for the future and passing them on to future generations as a document.

Cultural heritage expressing identity, having historical or scientific value, aesthetic and artistic value and economic value are among the reasons for its protection by researchers (Emre, 2020: 33).

Cultural heritage assets that human beings care about for various reasons, want to protect and pass on to future generations are faced with various problems of deterioration, wear and extinction. It is possible to divide these problems into two as natural factors and human factors.

The destruction of cultural heritage is an irreversible process. Because cultural heritage has lived for hundreds or even thousands of years, people may think that these beings will live forever. In fact, whether it be a monument or an object, all material assets that make up our cultural heritage are destroyed as a result of chemical, biological and physical changes that occur over time.

For all these reasons, it is aimed to introduce the cultural and natural assets with universal values that are accepted as the common heritage of all humanity to the world, to create awareness in the society that will protect the said universal heritage and to ensure the necessary cooperation for the survival of cultural and natural values that have been destroyed for various reasons. For this purpose, within the scope of UNESCO's 17 General Conference held in Paris between 17 October-21 November 1972, the "Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage" was accepted on 16 November 1972.

3. Ethnographic Artifacts

Ethnography is a branch of science that studies material remains revealed by human societies. It is also occasionally confused with the word folklore. Folklore mostly covers the customs and traditions and oral tradition of the society in question. In contrast, ethnography is directly concerned with the remains of material culture. It has a wide range from clothing to items used.

Ethnography basically has an anthropological origin. The idea of documenting the lives of primitive societies has been seen since the 18th century. However, especially after the end of colonialism, those doing research in these places turned to their own countries and started to examine the cultural products or folkloric features of their own people.

Museums are indicators of the economic, cultural, social and artistic formation and development of nations. These institutions, which transfer the traces of societies to the present, have undertaken the task of being the memories of nations that connect their past and their future (Anmaç, 2005: 14).

Ethnography museums are responsible for systematically collecting, classifying and displaying items related to the material and spiritual cultural items of the people living in that country, shedding light on the cultural history of a country (Öztürk, 1994: 172). The creation of ethnographic museums took place during the long period of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, which saw the construction and crystallization of national identities (Barringer and Flynn, 1998; Aronsson and Elgenius, 2011). As open and closed environments created to protect and exhibit the cultural values of the past in a certain order, museums today identify and register all movable and immovable structures, objects, documents, monuments and ruins related to cultural assets, ensure their protection, evaluate them and present them to the service of humanity. Whether dating back to thousands of years or hundreds of years ago, artifacts of a certain length of history, about to disappear, are preserved in museums and presented to people. Museums, which are indispensable for the development and education of society, with various purposes for science, art and social life; It is established and developed by states, institutions and even individuals (Artun, 2004: 147).

We can define four studies about the role of art in contemporary museum studies, especially in ethnographic museums. The first study is that modernism and primitiveness look at parallel museum histories (Errington, 1998; Miller, 1991). The second study deals with the ways artists work with historical collections to inculcate some form of institutional and often indigenous criticism (Phillips, 2011; Kramer, 2004; Clifford, 1997). The third study asks how the practice of art can provide an alternative methodology for building knowledge in museums. This approach understands art and anthropology as parallel methods for understanding the world that produces cultural knowledge through practices of cultural representation (Schneider and Wright, 2010). The fourth study draws on

actor network theory's interventions in museum work (Macdonald and Basu, 2007). This new focus combines art with a broader perspective of the ways in which objects and people form cultural knowledge together in museums.

Although we live in an increasingly globalized world, ethnographic museums still seem to emphasize the theme of “*origin and naturalness*” when displaying their collections and non-Western cultures are still seen as “*more ethnographic than others*” (Dahl and Stade, 2000: 157-158).

The installations and the objects exhibited in museums reflect the culture of the period and the society, as well as gaining partnerships with an antique object. In order to understand and define a society, it is necessary to consider the cultural images of that society.

In museums that follow a certain representation style that includes ethnographic elements: folk clothes, clothing items, woven products such as carpets, rugs and sacks, weaving tools used in daily life, wooden doors, cabinets, etc. architectural decoration elements, ornaments, jewelery, household items, agricultural tools, ceramics, weapons, musical instruments, transportation vehicles, etc. such as tools and objects take their place as important ethnographic artifacts (Vukov, 2011).

Especially when the textile and weaving collections in ethnography museums are considered in terms of the exhibition program, under the title of intangible cultural heritage, the social importance of the weaving and textile industry as a source of livelihood is emphasized, while the stages of weaving provide a knowledge.

Ethnographic artifacts consisting of items used in daily life such as clothes, embroidery, fabrics, silver artifacts and rosary have an important place in the exhibited collections. Saddlebags, socks and columns, needlework and crochet pouches complementing these works are complementary parts of embroidery and fabric collections. In particular, embroidery and other works reflecting all the subtleties of the art of embroidery turned into rich collections over time. The rosary collections, which contain a large number of samples made of organic and inorganic materials, take their place as important artifacts made from amber wood to rosewood, ivory to coral, gold and emeralds, amber and pearls.



Photo 1: Atatürk House Ethnography Museum (Photo by authors, Denizli-2016)

Clothing as old as human history; it is part of the people's national culture. Clothing shapes many factors such as the geographical area where people live, cultural environment, social structure and belief. The clothing culture shaped by the effect of all these factors constitutes the most important part of the cultural wealth of the people. Every region and every province of the world has created its own unique local clothing culture, and this culture has been kept alive by the people for centuries.

There are areas where human productions, which are seen as the concrete projection of culture, become specialized. In these special areas, handicrafts and craft objects are important elements of the period. Hand embroidery reveals many things in terms of ethnographic representation and has a very important place.

When looking at hand embroidery, which is a product of the craft and an ethnographic image; It describes the person who produces with naivety, simplicity and aesthetic concern. It is directly proportional to the creator's creation of his own representations, getting to know himself, owning and forming his own forms. The harmony between them and the object that represents them emerges with the process. The encounter, creation, hiding and use of the individual became a means to bring this process closer to him and created a form of expression.



Photo 2: Folk-Art Museum (Muzeul De Arta Populara) Constanta-Romania (Photo by authors, 2019)

Considering the artifacts, it is seen that a razor blade is as important as an archaeological statue at this point. It is possible to learn the cleaning methods, metalworking technologies and aesthetic understanding of the men of the culture to which it belongs, from a razor blade, as well as learning the anatomy knowledge of that period, material processing techniques, aesthetics, clothing styles, etc. from a sculpture. The needlework on a cheesecloth is not only of a folkloric value as a handicraft but is also important with its messages. The lace of the cheesecloth worn by the bride angry with her mother-in-law is different from the lace worn by a young girl to convey her love to a teenager. In addition to these social-cultural information, the use of cotton or silk yarn describes the local production type and economy, the type of dye used in the region, the fora or dyeing techniques, the weaving style and pattern of the cheesecloth, the local production style and aesthetic qualities.



Photo 3: Folk-Art Museum (Muzeul De Arta Populara) Constanta-Romania (Photo by authors, 2019)

Since these ethnographic artifacts that have rich cultural characteristics are no longer used in today's conditions, studies should be conducted to research, document, record, conserve and preserve these rich cultural heritage and make better promotion to future generations.

In this context, every nation must know and protect its cultural values that exist and sustain itself. Among these values; ethnographic works have an important place. Ethnologists, anthropologists, historians and educators in these fields should conduct more studies to introduce the values of the society better and guide future generations. In this way, the damage done by cultural imperialism, which causes negative changes on culture, can be reduced. The work to be done should be started by first examining the samples kept alive by the public or exhibited in museums.

4. Anthropological Perspective on Ethnographic Artifacts and Visual Arts

The anthropological perspective refers to a certain (professional) way of looking at, perceiving, understanding and explaining cultural phenomena, or, in general, to offer an analysis from the "human" or "human" data of a phenomenon, viewed in its particularity. As part of the socio-cultural reality.

An anthropologist looks at a certain way - what is happening (gestures, human interaction, clothing, ornaments, colors, objects); perceives in a certain way - the setting, conditions and context in which they take place (open space, passers-by, cars; ethnicity, age, sex of the participants); seeks to understand in a comprehensive way what is happening (seeks motivations, reasons, symbols, interests of this behavior, and does not judge it by aesthetic criteria, ethics or a culture different from the context in which it is performed); seeks to explain in a rational way (logical, legal, according to some theories) why these people do what they do.

In this way we can find out about different cultures the following informations:

- Relationships between them, their community, their culture, relationships with institutions, authorities or passers-by,
- The relations of age, gender, hierarchy, power, belonging to a certain group - which exist between them; how they are constructed, the meaning and consequences of these relationships,

- The way they make their objects and clothes, the way they list and repeat their rituals and dances and the references they give them in the “ethnic” culture from which they come and the urban culture in which they perform,
- The ways, strategies they follow to perform in such a way, in such a place, and according to the conditions and interests to which they are subject,
- The political interests (identity of the ethnic group, assertion and gaining of rights, protest against the authorities) that they pursue,
- The economic interests they pursue (to gain from the direct payment of an "ethno" street art, from the sale of "specific" products to the ethnic group, of attraction for tourists visiting an area),
- How they are manipulated by the authorities, the possibility that they consider them as a national image, suitable to express themselves in the center of the capital; the possibility that they use them as an attraction for tourists looking for "national folklore "or" the authenticity of their civilization; the possibility that they may use them to indicate that the rights and culture of ethnic groups are valued and promoted),
- The way in which they are interpellated by passers-by (the possibility for them to admonish them, to want to take pictures with them, to suggest new ways of expression and the use of new objects, ideas, actions...).

In the same time, the anthropological perspective is also a critical perspective on culture and the social world. Cultural descriptions, social projects, or programs to improve life and humanity have often failed in history precisely because they lacked an anthropological perspective:

- To balance them with real conditions of life, behavior, expectations, values, possibilities, etc. of a certain human group (eg regional development programs, social policies, etc.),
- To go through an applied critique and evaluate their ideological dimensions (nationalist, totalitarian, patriarchal, colonialist, capitalist, communist, environmentalist, pacifist, liberal, feminist, progressive, etc.),
- To indicate the degree of utopia, of non-adherence to the human reality of such projects (eg: traditionalism, passeism, the island of the happy, racism, eugenics, cloning, etc.).

Finally, the anthropological perspective:

- Involves a holistic view (all aspects of a topic are followed, as we talked above),
- Involves a comparative view (these aspects and the theme itself involve comparisons with other aspects and themes from other regions, other times, respectively having other conditions of existence),
- It involves an in-depth analysis (it is not satisfied with finding, exemplifying or classifying a phenomenon but seeks to discover its motivations and meanings of its manifestation).

After 1960, and after 1990 more obviously, the language of cultural anthropology (Mesoudi, Whiten and Laland, 2006) tends to unify under the influence of American or Anglo-American anthropology (Danowitz and Videon, 2010). In this context, English terms increasingly tend, as in other fields, to become canonical in the anthropological scientific language globally.

We can also see that the gradual abandonment of the terms "ethnology", "ethnography", "folklore", with all that they meant, and their replacement or (more frequently) the attempt to integrate them into the more generous term of cultural anthropology. For example, terms such as "Volkerkunde" or "ethnology" tend to be used only to indicate a local specific (with their history), related to these names; respectively to gain the acceptance of some sciences associated with some ideologies or political regimes that have instrumented them (as in the case of Romanian ethnology and folklore).

However, a relative distinction is maintained between cultural anthropology as a complex, integrative social science, etc. and ethnography as meaning the descriptive part (occurring of a methodology) of anthropology. At the same time, it tends to extend the meaning of the term ethnography to (a) other fields (meaning the descriptive part or subject to a qualitative research methodology): sociology, cultural studies, political science, pedagogy, fine arts and performing arts (Askew, 2007), media and communication, photography (Odo, 2013), development studies or power relations (from schools, hospitals, prisons, etc.), respectively to (b) the reflective-critical dimension of anthropology (emphasizing the fact that the anthropologist reflects on what he does in his position as ethnographer), c) the visual approach on the cultural heritage (Roberts, 2007).

The approach of the ethnographic studies is different from country to country. For example, in the Romanian scientific space, these meanings of ethnography are not current, the ethnological methodology being much more associated with a "folklore perspective" (Vlahovici-Jones, 2014), and finally with a textual, literary vision of culture. In the history of social sciences in Romania, however, there is a methodological perspective much closer to modern ethnography (Cornis-Pope and Hedeşan, 2007), the monographic method, which was not adopted by Romanian ethnological science.

Visual Anthropology and Ethnography

Visual anthropology (Tomaselli and Shepperson, 1997) is a subdomain of social anthropology that refers, in part, to the study and production of ethnographic photography, film and, since the mid-1990s, new environments. More recently it has been used by historians of science and visual culture. Although sometimes erroneously homogenized with ethnographic film, Visual Anthropology encompasses much more, including the anthropological study of all visual representations, such as dance and other types of performance, museums and archiving, all visual arts, and production. and media reception. Stories and analyzes of representations from many cultures are part of Visual Anthropology: research topics include sand paintings, tattoos, sculptures and reliefs, cave paintings, scrimshaws, jewelry, hieroglyphs, paintings and photographs (Pink, 2011).

Even before the advent of anthropology as an academic discipline in the 1880s, ethnologists used photography as a research tool. Anthropologists and non-anthropologists have done much of this work in the spirit of saving ethnography or attempts to record for posterity the ways of life of societies presumed doomed to extinction (see for reference the activity of Edward Sheriff Curtis (DeWall, 1982), an American photographer and ethnologist whose work focused on the American West and Native Americans).



Photo 4: Princess Angeline (Duwamish) in an 1896 photo gravure by Curtis Edward S. Curtis, photo source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Kikisoblu_\(%22Princess_Angeline%22\)_of_the_Duwamish,_1896.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Kikisoblu_(%22Princess_Angeline%22)_of_the_Duwamish,_1896.jpg)

The history of making anthropological film is intertwined with that of non-fiction and documentary film, although ethnofiction (Sjöberg, 2008) can be considered a real subgenre of ethnographic film. Some of the first ethnographic films were made with Lumière equipment (Promenades des Éléphants à Phnom Penh, 1901). Robert Flaherty, probably best known for his films about the lives of Arctic peoples (Nanook of the North, 1922), became a filmmaker in 1913 when his supervisor suggested that he take a camera and equipment with him on an expedition north. Flaherty focused on Inuit "traditional" ways of life, omitting, with few exceptions, signs of modernity among his film subjects (even to the point of refusing to use a rifle to help kill a walrus, his informants had jumped into while filming them, according to Barnouw, this scene entered Nanook where it served as evidence of their "clean" culture). This pattern would persist in many ethnographic films to follow (see Robert Gardner's Dead Birds as an example).

In the United States, Visual Anthropology found its first acquisition in an academic setting in 1958, with the creation of the Center for Film Studies at Harvard's Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnology. In the United Kingdom, the Granada Center for Visual Anthropology at the University of Manchester was set up in 1987 to offer anthropology and film courses to MA, MPhil and PhD students and whose graduates have produced more than 300 films to date.

Currently, the Society for Visual Anthropology (SVA) represents the subfield in the United States as a section of the American Anthropological Association, AAA.

In the United States, ethnographic films are screened each year at the Margaret Mead Film Festival, as well as at the AAA Annual Film and Media Festival. In Europe, ethnographic films are presented at the Royal Anthropological Institute Film Festival in Great Britain, Jean Rouch Film Festival in France and Ethnocineca in Austria. Dozens of other international festivals are regularly listed in the Newsletter of the Nordic Anthropological Film Association [NAFA].

Conclusion

From the first field explorations, anthropologists called for visual support to strengthen the veracity of cultural practices and social dynamics documented on the basis of field notes, later transformed into extensive ethnographic texts.

In a discipline dominated by textual ethnographic productions, visual anthropology has timidly and only recently consolidated a key position.

The pioneers of visual anthropology have in recent decades extracted cameras and video cameras from the position of passive recording instruments and used them in more participatory and reflective ways.

A large part of the bibliography in this field follow and explore the classic debates about the policies and regimes of representation, objectivity, power relations in different cultures.

What we compare today in a culture/society - habits, behaviors, institutions - cannot be treated as isolated from their contexts, but as an integral part of a system of relationships. Starting from the description (ethnography), continuing with the analysis of an institution, of a habit, of a behavior (ethnology), we seek to progressively discover what Lévi-Strauss calls *unconscious structure* which can be spotted in the form of a different disposition in another institution, in a different habit, in a different behavior. In other words, the terms of the comparison do not reside only in the reality of the empirical facts themselves, but in systems of relations that the researcher constructs as operative hypotheses starting from the facts.

The differences are not picked up as such by the ethnologist: confronted with each other and with what is ultimately compared, a system of them results, that is, of structured ensembles, thought and exposed by the researcher in the field of anthropology.

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Knowledge and Attitudes of General Population Towards the Children Beggars

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Abstract

Children beggars are common phenomena in bigger cities in Republic of North Macedonia. The mobile team of the In4Child Project has identified 34 children beggars on the streets in Bitola, all of Roma ethnicity. The aim of the study is to determine knowledge and attitudes of general population in Bitola towards the phenomenon of child begging. The study is epidemiological, with 437 participants who anonymously answered 5-items questionnaire. The results show that 1 in 10 participants finds that there are not many children beggars on the streets in Bitola, only 15.3% never give money to children beggars, 24.7% think that they help by giving money to children beggars, 88.6% think that children beggars are abused, and 86.3% know that children will remain on the streets begging if people give them money. The age group affects the attitudes towards 'giving money to children beggars' ($p < 0.001$); 'opinion of helping the children by giving them money' ($p = 0 < 0.001$) and 'opinion that children are abused when begging' ($p = 0.039$). Older people significantly give less money to children beggars, are more aware that by giving money they do not help and are more aware of child exploitation. The sex also influences attitudes, male participants are significantly less aware about the number of street children who beg, and are less informed that giving money to children beggars endorses the phenomenon and leads to further exploitation.

Keywords: Children beggars, Child exploitation, Child labor, Street children, Roma community, Poverty

1. Background

Begging is a social phenomenon of "solicitation of a voluntary unilateral gift, most often money, in a public place," according to Lynch (2005). As Marcu O. (2017) research of Romani Roma in Italy concludes, to beg is a difficult and tiring activity, involves a lot of emotional work, the beggar has to arouse pity, affection and empathy. Also the beggar has to face with humiliation, a lot of judgment and stigma. It is commonly accepted that the poverty is important motivator for this activity. In the broader context of Republic of North Macedonia, besides poverty, other factors that maintain begging activities are: unemployment, lack of education, early and underage marriages, social exclusion, lack of birth certificates and ID for family members that leads to marginalization of their communities, prejudices, stereotypes, discrimination and exclusion from society (Arifi B. et al 2013). Child begging is associated with child prostitution, drug abuse, risk of trafficking, involvement of children in criminal acts such as robbery (Save the children, 2011).

1.1 Children beggars in Bitola

The exact number of children begging on the streets in Republic of North Macedonia is undetermined and very much variable. The existing reports show that in 2005 there were 1000 street children in the country, and 95% were Roma children (UNICEF 2005). The Ombudsman reported 719 children on the street in 2011 (Ombudsman, 2011), in 8 cities, and 236 assisted street children who beg in 2015 (Ombudsman, 2015).

The mobile teams for psychosocial interventions on the street in Bitola, working for In4Child Project - "Psychosocial and healthcare interventions for children of vulnerable populations", has registered 33 children on the street in Bitola in 2019, 20 boys and 13 girls (39.4%). The youngest child was 9 months old, the oldest 16 years old. Older children were more often alone while begging, while younger children were with their mothers. Most of children were involved in begging from time to time, and were used for triggering sympathy by their mothers, or were simply around their mothers while mothers are begging. Some younger children also begged in small groups, but also nearby adult family member. All children beggars are spending their nights with their family in small one room dwellings, without regulated residency, where numerous family sleeps on the floor, with no sanitary facilities. Most of the women who beg with their children, are coming from a dysfunctional family / partnership, they are separated

from their unwed partners, their spouses/partners are imprisoned or using drugs/alcohol. Few women were pushed towards begging by their parents, and the money they receive are collected and managed by male family member, usually the father. The begging activity is fluctuating depending of the season. In the summer months, less adult women are involved in begging in Bitola, because there is a lot of work opportunities in agriculture, and most of those who beg, migrate to Ohrid, Struga and other touristic places that are more profitable.

All the women and older children beggars state that they beg because of poverty. Although a big part of Roma community in Bitola is extremely poor, most of the families avoid this activity, and protect their children from the harsh environment of streets. Important sign of the poverty and inequality is the significantly lower average life expectancy among Roma (68 years) compared to the national population (73.5 years) (Spitálszky A. 2019). Some of the cases, actually do not live in extreme poverty, have a place to live, and some income from welfare and occasional work in the grey economy, beg for an additional income from time to time. They use their children to receive more money, but avoid begging when weather conditions are bad. In these families, begging is accepted as tradition and profession, and women and children are expected and motivated to contribute through begging.

The street psychosocial teams of In4Child Project, has interviewed many families who live in the Roma ghetto community and most of the people see begging as a shameful, immoral activity, and even though they barely manage to provide food and shelter for their children, they do not involve themselves or their children in begging. Why and how some impoverished families accept the 'beggar' mentality and some don't is an interesting phenomenon that should be researched in the future.

1.2 Attitudes towards children beggars

The public perception towards children beggars is on the extremes: from 'criminal' and 'cheater' to a 'victim' (Göthe R., 2016). Street children and child beggars are often looked upon as a delinquents, liars, thieves, and no one would like to have them nearby. They live a life with no structure, very little or no education, that can affect their ability to get formal employment and to remain employed. When people are engaged in begging practices for longer period of time, they tend to develop poor self-concept and negative self-regard together with learned helplessness (Stones.R.C., 2013).

Begging is also viewed as a last-resort practice for some people, that is preferable than criminal activities such as prostitution, stealing, drug-dealing. In Pakistan, the traditional consideration by public towards beggars as nuisances or social annoyances, but not a security threats changed in the last decades towards a new trend showing that beggary has grown to constitute organized crime (Azam N. 2011).

Street children are the most physically visible, they beg or work on a public space, where exposed to public scrutiny, and also very much neglected by the institutions that are suppose to protect them. In a study of countries in Western Balkans, one finding is that even the professionals who work with children beggars such as social workers, law enforcement and other experts, are not synchronized in their understanding of the phenomenon. Most of the respondents (67%) define begging as way to secure material benefit, where conclusion that child begging constitutes deriving material benefit by exploiting children twice exceeds (42%) the percentage of law enforcement officers (21%) (Save the Children, 2011).

The children who beg, and receive money, are more endangered to be trapped in this activity, because the adults will keep sending the child back to continue begging. Begging is also reinforced by the income a child manages to receive. Together with money the child receives some independence, about how to spend some of the money. Children are then enabled to buy food and treats, but also can engage in gambling, psychoactive substances etc. That is why, many governments and NGO's enforce campaigns to donate money to organizations that really help street children, rather than giving money directly to the child.

Nii-Boye Quarshie E. (2011) study of perceptions of street children by shopkeepers and school children showed that both groups have sympathetic feelings and positive perception toward street children. However, the school children tend to identify and empathize more with the street children and have a more positive perception towards them.

The literature regarding general public perception and attitudes towards children beggars is not very rich. To be able to create interventions for street children, we should know how the public perceives this vulnerable group. The aim of the study is to determine the knowledge and attitudes of general population in Bitola towards the phenomenon of child begging.

2. Materials and Methods

The study is based on a survey with a cross-sectional design. For the purposes of determining knowledge and attitudes towards child beggars, a short 5-items questionnaire has been created (Appendix 1).

The research has been conducted by the In4Child psychosocial team, in the center of Bitola, during the busiest period of the day (form 10am till 4pm). People were approached on the central area streets, in shops and coffee places. The interviewing was

anonymous, only verbal consent was taken by participants. Most of the people were open to answer the questions, although some declined because of lack of time, or no interest for the subject. We can not calculate the response rate due to lack of data. Total of 437 participants answered all 5 questions and were statistically analyzed.

Statistical analysis was completed with SPSS software, descriptive statistic and nonparametric tests were used to determine the statistical significance between variables. Value of $p < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

3. Results and discussion

The survey was completed by 437 people, where 264 were female, 173 were male.

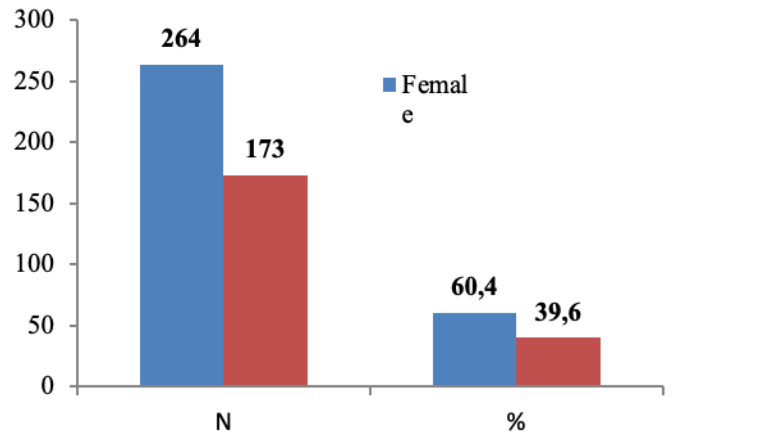


Figure 1. Gender distribution

The results show that only 1 in 10 people finds that there are not many children beggars on the streets in Bitola, only 15.3% never give money to children beggars, 24.7% think that they help by giving money to children beggars, 88.6% think that children beggars are abused, and 86.3% know that children will remain on the streets begging if people give them money.

Table 1. Attitudes towards children beggars

Are there many children begging on the street in Bitola?	N	%
Many children begging	394	90.2
Not many	25	5.7
Don't know	17	3.9
Do you give money to children beggars?	N	%
Yes, always	62	14.2
Yes, sometimes	308	70.5
No, never	67	15.3
Do you think you help the children beggars by giving them money?	N	%
Yes	108	24.7
No	198	45.3
Don't know	130	29.7
Do you think that children are abused when begging?	N	%
Yes	387	88.6

No	7	1.6
Don't know	43	9.8
Do you know that children will remain on the streets begging if you give them money?	N	%
Yes	377	86.3
No	60	13.7

The age group affects the attitudes towards 'giving money to children beggars' (Chi-square = 31.602, df=8, p<0.001); 'opinion of helping the children by giving them money' (Chi-square = 37.189, df=8, p=0<001) and 'opinion that children are abused when begging' (Chi-square = 16.209, df=8, p=0.039). Older people significantly give less money to children beggars, are more aware that by giving money they do not help and are more aware of child exploitation.

Table 2. Distribution by age group - Attitudes towards children beggars

		10-17	18-29	30-49	50-64	≥65	p value
Are there many children begging on the street in Bitola?	Many	27 (90%)	173 (91%)	124 (90.5%)	50 (89.3%)	20 (87%)	0.818
	Not many or don't know	3 (10%)	17 (9%)	13 (9.5%)	6 (10.7%)	3 (13%)	
Do you give money to children beggars?	Yes, always	8 (26.7%)	17 (9%)	21 (15.2%)	10 (17.8%)	6 (26%)	<0.001*
	Yes, sometimes	21 (70%)	153 (80.5%)	93 (67.4%)	29 (51.8%)	12 (52.3%)	
	No, never	1 (3.3%)	20 (10.5%)	24 (17.4%)	17 (30.4%)	5 (21.7%)	
Do you think you help the children beggars by giving them money?	Yes	16 (53.3%)	45 (23.7%)	32 (23.2%)	10 (18.2%)	5 (21.7%)	<0.001*
	No	6 (20%)	70 (36.8%)	73 (52.9%)	36 (65.4%)	13 (56.6%)	
	Don't know	8 (26.7%)	75 (39.5%)	33 (23.9%)	9 (16.4%)	5 (21.7%)	
Do you think that children are abused when begging?	Yes	21 (70%)	167 (87.9%)	128 (92.8%)	51 (91%)	20 (87%)	0.039*
	No	2 (6.7%)	3 (1.6%)	1 (0.7%)	0	1 (4.3%)	
	Don't know	7 (23.3%)	20 (10.5%)	9 (6.5%)	5 (9%)	2 (8.7%)	
Do you know that children will remain on the streets begging if you give them money?	Yes	24 (80%)	159 (83.7%)	120 (87%)	52 (92.8%)	22 (95.6%)	0.208
	No	6 (20%)	31 (16.3%)	18 (13%)	4 (7.2%)	1 (4.4%)	
N=437		N=30	N=190	N=138	N=56	N=23	

The gender significantly affects attitudes towards 'the presence of children beggars on the streets in Bitola' (Chi-square = 7.847, df=1, p<0.020); and 'opinion that children will remain on the streets begging if they receive money' (Chi-square = 10.218, df=1, p=0.001). Male participants are significantly less aware about the number of street children who beg, and are less informed that giving money to children beggars endorses the phenomenon and leads to further exploitation.

Table 3. Distribution by gender - Attitudes towards children beggars

		Female	Male	p value
Are there many children begging on the street in Bitola?	Many	247 (93.6%)	147 (85.5%)	0.020*
	Not many/don't know	17 (6.4%)	25 (14.5%)	
Do you give money to children beggars?	Yes, always	40 (15.2%)	22 (12.7%)	0.775

	Yes, sometimes	184 (69.6%)	124 (71.6%)	
	No, never	40 (15.2%)	22 (12.7%)	
Do you think you help the children beggars by giving them money?	Yes	63 (23.9%)	45 (26%)	0.775
	No	123 (46.8%)	75 (43.4%)	
	Don't know	77 (29.3%)	53 (30.6%)	
Do you think that children are abused when begging?	Yes	239 (90.5%)	148 (85.6%)	0.255
	No	4 (1.5%)	3 (1.7%)	
	Don't know	21 (7.9%)	22 (12.7%)	
Do you know that children will remain on the streets begging if you give them money?	Yes	239 (90.5%)	138 (79.8%)	0.001*
	No	25 (9.5%)	35 (20.2%)	

4. Discussion

Most of the general population recognizes the problem of children begging on public places, the children are visible in everyday life. Women are significantly more aware of existence of children beggars than men, and are more aware that giving money to children beggars reinforces the phenomenon. Our presumption that may explain this finding is that women are more aware of the neglect of children because of the carrying role they have in the family in our society. The perception of the problem in the different age groups is the same.

Big majority of the population practices is giving money to children beggars. Most of the people occasionally give money to children beggars but every 6th person always gives money. The children in need trigger sympathy, enough so, the general population has positive attitude towards giving money to children beggars. This is especially noticeable in school children aged 10-18 years old. They empathize with their less fortunate peers as it is a case in other countries.

The awareness that leaving or using the child to beg represents exploitation, abuse and neglect is higher as the participants are older. School children and young adults have significantly less knowledge about the meaning and motivation of begging in childhood. This finding tells us that additional education for school children is necessary. The curriculum should address human rights, street children, childhood abuse and exploitation.

5. Conclusions

The majority of general population is aware that giving money to children beggars is reinforcing the phenomenon, yet the children are given money.

Women are more aware about the presence of children beggars than men, and are more aware that giving money to children beggars reinforces the phenomenon.

School children and young adults are not properly informed about the 'circle of beggary', and should be further educated.

Appendix 1 Questionnaire



Gender: Female / Male

Age: _____

1. Do you think there are many children beggars on our streets?

Yes

No

I don't know

2. Do you give money to children beggars?

Yes, always Yes, sometimes No, never

3. Do you feel that by giving money to children beggars you help them?

Yes No I don't know

4. Do you think that children beggars are abused?

Yes No I don't know

5. Do you know that giving money to beggars actually maintains begging and takes away their childhood?

Yes No

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