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REGULAR PAPERS

STRATEGIC AND THEORETICAL DIMENSION OF MAD CONCEPT

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*“A strange game.
The only winning move is not to play.
How about a nice game of chess?”*

Abstract

The principal aim of the study is to examine the broader role of the mutually assured destruction (MAD) concept formed and in operation in the second half of 20th century. Via theoretical perspectives on the nuclear weapon such as

philosophical, ethical, or the security one, it is not only to provide an extended definition of the concept while utilizing categories of the broadly accepted game-theoretic approach to mutually assured destruction in the theoretical premises of humanistic - liberal conceptions, but also to figure out whether the ethical implications of the state of nuclear strategic balance of power empirically examined within the effect of deterrence can even be reconciled with the Kantian liberal conception of perpetual peace.

Key words: *MAD, perpetual peace, game theory, prisoner's dilemma, humanistic - liberal conceptions level of analysis*

INTRODUCTION

Nuclear weapons and theoretical systems which rather naturally occur as a functional frame of their potential use, amount to a complex subject of academic research. To some extent this fact results from the contention between authors' commitments to a human approach to the subject of research and the effort to achieve academic integrity of the outcome, which in the context of international relations presupposes the preference of Realist conceptions as an intellectual premise of further academic research. The contemporary body of theoretical perspectives on the nuclear weapon can be characterised as relatively broad, owing to its many dimensions, e. g. philosophical, ethical, or the security dimension. In a more comprehensive perspective, this serves to reflect the relevance of this concept for the reality of international relations at the global level. Political Realism as the theory of international relations reflects the study of power phenomenon ever present within the issue of nuclear weapons. This premise of research does not, however, necessarily reflect the Kantian view on the need for balance of power in terms of the criteria of "perpetual peace", a perspective central to ethical inquiries in international politics. Consequently, there arises a question of whether the balance of power empirically examined within the effect of deterrence can even be reconciled with the Kantian liberal conception of perpetual peace.

The goal of this study is to prove the relevance of the humanistic perspective in case of approaching the study of the mass destruction element and its synthesis with the premises of international issues interpreted by political realists, all in a fashion that avoids downplaying the positive aspects or intellectual premises in either of these "*grand narratives*". The study attempts to maintain continuity with the already existing standard of academic distinction and intellectual consistency in the as yet published works on the functionality of nuclear deterrence and the issue of Mutual Assured Destruction¹ (hereafter be cited as MAD).

¹Based on the theory of deterrence, MAD (mutually assured destruction) is a doctrine of national security policy in which a full-scale use of weapons of mass destruction by two or more opposing sides would result in the complete annihilation of participants, i.e. of the attacker as well as the defender. MAD accounts for a form of Nash equilibrium in which neither side to the conflict has any incentive either to disarm or to initiate a conflict.

A relatively narrow specification of the topic also determines the main ambition that is to decide whether it is still possible to consider the occurrence of the concept of MAD in relations between the USA and the Russian Federation to be a representative model of MAD, even with the effective nuclear bipolarity effectively over. In other words, it is an attempt to provide the answer if the analysis of the MAD concept in case of the US and Russia can transcend its original significance as a case study and, by means of formulas identified in this interaction, and whether it is able to serve as a relevant reference for other cases of nuclear antagonism with similar characteristics. When identifying the key characteristics of nuclear rivalry between USA and the Russian Federation or, formerly, the Soviet Union, the implications of this rivalry for the world security environment and the ethical dimension of its possible application must not be left out. This is because of the situation when a weapon of mass destruction has become a variable within a scheme whose logical result is an unstable, localised, but at the same time effective peace. This fact not only creates a remarkable deficit in the theoretical premises of humanistic - liberal conceptions, but it is also an expression of a reality where the level of nuclear balance is the category of a new security agenda. One of the secondary but highly consequential ambitions of the study is to identify selected factors which could strengthen the ethical dimension of the discussed issue.

The analytical and synthetic component of the applied methodology is justified by an effort to interconnect the already existing standard of academic knowledge of MAD; its application allows to guarantee diversity as well as continuity of academic sources related to the reality of nuclear deterrence. The chosen research methodology tends to refer to the strategic balance formed by means of the nuclear deterrence during the Cold War. The motivation for the research of the issue at hand is largely related to the fact that the existence of nuclear weapons creates a completely new dynamic not only in the world of politics, but, more specifically, in approaches used by the science of international relations as such. This attitude can be argued to constitute a further dimension of the authors' commitment to the social relevance of the above presented research.

1. STRATEGIC DIMENSION OF MAD CONCEPT IN THE LIGHT OF GAME THEORY

The categorisation of the MAD concept into the larger context of the science of international relations is a specific task. At the level of international relations science itself, this aspect of the study requires particular attention in regard to the nuclear weapon, that is, in many respects an unprecedented technology through which the concept of MAD is defined. Owing to the nuclear weapon technology, a new dimension could be identified not only in the reality of international politics *per se*, but also in the content of foreign policy and security doctrines of countries – either of the nuclear-weapon states (NWS) or the states in the diapason of power impact of those nuclear-states. The American school of political realism at the beginning of the *Nuclear Age* provided, in a highly perceptive manner, a description of this new dimension as having resulted from the characteristics of the nuclear weapon, which represented a revolutionary shift when compared to the yet analysed and generally known standard of military technology and strategy that saw use in the European campaigns of WWII. Under the circumstances of the existence of

nuclear weapons and “ *in a modern war the first battle might decide the outcome of the entire conflict*“ [Possony 1954:220], which is in a similar contradiction to the Late Modern Era conception of military conflict as the fact that “ *future wars hardly will be fought with weapons ordered and produced after the start of hostilities (...) war potentials have lost much of their significance, while forces in being and weapons stockpiles have become of crucial importance*“ [Possony 1954: 220].

The key points identified by Possony help to illustrate that the occurrence and proliferation of nuclear weapons impacts another – the methodological level of the scientific field of international relations. The reality of the course of a potential nuclear war, especially in the context of the technological availability of intercontinental ballistic missiles (*ICBM*), diminishes the relevance of since then existed essential components of a military strategy such as physical geography, war potential or the sustainability of a country after the outbreak of war, and it takes a direct, mechanical character which shifts closer to specialised disciplines of mathematical programming. The outcome of this situation is that the concept of MAD as a tool to grasp the reality of nuclear antagonism, takes position at a crosssection of political science and game theory as a discipline examining models of rational behaviour of actors in largely applicable modelled situations. [Plous 1993] Thus the characteristics of the MAD model are similar to other model situations in game theory: its ambition is, as in other contexts, to enable research of the given complex situation via a transparent model with a relatively low number of variables, while refraining from reducing or neglecting any of the essential aspects of the situation. *Mutually Assured Destruction – MAD* in the context of the possession of a nuclear weapon by both sides - is consequently defined as a state in which neither side can initiate a nuclear attack while, at the same time, avoiding a devastating retaliation from its opponent’s side. In case that both sides to the conflict are positioned in a thus defined equilibrium, a nuclear attack initiated by any of these sides results in a complete obliteration of both of them – a *nuclear holocaust* [Plous 1994]. An effort of the nuclear power state in its relation towards its opponent to achieve such mutual standoff, in fact, amounts to guaranteeing temporary peace in a situation when nuclear weapons are available at a grand strategy level: neither side launches the first strike inasmuch as there is no benefit to it. *The only winning move is not to play*. It is, therefore, the effort to figure out to what extent the game theory method reflects the reality of nuclear deterrence, that brings us to the first task - the illustration of MAD concept in the contemporary nuclear strategic balance created by the US and Russia.

Within the dynamics of the nuclear rivalry in the Cold War, the game theory became a methodological premise for the MAD concept as well as for the larger reality of nuclear deterrence and nuclear arms race between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. [Terem 2017] In case of the MAD, the preference of international relations specialists towards game theory can be ascribed to its own definition which retains its relative one-dimensionality and simple quantifiability which enable it to operate with simple categories of term logic. In the nuclear arms race, nuclear deterrence and other categories of nuclear bipolarity, it is possible to observe a certain connection similar to a mutual causality: the application of game theory to these concepts was a reaction to the relative quantifiability of factors that enter into their procedures, and the subsequent successes with the use of the game theory method

further redeem its use and highlight its merits. The nuclear arms race in particular is reflected via one of the subsets of game theory, i.e. the model of *prisoner's dilemma*. [Plous 1993] This model describes a situation in which two actors to a conflict situation achieve the best possible result if they decide themselves to cooperate. The players are not, however, directly in contact and, at the same time, each tries to avoid a situation in which they aid the opponent while the latter decides to deceive them. Inevitably, this results in a situation when both sides decide to act not in favour of their respective opponent, achieving a worse result than should both sides have decided to cooperate. Thus the outcome of prisoner's dilemma is suboptimal. [Plous 1993] Values of the outcome matrix between the United States and the Soviet Union, now the Russian Federation, as those of players in a nuclear arms race, might differ depending on the author's methodological license, which side it is more beneficial to continue in the competition for, or on the way the actor decides to conceptualize the variables entering the variation of the prisoner's dilemma. [Plous 1993] In most cases they are rounded to illustrative values in order to be transparent and comprehensible. The reality of nuclear rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union, in the contemporary period the Russian Federation, as Plous comments on it, can be tractable by the following result matrix (so far not taking into consideration further variables, thus explaining the Russian-American rivalry *per se* as a logical construction):

Table 1

	RF disarmament	RF armament
US disarmament	3.3	1.4
US armament	4.1	2.2

As previously stressed, thanks to this model it is possible to interpret the American-Russian competition in a nuclear armament in particular categories. The most advantageous for both sides is the situation when both sides decide to reduce their nuclear capacities (figure 3 for the US and 3 for Russia). This situation does not, however, occur in the default version of the prisoner's dilemma since neither side can be sure of the intentions of its opponent and wants to avoid a unilateral disarmament. At the same time, both sides are attracted by the possibility to arm while the opponent unilaterally disarms (in each case figure 4 for the side which is arms, figure 1 for the side that disarms). Both sides thus inevitably arm (figure 2 for the US, 2 for Russia). On the other hand, the possibility arises of a situation when both sides decide, via cooperation, to reduce their nuclear potentials, i.e. a state when both sides either intentionally or under particular conditions accept the existence of nuclear parity or have no reason to continue with nuclear competition hence subsequently forming a consensual state of a potential MAD. According to the above given definition, this situation deviates from the definition of *prisoner's dilemma* as such, and has to be considered by another model of game theory, in this particular case, by a larger game theory concept to which prisoner's dilemma is a subset.

This situation can be accounted for by means of the *Nash equilibrium*. [Holt, Roth 2004] This model is defined in terms of competing actors while each of them makes the best possible decision in regards to the position of their respective opponent; simply put, a situation when, with the B-side's decisions taken into consideration by the A-side, the latter cannot improve its own position by any unilateral action [Plous 1993]. This model in relation to the result-wise more limited prisoner's dilemma is advantageous insofar as it permits to grasp, via the outcome matrix, the situation when nuclear rivalry – conversely - leads to a mutual cooperation of nuclear powers. In the presently researched context, this cooperation takes the form of bilateral disarmament, or specifically, to contractual commitments resulting in the conservation of the state of a potential MAD. This situation can be illustrated by the draft of another version of the result matrix:

Table 2

	RF disarmament	RF armament
US disarmament	3.3	1.2
US armament	2.1	1.1

This version corresponds to the defining characteristics of MAD doctrine; the best unilateral solution is for either actor to refrain from nuclear armament, and in the case that an actor decides not to reduce its nuclear arsenal, it at least sets the maximum amount of nuclear arsenal that is consistent with its current state (the outcome of the first SALT agreement) [Odom 2007]. A thus defined outcome matrix is a simple variation on the previous version of Prisoner's dilemma; there arises a fact that the state of a potential MAD is possible to be observed by adding a modifier variable in the position of coefficient with the values that mark the outcome of armament on one or the other side:

Table 3

	RF disarmament	RF armament
US disarmament	3.3	1.4 mrf
US armament	4 mus .1	2 mus .2 mrf

$$; mus = 0.5, mrf = 0.5$$

where variables mus a mrf are modifiers of an outcome that is achieved by the US and Russia, respectively, on the level of the outcome matrix, in case that any of them decides to continue in armament. In such a designed model, it can be stated that the higher the value of a modifier is (which in regards to the logic of nuclear competition increases the value of the other), the more closely the reality of nuclear competition approaches a nuclear arms race; in contrast, the lower the value of the modifier of one side (with an analogical outcome for the opponent's modifier), the greater interest both sides will have in maintaining a nuclear rivalry in the state of

a potential MAD – in other words, into the relation which in the long run guarantees mutual nuclear deterrence without a need for large investments in offensive or defensive capacities on either side. [Krepon 2004]. So the modifiers *mus* and *mrf*, similarly, as other components of the outcome matrix, amount, to a certain extent, to a reduction of events of nuclear rivalry into a form in which it is possible to grasp them via a mathematical model in regards to a multidimensional reality of nuclear rivalry. No attempt at quantification can possibly transcend its essence as a means of illustration. On the other hand, this does not rule out the ambition to try at a synthesis of the already achieved knowledge of the patterns of nuclear rivalry and to draft a classification of the factors which – with no regard to their level of quantification - enter the above described version of the outcome matrix in the role of a modifier; these factors can subsequently function as premises for the assessment of the prospects of any international nuclear regime. Factors entering the model of the Prisoner's dilemma in the capacity of modifiers are identified on the following levels. All of these levels account for a theoretical dimension of the MAD concept.

2. THEORETICAL DIMENSION OF MAD CONCEPT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PARTICULARLY SELECTED ANALYTICAL LEVELS

The economical level. In a free market environment and circumstances approaching a potential MAD, the economic dimension of further armament is evident: the actor who decides to disarm does not have to invest in the production of new nuclear warheads and missile carriers, and as such it saves money required for their maintenance. This dimension could, however, be ambiguous due to divergent roles of arms industry in the GDP of the respective nuclear powers. If the nuclear potential of a country depends on import, or specifically, if expenses for the production and maintenance of nuclear weapons are higher than contributions from the arms industry to GDP, the modifier value for the respective country is decreased and the state of nuclear rivalry is shifted closer to a potential MAD. If a substantial percentage of the national industry of a given country depends on the effective functioning of arms industry, the government is economically motivated to continue with nuclear armament. This dynamic was even stressed in the former Soviet centrally planned economy where, in order to maintain the zero unemployment rate, a stable percentage of workers employed in the engineering industry was preserved. [Liakhovskii 2007]

The liberalistic level. The tension that exists between the existence and political functionality of nuclear weapons and the need for their redemption vis-à-vis liberal democracy, human rights and international law was already mentioned in the introductory part. The dialectic created by nuclear weapons as a means of maintaining peace is rather problematic for any effort of its integration into the discourse on a democracy-based international community: *“The situation becomes more complicated when you consider the value patterns of democratic societies. In these patterns, human life and human dignity are given high priority; nuclear weapons are weapons of mass destruction and genocide and should therefore meet with disapproval among citizens. We would expect the result of these inconsistent impulses to be such that democracies would be in favour of nuclear*

deterrence, but, instead they suffer from the dilemma of the noble objective of avoiding war, on the one hand, and the genocidal character of the weapons, on the other." [Müller, Schaper 2004:1]. The implied ambiguity of the reasoning on nuclear weapons in the categories of legal state and liberal democracy, apart from the completely obvious contradiction of nuclear weapons with the basic premises of these concepts, can be traced back to the democratic peace theory which in its original formulation can be ascribed to Immanuel Kant; characteristics of democracy as such embody a fact that democracies will be unwilling to wage war on each other. [Müller, Schaper 2004]. This point is further elaborated in the more recent Social Constructivist research which has concluded that some level of collective identity shared by all parties is necessary for a functional international security environment [Pouliot 2007]. Within our model, the modifier also depends on an emphasis that the nuclear powers be prepared to commit themselves to their own citizens, to the international community, as well as to their own essence as the continuation of the liberal democratic state tradition. Admittedly, at the same time, the inclusion of liberalistic conceptions among the factors influencing the standard of nuclear armament is contradictory to the findings of American political realism representatives who consider this variable to be at least trivial, if not negligible [Possony 1954]. Furthermore, recent events have shown that an excessive reliance on Liberal logic by Western leaders may well be downright dangerous for peace. The point made by some Realist authors is that a continuous enlargement of an ideologically liberal-democratic security environment epitomized by NATO and the EU, which is the consequence of Liberal thought, will inevitably be seen as aggressive expansion in the competing Realist optic. One result of such clash of narratives, Mearsheimer argues, is the ongoing conventional invasion of Ukraine which is the Russian response to the expansionist nature of the Western Liberal foreign policies [Mearsheimer 2014]. Mearsheimer's methodology here seems to be that of an interpretative case study which, while admittedly selecting a case precisely because of its Realist merit, well illustrates why a decidedly Realist approach to International Relations will oppose the inclusion of Liberalistic variables among the modifiers of the values of our proposed outcome matrix.

On the other hand, authors adhering to a different theoretical complex of the science of international relations - the English School of international relations theory - utilise the characteristics of international liberalism and formulate a specific central premise that, from their perspective, is the most noticeable characteristic of the contemporary functioning of international relations [Lasicová, Ušiak 2012]. From the realistic conceptions, the statement is adopted that in regard to the absence of a supranational authority, the relation among nation-states is inherently anarchic; on the other hand, the number, intensity and nature of conflicts are all significantly milder to those of a hypothetical collapse of the central authority at the intra-national level. This collapse would have, inside a failing state, resulted in a Hobbesian *bellum omnium contra omnes*, as is continuously proven within the context of coups d'état, revolutions, and third-world countries. In contrast, states, the entities whose role is that of formally equal actors within an anarchic environment, act with a surprisingly high measure of mutual cooperation. This fact leads the scientists of the English school to the conclusion that the international society or, by extension, the states it is formed by, create a specific frame of

reference for relationships that is unique to the international environment, and as such they are conceptually and methodologically different from the terms that are analogous to them in the intra-national sphere (i. e. society and state citizens). From this perspective, it is possible to make the assumption that the specific quality of relations among states illustrated in works of the English school is another potential and essential modifier entering the dilemma between the maintenance of strategic balance and a relapse into nuclear arms race [Kazanský 2015: 28].

In addition to the pressure that ideological liberalism, hypothetically, exerts on the outcome matrix when projected into international politics, another dynamic with a similar potential is created within each of the respective nuclear powers' systems largely due to the liberal nature of their constitutions, either actual or nominal. Active citizens in liberal countries will inevitably work to formulate and communicate their views on any change in nuclear policy via civil society networks, yet the capacity of civil society to actively influence its nation's foreign policy will depend on how closely it adheres to its now-traditional definition: „*The dominant conceptualization of civil society is based on the Tocquevillian idea of freedom of association (...) making civil society a space situated between the state, the market and the individual*“, which might be, admittedly, a „*romanticised western model*“ [Ljubownikov et al., 2013:154]. Indeed, Putnam makes a strong case that the effectiveness of representational government, at least on a regional level, correlates with the abundance of *social capital* that itself results in a widespread civic membership in voluntary associations. [Putnam 1995]. This fact might even serve to reconcile the Toquevillian concept with the valid remark by Evers and Laville that „*(it) neglects the economic dimension of civil society and overtly focuses on the autonomy of civil society rather than its intermediary nature*“ [Ljubownikov et al., 2013:154] While certain non-governmental organisations, as part of the third sector, did indeed work to influence the United States nuclear policy [Wang 2010], Putnam argues that these organisations are distinct from the voluntary associations of the Tocquevillian type; even though they claim a part of the political power, they are not directly descended from civic social capital [Putnam 1995]. Therefore, whether or not they can possibly serve to communicate the actual political will of the individual to the government, especially in relation to nuclear policy, is dubious.

The *Postmodernistic level*. Considering from what point in history onwards the nuclear antagonism takes place, some responsibility for its interpretation will inevitably be placed on the late-20th century Postmodernist thought whose main thesis is that of a qualitative divergence of the contemporary Western world from the period in which the economic, political and social reality could have been conveyed via the modernistic categories of liberalism, democracy and the rule of law. The characteristic of the *postmodern state* by proponents of modernism as ideology [Lyotard 1979] is the fact that the global standard of information and knowledge, whose internal consistency was emphasised by the Late Modern thought, has disintegrated. The legitimization of a given social phenomenon, concept and policy, does not occur implicitly, but via a metanarrative chosen by communicators: the media and political actors. Therefore, in a manner similar to all other spheres of public life, the nuclear policy is legitimised on the level of

linguistic-psychological games to which the subjects are political and economic elites, multinational corporations, proponents of technological and scientific innovations, and the civil society. Orwell, ever the dystopian visionary of the waning days of the Late Modern period, warns that a perceived acceptability of nuclear conflict and other commonly invoked categories of the modern world could be a function of the used language: “*Writing that aims at glorifying war usually takes on an archaic colour (...) The words democracy, socialism, freedom, patriotic, realistic, justice, have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with one another. In the case of a word like democracy, not only is there no agreed definition, but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides*” [Orwell 2013 : 8-9]. The postmodern state in contrast to the modern one makes higher demands on the civic control of a state, pressure from the media and critical approach towards the standard of political communication. By this same token, the nuclear policies of the postmodern state will inevitably be affected by the capacity of the civil society to submit them for a critical and informed scrutiny, free of confirmation bias, conspiratorial thought and – perhaps most critically – illiberal state propaganda. It can be hypothesized that such practice will correlate with an increased capacity to accurately interpret political language across the whole society, which is then reflected in a more responsible approach to regulating the strategic nuclear balance.

3. A RETURN TO TRADITION AS A NEW POLITICAL DISCOURSE

The history of the foreign policy of the United States of America was prominently framed by its historical tradition of Wilsonian idealism that guaranteed them international respect following the end of WWI. The momentum lasted well into the 20th century until the 1960s when the so-called McCarthyism, the new geo-political concept of the era started to be dominant (which accounted for not only strategic, but also for economic connotations of the arms race). Through the agenda of Woodrow Wilson, the values of the American Founding Fathers became realistic and “matured“. These had a stabilising effect even at such harsh times as the Great Depression, the attack on the Pearl Harbor, or when the US joined the Allied coalition during WWII. At the same time, the Wilsonian values helped shape, for at least half the century following WWII., a still not academically thoroughly processed, comprehended, and fully appreciated period; one during which the US became the leader and proponent of the dominating lineage within foreign policy of the world’s states. Yet a misunderstanding was present at those times. For W. Wilson, the only conceivable result of the US hegemony was the creation of a balance of power via the spread of democracy. W. Wilson formulated these very principles of the US foreign policy as follows: 1. harmony in international relations 2. a legal way of achieving changes, i.e. via international law 3. the so-called Wilsonian theory of democracy, in the sense that states accepting the first two principles will never resort to war as a means to settle international disputes. [Krejčí 2009] The above mentioned misunderstanding devolved into cynicism at the beginning of the 1960s. The distrust of Wilsonian agenda was further researched by the foremost American theoretician N. Chomsky who, at the beginning of the 1990s, expressed his opinion on the misunderstanding of goals from the side of USA and

Europe (i.e. also from the side of the Soviet Union and later Russia). The gist of his argument is that Europe has never got rid of cynicism (due to its historical development), which particularly precludes Europe from the thorough understanding and judgement of generous American projects as being just, and thus realisable only thanks to American enthusiasm. [Reid 2005] H. Kissinger in his work *Does America need a foreign policy. Toward Diplomacy for 21st Century*, points out that the erosion of American values was not only caused by European cynicism, but also by a series of turbulent events in the devastated economies of Latin American and African states, which led to moral problems in the development of these territories such as human rights suppression, the rise of poverty, unemployment, the inadequate performance of local governments unable to maintain order in the crisis regions. For all these negative phenomena, as Kissinger holds, the American trend towards globalisation was riddled with moral guilt, leading to and causing a devastation of weak economies. Accordingly, it is possible to conclude that the problem related to the evaluation of MAD had also, along with the strategic level, a moral one. On the one hand, there is armament: the development in this sphere always brings about economic bonuses; on the other hand, it becomes a counterproductive agenda for superpowers that were and are actors to international treaties on armament control. This discrepancy has even brought back ethical concepts into American as well as Russian foreign policy. This trend was represented by B. Obama in the US, and partially by D. Medvedev and V. Putin in Russia. [Solik, Baar 2016] The development of given events has brought new personalities on the international scene not only from the US perspective, but also from the perspective of the EU states. The recent period of searching for a productive and ethically controlled foreign policy of most powerful actors within global politics creates a new trend, one of increased international cooperation in security policy. However, this trend has already had new, historically proved and functioning models. Examples of these models include the European cooperation between France and Germany, a renaissance of good relations between Spain and Latin-American countries, the rise of importance of the Central European states as neighbours of Russia and Ukraine, but mainly the coordination of strategic and defence initiatives of states - having not a voluntary role as it was during the operation of MAD system, but as looking for a compromise and consensus on the rules within the existing organisations, especially NATO and the EU.

CONCLUSION

Reflexion of the contemporary standard of the US and Russian nuclear doctrine makes it possible to sum up ideal conditions to maintain MAD over the course of the next decades. Particularly the US should avoid the construction of new industrial complexes and, overall, prevent all possibility of finding itself in a situation where the production of more nuclear warheads could be seen as beneficial. The US as well as Russia are supposed to be open in a discussion on a future of the US anti-ballistic defence in Europe, including the possibility that this project will be realised. At the same time, the US ought to initiate a discussion on drafting an international treaty that would be a replacement for the ABM

Treaty², and which would take into consideration the end of US - Russian nuclear parity in preservation of the logic of mutual deterrence. The liberal dimension of the approach to nuclear regime, which undisputably bears the attributes of Kantian „perpetual peace“(democracy, equality of states, parity of interests via non-military activities, civic participation), presupposes on the side of the Russian Federation a significant improvement in the quality of democracy. Russian civic movements could then indirectly participate on international politics or, at least, increase the transparency of nuclear policy in Russia. The necessity of a stronger and more broadly applied civic control, however, extends to the US; this being in the interest of a thorough reduction of the influence of multinational corporations on a federal level, along with decisions related to foreign policy.

One of the subjects of inquiry defined in the introductory part were the ethical implications of the state of nuclear strategic balance. In this respect, the precondition of success is a thorough comprehension, by relevant authors, of the sphere of the theory of ethics, history of political liberalism, but also an ability to effectively transcend these concepts. Such effort could well be rewarded by an oxymoron made real: a moral climax inherent to the concept of the nuclear weapon. In this light, our conclusions are represented by the following observation by Possony that appears to call for a responsible management of international nuclear reality while implicitly dismissing the idealism of the global zero: *„However distasteful it may be, nuclear weapons of the fission and fusion types have come to stay. Henceforth, they will be as much a part of human existence as rain and snow, morality and crime, the telephone and the airplane, pacifism and aggressiveness, freedom and tyranny, stupidity and wisdom“*[Possony 1954:211]. A similar conclusion is achieved by contemporary theoreticians who, especially in the context of Obama's ambitions of heading towards the global zero, express skepticism in regards to the standard of deterrence after a hypothetical disappearance of nuclear weapons. In relation to the fact that nuclear weapons have been shown to be technologically feasible, a world in which no country officially has the nuclear deterrent at its disposal would become grotesquely vulnerable to any one, however clandestine, effort to bring it back into existence. The world security environment, defined in part by its uneasy, unlikely, yet well-researched stability, would stop serving its purpose, since shifting the security balance overwhelmingly to one side would become a mere economical stunt. From the perspective of this *nervous world* [Joffe, Davis 2011], it is necessary to accept a further continuation of the contemporary standard of nuclear deterrence in regards of the persistent and memetically indestructible nuclear weapon under the circumstances of consecutive, contractually guaranteed and smartly conducted reduction of the nuclear countries' arsenals as a tool of prevention of a relapse into the nuclear arms race.

² The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty signed in 1972 was a treaty on the limitation of the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems used in defending areas against ballistic missile-delivered nuclear weapons between the Soviet Union and the United States. Under its terms, each party was limited to two ABM complexes, each of which was to be limited to 100 anti-ballistic missiles. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, in 1997 the United States and four former Soviet republics agreed to succeed to the treaty. The US withdrew from the treaty In June 2002, which eventually led to its termination.

The activity of the Russian Federation in the sphere of the world nuclear control, coming to terms with the Russian portion of responsibility for a nuclear war prevention, as well as its contractual cooperation with the US and other NATO countries in maintaining mutual nuclear deterrence are all dimensions of what is decidedly in continuity with the Cold War Soviet nuclear doctrine, save for a certain capacity for compromise that is necessary for a post-bipolar era nuclear regime. All of these behaviors, however, are also in line with the Russian Federation's continued insistence at being regarded as an important geopolitical player. [Kotkin 2016] Some authors, however, identify in the foreign policy of Russian federation a tendency with a felicitous term *potemkinization* [Lo 2002], the essence of which is to camouflage, via a declaratory and, in many points, vague content of foreign or military doctrine, a deficit in internal consistency of political life that is characterized by a longstanding conflict between political movements, the elitarian political culture and the crisis of identity which arose after the fall of the Iron Curtain and to which the premise is a determination to uncompromisingly approach Russia as if it were a world power - *deržava*, regardless of any changes in the power potential of Russia [Lo 2002]. Some of the studies that adhere to Social Constructivism have attempted to link the emergence of an international security community to the precondition of collective identification [Pouliot 2007]. From this perspective, the feasibility of a global zero might well depend on Russia's willingness to abandon the narrative of *deržava*, as well as on the reconsidering, by the West, of the Liberal approach that Mearsheimer believes now governs the United States' foreign policy [Mearsheimer 2014]. This, along with an analogous departure from authoritarianism in Russian political life, whether caused by generational exchange or more prominent civic control, would have the potential to result in a more realistic openness to a mutual dialogue on the global nuclear regime with the United States.

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POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE AS THE BASIS FOR BUILDING MUTUAL RELATIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA. THE CASE OF POLAND AND AZERBAIJAN

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Abstract

Knowledge of politics is the basic determinant of political civic competences. In the contemporary world, citizens do not know a lot about politics, which affects their decisions, e.g. when voting in elections. The acquisition of political knowledge shapes political thinking, based on a specific set of views, which make up the so-called mind map or mind model.

The aim of our research is to identify the influence of political knowledge on the quality of Polish-Azerbaijani relations. The study was carried out between October 2017 and March 2018 and is one of the outcomes of our research internship at Baku Slavic University.

The research shows that the respondents agree only on a few specific issues, such as trust in politicians or the importance of family in life, but demonstrate considerable differences when it comes to basic knowledge of their partner country and in their attitude to tradition or gender roles. Therefore, the incompatibility of answers in this sphere makes it very difficult to build good social and political relations between Azerbaijan and Poland.

Key words: *political knowledge, political competence, Poland, Azerbaijan*

INTRODUCTION – SOME REMARKS ON TERM COMPETENCES

The term competence comes from sociology and psychology. For psychologists, it means a specific skill which helps people interact with the people around them effectively [White 1959, as cited by: Plecka, Turska-Kawa, Wojtasik 2013]. Competences defined in this way refer to different spheres of our activity. Thus, we may distinguish a few levels of them: social, civic and political. Social competences involve both a psychological predisposition, such as personality traits, temperament, intelligence, etc., and socialization, which helps us acquire specific experience owing to living in a given society.

Civic competences are a part of social competences and are defined as “the skill of cooperating with other people for the sake of common good; they refer to the quality of interpersonal contacts” [Plecka, Turska-Kawa, Wojtasik 2013]. They enable participation, on the basis of knowledge from different areas, in civic life, and motivate the individual to get engaged in the activities for the good of the whole community. Apart from knowledge, civic competences are also determined by skills and abilities, such as critical thinking, inquisitiveness, being a good listener, cooperation and problem-solving skills [Plecka, Wojtasik, Turska-Kawa 2013]. Civic competences are very important, especially for the development of social resources and the socialization of individuals involved in the process.

Civic competences, however, refer not only to the community as the area of people’s activity, but also to one’s relations with the state as an organization and to being able to influence its political system [Marszałek-Kawa 2016]. It is safe to say that they constitute a higher degree of competence initiation, referred to as political civic competences. They cover knowledge of politics (dependent on one’s interest in politics), values (especially political ones), social trust (which bridges political civic competences), and, finally, action (largely determined by the above mentioned factors). It is them, as Elizabeth Theiss-Morse points out, that determine whether one of citizenship models will function in the society: passive citizen, citizen-elect, citizen-spokesman, and citizen-activist [Theiss-Morse 1993].

1. POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE

What is the basic determinant of political civic competences is knowledge of politics. In the contemporary world, citizens do not know a lot about politics, which affects their decisions, e.g. when voting in elections. It should be pointed out here that some researchers cast doubt on the relevance of this knowledge for political activity. They emphasize the individual character of citizens’ knowledge [Lalman, Oppenheimer, Świstak 1994]. This assumption is based on the idea of the absolute rationalism of individuals and the possibility of using it for the implementation of individual interests. Therefore, one’s knowledge – which determines the possibility of choice - only serves individuals themselves, not the whole society. It thus becomes part of the liberal rather than republican demands for action for the common good [Godlewski 2009; Rosanvallon 2011].

This concept is consistent with the theories of elitism, which, since as early as Plato's times, have stressed that knowledge, including the knowledge of politics, is first of all necessary for people in power. In modern times, the concept of elitism was developed by Joseph Schumpeter, who pointed out that participation does not have to refer to the whole society and that it does not have spreading capabilities. Knowledge of politics can be applied for building the common good only if those who are interested in politics have good knowledge of it. In that case, the minority makes decisions concerning the majority. Schumpeter stresses that the democratic regime should not be considered utopian any longer. Democracy is not simply the rule of the people, but the system in which citizens elect their representatives, who they should not disturb in exercising power [Schumpeter 2009].

This multitude of views concerning the knowledge of politics and its influence on the quality of political civic competences can also be supplemented with the criticism of rationality. As far as the 20th century concepts are concerned, we should quote Michael Oakeshott's theory. Criticizing the expert knowledge of politics, he distinguished between two kinds of thinking: practical and technical. The first type referred to knowledge from a number of areas, which helps to describe the successive stages of action leading to the accomplishment of the goal, such as how to build a house or hammer a peg in the wall [Oakeshott 1999]. The other kind of thinking, practical knowledge, was connected with a lot of spheres of life, in which, to make decisions, we make use of our experience or intuition, i.e. "the levels of initiation", which cannot be learnt from course books, but are a consequence of life choices. Thus, practical thinking is devoid of rationality that technical knowledge involves. This also refers to politics. As Marcin Król notes, "the art of politics cannot be learnt from a course book, but only thanks to experience and intuition, as well as through taking advantage of the moment, circumstances and opportunities" [Król 2015].

At present, there is a lot of criticism of rational thinking based on reliable knowledge. This is mainly related to the view that in the world which is becoming more and more complicated, citizens first of all need simplified visions (which contributes to the emergence and reinforcement of populism). That is why they will never be fully informed. As Agnieszka Turska-Kawa notes, "when the individual does not have the sufficient amount of information, they fill information gaps by making use of the available methods supporting the decision-making process" [Turska-Kawa 2015]. What is the most common tool is obviously a heuristic technique, i.e. simplified reasoning rules. One may also get carried away by emotions, which definitely contradict rational choice [Caplan 2017].

However, despite the criticism of rationalism and doubts concerning the knowledge of politics, it is an important element of the development of political civic competences. What should be the starting point for acquiring knowledge of politics is R. Dahl's statement that "everyone should have equal and real opportunities to be informed about all possible decisions and their likely consequences" [Dahl 1999]. It is assumed that knowledge of politics is a "set of facts stored in long-term memory" [Caprini, Keeter 1993]. Citizens acquire knowledge in order to become well-informed and, owing to this, participate in the life of the whole community. This mainly refers, as numerous studies confirm, to electoral participation, but also to building social relations and cooperation with other countries. It should be

pointed out that knowledge of politics exists on different levels in different societies and communities, and is relatively stable in time. At the same time, “political knowledge is fraught with consequences and develops a sense of having influence on politics” [Caprini, Keeter 1993].

Research shows that people’s political knowledge and its quality are determined by their social position, involving age, place of living, professional status and level of religiousness. These factors significantly affect the level of one’s knowledge of politics. They are also largely dependent on the sources of knowledge: mass media, both traditional and electronic ones. Citizens are usually insufficiently informed and rely mostly on their own experience. They usually have the so-called general competence, which allows them to produce quite conventional opinions, which are the basis for making easy decisions “with the least possible effort and low costs” [Godlewski 2009]. There is no doubt this is caused by the high costs of absorbing and storing political information and difficulties in acquiring and understanding this information [Bennet 1988].

It should also be added that we must distinguish between professional interest in politics resulting from one’s job, e.g. a politician or a political scientist, and understanding it by an ordinary citizen. What is more, the practical understanding of politics does not have to be superficial. It mainly depends on the degree of one’s interest: if a citizen accumulates, analyzes and constantly absorbs knowledge, they cannot be criticized for the lack of deep understanding of it. In turn, when one becomes occasionally interested in political affairs and does not seem to comprehend the complex nature of the world, their knowledge of politics becomes common and superficial and their interest in this matter may be based on digressions and impressions [Karwat 2012]. In this case, people focus on details, which are perceived without discerning any relations and determinants. The information that a citizen has lacks order and is simplistic. Mirosław Karwat compares this to a gossip type of curiosity. It focuses on scandals, rumours and sensations the perception of which is based on impressions and emotions (often speculations) rather than logical ordering. People with such knowledge of politics may be seen as competent, but they are not interested in politics defined as a set of programme alternatives or possible solutions to social problems. For them, politics involves things like personal animosities, the line-up of powers and popularity rankings [Karwat 2012].

Common knowledge is based on three basic components: imaginations, intuition and valuing judgments [Karwat 2012]. They significantly contribute to the conventional perception of reality, without analyzing the whole, to the simplification and detailed view of a vision (what somebody said, etc.). Thus, common knowledge is not conducive to the consolidation of democracy; it is quite the opposite. People who have common knowledge are more influenced by populist slogans: simple solutions to difficult situations. Their knowledge of politics is founded on a simple pattern: who stole – has to give it back; something is impossible – we “can do it”. Otherwise, even if, on the basis of common knowledge, a citizen tries to make rational decisions, their rationalism will still lose to a promise, since their knowledge is random rather than permanent.

Karwat compares this type of knowledge to the substantive knowledge of politics. It focuses on problems instead of marginal information concerning politics. Citizens

are interested in institutions, political structures, and social and legal norms. They deal with social diagnoses, forecasts of the future, ideas for new solutions, and judgments of other people's views [Karwat 2012]. Unfortunately, as empirical research shows, only about two or three per cent of citizens have the substantive knowledge of politics. The others, as Mikołaj Cześniak, Radosław Markowski and Agnieszka Kwiatkowska put it, should be classified in the categories of: „total ignoramus”, „paralyzing ignoramus”, „huge ignoramus” or just „ignoramus” [Cześniak, Markowski, Kwiatkowska 2016].

Elaborating on M. Karwat's deliberations, we may thus indicate four levels of interest in politics. On the first level, in line with the opinion of Markowski and his team, there is political ignorance. This refers to people uninterested in politics, who are usually too poorly educated to grasp political information. This group also includes those for whom politics is a waste of time and this is why they do not seek information connected with it. On the second level, there are people who use the abovementioned common knowledge – usually based on emotions, intuition and speculations. Their knowledge is unordered, chaotic and superficial. These two groups – of ignoramuses and “speculators” – significantly contribute to the development of populism and extremism. Their polar opposites are the substantive knowledge of politics and expert political knowledge. They are both marked by reflection and cause and effect thinking, which embraces the whole instead of just the details of phenomena. While the substantive knowledge of politics is to a large degree uncritical of the sources of information and rarely helps to formulate hypotheses, the expert knowledge is free of these deficiencies. Moreover, its qualities are perfectionism and a sense of dynamics, as well as seeking new sources and verification capability.

Therefore, it is up to a person how he or she gains knowledge of politics. Whether one is predisposed to moving from common knowledge (or even from political ignorance) to substantive (or expert) knowledge depends on a number of factors. The study conducted by the research team of SWPS University of Social Science and Humanities [Żerkowska-Balas, Cześniak, Zaremba 2017] reveals some regularity concerning the stability of Polish people's political knowledge – in the years 1997-2015 it was relatively constant, showing no systematic and permanent fluctuations. It was also confirmed that older, well-educated, wealthy residents of large cities have more knowledge about politics. The research provided evidence that people whose knowledge of politics is broader than just common know its mechanisms and do not limit themselves to observing political events [Żerkowska-Balas, Cześniak, Zaremba 2017]. This was confirmed by the study carried out by Radosław Markowski's team, who pointed at culture, especially reading, as one of the significant determinants of interest in political knowledge. According to the statistics of the National Library from 2015-2016, only 35 per cent of Poles read at least one page of printed text a year. It means that a considerable part of electors had not read the programmes of political parties before the parliamentary election of 2015.

This is a point of significant relevance as the acquisition of political knowledge shapes political thinking. It is based on a specific set of views, which make up the so-called mind map or mind model. It is founded on the formulation of diagnostic, explanatory, forecasting, valuing and normative judgments [Reykowski 2002].

Although political thinking and gaining political knowledge are individual actions, mind models established on the basis of them are made owing to joint efforts – being a consequence of socialization and obtaining information from other people. People who lack a mind model are not able to think about politics independently and often make decisions on the spur of the moment, influenced by emotions, authoritative people or external pressures. They may be easily controlled since their thinking of politics is determined by chaos and randomness. They also become susceptible to populist slogans.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEMS AND METHOD

The aim of our study is to identify the influence of political knowledge on the quality of Polish-Azerbaijani relations. We selected an in-depth interview as the research method, because it seemed to us that a questionnaire was a set of too simplified responses [Modrzejewski 2011; 111-113]. An in-depth interview is usually chosen when specific phenomena, such as the relevance of political knowledge for building social and political relations, come into play. This is because it offers the possibility of asking respondents in order to seek explanations or deeper meanings, as well as creating the atmosphere for sincere answers.

The study was carried out between October 2017 and March 2018 and is one of the outcomes of our research internship at Baku Slavic University. The participants of the study were university students who spoke Polish, which was the consequence of their interest in Poland. We also conducted in-depth interviews with students from Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, who study the same field and at the same level as their Azerbaijani colleagues at the same. There were 50 respondents, including 25 from Baku Slavic University and 25 from the Nicolaus Copernicus University; 30 women and 20 men. They were students of international relations at the age of 21-23.

The main research problem was the influence of political knowledge on the development of relations between the representatives of two societies and countries: Azerbaijan and Poland. That is why the interviews were designed in the way that can be referred to as cross-examining: we asked students from Poland about Azerbaijan, and interviewed students from Baku about Poland. These questions were preceded by preliminary general questions, which allowed us to build rapport with the interviewees.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

We asked three general questions to which we received interesting responses. The answer to the first of them, “Is family important for you?”, was actually not surprising. 49 people declared that their family was very important, but they raised different arguments. They used statements such as “my family understands me perfectly,” “because I love them a lot,” “because there are no things more important in life.” Two responses drew our attention. One of them, which confirmed that family is very important, was given by a student from Baku: “when the family is good, the society is good as well, and this means a good state.” The other response that is worth emphasizing was given by a student from Poland, who was the only one that answered our question in an ambiguous way. She said: “It depends on

whom". She justified her words saying: "My husband is one of the few people that I get on well with. My dad was the only person who knew how I had been treated in my adolescence years (my parents are divorced) and who was always on my side." The student's answer to another question was interesting as well. When asked who she respected most, she replied it was Margaret Thatcher.

What should be emphasized – this response was one of the few in which these young people declared that they had the role model in life. The overwhelming majority of them (37 people) answered they had no such model. The others stressed their attachment to family (seven respondents said that it was their mother and father that were their role models, one person replied it was only her mother). The remaining five students gave witty and, at the same time, evasive replies, e.g. "Messenger." It should be pointed out that the majority of Polish students (22 people) had difficulty in naming their role model.

Our last general question concerned young people's attitude to tradition. The respondents' answers show clear national divisions: for 23 Azerbaijani students, tradition is of big or very big importance. Only two people gave the negative answer here. One of them added that tradition based on religion imposes limitations on his development opportunities. He talked about social problems generated by religion, specifically saying that it "makes the society move backwards", it "confines women to their houses" and "does not make people feel a part of the community." Polish students, in turn, unanimously stated that "tradition brings no benefit," "tradition does not let people spread their wings," "life in line with tradition means the return to Middle Ages," and that "one should look ahead rather than constantly refer to tradition."

In the second part of our interviews, we asked the respondents about their general knowledge concerning politics. The aim was to establish the level of trust in politicians and get an overview of young people's style of thinking about politics. Thus, having asked them about their trust in politicians, we got the confirmation of a general trend of the so-called political distrust in Poland: none of our respondents declared trust in politicians. They were accused of being greedy, deceitful (lying during election campaigns) and showing no interest in their voters after a campaign. This was consistent with the part of the interview which concerned associations with the profession of a politician. The respondents often repeated that a "politician is a person with power and money." Two people emphasized that people usually choose the job of a politician in order to make a career.

It should be pointed out that the responses concerning the above issues obtained from Polish students significantly differed from those given by young Azerbaijani. The majority, i.e. as many as 15 people, stressed their lack of trust in politicians. The others either trusted politicians (seven people) or used the lack of opinion as an excuse. Let us quote one of the students. He said: "A politician is a symbol of success and a well-managed career. Thus, one should trust politicians, because if they have been able to win so much for themselves, they will also do a lot for others." In this context, the answers to the question about the qualities that a female politician should have were very interesting. While this question did not raise any controversy among Azerbaijani students (which might be due to the fact that a woman holds the office of vice-president in this country), their Polish colleagues were surprised by the way the question had been formulated. They

asserted that a woman in politics should have the same personality traits as a male politician. The Polish participants of the study stressed that both genders are equal when it comes to doing the job of a politician and that is why women are no different from men in this respect (23 out of 25 answers). The Azerbaijani respondents, in turn, indicated the qualities which distinguish women, such as sensitivity and benevolence. They also expressed a conviction that not every woman is predisposed to the profession of a politicians, because, above all, she has to be... smart (21 people). It was suggested that, actually, every male politician is wise, and women must prove their wisdom if they want to be politicians.

The third section concerned the knowledge of Azerbaijan (we asked this question to the Polish students) and Poland (asked to the Azerbaijani respondents). What is interesting, among 25 participants from Nicolaus Copernicus University, there was not a single one that had visited Azerbaijan before and none of them could speak Azeri. What drew our attention during the talks with Poles was their indifference to Azerbaijan, often verging on ignorance. It was evident in their answers, such as “I don’t know anything about Azerbaijan, except for its geographical location,” “I don’t know where. Asia?” or “unfortunately nothing.” When asked what they know about Azerbaijan, Polish students showed no real interest in this country, its people and culture. One could have an impression that the fact they studied with Azerbaijani citizens did not make any of them take an effort to seek some basic information about the country, its culture and tradition, and its political system, etc. There was only one answer that revealed some knowledge about Azerbaijan – one of the students, a woman, associated it with “oil and wealth” and “Formula One GP.”

In view of the above, it is surprising how much students from Baku know about Poland. As we mentioned before, all of the respondents learned Polish. What is interesting, they did it not because it was an institutional obligation, but because they were motivated by their interest in Poland and liking towards Poles. They often said: “we like Polish people as they are hospitable and smile a lot,” and “the level of education in Poland is very high, and the ability to speak Polish will help us study there. These statements were supported by very pragmatic assumptions, such as: “the knowledge of Polish allows us to study abroad. Poland is a member of the European Union and graduation from a European university opens new opportunities.”

At the same time, it must be stressed that students from Baku perceive Poles as “cheerful and hard-working people” and appreciate Poland’s achievement in the area of state development and culture. Even if we consider their knowledge to be incomplete, we must admit that it is much broader than Polish students’ knowledge of Azerbaijan. There was not a single answer like the Polish respondents’ statements: “I know nothing about Azerbaijan” (19 people) or “I have no information about it” (four people).

CONCLUSIONS

Political knowledge is based on general knowledge. The study we conducted among the selected students at the turn of 2017 and 2018, which concerned political knowledge as an element of the building of relations between the societies of Azerbaijan and Poland, shows no symmetry. First, there is no symmetry as far as

basic knowledge of the other side is concerned. While students from Baku show interest both in Poland and Poles, speak the Polish language (sometimes not fluently, though) and know the most fundamental things about our country, students from Poland have no such knowledge of Azerbaijan, demonstrating no interest whatsoever in their host country, its problems and politics.

Second, there is no symmetry in cultural experience. Students from Nicolaus Copernicus University emphasized gender equality when it comes to performing the role of a politician, but, at the same time, they denied the importance of tradition in social development. This is quite the opposite of what students from Baku said in the interviews. Young Azerbaijanis stressed that there are huge differences between men and women dealing with politics and believed that tradition is an important indicator of cultural identity. It was also easier for them to identify their role model. As a matter of fact, our respondents tend to agree only on issues such as trust in politicians, the importance of family or associations with the profession of a politician. However, the compatibility of answers in this sphere is insufficient to build good social and political relations between Azerbaijan and Poland.

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THE DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT AND PARTICIPATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION ENERGY POLICY

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Abstract

The European Union (EU) is an organization which consists of democratic states. However, paradoxically, both politicians and researchers of the European integration process notice the deficit of democracy existing in the EU and point to its negative consequences for the future of the European integration process. In search of the legitimacy of their actions, EU institutions refer to the tools of participatory democracy, which was recognized in the Lisbon Treaty as a complement to a representative democracy underlying the functioning of the European Union. Participation is more and more often applied in the shaping of EU policies. However, an increased interest of citizens in the participation in the designing of EU policies is noticeable only in some areas of functioning of the EU. These matters include decisions in the sphere of energy policy. This article attempts to present the reasons for this situation. The attention is focused, on the one hand, on the problem of the democratic deficit in the European Union as well as on the ways of gaining democratic legitimacy by EU institutions, on the other hand, on the interest of European citizens in participation in shaping the EU's energy policy.

Key words: *democracy in the European Union, democratic deficit, participation, democratization, energy policy, renewable energy sources*

INTRODUCTION

In this article we adopt the assumption that basic principles of democracy are associated with legitimacy, transparency, control of operations of power and participation of governors in the process of governance, and that democracy itself is not just a sum of institutional devices forming and articulating a political bond

between citizens and governing institutions, expressing in the last instance the political will of the people, but it also means a certain way of taking political decisions on the basis of unfettered deliberation and the principle of majority (Schmidt, 2002). The political practice shows, however, that the adoption of a specific perspective changes the meaning of participation. An example of this is the perspective of the governing and the governed. The first group can treat participation as an opportunity to optimize political decisions and gain legitimacy for undertaken actions, the other as an opportunity and a tool to exert influence on final political decisions. We acknowledge that participation should be a constant element of democratic decision-making processes. We assume that it represents, on the one hand, a form of participation in the decision-making process desired by society or citizens, and on the other hand, the activity of society in this process which is optimal for decision-makers. Adopting these two perspectives, we focus primarily on finding answers to the questions: What main problems does democracy pose for the process of European integration and what challenges does the problem of participation in EU energy policy face?

1. DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Interactions between its ideals and reality lie at the roots of democracy. For this reason, we can assign at least two dimensions: instrumental and normative to democracy. The concept of participation is at the crossroads of normative and empirical social sciences. The instrumental understanding of participation is associated with the empirical or realistic approach to democracy, while the normative concept with idealistic approaches (Friedrich, 2011).

Democracy as a postulate and concrete political act encounters a number of limitations due to which, despite uniform premises (cultural, ideological, political, structural, systemic, etc.), the degree of democratization varies (Schmitter and Karl, 1995). Moreover, democracies differ in the level of agreement on basic political objectives and the role of the state, the scope of participation in the political life, the degree of access to power, the way of enforcing political accountability, the scope of the principle of the majority, the level of sovereignty of the parliament, the scope of the rule of the party, the way of implementing the principle of pluralism, the scope of the spatial distribution of a power, the scope of the powers of the head of state and the way of implementing the principle of separation of powers. The basic condition for the existence of a democratic system is the people as a sovereign subject of politics, encompassing all citizens equipped with equal political rights and holding the institutionally ensured possibility of exercising direct and indirect governing actions. What is also important is the existence of constitutional institutions which guarantee the representative nature of power and administration, mainly coming from the direct election of the Parliament and the accountable government, and institutions structuring the current political life of the people, representing the interests of citizens and translating them into concrete proposals and political agendas – and therefore, parties and socio-political associations – and public opinion allowing the formation of political will of the people through the exchange of views and dialogue (Schmidt, 2002). Democratic political systems differ in institutions of political participation and exerting

influence, and institutions of the distribution and exercising of power. According to Robert Dahl and Bruce Stinebrickner, the most convincing indirect evidence is the differentiation of institutions providing citizens with opportunities to participate in the process of making decisions carried out by the state government (Dahl and Stinebrickner, 2007).

In the case of a supranational organization, such as the European Union, the definition of democracy has become an important practical problem and a difficult theoretical challenge. There is no consensus as to whether the European Union can be a democratic organization; among those who consider it to be possible there are proponents of “discovering” democracy anew within the union’s original and unprecedented political and institutional structure. They stress that democracy cannot be instilled in a political vacuum, that is without political unification there can be no democratization (Nevola, 2001). They support their thesis with the argument that in the process of building democratic institutions, political unification precedes democratization, the condition for passing the democratization test by a political system is passing the unification test. In other words, “first «let us get together», let us establish where we are, where our home is, and who we are; then let us discuss, let us divide into groups, if necessary – let us argue, let us fight for our views and our interests, and let us agree how to settle our disputes, let us establish who owns what. In the end, if any good, including power, is to be divided in accordance with the rules and principles of democratic pluralism, firstly the property should be divided; only in a common and unified political space, and only among its parties it is possible to discuss and compete in sharing of available goods” (Walzer, 1983).

An increased interest in the problems of democracy in the European Union can be associated with the development of European integration. The establishment of the European Union and the clarification in the content of art. 1 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) of the task of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe, in which decisions are taken with the greatest possible respect for the rule of openness and as close to citizens as possible, placed the question of democratization of this organization and democracy of decision-making processes in the heart of the issues important to the future of Europe. Due to the changes taking place in the EU as a result of the entering into force of revision treaties and subsequent accessions, the European Union has become one of the most important sources of relevant decisions in Europe. Moreover, most observers agree that since the creation of the Communities in the 50s of the twentieth century decision-making powers have moved largely from the Member States to the European level. There is, therefore, a clear and growing need to understand how to create policy in the EU context (Rosamond, 2007).

The issue of the need to take action to democratize the European Union has become one of the topics of the discussion on the way out of the “constitutional crisis” connected with the rejection of the Constitution for Europe by citizens of the EU (Kuzelewska, 2011). This event was defined as a fall of the “permissive consensus”, i.e. a situation in which European citizens were not interested in integration, had no opinion about it, or they supported governments promoting integration. Paradoxically, increasing awareness and knowledge of citizens on European issues largely turned against integration processes (Mrozowska, 2012).

In terms of the democratic deficit at the EU level, there are positions in favour of its absence or indicating that its existence is not critical for the development of the organization (Moravcsik, 1993, 2005) or is impossible (Czaputowicz, 2014), and the institutional system of the EU is as democratic as it is possible in the realities of a supranational organization, and those that emphasize its existence on many levels (Modrzejewski, 2016; Majone, 1998; Kuper, 1998).

Moreover, *a crisis of Western democracy* is pointed to, defining this phenomenon as a result of many phenomena, including excessive liberalization of markets; increased role of institutions and international law; change of the role of the media which control public authorities to an increasingly smaller extent, and create political events instead; disappearance of substantive debate or pushing it to niche environments; increased role of political marketing manipulating social moods. The development of civil society only slightly counteracts tendencies to weaken the democratic system. As a result of the above phenomena the basic principle of political legitimacy through a general election becomes limited. The possibility to implement the “will of the people” weakens and the evolution of the political system in Western countries increasingly moves to the actual oligarchy of the system while maintaining basic democratic institutions. In part this is done by a symbiosis of national elites with transnational elites (Grosse, 2011).

If we adopt the assumption that the European Union should be democratic, the problem is to define democracy at supranational level. The level of democracy in the EU is often examined through the prism of the conditions of democracy at the national level (Mihálik and Juhás, 2012). The allegation appears that something like ethos on the European scale has never existed, and will not exist, because the European continent is characterized by ethnic and cultural pluralism. In Europe there are also no genuinely European socio-political organizations, operating in the trans-national space and expressing trans-national aspirations, European in the proper sense. Similarly, European political parties are European in name only, and not due to their activity, also no genuine European public opinion exists (Grzeszczak, 2002).

From this perspective, the tendency of the European Union to increase the opportunities for participation of citizens in the EU political life is associated with a desire to eliminate the democratic deficit in political, institutional and social terms. The social approach emphasizes the absence of the European *demos* and enumerates elements necessary for the emergence of a community of Europeans, which is a prerequisite for the democratization of the European Union. The social democratic deficit is considered to be particularly dangerous for the further development of the European integration process. It manifests itself in the estrangement of an ordinary citizen from EU institutions, the lack of a sense of relationship of citizens with the European integration process and the lack of awareness of the impact of decisions taken at European level. This type of democratic deficit results in low turnout in the elections to the European Parliament, ratification crises, and a decline of citizens’ interest in EU issues and their knowledge on the subject. The essence of the social democratic deficit is the fact that “the European Union makes decisions on a wide range of issues directly affecting citizens, but they are only indirectly and not fully entitled to influence these decisions” (Christiansen, 2008).

Scientific attempts to indicate the solution of the democratic deficit problem have been undertaken for many years. Abromeit (1998) believed that the democratic system of political decision-making should have the possibility of transferring conflicts to the level of operating representative elements of the system to effectively take relevant decisions accepted and implemented in relevant sectors, and ensure adequate participation of members of these organizations. Therefore, he proposed the reorganization of the territorial and sectoral representation at the institutional level and the system of the right of veto enjoyed by such representations (including the possibility for their members to express themselves in a referendum). In turn, Cini (Cini, 2003) argued that democratization of the European level is only possible using the parliamentary and/or federation approach. Biernat (Biernat, 2001, p. 40) indicates, however, that the solution to this problem is “largely «encoded» in its nature which, as it seems, is located at three different planes”. As the first of them the author mentioned citizens’ perception of and attitudes towards the surrounding political reality, stressing that it is the perception through the prism of the nation-state, with the whole current and past ballast which is connected with this form of political organization of society. As the second element he recognized the nature of the legal system and, in fact, not the content of individual standards of this system, but what can be defined as its specific morphology. The third one is the creation of the administrative structure, as a kind of a *sui generis* fact, which, in accordance with the assumptions accepted at the earliest stage of the creation of the European Communities, diverges from conventional forms. Moreover, he stresses that in the situation in which the EU is, clinging to “models of democracy” learned from the practice of functioning of the state is justified only to a small extent. He proposed to start the reorganization of the legal system in order to liquidate the democratic deficit by calling into existence the constitution containing a charter of fundamental rights. In the end, he noticed that the third plane is the most controversial, because it concerns the administration which actually performing political functions is excluded from political control to the same extent as in a democratic state. According to the author, the introduction of control mechanisms should be preceded by a clear indication of the direction in which united Europe is to develop. Grosse (Grosse, 2011, p.88-89) proposed a different solution, and suggested a reflection on three solutions. The first of these was to limit the existing expansion of the European integration and revert it to the period of intergovernmental cooperation. In this way, borrowed legitimacy would be sufficient social justification for the functioning of the Union. This would entail the need to restore unanimous voting in intergovernmental institutions, as for proper legitimacy of intergovernmental cooperation each party of the agreement should have the equal scope of exercised power. He regarded the strengthening of political institutions in the Union elected by universal suffrage in whole Europe as the second mechanism eliminating the democratic deficit. According to the author, it would have to mean such a reform of the existing system of the Union which would introduce mechanisms of a democratic federation. In the author’s view, the third way to reduce the democratic deficit is an attempt to build ways of obtaining social legitimacy in the Union which are alternative to democratic ones.

2. PARTICIPATION AND LEGITIMATION

Due to the changes taking place in the EU as a result of the entering into force of revision treaties and subsequent accessions, the European Union has become one of the most important sources of relevant decisions in Europe. Moreover, most observers agree that since the creation of the Communities in the 50s of the twentieth century decision-making powers have moved largely from the Member States to the European level. In this context, the issue of decision-making in the European Union and participation of European citizens in this process has become an important problem.

The basis of the functioning of the EU is representative democracy, but forms of participatory democracy also occupy an important place in the Treaty of Lisbon (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007). The relationship between representative democracy and participatory democracy was defined as complementary. Art. 11 of the Treaty points out the preferred form of participation of European citizens in the decision-making processes, and mentions horizontal civil dialogue, vertical civil dialogue, consultation of the European Commission (EC) and the European citizens' initiative, which has been identified as the first ever case of the inclusion in the Treaty of concrete provisions relating to the procedure of direct democracy at the supranational level.

However, not all instruments proposed by the EU have the potential to increase the participation of citizens in shaping EU policy. On 31 March 2015, the European Commission published its first report on the European citizens' initiative in the years 2012-2015, which shows that in the three years EC received fifty-one applications, among which thirty-one concerned matters within the competence of the Commission and were registered. Three initiatives reached the threshold of one million signatures, the organizers of twelve failed to collect enough signatures, and ten were withdrawn (Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, 2015).

An example of an instrument of vertical civil dialogue is the "Agora" of the European Parliament¹. It was to provide a forum connecting the voices of European citizens with the voices of their elected representatives. Its participants were supposed to have the opportunity to present specific policy strategies based on everyday experiences in order to solve the problems faced by the EU. The results of the "Agorae" work were to help Members of the European Parliament in their further work. Creating this forum, the European Parliament was to move beyond the framework of the traditional division of civil society into sectors. In order to achieve this, the creation of interdisciplinary working groups was planned consisting of representatives of various communities and social groups. Their exchange of views was to be a complement to the existing programme of hearings in committees. The "Agora" was to enable voters and the elected from all sectors of society and Member States to gather together to openly discuss the future of Europe.

In the years 2007-2016 there four debates were held in the framework of the "Agora": The future of Europe (08-09.11.2007), Citizens' Agora on climate change (12-13.06.2008), The economic and financial crisis and new forms of poverty (27-

¹ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/20150201PVL00041/Agora>

28.01.2011) and Citizens' Agora on youth unemployment (06–07.11.2013). Thus, the original assumptions about the organization of debates twice a year was not realised. After more than ten years since the creation of the "Agora" this instrument cannot be considered significant for the process of democratization of the EU.

In turn, researchers of EC consultations note (Kurczewska, 2015, p. 44) that "the EU moves towards increasing the communication dimension and building relationships with civil society. The European Commission tries to create a European space of communication through bureaucratic procedures and inclusion of stakeholders in the deliberations, although they are often too technical and require expert knowledge. The consultations are highly formalized and conducted with the standards of transparency, openness and inclusion. However, we should remember that they serve EC primarily as an instrument to legitimize its decisions and strategies and to strengthen the political position and prestige in the institutional structure of the EU".

One of the problems of democracy in the EU is the weakness of social actors of politics and the lack of European identity and common public opinion, which inevitably lead to the reduction of legitimacy of power (Jasiecki, 2008, p. 39.). Moreover, in the discussion about the creation of EU civil society the conditions, the fulfilment of which would increase a bottom-up pressure on the democratization of the Union institutions are often characterised. These include the instilment in citizens of the awareness of the functioning of the will of the collective entity (organizations, movements and coalitions), commitment to common democratic values, social awareness of participation in transnational political processes, the will of democratic shaping of the future of the whole Union, as well as the ability to create a counterweight to the dominance of economic interests.

From the empirical point of view, an expression of recognition by EU institutions of the value of participation are created institutions, cooperation networks, programmes, and various kinds of representative bodies such as: the European Commission and Civil Society²; Transparency³; Europe for Citizens Programme⁴; Dialogue with Civil Society⁵; Your Voice in Europe⁶; Citizen's Agora⁷; Civil Society, European Economic and Social Committee⁸; Liaison Group⁹; The Council of Europe and Non-Governmental Organizations¹⁰.

Other activities aimed at increasing the participation of European citizens in the decision-making processes include all attempts to unblock one-way flow of information from European institutions to citizens and two-way communication. In the latter area a number of documents have been prepared (Communication on a new framework for co-operation on the information and communication policy of

² http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/civil_society/ [accessed: 02.05.2016].

³ http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/index_en.htm [accessed: 02.05.2016].

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/europe-for-citizens-programme/index_en.htm [accessed: 02.05.2016].

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/europe-for-citizens-programme/structured-dialogue-with-civil-society/index_en.htm

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/index_en.htm

⁷ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/20150201PVL00041/Agora>

⁸ <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.civil-society>

⁹ <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.liaison-group>

¹⁰ http://www.coe.int/t/ngo/text_adopted_en.asp

the European Union, COM(2001) 354; Opinion on an information and communication strategy for the European Union, COM(2002) 350; Communication on implementing the information and communication strategy for the European Union, COM(2004) 196 the European Commissioner responsible for communication was appointed (Gniatkowski, 2007). As early as 2005 the so-called Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate was created COM (2005) 494, and a year later White Paper on a European communication policy (White Paper, COM(2006) 35).

3. PARTICIPATION IN EUROPEAN UNION ENERGY POLICY – THE EUROPEAN DIALOGUE ON ENERGY

In the framework of international negotiations on climate the EU pledged to reduce by 2020 greenhouse gas emissions by 20% compared to 1990 levels. Renewable energy sources are supposed to play one of the main roles in the implementation of these commitments. It was assumed that if by 2020 Europe managed to meet the targets on renewable energy and energy efficiency, it would be able to exceed the currently set level of emission reduction by 20% and reach the level of 25% reduction by 2020 compared to 1990 level. These indicators are reflected in the strategy *Europe 2020* (Europe 2020, COM(2010)2020). In Energy Roadmap 2050 (Opinion on the “Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Energy Roadmap 2050”, COM(2011) 885) it is assumed that renewable energy will be the basis of the EU energy system in the future. The idea of “green growth” is treated as an additional opportunity for both the transition to modern technologies of exploitation of natural resources and the creation of new jobs. This priority is linked to the EU’s ambition to become a leader in environmental technologies and environmental protection. Member States have undertaken to meet their obligations to achieve national indicators of the Europe 2020 strategy. Individual EU states are diverse in both economic and social terms - therefore they were given different target values to achieve, which they undertook to do using the means and tools adapted to their specificity and their capabilities. The effects of their actions are supposed to lead to the realisation of common objectives. The differences in the perception of the objectives of EU energy policy by citizens of Member States were noticed by the European Economic and Social Committee which engaged itself in building a dialogue on energy¹¹. It justified its decision by the fact that “if the EU is to meet energy targets, society must stand by its side”. The European Energy Dialogue was defined as a coordinated, multi-level, action-oriented conversation on energy policy within and across EU countries, and as a synonym of transferring reliable information about energy in a language ordinary people can understand (Press release of the European Economic and Social Committee. An effective EU energy policy needs informed and structured public dialogues, 27/2013).

The dialogue is to serve consumers in obtaining explanation of trade-offs and expressing preferences and to constitute a negotiation space where policy choices

¹¹ Promotion of civil society involvement and participation in energy issues through the European Energy Dialogue is the responsibility of the Permanent Study Group on the European Energy Community of the European Economic and Social Committee.

would be discussed against a background of societal impact and acceptance, investments and resource strategy. It is supposed to be a new structure taking into account social and civic involvement, consequently leading to deepening of public debate on energy, influencing policy making pertaining to all types of energy and playing a role in stimulating the convergence at the level of the European Union in close liaison with the framework of energy policy and climate protection policy for the period after 2020. The objective of the Economic and Social Committee was to establish and direct a permanent European dialogue on energy conducted at the national, regional, metropolitan and local level with the support of the European Commission.

The opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the development of the governance system proposed in the context of the 2030 climate and energy framework contained a clear diagnosis of the situation, specifying social deficit as a barrier to achieving the objectives of EU energy policy. EESC indicated that: “EU and national energy policies have a direct and significant, impact on the lives of citizens. However, the content and rationale of these policies is often not clear to the general public and can be misunderstood by civil society. This leads to generally weak public support or misconceptions involving essential aspects of future EU development. Detrimental consequences follow and there are many instances of not informing and involving civil society in both national and EU energy policy which leads to a general lack of trust and to policies not always achieving desired results” (Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the development of the governance system proposed in the context of the 2030 climate and energy framework, 2015).

The most important benefits of the European energy dialogue included the following: a better understanding of policy formulation and implementation of the Energy Union, contributing to the visibility, acceptance and success of this key priority of the Commission; an informed view of the public, providing more political certainty, and the evidence of an open, focused and results-oriented process. This informed view will result from the practical combination of the European-wide interactive EED conversation and everyday knowledge; a better understanding by energy users of their role and measures available to them for enhancing their energy economy, leading to more consumer engagement, the basis for a renewed and positive relationship with energy suppliers; a ‘neutral conversation space’, fostering trust and legitimacy through framing and facilitating discussion rather than through suggesting a predetermined conclusion (Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the development of the governance system proposed in the context of the 2030 climate and energy framework, 2015).

In 2015 EESC presented the final report of the study of the role of civil society in the implementation of the EU Renewable Energy Directive (EESC Study, 2015). Conclusions from the study clearly confirmed that the potential of civil society to accelerate the transition to renewable energy is untapped. Moreover, “The study team could find no signs of a consistently-implemented government strategy aimed at promoting civic energy in any of the Member States. Public debates about energy policy are usually dominated by price concerns and may even fall victim to populism. An open and transparent public debate on energy costs and prices is

needed". (EESC study on the role of civil society in the implementation of the EU Renewable Energy Directive, 2015, p. 34).

CONCLUSION

Activities aimed at the democratization of the EU have not produced the expected results. However, this organization cannot remain indifferent to the democratic deficit, among others, due to the fact that seeking to gain legitimacy it must take into account the fact that democracy is a value very highly rated by its citizens, and only 18% of them in 2015 gave a positive answer to the question of whether the European Union means democracy to them (Eurobarometer 83).

The views recognizing the democratic deficit as a barrier to the development of the European Union are dominated by positions indicating its two variants: institutional and social. The first of them refers to the institutional structure established in the process of European integration, the other to the situation of "estrangement" of an ordinary citizen from EU structures, and his sense of lack of influence on the process of shaping European policy. The remedy for the social deficit are attempts to implement tools of participatory democracy, which was recognized in the Lisbon Treaty as a complement to representative democracy underlying the functioning of the European Union.

Participation of European citizens in the decision-making processes is still a big challenge for the European Union: it is accepted as a tool for the democratization of the EU by European institutions, but increased interest of citizens in participating in the shaping of EU policies is noted only in some areas of functioning of the EU. Those matters include decisions pertaining to energy policy.

EU initiatives to build a dialogue are often referred to as idealistic and difficult to implement. An exceptional example of an institutional attempt bringing the citizen nearer to the European Union is a European dialogue on energy – an initiative of the European Economic and Social Committee – undertaken in connection with the strategic development of renewable energy in the European Union. The dialogue is to serve consumers in obtaining explanation of trade-offs and expressing preferences and to constitute a negotiation space where policy choices would be discussed against a background of societal impact and acceptance, investments and resource strategy. It is also supposed to be a new structure taking into account social and civic involvement, consequently leading to deepening of public debate on energy issues. The idea of the energy dialogue contains elements of effective communication and participation: recognition of different interests and perception of the local community; understanding of local communities, communication addressed to specific groups essential from the point of view of acceptance, transmission of information using tools and channels compatible with the needs of residents and continuous dialogue with local, especially opposition groups.

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FROM SOVIET TO CONTEMPORARY TRANSPARENCY: SOCIAL CHANGES IN GEORGIA

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Abstract

The present article examines the practical effects of the new social paradigm of transparency on the Georgian society. While contemporary Georgia affirms a clear European, modern orientation, there is a dark side to this development which needs to be addressed duly. This study examines the challenges that the new social changes bring: it explains in what ways the advent of transparency puts the functioning of the public sphere under risk. To explore the forms that both: transition and transparency assume, a complex set of qualitative methods was used including case studies, media analysis, focus group interviews and expert interviews.

Key words: *transparency, public sphere, private sphere, transition, development*

INTRODUCTION

Georgia is a post-Soviet country which undergoes the process of transition from totalitarian to democratic regimes, and changes the system of values and lifestyle – old standards are not totally devaluated, but new ones have not been firmly established yet. Along with other aspects of development, this transitory stage is evident in the development of the public and private spheres too. Contemporary Georgian society is in the process of (re)discovering the private sphere, which had been long repressed under the Soviet time. The fight against private property had reached even the physical bodies of individuals: metaphorically speaking, the person in the Soviet space (the ‘homo-Sovieticus’) was somehow deprived of their body, and then suddenly, after achieving independence from the USSR, they gradually started to discover their own body, and sometimes even show it publicly. This has been one source of the transition conflict in Georgia since the 1990s. Simultaneously, another conflict between the public and private spheres is starting to gain strength at another battlefield – the one which fits within the global trend of

physical space domination and transparency. Transparency represents a global social paradigm which strengthens social control and often leads to indifference and isolation. In most of the Western developed countries, transparency is a consequence of the intrusion of the private sphere into the public one. The picture is more complex in post-Soviet countries, where the establishment of transparency means the intrusion of the underdeveloped private sphere into the public sphere.

As this research addresses the issue of transparency, it studies specifically the relationship and balance between the two spheres (public and private) in Georgia. In this regard, the habit of the old Soviet experience of the public sphere plays a crucial role while the destruction of its standards is a painful process. This paper intends to answer the following questions: does the paradigm of transparency function in Georgia and how is it manifested? The paper claims that the new paradigm of transparency functions in Georgia too and carries considerable risks on the way to democracy. Along with the positive changes in the country's westernization processes, the social control imposed by transparency assumes a form which hinders the development of Georgian community.

Objective social sciences being a relatively new academic field, emerging slowly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there are many understudied issues in general. This is especially true regarding transparency: this is a topic which has not been addressed at all. Consequently, this research did not face the task to fill a gap in the study of transparency in Georgia, but to start filling an abyss. It rather created gaps the filling of which would put more light to the understanding of transition changes in general, as well as the experiences of transitory and post-Soviet countries which face the paradigm of transparency too.

The methods used for the research are basically qualitative and include desk research, media analysis, focus-group discussions and expert interviews. Thus the results are based on previous quantitative and qualitative surveys, press analysis, and newly produced data as well.

The structure of the paper is as follows: right after the introduction, there comes the review of relevant literature, which is followed by the methodology part. Then the results start with a brief overview of the cultural background of the Georgian society. The fourth section analyses why and how the new paradigm of transparency works in a transitional country like Georgia and, finally, the paper ends with a conclusion, where a general assessment, research implications and shortcomings are provided.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of transparency represents an overwhelming phenomenon which applies to all domains of life: politics, economics and society. This research focuses on the social implications of transparency, although the other domains fall under its rules too.

The concept of transparency is analysed through the theories of two major authors: Richard Sennett (1992) and Byung-Chul Han (2015). Sennett associated transparency with narcissistic tendency, opposing it to play and creativity, which had been the dominant forces until narcissism defeated them. Geographical space becoming more and more open to everyone's sight, people experience

embarrassment: they feel they are seen unmasked – just the way they are, and so everything they do reveals their personal character. According to Sennett, the 19th-century social changes made people abandon social masks in favour of the belief that direct, open relations create warm, long-lasting relationships. The private being inevitably present in the public sphere, social control has encompassed it too. This paved the way to an overwhelming fear to show private character in public. It became even unavoidable, and the solution people found to confront this stress was to create comfort in small communities whose members share many similarities. However, this solution leads to a vicious circle, as the demand on openness between two people burdens relationships with heavy responsibilities and very often leads to frustration. The demand on openness together with the intense social control create a paradoxical situation in which the size of the acceptable community is constantly shrinking, while community becomes ‘destructive’ and ‘loses civility’ – the ability to live in a pluralistic society, to interact with people who may be even dramatically different (Sennett 1992).

One of the latest works on transparency is authored by Byung-Chul Han. Han assesses the dominance of the transparency paradigm as essentially based on the mistaken assumption that ‘transparency creates trust’ - in reality, transparency brings total surveillance and control, leaving trust behind (Han 2015, p. vii). To show its decaying effect, the author equates ‘the transparency society’ with ‘the society of control’, and ‘the society of positivity’ where negativism is destroyed just like on Facebook where there is no ‘dislike’ button – for negativity is a drawback to communication and is economically useless too. (Han 2015, pp. 7-8). Also, Han refers to ‘the society of exhibition’, ‘the society of pornography’ or ‘the society of intimacy’, where the public sphere is an exhibition space, whereas the society, experiencing ‘the pornographic lack of distance’, loses critical consciousness (Han 2015, pp. 35-36). It becomes the ‘society of opinion’, which leads to no consequences and ‘leaves what already exists untouched. ... Compulsive transparency stabilizes the existing system most effectively’ (Han 2015, p. 7). Among other spheres of life, transparency negatively affects political performance and kills long-term planning (Han 2015, p. vii).

Most of the statements that Han made find relevance in the Georgian society. The development of communication and networking made being different or holding a different opinion more and more difficult. As Han states, transparent communication has a unifying and levelling effect, which causes de-individualization (Han 2015, pp. vii, 29-31). Transparency turns freedom and communication into total control precisely by the means of the members of the transparent society – they communicate with each other not because of an outer constraint, but voluntarily, out of inner need (Han 2015, p. 46). Thus Han states that the ‘transparent consumer is the new prisoner’ (Han 2015, pp. 48-49).

The application of Han’s and Sennett’s theories to transitory Georgia made me claim that the social control imposed by transparency assumes a different, more extreme form in Georgia for two reasons: 1) The transition period implies a passage from the traditional homogenous society to a more pluralistic one, from a collectivist consciousness to a more individualized one, and finally, from a poorly developed private sphere to a capable one (Leshchenko 2002); and 2) Georgia is among those cultures ‘which rely heavily on shame’ (Benedict 1984, p. 222).

When conducting an anthropological study of Japanese culture, Ruth Benedict distinguished and contrasted two types of cultures: one emphasizing the importance of guilt (like the American culture), and one privileging the importance of shame (like the Japanese culture). In the latter type of culture, individuals need to refine 'prudence and watchfulness', and live up to other people's expectations (Benedict 1984, pp. 220-222). Benedict's work gives an explication of the reason why the transparency paradigm was easily established in a post-communist country like Georgia.

As the paper addresses the functioning of the public sphere, and claims that transparency affects its functioning negatively, it was essential to consider the work of Jürgen Habermas: "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere" (1991). Habermas notes a certain disjunction between the functions that the public sphere practically assumes, and those functions which are expected from it in a democratic society (Habermas 1991, 222). He sees one source of the problem precisely in the disappearance of privacy due to the plurality and abundance of opposed interests – this incites the suspicion that it is impossible to find a common interest on which public opinion would rely. However, Habermas believes that the public sphere can fulfil an effective role if, along with the maximal diminution of bureaucracy, interest conflicts would be balanced according to universally acknowledged standards (Habermas 1991, 234-235).

2. METHODOLOGY

The research utilized a set of qualitative methods. First of all, desk research was carried out to select relevant previous studies: both qualitative and quantitative. There are two major surveys encompassing Georgia: the 'World Values Survey' (2008 and 2014), and the 'Caucasus Barometer' carried out annually in the South Caucasus countries. Those two databases are incommensurably important as they are the only sources showing general tendencies and attitudes in the Georgian society. In addition, another quantitative survey was carried out by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation: 'Generation in transition: Youth study 2016 – Georgia'. Thus the quantitative data was used to strengthen different arguments of the study. As for qualitative researches, this paper uses studies by different scholars published in academic journals, as well as a report fulfilled by a NGO – the Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center (EMC).

The next method used for this study was in-depth interviews with experts of social and political sciences. Namely, I conducted three interviews in November and December 2016: one with the sociologist Emzar Jgerenaia, two with political scientists Ghia Nodia and Thornike Sharashenidze. Those interviews aimed to reveal the actual issues of the Georgian public sphere, in addition to those revealed by desk research.

Another method used for this study was focus group discussions. There were two categories: the first two focus group interviews recruited high school students of 14-15 years old (10 in each group); whereas the other two focus groups were composed of respondents aged 25-35 and represented different social backgrounds. For the youngest groups, two public schools were selected in Tbilisi, capital of Georgia (namely, the 21st and the 55th state schools), as the situation in Tbilisi often gives

possibility to estimate what happens in other big cities and rural areas: if certain prohibitions or taboos would be evident in Tbilisi, then it would be probable to find them even more intensively in other big cities and rural areas. The focus-groups were composed considering gender balance, and the questions were the same for both age groups, the comparison of which gave dynamics. Nevertheless, there were a few issues that were discussed only with the older groups, as they already had accumulated considerable experience of social life. All the focus-group interviews took place in January 2017 and aimed assess young people's attitudes, as well as their compatibility with the 'transparency society'.

Finally, I have analyzed two popular employment web-sites in Georgia: 'hr.ge' and 'jobs.ge'. This method was an additional mean to assess the presence of transparency paradigm, more particularly, the presence of narcissistic principle in social relations. The study of the demands of employers towards potential employees clarifies what is acknowledged as desirable at least verbally and officially. Overall, 100 vacancies were selected that were announced in March 2017: 55 cases from 'hr.ge' and 45 cases from 'jobs.ge'. Those were vacancies for 'white-collar' jobs (as Sennett names it), where cadres have to deal with office work. I analyzed categories like 'administration' and 'management', with positions like 'sales manager', 'brand manager', 'office manager', 'administrator', 'development manager' or 'director assistant'. This kind of jobs select employees according to their 'personal skills' precisely.

3. CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Georgia stepped on the transition road in the second half of the 19th century – if we imply in transition not only the passage to democracy, but from the traditional to the modern system of values too. In this regard, we cannot avoid the importance of the Georgian Enlighteners' work, as it was precisely their initiative to implement the first project of modernization in Georgia. Apart from social reforms, they strived to establish modern values such as the importance of education, work, common welfare, and they harshly criticized inactivity and indifference (Kekelia 2015). To what extent were they successful in their intentions is a separate case for discussion, however, one thing is clear – critical thinking in the Georgian society started with Ilia Chavchavadze, the most famous figure of the Georgian Enlighteners. Ilia Chavchavadze was the person who criticized the society and handed it a 'mirror' so as to show all its flaws. For this reason, he was despised, as he writes in one of his poems: 'they say about me: "he speaks the vice of a Georgian, does not hide his flaws, this is obvious hatred!"' (Chavchavadze 1861). In spite of the Enlighteners' efforts, critical thinking proved to be hard to be implemented in the society, and this was due to two main reasons: 1) Georgia's last two centuries' history; 2) shame-based culture.

3.1. Russia-Georgia relations

Due to the restrictions that started with the Russian Empire, the last two-century history of Georgia could be assessed as a tragic 'existence' and not even 'history' (Jgerenaia 2017). Jgerenaia sees the reason in the opening of the Caucasus

mountain road by King George XIII of Georgia, which caused the chaining of Georgia to the mountains and the land instead of the sea.

“The land, unlike the sea, always creates conservative, recluse culture which is inclined towards autarchy. On the other hand, the unstable element of the sea and the seafaring are the basis for openness, liberal values, freedom, the giving and sharing of others’ cultural norms and customs” (Jgerenaia 2017: 32).

After having chained Georgia to the Caucasus Mountains, the Russian Empire was soon replaced by the Soviet Union, under the conditions of which all kinds of differences were persecuted, not to mention critical thinking. The attempt of homogenizing the society enrolled every person who was considered different into merciless repressions. Jgerenaia notes the influence of the Soviet regime on the homogenization process and the distortion of the meanings of some words: ‘words were deprived of their meaning, what was supposed to designate war was called “international aid”, “love” was understood and interpreted without “sexuality”, while “the workers’ and peasants’ state” did everything to deprive work from all its meaning’ (Jgerenaia 2017: 24-25).

Georgia achieved independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, nevertheless, the society’s mentality was still far from freedom. The data of the World Values Survey in 2014 suggest that 61.6% of the Georgian population think that it would be a positive change if respect towards authority increased in the future. This is assessed negatively only by 6%, whereas 30% holds a neutral position. The society is habituated to the fact that its fate is decided from ‘above’, and thus is constantly waiting for a hero that will save the nation. First, it was Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Georgia’s first president, who was regarded as the savior of the nation, then – Eduard Shevardnadze, Georgia’s second president, who wore ‘Stalin’s shade’ (Jgerenaia 2017) and was glorified as a hope for the Georgians. The same is true for the third president, Mikheil Saakashvili, and even as late as in 2012, the society believed that Bidzina Ivanishvili, the leader of the new opposition party, would be the guardian of the Georgian nation, and would care of their welfare as he is a famous millionaire. It seems that indeed, ‘having been a colony for a long period of time renders people deeply skeptical towards their own intellectual abilities and the capacity to create their own political order’ (Jgerenaia 2017: 33).

3.2. ‘Shame’ culture

Ilia Chavchavadze’s work had a crucial importance: it represented the first blow on the Georgian ‘shame-based culture’. However, the blow must have been far less than enough, as the indicators of the ‘shame culture’ are still clearly evident in the society. First of all, there is the famous phrase from a Georgian writer Chabua Amirejibi: ‘You should be your family’s emissary in your homeland, and your nation’s emissary outside your homeland, because your behaviour is your family’s face in your country, whereas it is your nation’s face outside your country!’¹ The

¹ Phrase retrieved from:
http://patriotebi.ucoz.com/load/brdznuli_gamonatkvamebi/ch'abua_amirejibis_brdznuli_gamonatkvamebi/2-1-0-54 (accessed 17 July 2017).

shame-based culture is suggested by the World Values Survey 2014 as well, according to which it is important for 78.8% of the Georgian population ‘to always behave properly; to avoid doing anything people would say is wrong’ (World Values Survey 2014).

The actual presence of the ‘shame culture’ was revealed through the focus-group interviews too: young respondents accorded importance to ‘people’s opinion’ and assessments, as well as the importance to behave conformably to their expectations. In this regard, a girl who is in her twenties and works as an assistant of lecturers at a state university in Tbilisi provides a most illustrative speech describing her insecurity:

I have a problem in the public space and I get tensed whenever I see that there is a certain expectation from me in the particular social environment. For example, I should live up to a certain expectation or I should do something. I do not worry at university lectures because I am sure about what I am doing. But if I have even a slightest doubt that I might not be [behaving the right way] in a concrete situation, then I just ‘stand in my corner’², not to mention communicability. I need to be sure that there is coincidence between others’ expectations and my capacities (girl from 25-35 year-old category).

This is the dominant attitude among the youth in Georgia, regardless of the level of education.

4. TRANSPARENCY AND THE DESTRUCTIVE ‘GEMEINSCHAFT’

Due to the specificities of Georgia’s political experience, the country has not developed firm democratic traditions yet. Neither is its private sphere developed. However, the modern stimulus of transparency is irrepressible and establishes a mixed and paradoxical situation where the underdeveloped private sphere already claims its transparent presence into the public sphere.

In a popular TV emission of the Soviet Union, a Georgian movie director Giga Lortkipanidze said: ‘the most terrible word for a Georgian ... is the word “[misleading] appearance”’ (Young Communist, 27.10.1988: 4). These words suggest that the transparent notion of ‘personality’ has existed in the Georgian society for at least decades already: as ‘[misleading] appearance’ implies play, a certain mask that the transparent society does not tolerate. Indeed, even at a glimpse, the actual picture of the Georgian society fits within the paradigm of transparency: the concept of personality has certain value, the social control encompasses the private sphere via the public sphere, and there is hardly any capacity to live in a pluralistic environment.

4.1. Narcissism

As one of the aims of the research was to assess whether or not the public sphere is transparent, it addressed the presence of narcissistic principle in social relations. First of all, the focus-group discussants were asked which attitude favours warm and strong relationships more, and the majority of both age groups chose

² Idiom in Georgian meaning to stay inactive.

‘straightforwardness’ or ‘openness’ against ‘the presence of certain norms and distance’, play and wearing social masks – the conviction that, according to Sennett, leads to disappointment and reduces the number of acceptable people in the community.

Secondly, the research addressed play and creativity as the forces towards which the narcissistic principle is hostile. Apart from the World Values Survey, low level of creativity is suggested by the focus-group discussions as well. Notwithstanding single exceptions, the desire to play was not manifest. One of the respondents even assessed play as ‘irrelevant’ in his age and even joked that it was a ‘soviet inheritance’. Another respondent saw the problem in the fact that he did not have relations with his childhood friends anymore, whereas another one mentioned the lack of infrastructure. ‘People of my generation do not have the same wish to play as I have, so I play with children and cats’ – said a girl from 25-35 year-old category.

In the third place, narcissism in the social space implies the emphasis on personal skills and characteristics instead of deeds and action. On the official web-sites of employment, a great majority of the vacancies had personal features and skills as requirements, often (in about 50% of the cases) in separate categories too, under the headings ‘personal features’ or ‘personal skills’. The mostly demanded personal features are ‘communicability’ (65 vacancies out of 100 search for communicative cadres), responsibility (56%), and organization and discipline (55%).

Table 1: Personal skills required by employers in Georgia

Personal skill	Percentage %
communicability	65
responsibility	56
organization and discipline	55
team work ability	36
time management skill	33
capacity to work in a stressful environment	23
negotiation skill	22
diligence and hard work	21
energy and activeness	21
analytical thinking	21
punctuality	20
motivation	17

ability to work independently	17
ability to plan	16
attentiveness to details and concentration skill	14
ability to act operationally	14
ability to take decisions rapidly	13
creativity or creative thinking	10
logical thinking	9
persuasiveness	8
honesty and morality	8

Obviously, it is hard for employers to define to what extent most of these required personal features characterize potential cadres, as it is a matter of theoretical perception. Therefore, employers rely on the impressions that prospective employees leave on them, as well as on recommendations and existing opinions on those candidates.

4.2. Social networks

The transparent social control would not be perfect without social media. According to a latest quantitative research in Georgia, 84% of the youth (14-29 year-olds) is a daily user of 'Facebook' (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung 2017), and is not exempted from the overwhelming social control of transparency. Facebook has become significantly popular in Georgia, and reduces the amount of time spent in face-to-face interactions. One can often observe, especially in Tbilisi, young people sitting in a café around the same table and staring into their cell phones. This happens everywhere: cafes and other public distraction spaces, on a village bench or at a public lecture. 88% of the youth (aged 14-29) have access to internet, spend about 3.7 hours there daily, and 86% use it for social networks (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung 2017). Social networks are predominately used for their visual effects – i.e. for exhibition purposes, for sharing or viewing photos and videos. Thus Facebook implements the culture of 'exhibition' and 'positivity': especially among young people, who use the social network for 'publicizing' themselves via 'selfies', pictures, and 'statuses' about their feelings. The pictures must necessarily be positive: showing smiling faces, beauty or fun. It is not 'normal' to corrupt the positive mood anyhow – negative statuses, although quite few, do not get much sympathy, nor response. It would even look awkward to 'like' negative statuses or pictures.

Compulsive transparency is evident from the fact that Facebook users 'post' and 'check-in' voluntarily, out of their own inner need – as if they knew that if they do not stay active and do not remind Facebook users of their existence, they would practically cease to exist – as disappearance in social network means leaving the stage of attention, and thus to be forgotten in reality. Therefore, posting or

exhibiting is the only way to 'sell oneself' on the social market. This constraint is fulfilled voluntarily, as if it were not a constraint but freedom. One illustrative example from Georgian Facebook users is a young girl who exhibited almost every step of her wedding and honeymoon.

4.3. Empty Public Sphere

Both Sennett and Han postulate that the transparent society is characterized by inactivity and mistrust – in fact, striking features of the Georgian society which represent major challenges of societal development. People verbally claim they care about various issues, however, when it comes to practical action – they do nothing. This is suggested by both the focus-group interviews and quantitative surveys. The focus-group respondents reported a great concern, for example, on acts of violence in the street and the neighborhood, however, they do not or do not dare to interfere: some boys said they feared to become victims of violence too. Two girls from the 25-35 year-old category told they knew a lot of cases of domestic violence, and they were concerned, but they had disappointing experiences which made them decide not to intervene again. A girl narrates:

I have a relative in the village who is beaten by her husband. Once he even inflicted a concussion of the brain to her. She did not like her condition and often ran from the house. One time I happened to be in the village too, and I was the only person in the whole village who supported that woman at all. Everybody would tell her: 'why are you complaining? He is your husband and your family'. ... She left the house and lived with me for about a week. I convinced her to write a complaint at the police office where I would accompany her. However, the very previous night her husband came raging and 'almost beat' me too. This was followed by serious discussions: why would I meddle with and why would I 'predispose' his wife against him. Then the woman was returned to her house by force. She was 'cured' as a fool with psychotropic medicine and now she lives unhappily (girl from 25-35 year-old category).

Another girl from the same category added that she had lost the wish to intervene: 'I stopped interfering because I try to persuade people to fight, I offer my support and strategies, but in vain. ... I prefer to stay in the three monkeys' position [I don't see, I don't hear, I don't speak]' (girl from 25-35 year-old category). In general, boys were more categorical in supporting indifference in domestic violence. A boy from the same age category even stated that it is not right to interfere in a husband-and-wife relationship, as it is only their business and no effort would make sense. Another boy noted that 'it is a very bad tone to interfere in an act of violence in the street. One would not want to do it, so I do not do it' (boy from 25-35 year-old category). Only one 14 year-old girl reported a successful act of interference, but not in domestic violence: she saved a boy of a different race in a subway passage from the bullying of a Georgian boy band by pretending she was his girlfriend.

The general high level of inactivity is evident from the World Values Survey (2014) as well. For example, 97.1% of the population considers itself as religious, but only 21.8% attend religious services at least once a week. Another illustrating example is that 80.2% of the population affirm they care about the environment, but only 6.6%

has participated in a cause for protecting the environment during the last two years. Moreover, there is a general readiness for inactivity: about 80% of the Georgian population states that they would never participate in protest actions, strikes or boycotts. 60.6% of the population would never join even peaceful demonstrations, while 71.2% would never sign a petition. In addition, the level of membership in all kinds of voluntary organizations fluctuates between 0.2%-1.9% (including inactive membership), except from membership of religious organizations which is as high as 21% (World Values Survey 2014).

As regards mistrust, its level is still high in the Georgian society (Caucasus Barometer 2015; World Values Survey. 2014). Except from the high level of trust towards religious institutions (80% of the population trust their religious institution), the highest indicators of trust is revealed only towards those institutions that underwent successful reforms during 2004-2011: namely, the army is trusted or fully trusted by 74% of the population, then comes the police and the committee for university enrolment exams with 45% of trust each. In the cases of all other institutions, neutral position dominates all with about 35-54%, whereas trust affirmation is relatively low: the ombudsman as well as local governments are trusted or fully trusted by 26%, the media – by 22%, the judiciary system – by 24%, political parties – by 8%, the parliament – by 16%, the executive government – by 21%, the president – by 33%, and even the non-governmental organizations by – 23% (Caucasus Barometer 2015). Such low rates of trust means, according to Han's theory, that those institutions are deprived from the capacity to act.

The deceleration of the functioning of the public sphere is also manifested by the non-existence of a common interest that would consolidate the society (Habermas 1991, 234-235). This could also be an additional reason in Georgia, as experts of political science point to this issue:

The problem lies in the absence of a common link among the population that would be stronger than what differentiates them. Often such common link is incarnated in an external threat. In Georgia, many people perceive the threat of Russia as artificial and invented by 'The United National Movement Party' ... Endlessly as we may speak of the threats and problems, the society is relaxed and inert. ... sensitivity towards even small problems is higher in most prosperous countries, whereas in countries like Georgia, where there are many serious issues, this sensitivity is low (Interview with Ghia Nodia, 19 November 2016).

4.4. Uncivil Society

Compared to other countries where democracy has long been established, transparency bears more risks in a transitory country like Georgia. First of all, transparency becomes a drawback to creativity, which was already repressed in the USSR. The Soviet legacy can still be observed today in people's attitudes: only 9% of people mentioned 'imagination' as an important quality to develop in children, against 19% mentioning 'obedience' (WVS 2014). Secondly, transparency has the quality of leaving things as they are, which is undesirable in a place experiencing transition shock and difficulties in living in a pluralistic environment. The level of tolerance towards different minorities are very low not only regarding homosexuals,

but also people of different religion, race, and ethnicity: according to WVS 2014, xenophobia is strongest towards homosexuals: about 86% think homosexuality is never justifiable, and would not like to have them as neighbours. Another 36.4% would not like to have people of a different religion as neighbours, whereas 32.8% mentioned immigrants and foreign workers as undesirable neighbours, 83.4% agreeing to the statement that when jobs are scarce, people of this country should be given priority over immigrants. About a third of the population (32.1%) would not like to have people of a different race as neighbours. Even the young focus-group discussants highlighted the diverse restrictions imposed by the society, especially regarding ethnicity, religion and sex. Although most of the respondents claimed the readiness to be friends with people of different social, religious, ethnic or perspectival grounds, some boys and girls from the 25-35 year-old category could not imagine creating families with persons from a different culture: they mentioned linguistic and 'other striking cultural differences' as the reason.

Recent facts pointing to intolerance and 'uncivility' overgrows into violation of human rights. Namely, Muslims living in Georgia were deprived of their right of prayer in October-November 2012 in the villages of Nigvziani and Tsintskaro, and in May 2013 – in the village of Samtatskaro (Mikeladze 2013). Over a year later, on 10 September 2014 a group of Orthodox people hung a pig's head at the door of a Muslim boarding-school in Kobuleti (*UN Association of Georgia*, September 11, 2014). As Sennett had noted, the only 'action' a modern community can take is shrinking the size of the community by excluding and marginalizing more and more individuals from it (Sennett 1992, pp. 221-223). Another striking fact occurred on 17 May 2013, the international day against homophobia, when Orthodox priests, organizations and parish attacked the peaceful meeting that supported the LGBT groups in Tbilisi. Meanwhile, the Patriarchate declared May 17 as the family purity day (Patriarchate of Georgia, May 16, 2013).

Thus the fact that the Georgian society still experiences intolerance towards people of different religion and culture should not be necessarily considered as a remnant of the obscure notion of 'traditional times', when society was mostly homogenous. Rather, this could be a consequence of the advance of pluralism and globalization which favour the 'shrinking' of communities. And indeed, since as recently as in July 2017, a community called the 'Georgian march' organizes in demonstrations against 'non-Georgians' living in Georgia. Such 'uncivility' in the society is unprecedented in Georgia, and it has reached even 'different' Georgians, who differ not by big differences like sexual orientation, religion or socio-economic stand, but by character, communication style, or different thinking. When someone is said to be 'a little different' or 'strange', it means that the community experiences hardship in integrating them. Moreover, in a great part of the Georgian society, there is intolerance towards happiness too: a person should not be considered happy – sometimes, rich or just free – so as not to be outcast from 'we'. A sign of such disintegration is when a person is told resentimental phrases like: 'you are carefree, we have issues', or 'how would we have as much capacities [as you]?'

CONCLUSION

The research strived to examine the functioning of the paradigm of transparency in Georgia and its forms of manifestation. The results suggest the presence of

transparency and its accompanying control, reduced civility and prolonged transition. The transparency paradigm in transitory Georgia manifests itself in the intrusion of the underdeveloped private sphere into the public sphere, and is divulged by the intense social control of people's *private* characters in the *public* sphere. This form of conflict hinders the already fragile capacity to live in a modern, pluralistic environment.

In Georgia, the transparency paradigm was facilitated by the culture of 'shame', which was already oriented to external appearance and visibility. That Ilia Chavchavadze encountered so much criticism in the 19th century because he 'spoke the vice of a Georgian' publicly, it means that the Georgian society at that time – just like today – accorded importance to what others would say, and how one would appear in public, more than what was ethically right.

The transparency paradigm reinforces the point of departure and prolongs the way to the point of destination. In the circumstances of transparency, transitory Georgia experiences the 'emptying' of the public sphere, as transparency hinders creativity, promotes mistrust, aimlessness, general passiveness and inability to have long-term perspectives. Even notwithstanding consolidation around a common interest, the results of the research affirm the positive link between transparency and the dysfunction of the public sphere. In the absence of trust and action, nothing is interesting any longer, nothing 'happens', everything exists in a passive mode and nothing matters except one: the self-presentation in social networks (which covers greatly the public sphere). All that matters is the image that an individual constructs about themselves. In such circumstances of transparent control, it is unlikely to have a common interest, as the only interest common to all the members of the transparent society is this control precisely, derived from economic motivations. That 'sensitivity towards even small problems is ... low' is a result of transparency. When the transparency paradigm entered Europe, the society already had firm democratic habits and values, and so the ceasing of socio-economic development ensuing transparency does not harm them as much as transitory countries, where there are many unresolved problems in general, but the society does not yet have the skills to perceive and solve them. It is commonly known that the 2008 August war between Russia and Georgia did not 'happen' for part of the youth in Tbilisi, as they were not interested in politics and led their usual transparent life. Here lies the wittedness of Han's theory: transparency and the 'information society' does not bring light into darkness.

The obstruction of the public sphere's functioning promises poor consequences to a transitory society: in the best case, it will remain frozen in the middle of the road, there where it was standing when the transparency paradigm was established. As transparency leaves the social and cultural situation intact, the paralyzing effect of transparency in transitory countries means to stay crowded in transition for ages, far from reaching the point of destination. Even though transparency is assessed as dangerous for developed countries too, the level of development and the internalized modern values there represent a certain shield which does not yet exist in transitory states: there the situation is more vulnerable because of the lack of the democratic tradition, values, and critical thinking.

Even though the issue of transparency is relatively new and its impact is subjected to constant change, it should be paid more academic attention especially regarding

transition societies. Those societies which have not reached a firm tradition of democracy yet appear more vulnerable to transparency's negative effects, which bases its power on the development of information technology. The worldwide trend towards radical and extremist movements are modern phenomena boosted by the digital revolution, facilitated by easier communication, and thus derive from the paradigm of transparency. Consequently, it is a complex question to distinguish the reason lying behind a transitory society's intolerance, inability to live in a pluralistic environment: this could be either the total absence of civility, or a drawback from a certain level of civility to the shrinkage of community. The Soviet Union used to work in both directions: on the one hand, it promoted 'international friendship' (international – meaning between Soviet nations only), whereas on the other hand it sowed tensions between different ethnic groups for political purposes and favoured a homogenous society. Consequently, the study of the reason of a society's uncivility is very important in order to define its practical solutions.

The impact of transparency assumes a greater importance in the light of the infantilization process reappearing in the developed world. Experience has shown that the Enlightenment process as defined by Kant is not irreversible, and that 'immaturity' can be self-re-incurred even in societies which have accumulated firm democratic experience. It seems that transparency facilitates this process especially in transitory countries like Georgia, where the high level of respect towards authority along with the low level of independence and personal freedom allow the 'guardians' to keep individuals in immaturity. In the case of Georgia, latest research suggests that the main goal of the Enlightenment 'Sapere aude!' and the depreciation of authorities remain unfulfilled.

Considering all the above mentioned importance of the study of transparency in transitory societies, future research should focus on different factors influencing it either positively or negatively: for instance, influential institutions like the Georgian Orthodox Church, and see what role they play in the transparent transitory process. Future research could also take the task of clarifying who are those powerful 'guardians' that keep the society infantile and what are the ways they use in order to deter independence and critical thinking. As transparency leads to the immobilization of the public sphere, the existing socio-cultural situation, and thus questions the possible end of the transitory stage at all, future research should provide answers to the following question: how can civil society transform non-liberal values and attitudes in favour of democracy in the transparency conditions when the society is still under the influence of authoritarian values implemented by the former totalitarian regime?

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PERCEPTIONS OF GLOBAL TOPICS AMONG STUDENTS OF ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY PROGRAMS IN SLOVAKIA

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Abstract

The aim of the survey was to find out if there is a difference in the perception of relevance of the global issues to their respective study fields between students of economic and ecological study fields at four Slovak universities and if there is such difference among the students of the four faculties. We used an on-line questionnaire developed in the project Ethical Internacionalism in Higher Education Research Project (<http://eihe.blogspot.sk/>). The responses were analysed in the program Statistika 12. We found out that there is a difference in the perception of global topics between the students of Business and Ecology. The results will be used to innovate the study programs at the respective faculties and similar faculties.

Key words: *global education, global problems, universities, economics study program, environmental study program, Slovakia*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, in the context of globalisation, the differences between lives in the different parts of the world have been more and more eliminated. That means that the lifestyles within different regions of the world have become more similar than ever before. At the same time, the countries are more interdependent. Contrary to the growing closeness of the regions, the era we are living could be called the era of paradoxes. On one hand globalisation is pushed by transnational corporations, doing their business all over the world, offering people to live the same consumerism way of life in quite different countries, with different conditions and possibilities. On the other hand, the differences between developed and developing countries are persisting, making inequality within countries and among countries a continuous problem of the present society. At the same time, it points that current globalisation endangers a sustainability of the world. Today's international system has to ensure a sustainable development among countries and also inside the countries. Each person has to understand his or her own part of responsibility toward the development of the Earth, and understand the fact that he or she does not belong only to some particular nation, but also to a big global society. [Mravcová 2017]

Issues like increasing population in the developing countries, in parallel with ageing population in the developed countries, persisting poverty, environmental issues, climate change, robotization and automatization, need of renewable sources of energies, all those are challenges which need the reaction of the global community, as it is not enough to react individually on the state level.

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The international community pays an increasing attention to these issues. The examples are clear, as e.g. the Agenda 2030 – Sustainable development goals of the UN which have been in place since 2015. An example for the European continent is the work of the European Environment Agency (EEA), which is regularly assessing global development from the social, environmental, economic, technical, but also political perspective. In its report from 2015, they formulated 11 areas of global megatrends: diverging global population trends; more urban world; changing disease burdens and risks of pandemics; accelerating technological change; the future of economic growth; increasingly multipolar world; intensified global competition for resources; growing pressures on ecosystems; increasingly severe consequences of climate change; increasing environmental pollution; diversifying approaches to governance. Because of these megatrends, Europe's ecological and societal resilience will be significantly affected in coming decades, but at the same time Europe itself contributes to environmental pressures in other parts of the world. [EEA 2015: 4-5]

Due to the character of current challenges and mentioned examples of activities on the level of international organizations, it is clear that the solutions depend on cooperation on the interdisciplinary basis, as none of the scientific disciplines is able to solve them individually.

1. GLOBAL EDUCATION

The situation described above creates a big challenge for the education systems on all levels and everywhere. It is not possible any more to teach just in a manner of imparting definitions and looking at the potential problems ignoring the global context. The role and the need of the so called “global education” is increasing, especially in the region of just recently developed countries (e.g. former transitional economies), where Slovakia could serve as a nice example. However, it is not possible to cover the problem in the broad context of all important aspects just in one paper. That is why the focus of this paper is on the tertiary education in Slovakia, analysing the importance of global education for economic and environmental study programmes.

Global education is not actually a modern term as it may seem in our region, where it was not used before. Its origin goes back for more than 50 years, when in Northern America some authors started to argue that systematic view was needed in order to understand global interdependence and that this should also be reflected in the curriculum. The UK authors Pike and Selby in 1988 highlighted what they called “*the four dimensions of globality*”. These are: (i) *the spatial dimension*; (ii) *the temporal dimension*; (iii) *the issues dimension*; (iv) *the human potential dimension*”. During the 1990s a number of global educators have specifically explored the nature of the temporal dimension of how global issues affect and are affected by interrelationships between past, present and future. “*The broad purpose of such work is to help young people think more critically and creatively about the future, especially in relation to creating more just and sustainable futures*”. [Hicks 2003]

There does not exist just one acceptable definition of the global education. In general, different definitions point out different aspects of the complexity which the

term global education covers. For the modern understanding of the global education the definition of GLEN (Global Education Network) seems to be relevant, saying that *“global education is a creative approach of bringing about change in our society. It is an active learning process based on the universal values of tolerance, solidarity, equality, justice, inclusion, co-operation and non-violence.”* Based on this definition the global education starts with the awareness of *“global challenges such as poverty or the inequalities caused by the uneven distribution of resources, environmental degradation, violent conflicts or human rights, thus creating deeper understanding of the complexity of the underlying causes. It aims to change people’s attitudes by them reflecting on their own roles in the world.”* The result of global education should be empowering people to become active and responsible global citizens. [GLEN 2009: 3] Maastricht Global Education Declaration [2002: 66] defines global education as *“education that opens people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all. Global Education is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Intercultural Education; being the global dimensions of Education for Citizenship.”* Slovak National Strategy on Global Education uses the term global education *“as an overarching principle. It includes development education (education concerning developing countries and poverty in the world), environmental education, multicultural education, peace studies, and education relating to the development and maintenance of human rights in the global context.”* [Slovak National Strategy, 2012: 1]

Professor Andreotti, who has done extensive research in the area of global education, points out the challenge of global education, as *“whether and how to address the economic and cultural roots of the inequalities in power and wealth/labour distribution in a global complex and uncertain system. In order to understand global issues, a complex web of cultural and material local/global processes and contexts needs to be examined and unpacked.”* Andreotti in her work quotes the question of Pogge, from 2002: *“How can severe poverty of half of humankind continue despite enormous economic and technological progress and despite the enlightened moral norms and values of our heavily dominant Western civilisation?”* [Andreotti 2006: 41-42] This question moves us back, to first of all understand the meaning of the word „globalisation”. There exist quite different definitions of this term. UNESCO on their webpage has several definitions, one of them is: *“Globalisation is a multi-dimensional process characterised by the acceptance of a set of economic rules for the entire world designed to maximise profits and productivity by universalising markets and production, and to obtain the support of the state with a view to making the national economy more productive and competitive.”* [UNESCO 2017] According to the World Bank, globalization is simply *„the growing integration of economies and societies around the world.”* [The World Bank 2001] More controversial definition is offered by Dobson, who defines globalisation as *“an asymmetrical process in which not only its fruits are divided up unequally, but also in which the very possibility of ‘being global’ is unbalanced”.* [Dobson 2005: 262] In the introduction we mentioned that we live the era of paradoxes. On the other hand, this brings us to the division of the world to the part

where this is true and where it would not be true maybe even in the long-run and differences between countries will persist. So, although the world is global, and countries are interdependent, their roles in the process of globalisation are totally different.

2. SKILLS FOR 21ST CENTURY – THE CASE OF SLOVAKIA

The 21st century is quite different from the 20th with regard to the skills people need for work, citizenship, and self-actualization. Development of information and communication technologies (ICT) has been faster in the last 50 years than ever before. The challenges of the present era mentioned above put emphasis on the different abilities from young people. In fact, skills students need nowadays are not new. Critical thinking and problem solving, for example, have been components of human progress throughout history. Information literacy and global awareness are not new either, at least not among the elites in different societies. [Rotherharm 2010: 17] However, the need of these skills today is not limited to the educated few but on a mass scale.

While thinking about the skills of the present and future generations, the system of higher education in each country seems to play an increasing role. The system of education needs to reflect the changing world in which it plays a crucial role. When considering the processes in the human resource development, it seems obvious that classical education methods are not suitable to meet all the new requirements. Therefore, substantial changes are needed towards more accessible, open, flexible and professional education which can meet the special needs of learning and internationalization of especially tertiary education. Individuals with their obtained education, skills and professional experience (representing the human capital of the society) change the course of the country in response to the challenges of the 21st century. This emphasizes the increasing importance of the education system for the development of the country and its society. [Mekvabidze 2015: 51-52]

In the Slovak Republic, the university studies are narrowly specialised, offered by 20 public universities or tertiary education institutions. Chosen topics of the global education appear within their curriculum on a different scale. However, the problems of the current globalised world are complex and their solutions need cooperation of experts from different fields (e.g. economists, sociologists, ecologists etc.). Consequently, there is a need for more interdisciplinary cooperation in different forms within the higher education (e.g. discussions, innovation of curriculums with the global topics, solving problems in interdisciplinary teams). This poses a challenge for both the global education theorists and practitioners. As prof. Andreotti says in her paper. *„To meet the challenges of the 21st century in terms of equipping learners to listen to one another and work together to create new possibilities for an equitable and sustainable future, development education will need to challenge its boundaries, become self-reflexive, diversify its constituency, raise its professional profile, operate inter-disciplinarily, focus on the interface between development and culture, articulate the connections between theories and practices and, in accountable ways, face the challenge of walking the minefields”*. [Andreotti – Souza 2008] It means that it is mostly up to the teachers to come to grips with the

new demands and find or create ways how to lead students to look at the problems 'Through Other Eyes'.

The Slovak Republic is one of the signatories of the Agenda 2030, thus signalling the obligation to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. In the Manifesto of the Government of the Slovak Republic for years 2016 -2020, the Government declared its aim to strengthen the institutional frameworks for national implementation of the Agenda 2030. Within the institutional structure, important role is assigned especially to the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs with the Slovak Agency for International Development Co-operation, as well as the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport. Since Slovakia became a donor country, development education has been integral part of the Slovak ODA. Pursuing global education is one of the crucial steps in fulfilling international obligations. That is why the three mentioned institutions have prepared the National Strategy for Global Education for 2012 – 2016. A new strategy is being discussed currently. [GENE 2017: 51]

National Strategy for Global Education defines „global education” as an education emphasizing global context in learning, leading to increased awareness about global issues on individual level, developing individual critical thinking and deeper understanding of global problems. The Strategy states that global education within tertiary education institutions has been from 2005 initiated mostly by the NGO sector and in some cases by institutions themselves. At present the courses dealing with global education issues are taught as compulsory and optional courses at several universities in Slovakia. [Slovak National Strategy 2012]

There are seven ongoing projects contracted earlier in 2015 dealing with global education topics focusing on universities, secondary schools and increasing public awareness. *“The most important outputs from these projects are:*

- *publications for inclusion of global education into educational system;*
- *developing the new lectures/courses at university level or enrichment of already well-established lectures on the dimension of global education;*
- *new lecturers trained in global education;*
- *capacity building and multiplication effect;*
- *increased awareness of global education among students;*
- *active effort of the organisations involved in global education projects in obtaining accreditation for courses dealing with global education and development co-operation.”* [GENE 2017: 70-71]

As the goals of the National Strategy for Global Education oriented towards universities are defined as innovation of the teaching process in connection with global education and implementation of the new topics, the starting point should be the data collection about the current state of teaching (content and methods of teaching), knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers and students at the Slovak universities.

We still lack a thorough analysis of the current state of global education in Slovakia and the relevant survey of university students regarding GE issues. So far, there is only the study of Jančovič and Penfold (2017) that analyses needs of Slovak university students of pedagogics, future teachers, regarding global education topics. The students (n = 127) of the universities involved (Presov University, Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica, Trnava University, Comenius University in Bratislava and the P.J. Safarik University in Kosice) filled in an online or printed

questionnaire in order to find out their understanding and needs in the area of global education. The study included also other target groups – teachers at the involved universities and the graduates – teachers at work.

There have been several projects implemented for the higher education teachers in order to connect the teaching with the needs of practice, current trends and to respond to the objectives of the National strategy of global education 2012 – 2016, such as:

- Global education for the universities of 21st century (2015 – 2016)
- Academics actively and practically (2016 – 2018)
- University network of global education (2017 – 2019).

These projects have been implemented in the cooperation of Technical University in Zvolen and the renowned Slovak non-governmental organisation – The Centre for environmental and ethical education Zivica with the support of SlovakAid. At first, the cooperation focused on gathering the state-of-the art knowledge of global education and its teaching methods (such as the workshop for university teachers with Vanessa Andreotti from the British Columbia University, Canada Research Chair in Race, Inequalities and Global Change). However, in order to implement the topics of global education at universities it is also necessary to strengthen the skills of university teachers, so there have been also workshops on critical thinking, conflict resolution, facilitation, non-aggressive communication and similar). Currently there is work being done on networking the university teachers that innovate their courses in various fields both in contents and teaching methods so that they incorporate the issues and methods of GE. So far, six out of 20 public universities in Slovakia have been involved in the project, and teachers come from 11 faculties in different fields (economics, ecology, law, social work, mass media communication, pedagogics and teacher training etc.). The teachers study together, share their experience through webinars and work together on creating new study programs aimed at global education using knowledge and experience from various fields.

In order to assess the impact of the innovated contents, forms and methods of teaching the global issues at universities, it is necessary to establish the current state of students' perception of these topics and their relevance to their studies. We approached students of four Slovak universities studying economics and ecology to see how relevant they find the global issues to their studies and how they differ in their assessment of these topics based on their study fields.

We verified these hypotheses:

H01: There is no difference in the perceived relevance of the global issues to their studies between Business and Ecology students.

The alternative hypothesis was:

HA1: There is a difference in the perceived relevance of the global issues to their studies between Business and Ecology students.

H02: There is no difference in the perceived relevance of the global issues to their studies among the students of different faculties in Slovakia.

The alternative hypothesis was:

HA1: There is a difference in the perceived relevance of the global issues to their studies among the students of different faculties in Slovakia.

3. METHODOLOGY

Andreotti et al. (<http://eihe.blogspot.sk/>) studied social roles of current higher education, contributions and risks of education internationalisation, as well as relevance of global education topics, political and social problems to the study programs at 22 universities in different countries worldwide (Ethical Internacjonalism in Higher Education Research Project - EIHE). For the collection of our data at Slovak universities we used the questionnaire from this survey. Our survey was run in an online form in 2017. The target group comprised students of Bachelor degree study at four faculties, out of which two faculties are in Business/Economics field of study and two faculties are in Ecology study field (50 students at each faculty, 200 questionnaires in total, Table 1). In this paper we evaluate the students' responses from one part of the EIHE questionnaire dealing with global education, in particular global topics and their relevance to the students' field of study (e. g. *economic growth, trade barriers, global mobility, technological advancements, poverty, climate change, over-consumption, terrorism, racism, etc.*).

Table 1: Faculties involved in the survey

University	Faculty	Abbreviation
Comenius University in Bratislava	Faculty of Management	BUSBA
Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica	Faculty of Economics	BUSBB
Technical University in Zvolen	Faculty of Ecology and Environmental Sciences	ECOZV
Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra	Faculty of Horticulture and Landscape Engineering	ECONR

Students expressed the level of their agreement/disagreement with a concrete statement on a 6-degree scale:

strongly disagree, disagree, unsure/no opinion, agree, strongly agree.

At the statistical evaluation we merged the responses unsure and no opinion and we used this scale:

- 1 strongly disagree
- 2 disagree
- 3 unsure/no opinion
- 4 agree
- 5 strongly disagree.

We analysed the data collected through the online questionnaire in the program STATISTICA 12. We tested the differences:

- a) Between the responses of students of Economics (BUS) and students of Ecology (ECO) using the Mann-Whitney U test (we compared two groups of students: Business group consisting of BUSBA and BUSBB students, n = 100; Ecology group comprising ECOZV and ECONR, n = 100)
- b) Between the responses of students of the different Faculties (BUSBA n = 50, BUSBB n = 50, ECOZV, n = 50, ECONR n = 50) using Kruskal – Wallis ANOVA test. After finding the statistically significant difference we subjected the data to non-parametric post-hoc comparisons to see the differences in responses among students of different faculties.

4. RESULTS

We have processed the responses of students of Economics and Ecology at four different Slovak universities regarding the *global themes that are relevant to their field of study*.

Comparison of groups: students of economics and ecology

Most students of both Economics and Ecology responded with *agree or strongly agree* to the relevance of the following global topics to their study field (over 50% of the students of the respective group agreed):

a) without a statistically significant difference between the BUS and ECO groups (more in the Table 2):

- *technological advancements*
- *access to education*
- *waste of resources*
- *corporate greed*

b) with statistically significant differences between the BUS and ECO groups, with a higher proportion of positive responses of Business students in comparison with the responses of Ecology students. However, these differences are the result of a varying level of agreement (a varying ratio of responses agree, strongly agree and other responses, see more in the Tab. 3):

- *economic growth*
- *international cooperation*
- *international solidarity*
- *global mobility*
- *over-consumption.*

In the following group of statements we have established statistically significant differences between the BUS and ECO groups that we consider as relevant:

a) with a higher proportion of agree answers of BUS students (over 50 % responded with agree or strongly agree to these statements) in comparison with the ECO students' responses (most responses were agree or strongly agree, but they were below 50 %):

- *trade barriers*
- *poverty*
- *human rights*
- *government overspending.*

- b) with a higher proportion of agree responses of ECO students:
 - *climate change (agree or strongly agree: 80 % ECO, 47 % BUS).*

Table 2: Results of the Mann_Whiney U test

Statement	U-value	U-value	p-value	significance
economic growth	2420.500	6.301500	0.000000	***
trade barriers	2442.000	6.248967	0.000000	***
global mobility	3686.000	3.209391	0.001330	**
technological advancements	4351.000	1.584538	0.113072	NA
access to education	4727.500	-0.664602	0.506306	NA
international cooperation	3640.000	3.321787	0.000895	***
international solidarity	3936.500	2.597322	0.009396	**
poverty	3850.000	2.808676	0.004975	**
climate change	3107.000	-4.62411	0.000004	***
human rights	3400.500	3.906979	0.000093	***
discrimination	3256.000	4.260049	0.000020	***
government overspending	2761.000	5.469526	0.000000	***
loss of jobs	2969.000	4.961301	0.000001	***
gap between rich and poor	3336.000	4.064577	0.000048	***
unequal relations of power	2986.500	4.918542	0.000001	***
over- consumption	4132.000	2.119640	0.034037	*
corporate greed	4326.000	1.645622	0.099843	NA
waste of resources	4635.000	0.890615	0.373136	NA
terrorism	4489.500	1.246128	0.212718	NA
disease epidemics	4841.000	0.387277	0.698551	NA
over- surveillance	4758.000	-0.590078	0.555138	NA
distribution of wealth	2824.000	5.315593	0.000000	***
racism	4284.000	1.748245	0.080423	NA

n = non-significant, *p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 3: The most numerous responses by student groups (% responses)

Statement	BUS %, response	ECO %, response
economic growth	95 yes	58 yes
trade barriers	88 yes	44 yes
global mobility	78 yes	57 yes
technological advancements	80 yes	76 yes
access to education	72 yes	81 yes
international cooperation	94 yes	83 yes
international solidarity	78 yes	64 yes
poverty	59 yes	37 yes
climate change	47 yes	80 yes
human rights	77 yes	49 yes
discrimination	67 yes	39 NO
government overspending	86 yes	41 yes
loss of jobs	72 yes	39 NO
gap between rich and poor	64 yes	39 NO
unequal relations of power	66 yes	39 NO
over- consumption	76 yes	58 yes
corporate greed	65 yes	53 yes
waste of resources	85 yes	77 yes
terrorism	41 yes	45 NO
disease epidemics	42 NO	45 NO
over- surveillance	42 NO	38 NO
distribution of wealth	70 yes	40 NO
racism	49 yes	44 NO

Pozn.: yes = odpovede agree, strongly agree, NO = disagree, strongly disagree

Opposing responses with statistically significant differences among Business students (over 50% responded with agree or disagree) and ECO students (most responses of disagree, strongly agree or no opinion/unsure) were found with the statements:

- *discrimination*
- *loss of jobs*
- *gap between rich and poor*
- *unequal relations of power.*

The following statements got predominantly responses disagree, strongly disagree or no opinion/unsure without statistically significant difference:

- *disease epidemics*
- *over- surveillance*
- *terrorism* (41 % BUS agree, 45 % ECO disagree)
- *racism* (49 % BUS agree, 44 % ECO disagree).

Based on the test results above we reject the hypothesis H_{01} :

There is no difference in the perception of the relevance of global issues in relation to their study field between the Business and Ecology students.

We accept/confirm the alternative hypothesis:

H_{A1}: There is a difference in the perception of the relevance of global issues in relation to their study fields between the Business and Ecology students.

Comparison of the faculties: business and ecology students

In the previous part we have described the differences found between the responses of BUS and ECO students. In the following part we are concentrating on comparing the students' answers by their faculties (BUSBA, BUSBB, ECOZV, ECONR). The results corresponding to the results of the previous part are not repeated, we rather go into more detail when commenting new findings.

The only statement with no statistically significant difference among students of all faculties was waste of resources, with which all students either agreed or strongly agreed (over 50%). At other statements we have found statistically significant differences (Table 4).

Table 4: Results of the Kruskal – Wallis ANOVA test - H (3,200)

Statement	H-value	p-value	Significance
economic growth	52,7	0,00001	***
trade barriers	45,38	0,00001	***
global mobility	15,84	0,0012	**
technological advancements	16,81	0,0008	***
access to education	8,03	0,045	*
international cooperation	18,8	0,0003	***
international solidarity	11,13	0,01	*
poverty	13,94	0,003	**
climate change	63,95	0,00001	***
human rights	21,67	0,0001	***
discrimination	20,86	0,0001	***
government overspending	32,63	0,00001	***
loss of jobs	31,74	0,00001	***
gap between rich and poor	22,39	0,0001	***
unequal relations of power	30,03	0,00001	***
over- consumption	14,82	0,002	**
corporate greed	11,55	0,009	**
waste of resources	3,39	0,33	NA
terrorism	19,33	0,0002	***
disease epidemics	14,36	0,003	**
over- surveillance	12,43	0,006	**
distribution of wealth	42,0	0,00001	***
racism	15,36	0,0015	**

Statements with which all the groups mostly agree or strongly agree, except one group of students (Tab. 5)

- *economic growth*

- *human rights*
- *corporate greed*

Table 5: Statements with the majority of agree answers except one group of students

Statement/student group	% agree or strongly agree			
	BUSBA	BUSBB	ECOZV	ECONR
economic growth	94	96	46	70
human rights	72	82	60	38
corporate greed	56	74	64	42

Statements that all groups but one mostly agreed with (Table 6):

- *poverty* (statistically significant difference between: BUSBB 68 % agreement and ECONR 38 % disagreement)
- *climate change* (BUSBA 60 % disagreement, all other agreement).

Statements to which only one group of students responded to with a definite response (Table 6):

a) BUSBB agreement:

- *disease epidemics*
- *racism*

b) ECONR disagreement:

- *over-surveillance*.

Topic of *terrorism* elicited definite and opposing responses by students of BUSBB (agreement) and ECONR students (disagreement).

Table 6: Responses with statistically significant differences among the groups of students by faculties

Statement/student group	% of responses			
	BUS BA	BUS BB	ECO ZV	ECO NR
poverty	50 yes	68 yes	46 yes	38 NO
climate change	60 NO	78 yes	76 yes	84 yes
terrorism	50 NO	56 yes	42 yes	58 NO
disease epidemics	58 NO	52 yes	40 NO	50 NO
over-surveillance	50 NO	36 unsure/no opinion	44 yes	54 NO
distribution of wealth	64 yes	76 yes	38 unsure/no opinion	52 NO
racism	42 NO	60 yes	38 yes 38 NO	50 NO

Statements to which the responses of students differ even though they are from the same study field but from different faculties:

- a) BUSBA and BUS BB: *climate change, disease epidemics, terrorism, racism*
- b) ECOZV and ECONR: *over-surveillance, distribution of wealth*

Based on the results we reject the zero hypothesis:

H₀₂: There is no difference in the perception of the relevance of global issues among the students of different faculties.

We accept the alternative hypothesis:

H_{A1}: There is a difference between the perception of the relevance of global issues among the students of different faculties.

5. DISCUSSION

The authors of the paper work at the four faculties students of which were the members of the focus group. The results above will serve as a basis for a discussion leading to the innovation of courses at the respective faculties. At the same time these results can contribute to reflecting the teachings of global issues at other faculties and universities in other fields of study.

Some global topics are perceived as relevant to their studies by more Business students (e.g. *trade barriers* – 80% of BUS and 44% of ECO), other by more Ecology students (e.g. *climate change* – 80% of ECO students and only 47% of BUS students), which is due to their study specialization. However, in the world today it is not quite possible to see the global problems only from one perspective and specialization. For example Áč [2014] draws the attention to the effects of climate change on developed countries, conflicts, migration, spreading of diseases and other that have serious economic consequences. Similarly, *over-consumption* (76% of BUS and 58% ECO agree) results not only in depletion of resources but also a sharp increase in the amount of waste, which creates environmental costs [Huppés et al. 2006, Móznér, 2014, Pikoń 2015].

The problem of *poverty* (59% of BUS and 37% of ECO agree) is not only a sociological and economic problem but it may also cause serious environmental problems [Duraiappah 1998, Baland et al. 2010, Deodatis et al. 2014], as well as a *gap between rich and poor* (64 % BUS agree, 39 % ECO disagree) [World Bank 2017, Davies et al. 2017].

There are topics that both groups of students perceive as relevant – e. g. *economic growth*. However, while the economists consider economic growth largely as inevitable and positive the ecologists and environmentalists would criticize the concept of continuous growth as unsustainable [Everett et al. 2010, Johanisová, Fraňková 2012, Drews at al. 2018].

Some authors notice the disagreement between ecology/environmentalism and economics due to their differing goals [Klinec, 1998]. However, as noted by Johanisová [2014], as early as in the 1980-s the ecologists and economists in Sweden started to work on a new study field – environmental economics. We consider the integration of economic and ecological/environmental aspects of the development as crucial at studying these fields at universities as the current global problems require both environmentally and economically sound solutions.

As for the more general and more civic global topics, such as racism, human rights, or discrimination, we find that students do not see them as very relevant to their study fields. Eco students produced a wide scale of responses to this topic and their perception of the relevance of this topic to their studies is thus very ambiguous (ECOZV 38 % disagree, 24 % unsure/no opinion, 38 % agree. ECO NR 50 % disagree, 30 % unsure/no opinion, 20 % agree). BUS students see this topic depending on which faculty they come from – BUS BB 60 % agree, 16 % unsure/no opinion, 24 % disagree) and BUS BA 38 % agree, 18 % unsure/no opinion, 44 % disagree.

However, racism may have serious economic consequences in addition to its social, political, psychological and moral ones [McLoyd, 1990, Larson et al., 2007, Paradies et al. 2015, Elias, Paradies 2015] and it is also a current concern in many countries [Eurobarometer 2015]. The topic of *human rights* elicited an ambiguous response from ECONR students (38 % agree, 30 % unsure/no opinion, 32 % disagree). University study in Slovakia today is typical by narrow specialization and in case the social or humanistic issues are not what the students study, they become marginal in the curriculum or they are not dealt with at all. We could argue that students dealt with these topics in the lower levels of their schooling (in the subjects like Ethics, Civic education, etc.) so it is not necessary to deal with them again at Universities, but we are aware of the fact that teaching of these subjects at lower levels faces many problems (formalism, frontal teaching, etc.) so it does not fulfil its education aims [Valica et al., 2014].

The implementation of global education into the curricula of different higher education faculties is a serious task. As found by Jančovič and Penfold (2017), over two thirds of student respondents from pedagogical faculties have heard of global education and agree with the statement „*Global education asks questions and provides different points of view of global challenges.*“ Most future teachers, however, have not learned or been trained how to teach about globalization, global challenges or environment considering global aspects. About one half of respondents received some training aimed at multiculturalism and human rights. Most students that lacked the training in global education thought that it would be useful to incorporate global topics into the curriculum of future teachers. In general, the prevailing opinion was that it is important for future teachers to receive training in the topics of globalization, global challenges, intercultural education, human rights or environment and in developing the attitudes of global responsibility, solidarity, citizenship, social justice and critical thinking.

Based on our results from students' responses we propose adding global topics to the study content at each of the faculties and innovate the teaching of these topics. Firstly, it is the topics at which we found statistically significant differences in the responses of economics and ecology students or their responses were on a wide scale (not clear opinions):

- a) topics that BUS and ECO students may view from opposing perspectives but in practice *they have serious economic and ecological consequences (they are closely related)*:
 - *economic growth*
 - *poverty*
 - *climate change*

- *gap between the rich and poor*
 - *over-consumption*
- b) topics that may not seem as relevant to the particular study program but we consider them important in the value systems of all higher education students (and citizens):
- *human rights*
 - *discrimination*
 - *racism*
- c) topics that are connected with good functioning of democratic states, they are often dealt with on a national and international level and they should be reflected by students as active citizens
- *government overspending*
 - *over-surveillance*
 - *terrorism*
 - *distribution of wealth*

As our focus group in the study were students of Bc. degree we presume that it is likely that they change their perception of the relevance of global topics to their specialization in the course of their university studies provided their curriculum is innovated both in terms of content and teaching methods. We plan to repeat the survey after two years, at the end of their Master degree, aiming to find out whether:

- the perception of relevance of global topics at which there was a wide range of answers will become more clearly positive
- the students' perception of global topics will change and how
- the differences between BUS and ECO students will grow

The presented findings are a contribution to the mapping of the situation regarding the students' perception of global education topics at higher education fields of Economics and Ecology in Slovakia. There is a new project aimed at mapping the teaching of global education in Slovakia being implemented that will also include identification of the main barriers to its inclusion into the higher education and gathering good practice examples (Development of global education programs at higher education institutions, January 2018 – August 2019). This should support both the existing courses of global education and creating new courses and programs at higher education institutions.

CONCLUSION

We approached students of four Slovak universities studying economics and ecology to see how relevant they find the global issues to their studies and how they differ in their assessment of these topics based on their study fields.

We accept/confirm these hypothesis:

There is a difference in the perception of the relevance of global issues in relation to their study fields between the Business and Ecology students. There is a difference between the perception of the relevance of global issues among the students of different faculties.

One of the main objectives of the university study is to prepare experts in specific fields using the results of the state-of-the-art research. At the same time, the

university graduates should master the skills of a constructive discussion, team work, innovativeness, among others. Many of the current social problems, including the global ones, require cooperation of experts in different fields, for example economists and environmentalists. We see the results of our survey as an insight into the perception of global topics by students of environmental studies and economics at selected Slovak universities. They will serve as a background material at discussions about the contents of teaching today and an impuls for the innovation of curricula at the respective faculties.

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CORPORATE TAX AS A DIRECT TOOL FOR SUPPORTING THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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Abstract

The economic power and the influence of the third sector on the society are indisputable. While the independent Slovak Republic has been developing, the various forms of non-profit sector have been developing, too. During the first years of their existence non-profit organisations in Slovakia were supported mainly from foreign financial resources. Since 2002 the main financial resource of most non-profit organisations in Slovakia has been the tax assignment from both individuals and legal persons. The paper is focused on the development and direction of tax assignment in Slovakia. The main methods of research include the analysis and application of the economic model.

Key words: *non-profit sector, legal entity, tax assignment*

INTRODUCTION

The third sector represents the sector which operates in the space between the state and market. The main aim of the third sector is not to generate profit and distribute it among its owners. If any profit is generated it is returned to other public benefit programmes. In most of cases it is obvious that the subjects of the third sectors are not able to secure sufficient financial resources for their operation and activities related to their work. Therefore, the search for new sources of financing is a very important task. Tax assignment as the source of financing of non-profit organisations was implemented to the Slovak Law Order by the change of the tax law. Income tax assignment represents the main financial resource for most non-profit organisations in Slovakia.

From the point of view of economic theory, the tax assignment denies the basic tax principle - non-equivalence. The amount that a taxpayer pays to the state budget in the form of income tax, does not entitle him to make decisions about its use. The principle of justice is violated. In case of two entities having the same taxable income, when one entity uses the assignment mechanism and the other one does not, it follows that the entity which has used the assignment contributed to the payment of public goods less than the other entity which has paid the share of tax to the state budget. Another risk might be represented by the ineffective allocation of financial resources caused by the imperfect awareness of tax payers. The main positives of tax assignment include the fact that such income of non-profit organisations differs from state subsidies and lead to a higher number of the recipients of financial support and a more even redistribution among regions. The assignment supports the principle of partnership and expands funding possibilities for the non-profit sector [Kolibova 2016].

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the time of Adam Smith economic theory has emphasized the importance of private markets in the effective offer of goods. However, altogether with the existence of private markets there are some limitations in the provision of selected basic social needs. The attempts to eliminate the negatives lead to the gradual increase of the role of state in the economy [Stiglitz 1986].

Many economists agreed on the fact that there are the areas of social life, where the state is not able or willing to meet the needs of citizens partially or at all. Many people in the East and West start to realize that free market and free elections are not enough for building and maintaining healthy and democratic societies. Market economy can be effective in terms of providing consumer goods and service, but it is not sufficient in the role of a mechanism for meeting various social needs by its very nature. However, citizens cannot depend on the government either, if they want the basic important collective interests, such as clean natural environment, civil rights and social care to be applied and protected [Siegel, Yancey 1992].

Boukal matches the third sector to the concepts of public and non-profit sector. He defines it as the broad space between the state and state institutions, the market representing profit-oriented companies and a citizen, who, based on his internal conviction, wants to offer a service that cannot be realized based on the profit. He defines public sector as the subset of non-profit third sector [Boukal 2009].

The sources of financing of non-profit sector are closely-linked to the overall economic, social and political situation in the country. According to Davis and Etchart the financial resources of non-profit organisations consist of the set of external and internal resources. The external ones are divided into domestic and foreign resources [Davis, Etchart 1999]. They are American economists mainly who emphasize the importance of the third sector, not only from the point of view of its formation and activities within providing public service activities, but also because of its position on the job market. The non-profit sector employs more than 7 % employees in the West European countries. The share of employment is significantly lower in the countries of the Middle and East Europe and it is above 1

% [Anheier, Carlson, Kendall 2001]. There is an open question, not only the theoretical one, about the adequate size of the non-profit sector.

The basic financial resources of the non-profit sector in Slovakia can be divided into the direct and indirect ones. The direct form of financing mainly includes providing subsidies and grants, redistribution of revenue from public collections and funds from EU funds. The exemption from tax, deduction of the donation from the tax base and tax assignment belong to the indirect forms of the financial support of non-profit sector. After the establishment of the Slovak Republic Slovak non-profit organisations received sources especially from America (United States Information Service, United States Agency for International Development - Your Earth Program), the Netherlands (ecological programme), the Great Britain (Know How Fund) as well as EU pre-accession funds. It was also true that many foreign investors also supported the activities of non-profit organisations after arriving to the Slovak market [Marcek 2004]. Financing of the non-profit organisations in the form of donations and tax allowance had a temporary character in the Slovak Republic. Tax assignment has been the part of tax system in the Slovak Republic since 2002. It is an important source of non-profit organisations financing.

2. METHODOLOGY

The main aim of the article is to outline the complex view of financing of the non-profit sector in the Slovak Republic from 1993 to 2015. Analysis, regression analysis and synthesis were the main scientific methods applied in the article. The analysis of the tax system was applied because of the identification of selected tax tools used for financing the non-profit sector in the Slovak Republic from the beginning to the present. The selected aspects of the assignable process in the Slovak Republic were also analysed. In particular, it is the analysis of the number of legal entities assigning the corporate tax, the number of recipients of financial resources from assignment, the amount of the assigned tax coming from legal entities in the Slovak Republic as well as the effectiveness of the use of assignable mechanism by legal entities in the Slovak Republic. In the other part of the article the regression analysis was used to study the relation between the income from the corporate tax and the amount of the assigned tax by legal entities in the Slovak Republic for the whole period of the assignable mechanism existence.

3. RESULTS

However, since 2002 the main financial resource of most non-profit organisations in Slovakia has been the tax assignment from both individuals and legal entities. The assignable mechanism distributes the public funds from the central level to the individual one. A legal entity can use the institute of tax assignment to decide whether it provides a part of paid tax to another subject or the state. The company redirects a share of paid income tax to a selected organisation that is not business-based. Therefore, tax assignment represents a method which can be used by a legal entity to participate in the decisions on public benefit.

The opportunity to deduct donations from the tax base of a legal entity belonged to the oldest forms of public sector financing in the Slovak Republic. Donations could

have been of a financial or material character. The only condition for their application to the company's costs was a donation for public purposes. Tax legislation precisely set the purpose of donation. However, the group of recipients was unclear. The above-mentioned form of financing did not represent an important source of income of non-profit organisation in the Slovak Republic. The biggest share of means was directed to schools, health care and social facilities. However, this form of the support of the non-profit sector was not sufficiently motivating for providers. Therefore, donation stopped to be perceived as an indirect form of state support. For the above-mentioned reasons, a new tax law cancelled that form of financing the non-profit sector in 2004.

Actual sources of financing non-profit organisations are significantly different. Organisations acting in the third sector are forced to diversify their financial sources. One of them is also the tax assignment of paid income tax. The assignment mechanism distributes the public funds from the central level to the individual one. A company can use the institute of tax assignment to decide whether it provides a part of paid tax to another subject or the state. Therefore, the company redirects a share of paid income tax to a selected organisation which is not based on business and so the legal entity can participate in the decision about the public benefit.

The ideas of assignment mechanism in the Slovak Republic are dated back to 1997. This process is mainly supported by the representatives of the third sector as it is the opportunity for long-term financing. The original proposal of the mechanism contained the opportunity of assignment only for individuals, who could assign 1 % of paid income tax. However, the assignment mechanism which could be used only by individual for the first two years of its existence was put in practice only in 2002. It has gone through several changes during a 15-year-period, but it has preserved its position within tax policy until now. As we have already mentioned, the mechanism could have been applied only by natural persons from 2002 to 2003. In 2004 the tax reform cancelled deductible items for legal entities in the form of donations. However, the pressure of non-profit organisations in Slovakia enabled the implementation of a new system, concretely the system of tax assignment by legal entities in the amount of 2 % of their tax liability. Therefore, the support of public sector was extended to legal entities in 2004. The Slovak Republic became the only European country with such a right given to legal entities. A legal entity can assign the tax to several non-profit organisations. However, the minimal amount of assigned income tax for one organisation is defined in legislation (legal entities can assign at least 8 EURO for one receiver). The total corporate tax revenue reached 1 billion EURO in 2004. The theoretical maximum value of 2 % of corporate tax represented 20.3 million EURO. The actual assigned tax reached 18.9 million EURO. It represented 92.7 % usage of the tax assignment mechanism by legal entities in the first year of the existence of the assignment mechanism.

The changes in the mechanism of tax assignment were recorded immediately in the second year of its existence. A positive change was the reduction of administrative burden for legal entities in 2005. Since then legal entities could assign the share of paid income directly via a tax return without the necessity to use an independent document. Based on the comparison of theoretical maximum assigned amount and actual assigned tax in 2005 we can say that the percentage of assignment mechanism usage by legal entities reached 97 %. In 2006 the growth of the volume

of tax assigned by legal entities was more than 24 % in year-on-year comparison. However, on the other hand, it caused more significant reduction of budget income from corporate tax. That is the reason why there were the suspicions about tax evasion in the form of unauthorized tax assignment (the existence of these legal entities was suspicious, since they were non-profit organisations which got only incomes that were not the subject of taxation and were not obliged to register at the tax office). The percentage of assignment process usage by legal entities was above 90 % in 2006.

In 2007 the receivers who were focused on the protection of natural environment, human rights, the development of spiritual values and education were excluded from the assignment mechanism. On the other hand, the assignment process was extended by the areas of prevention support, the treatment and re-socialisation of drug addicts within health care and social services. In the following year 2008 the support expanded also to non-profit organisations aimed at research and development. The authorized recipients also included The Drug Fund and the Vocational Training and Development Fund. The percentage of the assignment process use by legal entities did not drop under the level of 90 % in both above mentioned years (it was 93.4 % in 2007 and 98 % in 2008). The effects of the economic crisis affected the development of many macro-economic indicators and they also influenced the development of the assignment process in the Slovak Republic. The percentage of the assignment process use reached the level of 88.4 % in 2009 and it fell to 67.2 % in 2010.

The biggest volume of financial means was indicated to non-profit organisations in 2009 in the total amount of more than 55 million EURO; 68 % of this sum was assigned by legal entities. The effect of the world financial crisis was registered in the Slovak Republic only at the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010. Therefore, the fall of economic activity of the Slovak economy and higher unemployment lead to the reduction of tax income. It resulted in the reduction of assigned tax volume which is paid right from the income. The drop of total assigned sum by legal entities recorded the annual fall by 23.8 %; it was more than 8.9 million EURO.

A new amendment of the tax law was put into practice in 2011, what causes the reduction of the percentage of assigned tax legal entities could assign to the non-profit sector. In that year the legal entities who decided to assign 2 % of their tax liability, had to contribute a donation to the non-profit sector in the minimum amount of 0.5 % of tax base. If a company had not given a donation during the taxation period, it had the right to assign only 1.5 %. The change caused the drop of the volume of assigned tax by 12.4 % in year-on-year comparison. In that year there was also the drop of legal entities assigning their financial means to the non-profit sector. Only 9.53 % (2,467) from 25,754 legal entities took advantage of the opportunity to give a donation in the taxation period for public purposes what would enable them to assign 2 % from the paid tax later. The remaining 90.47 % (23,489) of legal entities assigned only 1.5 % of paid tax. The total amount of tax assigned by legal entities when classified according to the percentage (1.5 % or 2 %) shows that the most profitable companies assigned 2 % and therefore they also gave the donation in the minimal amount of 0.5 %. The average assigned sum per one legal entity was 615 EURO in case of a legal entity assigning 1.5 %. The average sum of a legal entity assigning 2 % was 4,336 EURO. The percentage of assignment

mechanism use by legal entities recorded slight annual growth to 77 % in 2011. Its level fell to 74 % the following year.

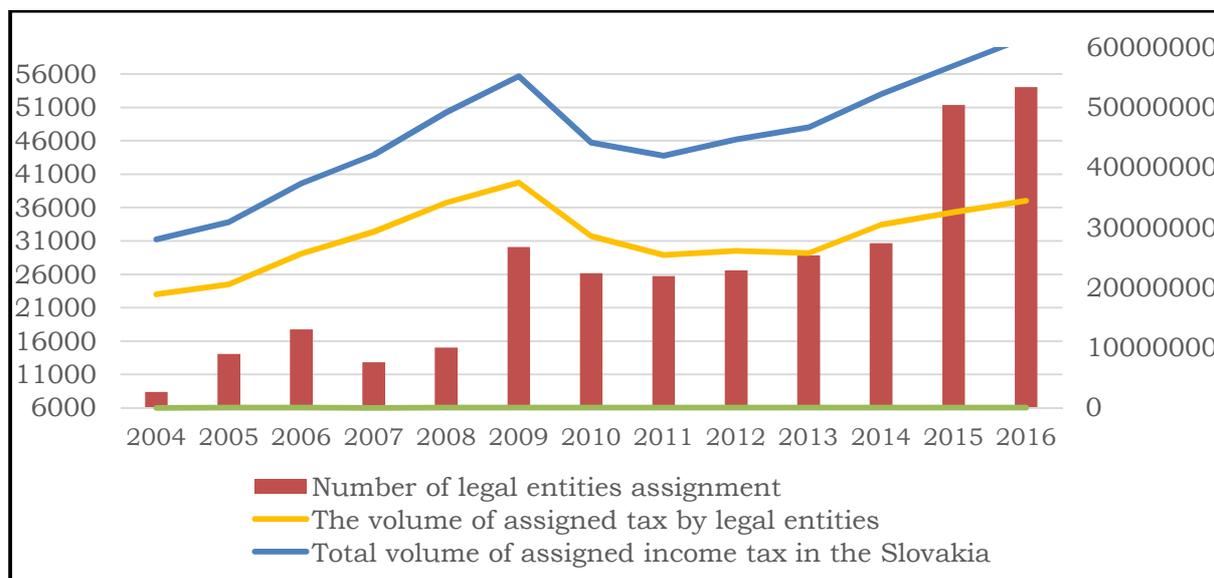
Table 1. The total amount of assigned tax in the Slovak Republic (in EURO)

Year	The number of assigning LE	The amount assigned by LE	The total amount of assigned tax in the Slovak Republic	The share of tax assigned by LE compared to the total volume of assigned tax (%)
2004	8,364	18,896,000	28,055,000	67
2005	14,063	20,525,000	30,896,000	66
2006	17,74	25,629,000	37,342,000	69
2007	12,819	29,306,000	42,125,000	70
2008	15,036	34,144,000	49,180,000	69
2009	30,078	37,496,000	55,180,000	68
2010	26,172	28,592,000	44,145,000	65
2011	25,754	25,444,000	41,970,000	61
2012	26,621	26,146,000	44,694,000	59
2013	28,827	25,762,000	46,706,000	55
2014	30,682	30,465,000	52,205,000	58
2015	51,377	32,537,000	56,941,000	57
2016	54,042	34,456,000	61,631,000	55

Source: Own processing according to the data of Financial Directorate of the Slovak Republic. Note: own table

The permanent growth of the number of the organisations involved in the process happened during the monitored years of 2004 to 2016 (Table 1). Exceptions were the years 2010 and 2011 when the significant changes of the assignment mechanism happened, as we have mentioned above. At the same time there was the drop of the volume of the tax assigned by legal entities. These two years were a breakthrough from the point of view of the share of the tax assigned by legal entities when compared to individuals. This indicator fell by 10 % in favour of individuals. The mechanism of the assignment process was used by legal entities in 63.5 % in 2013. The next year the indicator value rose to 78.2 %. In 2015 the effective use of the assignment mechanism significantly fell to the historically lowest level, when the value of effectiveness of its use by legal entities reached only 61.5 %.

Fig. 1. The development of the assignment mechanism in the Slovak Republic



Source: Own processing according to the data of Financial Directorate of the Slovak Republic. Note: own table

As we can see from the figure 1 the volume of the tax assigned by legal entities increases altogether with the growth of economic performance and the growth of the amount of corporation tax revenue, which was at the highest level in 2009. Therefore, we can say that the corporation tax revenue has an immediate impact on the development of the volume of assigned income tax in the Slovak Republic. However, it is obvious that apart from this factor there are several other factors which significantly influence the assignment mechanism. The purpose of the regression analysis we used was the identification of these factors as well as pointing out their quantitative justification; what is the extent up to which they influence the volume of assigned corporation tax (Input data necessary for the construction of regressions were acquired from several sources, especially from the statistical data of OECD, EUROSTAT, NBS, Slovstat and MF SR). A linear regression model was tested for the unambiguous interpretation. However, when constructing the graph, we also tested a polynomial, logarithmic, exponential and power trend (the trend which explained the highest part of the variability of a dependent variable (it reached the highest value of coefficient of determinacy) was then graphically depicted.)

The statistical significance of the regression model as a whole was tested at the degree of reliability of 90 %. F-statistics was used for the determination of the model significance. F-test calculated value was 4.539478; F-test critical (tabular) value was 1.37218. It follows from these values that the model is statistically important as a whole. The P-value (F) (0.058961) also confirms the statistical significance of the model. It is below the level slightly above 5 %. Therefore, the model as a whole is justifiable at the significance level of 10 % and it can be further analysed and interpreted. The testing of the statistical significance of

model parameters was also realized at the significance level 10 %. In the constructed regression model no. 1 there is only one parameter (corporation tax revenue in the Slovak Republic). We achieved the following values by the means of T-test. T-test calculated value was 2.1306; T-test critical (tabular) value was 1.37218 (table 2).

Table 2. Regression model 1

Dependent variable: The share of the tax assigned by legal entities					
	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-ratio	p-value	
const	15,7472	5,83558	2,6985	0,0224	**
corporate tax revenue	0,0065777	0,00308723	2,1306	0,059	*
Mean dependent var	27,84167	S.D. dependent var	5,388786		
Sum squared resid	219,6978	S.E. of regression	4,687193		
R-squared	0,312217	Adjusted R-squared	0,243439		
F (1, 10)	4,539478	P-value(F)	0,058961		
Log-likelihood	-34,47134	Akaike criterion	72,94268		
Schwarz criterion	73,91249	Hannan-Quinn	72,58362		

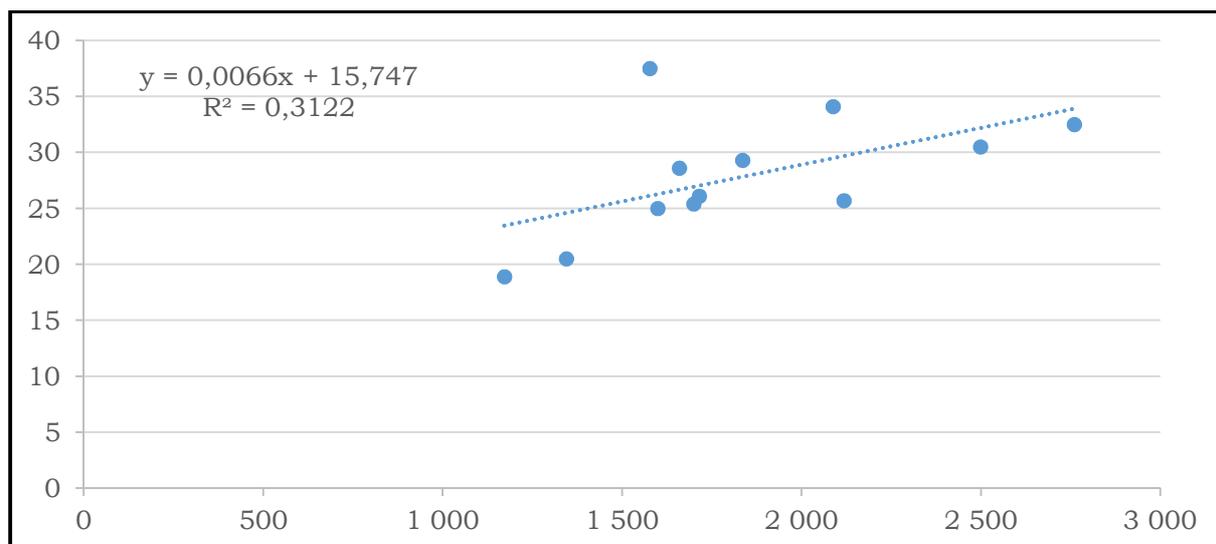
Source: Own processing using the programme GRETL. Note: own figure

Based on the comparison of obtained and tabular quantities it applies that the parameter (corporation tax revenue) is statistically important in the constructed model. The coefficient of determinacy (R^2) gains the value of 0.312217. It follows that 31.22 % of the changes in the volume of the tax assigned by legal entities is influenced right by the changes of corporation tax revenue. The equation has the form of

$$\text{corporation tax revenue} = 0.0066 \times \text{volume of assigned tax} + 15.747$$

The equation results in direct dependence. If the revenue of corporation tax, respectively tax liability of a corporation increases, we can observe the growth of the volume of assigned corporation tax. However, the results of the model proved that higher corporation tax revenue does not automatically represent higher volume of tax assignment by companies. The model proved that the revenue of assigned tax is closely related to other factors, too. The impact of the external factors which influence the corporation tax revenue the most is noticeable. They were mainly the effects of the economic crisis in the Slovak Republic. There is the graphic representation of the regression model in the figure 2.

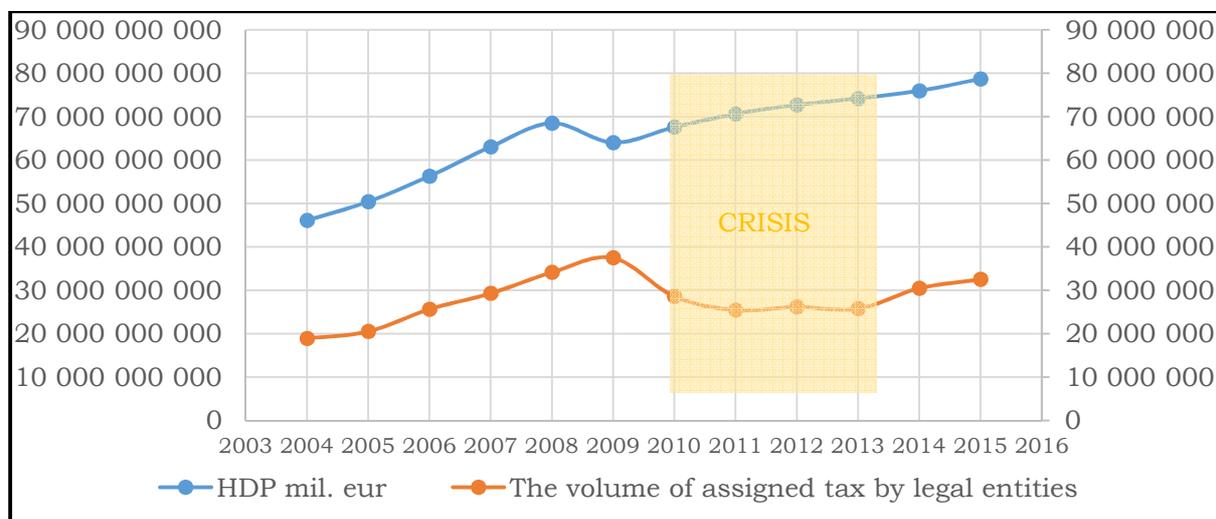
Fig. 2. The graphic representation of the regression model



Source: Own processing according to the data of Financial Directorate of Slovakia. Note: own figure

The regression analysis was also used for studying the dependence of the volume of assigned tax from the GDP size in the Slovak Republic. However, the conclusions of the model are relevant since the linear dependence of two quantities cannot be clearly confirmed for the whole monitored period. The period from 2004 to 2008 is characteristic by direct dependence, when the volume of the tax assigned by legal entities growth altogether with the growth of GDP. However, we observed a sharp drop of GDP in 2009 caused by the crisis effects, but the volume of assigned tax was still growing, since in 2008 we observed the volume of assigned tax for the period of previous year. There was a sharp drop of the volume of assigned tax in 2009, but it was accompanied by a slight growth of GDP. Therefore, the period from 2010 to 2013 is characteristic by the exactly opposite development than the period from 2004 to 2008. A slight growth of GDP is accompanied by a slight drop of the volume of assigned tax when the effects of the crisis slowed down the management of companies; there was the reduction of tax liability and also the reduction of the volume of assigned tax, as the figure 3 shows.

Fig. 3. The volume of assigned tax and GDP in the Slovak Republic (2003 to 2016)



Source: Own processing according to the data of Financial Directorate of Slovakia. Note: own figure

The share of the corporation tax in the Slovak Republic can be provided only to a defined group of receivers and for the intended purpose. Both conditions are regulated by the tax law. The list of assigned tax receivers is published by Notary Chamber of the Slovak Republic every year. The number of organisations involved in tax assignment from 2004 to 2016 was continuously growing. The reasons were mainly the awareness of assigning organisations as well as the successful media campaign of non-profit organisations.

CONCLUSION

A model for the assignment mechanism in the Slovak Republic was the system of tax assignment in Hungary. The assignment mechanism has been functioning in Slovakia for 15 years even though there have been many attempts to cancel it. During its existence in tax legislation this mechanism provided the important amount of financial resources to the non-profit sector. It motivated the establishment and registration of other non-profit entities which have shown a bigger effort in addressing the potential donors caused by the increasing revenue of the donated share of the income tax. A particularity of the assignable process in the Slovak Republic as the only European country is the right of legal entities to assign the tax.

The state gave legal entities the opportunity to decide about a receiver of the share of paid income tax. However, some limiting facts were put into practice together with the implementation of the assignment mechanism. In that case they are control mechanisms in some way, such as the definition of purpose range of assignment means usage, the obligation to register recipients in the list of recipients led by Notary Chamber of Slovak Republic, the determination of time for drawing means as well as the obligation of publication of information about the recipients of assignment tax. The recipients with the summary of shares of tax assignment in the corresponding calendar year over 33,000 EURO are obliged to create a particular bank account where the means of tax assignment will be separately recorded.

The fact is that the assignment mechanism motivated mainly big companies to create their own corporate foundations. A company can assign the tax directly to its own foundation. However, this practice has been criticised a lot. Foundations acting within big companies also have to comply with legislative standards and they have to use financial means only for precisely defined goals. The actual legislative regulation of the assignment mechanism is very transparent, and it is subjected to several stages of control. The total annual volume of the tax assigned by legal entities reached more than 32 million EURO nowadays. From the point of view of public finance, when compared to other public expenditure it is not a high amount and therefore the tax assignment does not threaten the stability of public finance in the Slovak Republic. However, the case studies realised in Slovakia proved that the benefit of the assignment mechanism is significant.

The number of assigning legal entities in 2016 exceeded 54,000 companies. When compared to the first year of the application the number is more than 6 times bigger. The volume of assigned tax by legal entities nearly doubled for the monitored period. The results of the regression analysis confirmed the direct dependence

between corporate tax revenue and the volume of assigned tax of legal entities. The model has proven that 32 % changes of the volume of assigned tax depend on the amount of corporation tax revenue (the amount of tax liability of all legal entities in the Slovak Republic). The volume of assigned tax is influenced by other external and internal factors. Internal factors, political will, power and impact of non-profit organisations are very important. The impact of political factor was obvious in the Slovak Republic in the period from 2010 to 2011 when there was the decrease of assigning legal entities. The number of recipients - non-profit organisations also had a positive trend. Their number rose four times in the period from 2004 to 2016.

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SELECTED ASPECTS OF FISCAL POLICY IN CENTRAL EUROPE: CASE OF SLOVAKIA

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Abstract

The sustainability of public finances in Slovakia is significantly associated with increasing VAT efficiency and reducing VAT revenue losses. VAT as a major tax revenue source in Slovakia is yielding almost 40 % of total tax revenues, but more than one third of potential VAT is not levied. Discrepancy between the growth of VAT revenues and the growth of its macro-economic base in recent years may imply the existence of tax evasion as well as low efficiency of VAT collection. Since Slovakia becomes a Member of the EU in 2004, the VAT revenue losses almost tripled with its peak in 2012. Due to the measures combating VAT evasion and increasing efficiency of VAT collection, the VAT revenue losses in Slovakia decreased in absolute and relative terms, but still are above the EU average. The aim of the paper is to outline the VAT gap development in Slovakia and identify the statistically significant variables that have an impact on the VAT gap using a simple regression analysis. Based on our analysis, we may conclude that VAT gap share responds negatively to the effective VAT rate and VAT revenue to GDP ratio and positively to the final consumption of households and the size of the shadow economy.

Key words: *sustainability of public finances, VAT efficiency, VAT revenue losses*

INTRODUCTION

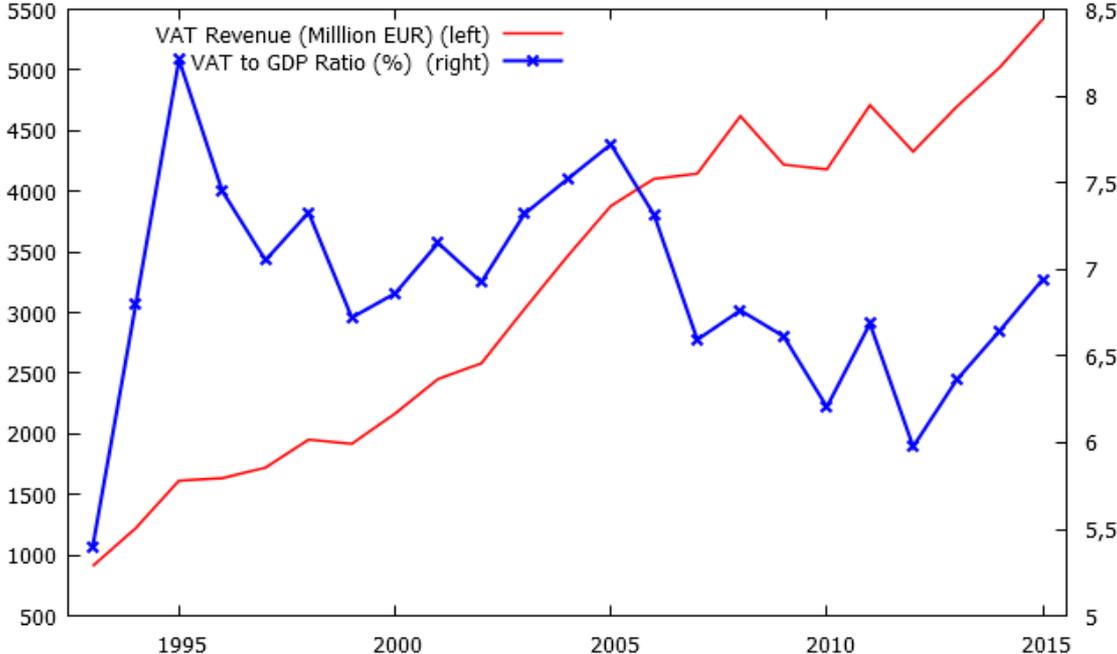
The sustainability of public finances is a difficult task in most EU Member States. The significant role of VAT in the structure of tax revenues and downward pressure on income taxes in the EU raises the need to improve efficiency of VAT system. Increasing VAT efficiency and broadening the VAT tax base through the removal of exemptions and reduced rates currently applied to a wide range of goods and services could substantially help to increase revenues and reduce economic distortions in the EU.

Since its introduction in 1993, the value added tax has become the most important tax revenue source in the Slovak Republic. A development of VAT revenue depends on its macroeconomic base, which is mainly affected by the final consumption of households. The final consumption of households represents the major part of the theoretical tax base on which VAT is levied. VAT imposed on household consumption creates 65 % of the theoretical VAT liability calculated for all EU Member States [CASE 2014].

The tax reform realized in the Slovak Republic on 1st January 2004 included the cancellation of the reduced VAT tax rate and the introduction of the uniform VAT rate in the amount of 19 % for all goods and services. It meant the simplification of the VAT mechanism and the reduction of the administrative burden for tax payers and tax administration. The uniform VAT rate in the amount of 19 % was being applied in the Slovak Republic even after its accession to the EU in May 2004 until the end of 2006. A reduced VAT rate in the amount of 10 % was again introduced on drugs, selected goods and medical devices in 2007. Another reduced VAT rate in the amount of 6 % on so called "yard sale" was applied during 2010.

VAT revenue in Slovakia has been increasing on a year-to-year basis from EUR 0.9 billion to EUR 5.4 billion 2015, except 2009 when there was a sharp decline due to the crisis. The VAT revenue shortfall also occurred in 2012. It was mostly caused by the unfavourable financial situation of business entities, the growth of exports of goods and the related growth of excessive VAT deductions and increasing tax evasion related to VAT. In 2013, VAT revenue showed an upward trend and for the first time exceeded the pre-crisis level. It was associated with the improving economic situation in the country and also the implementation of the Action Plan against Tax Evasion from 2012 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. VAT revenue in Slovakia in absolute and relative terms



Note: Own figure; Source: Eurostat (2017)

The economic crisis and anti-crisis measures significantly deepened the level of public deficits in majority of the EU member states after 2009 [Válek & Kušnířová 2014].

The public finance deficit in the Slovak Republic grew from 2.1 % in 2008 to 8.0 % in 2009-2010. The adopted consolidation measures in the volume of EUR 1.2 billion were directed to reduce the public finance deficit under 3 % of GDP in 2013.

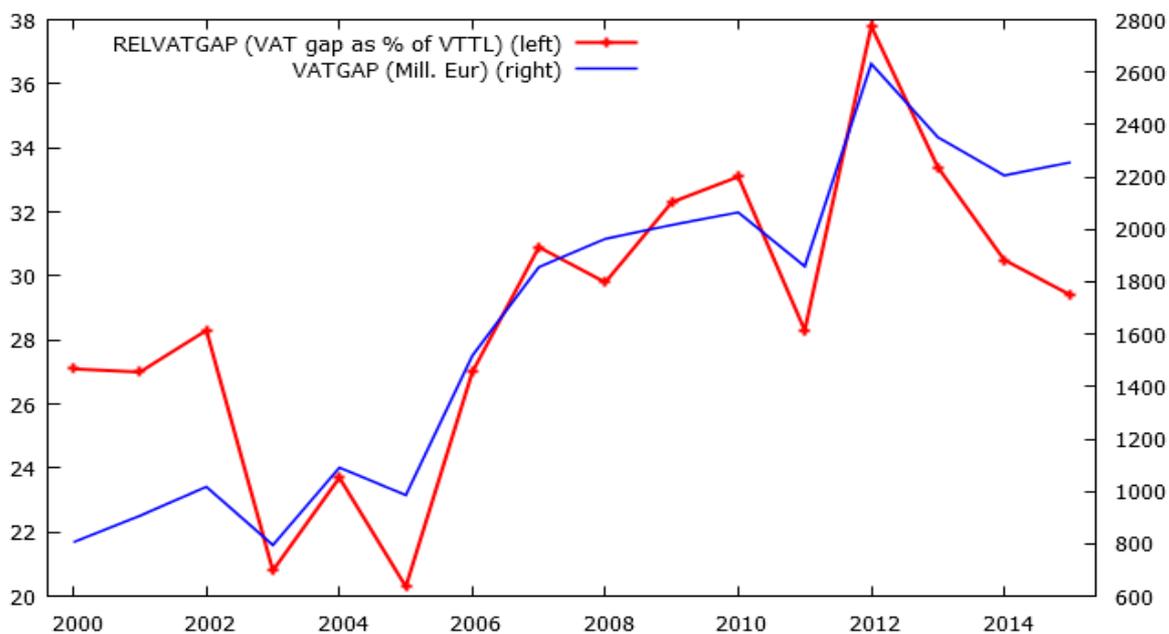
In 2011, the standard VAT rate increased from 19 % to 20 % in relation to the measures focused on the reduction of public finance deficit. The increased VAT rate should have been only temporary, while the public finance deficit drops under the level of 3 % of GDP. Despite the fact that the general government deficit declined to 2.8 percent of GDP in 2013, the VAT rate remained at 20 %.

In 2009, the European Commission published the information about the estimated VAT revenue loss in the Slovak Republic for 2006 in the amount of EUR 1.3 billion [Reckon 2009]. The estimated amount of VAT loss was higher than the amount of funds necessary for the consolidation of public finances in the Slovak Republic.

In May 2012, the Slovak government approved "Action Plan against Tax Evasion for 2012-2016". The adopted measures on VAT were aimed at the improvement of VAT collection, the prevention of VAT system misuse and the creation of better conditions for the realisation of legal business activities, e.g. releasing the "List of potentially risky VAT payers" by the Financial Directorate of the Slovak Republic launched in February 2013, the introduction of the electronic VAT control statement in 2014 (it should help the tax administrator to detect and prevent frauds on VAT by automated system of cross control of data) or setting up a specialised team called "Tax Cobra", which uncovers *tax evasion*-related crimes and others. In 2014, the Financial Administration of the Slovak Republic identified the risk VAT in the amount of EUR 200 million by the VAT control statement.

Despite the fact that the Slovak Republic gradually reduces VAT gap, it had the second highest VAT gap among the EU Member States in 2015 [CASE 2017]. Since 2004, VAT revenue losses almost tripled and reached peak in 2012 at the level of EUR 2.6 billion (37.8 % of the theoretical VAT). It is estimated that approximately one third of potential VAT revenue was not collected in the period from 2000 to 2015. Since 2013 the total VAT loss has been gradually decreasing. It fell to 33.4 % of the theoretical VAT (EUR 2.4 billion) in 2013, to 30.5 % (EUR 2.2 billion) in 2014 and to 29.4 % (EUR 2.3 billion) in 2015 (figure 2).

Figure 2. VAT gap in Slovakia (in absolute and relative terms)



Note: own figure; Source: CASE (2013, 2017)

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Generally, there are three main groups of factors that have an impact on VAT revenue: (i) norms that set VAT tariffs, tax base, object, registration thresholds and other elements of this tax; (ii) factors that describe the economic environment of the country – GDP or the final consumption of households (the size of potential tax base), inflation, unemployment; (iii) tax avoidance and the system of tax administration [Bikas & Rashkauskas 2011]. Due to the fact, that VAT is a consumption tax, VAT revenue primarily depends on the consumption level in the country.

There have been few studies on determinants of VAT revenue losses. Agha and Haughton (1996) calculated and analysed the VAT compliance rates for 17 OECD countries in 1987 using ordinary least squares (OLS) cross-country regression. They found out that (i) a higher VAT rate is associated with lower VAT compliance; (ii) the number of VAT rates negatively affects the level of VAT compliance; (iii) VAT compliance increases the longer has been the VAT in operation; (iv) smaller countries (in terms of population) tend to have higher level of compliance.

Christie and Holzner (2006) analysed data for 29 European countries from 2000 to 2003 by the means of panel regression using the fixed effects. They found that: (i) higher weighed average VAT rate reduces VAT compliance; (ii) greater judicial and legal effectiveness increases VAT compliance; (iii) countries where citizens want more power for local authorities (which is proxy for tax morale) tend to have lower level of VAT compliance.

The first study, which quantified VAT revenue losses in the EU, was published in 2009 [Reckon 2009]. The VAT revenue losses were estimated through the “VAT gap” indicator, which can be defined as the difference between the amount of VAT actually collected and the theoretical VAT total tax liability derived from general economic data. The VAT total tax liability (VTTL) is an estimated amount of VAT that is theoretically collectable on the VAT legislation. The VAT gap might include VAT not paid as a result of legitimate tax avoidance measures as well as VAT that is not collected due to the insolvency. Reckon study (2009) calculated and analysed data for 24 EU-countries from 2000 to 2006. The authors used the panel regression with random effect and number of explanatory variables to determine VAT gap such as the standard VAT rate, corruption perception index, GDP (size of the economy), unemployment rate, population, Gini coefficient etc., but only corruption perception index showed significant negative impact on the VAT gap. They found out that a lower perception of corruption appears to reduce the VAT gap share (an increase in the Corruption Perception Index coincides with a reduction in the VAT gap share).

CASE study (2013) prepared for the European Commission calculated VAT gap for 26 EU-countries from 2000 to 2011. The authors focused on the influence of the business cycle and VAT rate. The results confirmed that: (i) higher unemployment increases VAT gap (during the recession it rises); (ii) higher VAT rate is associated with higher VAT gap but only in countries with low level of tax collection and tax morale.

CASE (2014) provides estimation of the VAT gap in the EU-26 in 2012 and includes updated figures for the period 2009-2011. This study was updated by CASE (2015), where the figures for 2013 were calculated and estimations of the VAT gap for 2009 to 2012 were revised due to the improved methodology. The updated study CASE (2016) provides figures for the year 2014 as well as revised estimations for the years 2010-2013 due to the transmission of Eurostat national accounts from the ESA95 to the ESA10. The updated study CASE (2017) provides figures for the year 2015 as well as updated estimates for the years 2011-2014 and first estimates of VAT gap for Cyprus.

There have also been few estimates of the VAT gap for specific country, such as the United Kingdom [HMRC 2010], Sweden [Swedish National Tax Agency 2008], Slovakia [IFP 2012], Italy [D’Agosto et al. 2014] and others.

The Institute for Financial Policy of the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic published the study [IFP 2012] which summarizes the estimations of the total VAT revenue loss in 2000-2010 and the VAT gap in 2005-2010 in the Slovak Republic. While the total VAT revenue loss represented 18.2 % of the theoretical VAT, i. e. EUR 861 million in 2005, it reached 35.9 % of the theoretical VAT, i.e. EUR 2.3 billion in 2010. D’Agosto et al. (2014) analysed factors influencing the VAT gap in Italy from 2007 to 2010.

2. METHODOLOGY

A dependent variable for an econometric analysis is the VAT gap share (RELVATGAP), defined as the VAT gap divided by the theoretical VAT liability (VTTL). Data for this variable come from CASE (2013-2017). Candidate explanatory

variables were selected on the basis of the results found in the literature reviewed in Reckon study (2009) and in Zidková and Pavel (2016).

The analyzed data are obtained from Eurostat (National Accounts), Transparency International or European Commission (table 1). The period of years monitored is from 2000 to 2015.

Table 1. Explanatory variables

	Key factor represented by variable	Expected relationship with VAT gap	Source of data
Final consumption of households (FCONSUM)	Size of potential VAT base	Increases	Eurostat
Size of the shadow economy (SHADECON)	Significance of shadow economy	Increases	Schneider (2015)
Unemployment (UNEM)	Business cycle and income inequality	Increases	Eurostat
Corruption perception index (CPI)	Level of corruption of public sector	Decreases	Transparency International
VAT revenue to GDP ratio (VATREV_GDP)	VAT burden (Tax quota)	Increases	Eurostat
Standard VAT rate (STVATRATE)	VAT burden	Increases	European Commission (VAT rates in EU)
Effective VAT rate (EFVATRATE)	VAT burden	Decreases	Eurostat
Difference between standard and reduced VAT rate (diffVATRATE)	Complexity of VAT system	Increases	European Commission (VAT rates in EU)

Source: According to Reckon (2009) and Zidková & Pavel (2016).

All variables are in relative terms (%), except the final consumption of households, the size of the shadow economy and the corruption perception index (scale from 0 - highly corrupt to 10 - perfectly clean). The effective VAT rate is expressed in % as a share of the VAT revenue and final consumption of households. Descriptive statistics of all variables are in table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of dependent and explanatory variables in 2000-2015

	Average	Minimum	Maximum
VAT gap share (% of VTTL)	0.287	0.203	0.378
Final consumption of households (million of EUR)	32,468.5	17,291.6	42,468.6
Size of the shadow economy (million of EUR)	9,470.0	5,973.0	11,099.0
Unemployment (%)	0.147	0.096	0.192
Corruption perception index (scale from 0 to 10)	4.36	3.50	5.1
VAT revenue to GDP ratio (%)	0.07	0.06	0.08
Standard VAT rate (%)	20.13	19.0	23.0
Effective VAT rate (%)	12.28	10.6	13.9
Difference between standard and reduced VAT rate (%)	12.06	6.0	19.0

Source: Own calculation in GRETl

The starting point of the analysis was to estimate correlation coefficients between dependent variable and each of explanatory variables using Excel statistical function for correlation.

A simple linear regression model in GRETl was estimated for each explanatory variable. The regression coefficients were estimated by the method of ordinary least squares (OLS). F-test and t-test were used to confirm the significance of particular simple linear regression model and its parameters.

3. RESULTS

The Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated for each pair of variables, because it can indicate a predictive linear relationship between 2 variables that can be exploited in practice (table 3). If the correlation coefficient values are closer to -1 (1), there is the higher negative (positive) tightness of the time series examined.

Table 3. The values of the correlation coefficients (R) for the selected variables

	RELATVATGAP	Relationship
EFVATRATE	-0.922	negative (S)
STVATRATE	-0.072	no or negligible (W)
diffVATRATE	-0.436	negative (M)
VATREV_GDP	-0.936	negative (S)
FCONSUM	0.648	positive (S)
UNEM	-0.469	negative (M)
SHADECON	0.600	positive (S)
CPI	0.476	positive (M)

Note: S – strong, M – moderate, W – weak
Source: own calculations

There appears to be a strong relationship between the VAT gap share and these explanatory variables: the effective VAT rate ($R = -0.922$), the VAT revenue to GDP ratio ($R = -0.936$), the final consumption of households ($R = 0.648$) and the size of the shadow economy ($R = 0.600$).

A moderate relationship appears to be between the VAT gap share and the unemployment ($R = -0.469$), the VAT gap share and the corruption perception index ($R = 0.476$) and the VAT gap share and the difference between the standard and reduced VAT rate ($R = -0.436$). No linear relationship or very weak appears to be between the VAT gap share and the standard VAT rate ($R = -0.072$).

The simple linear regression models in GRETL were estimated for each explanatory variable by ordinary least squares (OLS). The compiled results are in summary table 4.

Table 4. Results of simple regression models

	Dependent variable: RELVATGAP (VAT gap share - % of VTTL)				
	Model: OLS, using observations for the period 2000-2015 (T=16)				
	Coefficient	Equation – simple regression model	R²	P-value (F)	
Model 1	const 83.7208 *** EFVATRATE -4.47752***	$\hat{RELVATGAP} = 83.7 - 4.48*EFVATRATE$ (6.18) (0.502)	0.850	3.75e-07	
Model 2	const 90.5668 *** VATREV_GDP 9.0188 ***	$\hat{RELVATGAP} = 90.6 - 9.02*VATREVGDP$ (6.22) (0.905)	0.876	9.73e-08	
Model 3	const 17.8696*** FCONSUM 0.0003345***	$\hat{RELVATGAP} = 17.9 + 0.000335*FC$ (3.53) (0.000105)	0.420	0.006631	
Model 4	const 14.5553 ** SHADECON 0.001496 **	$\hat{RELVATGAP} = 14.6 + 0.0015*SHADECON$ (5.14) (0.000533)	0.360	0.013953	
Model 5	const 39.8674 *** UNEM -0.7585 *	$\hat{RELVATGAP} = 39.9 - 0.759*UNEM$ (5.31) (0.355)	0.246	0.050853	
Model 6	const 10.9862 CPI 4.0734*	$\hat{RELVATGAP} = 11.0 + 4.07*CPI$ (8.83) (2.01)	0.226	0.062458	
Model 7	const 35.0249 *** diffVATRATE -0.5217 *	$\hat{RELVATGAP} = 35.0 - 0.522*diffVATRATE$ (3.63) (0.288)	0.190	0.091416	
Model 8	const 33.1215 * STVATRATE -0.2181	$\hat{RELVATGAP} = 33.1 - 0.218*STVATRATE$ (16.4) (0.813)	0.005	0.792265	

Note: Significance of coefficients: *p-value < 0.1; **p-value < 0.05; ***p-value < 0.01.

Coefficient without * - variable is not significant. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Source: Own calculations in GRETL

The F-test results of overall significance confirmed the statistical significance of regression models 1, 2, 3 and 4 at the 5 % significance level. This conclusion was also confirmed by the probability P-value (F) of particular models, which is less than 0.05. T-test results confirmed the statistical significance of individual parameters (coefficients) in these models.

The regression models 5, 6 and 7 are statistically significant at the 10 % significance level. The coefficients of determination (R^2) are low, which suggests that unemployment, the corruption perception index (CPI) and the difference between the standard and the reduced VAT rate have only a negligible impact on the VAT gap share. The regression model 8 is not statistically significant, which is confirmed by F-test results and the P-value (F) of the model (0.7922). The estimated coefficient of explanatory variable in model 8 is not statistically significant as well. Coefficient of determination is close to zero (0.005), which suggests that the standard tax rate does not affect the VAT gap share in Slovakia.

CONCLUSION

The sustainability of public finances is a major challenge for many countries including Slovakia. The 2009 global financial and economic crisis, together with measures of fiscal policy adopted in the EU countries, had a strong impact on the level of tax revenues. Recovery of the global economy required a lot of financial resources. The governments adopted strategies to get out of recession and stimulate their economies. Several Member States (e.g. Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Finland, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Great Britain or Poland) increased the standard VAT rates to improve fiscal (budget) situation. But without reassessing the effectiveness of existing tax systems and reducing tax fraud and evasion, especially in the area of VAT, Member States will not be able to increase tax revenues and ensure the long-term sustainability of public finances.

Slovakia, as well as other Member States has to face the increasing volume of tax evasion and fraud, particularly in the field of VAT. The size of tax evasion reflects the efficiency of the tax system and directly affects the economic policy of the government and the long-term sustainability of public finances.

From the results of particular linear regression models it can be concluded that VAT gap share in Slovakia is influenced mainly by the effective VAT rate, VAT revenue to GDP ratio, final consumption of households and the size of the shadow economy. Other factors such as unemployment, the corruption perception index (CPI) and the difference between the standard and the reduced VAT rate have only a negligible impact on the VAT gap share in Slovakia.

The expected relationship with VAT gap (see table 1) was confirmed in the case of effective VAT rate (model 1), final consumption of households (model 3) and the size of shadow economy (model 4). The expected relationship between VAT gap share and VAT revenue to GDP ratio was not confirmed.

The comparison of actual VAT revenue and the estimated VAT revenue loss in Slovakia shows that approximately one third of potential VAT revenue is not collected. Despite the adopted measures focused on the efficient tax collection and elimination of VAT evasion, Slovakia loses approximately EUR 2.2 billion annually. A serious problem is the inability of the Financial Administration to enforce

additional VAT levy based on the tax audits and the lack of payment discipline of the taxpayers.

The application of (general) reverse charge mechanism on domestic transaction, elimination of exemptions and broadening tax base should help tackle VAT fraud and evasion. The expected change of the VAT system at the EU level could partially strengthen the resistance of the VAT system against tax evasion and eliminate VAT revenue loss in Slovakia.

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WORKING PAPERS

TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM OF GEORGIA: ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

In recent years education and science has achieved a significant progress in Georgia. The country has implemented a number of reforms aiming at transforming the post-Soviet education system and creating a new system that would be in line with rapidly developing world demands. It was a very important historic, economic or socio-political event for Georgia to withdraw from the Soviet Union's total governance though the country was facing big challenges.

Georgia, as a member of the Bologna Process since 2005, constantly implements innovations in the education system, thus deserves more trust in the higher education sphere of Europe.

In spite of serious reforms, many challenges remain on the quality education services and equal access of those services.

The Georgian system of education quality assurance is dynamically developing in line with good international practice.

Internationalization of education is an unconditional priority. It promotes educational quality development, international mobility and international recognition and builds confidence. The internationalization process also facilitates: Approach of the Georgian education system to European standards and Realization of Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration. It should be noted that the process of

internationalization also ensures effective implementation of the obligations taken under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.

Key words: *Higher education system, Bologna process, Quality education, Quality assurance systems*

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the fundamental rights of a human being and a vital condition for a sustainable development of the country [Hubersky 2017: 78-84]. Consequently, quality assurance, affordable education and science system is one of the main priorities of the Government of Georgia and is declared as the cornerstone of the country's development. A higher education sphere is regulated by the laws of Georgia on "Higher Education" and "Education Quality Development" and other legislative acts based on: the Action Plan of the Government of Georgia, Association Agenda with the European Union, Bologna Process and European Higher Education Area Frameworks [*Law of Georgia on Higher Education Tbilisi 2010 : №47, 05.08.*]

The primary goals of higher education in Georgia are as follows: (a) To promote the development of the Georgian and world cultural values, orientation towards the ideals of democracy and humanism essential for the existence and development of a civil society; (b) To satisfy the requirements of one's personal interests and capabilities in obtaining proper higher education, in raising the level of one's skill and retraining; (c) To realize personal potential, develop the creative skills, train the competent persons capable of satisfying modern requirements, provide for competitiveness of graduates on domestic and international labor markets, and offer to the interested person (persons) high quality education that meets the requirements of the student community and the public; (d) To train and retrain a new research personnel in order to ensure the sustainability of the country's development and higher education system itself; to create, maintain and develop favourable conditions for research; (e) To encourage the mobility of students and academic personnel of higher education institutions.

The higher education system of Georgia has undergone a significant transformation over the past decade. A number of steps have been taken to integrate the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA); for educational quality development and internationalization of the Georgian higher education system several systems were put into operation, such as: the three-stage system of higher education, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), Internal and External Quality Assurance Systems; the National Qualification Framework was created for mobility of students and academic personnel.

In recent years education and science has achieved a significant progress in Georgia. The country has implemented a number of reforms aimed at transforming the post-Soviet education system and creating a new system that would be in line with rapidly developing world demands.

In the light of the ongoing globalization process in the modern world new international economic and cultural relations have been formed; Naturally, education cannot be isolated from these processes.

Globalization and technological changes have created new opportunities in the field of education and employment. Digital transformation has changed the labour market and created a need to develop new skills. Consequently, the education system has become one of the most important challenges of modernity, which involves equipping of young people with the competence, knowledge and skills [Unified Strategy of Education and Science 2017-2021: 32-35].

1. GEORGIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The problem of education started in early 90-es when Georgia became independent and had to overcome difficult times problems from which it is still trying to get rid of.

The education system of the Soviet Union was a classical model of education transferred from Germany and Israel. It was based entirely on a classical pedagogy. The only drawback was the Communist ideology. Furthermore, it was unacceptable for the new born country to carry out human upbringing with the communist ideology. Since 1989 (April 9), Georgia has already begun to think about a new system of education in order to determine country's future development. Since 1991, the Soviet Union could not interfere with our country. The hardest economic process started. The withdrawal from the Soviet Union led to the elimination of existing economic ties. The production was constructed in a way that it could no longer exist without Russian donation. The system was destroyed and this was the biggest blow to school and pre-school education. Practically, the country lacked energy and this caused a great crisis in the educational process. School education collapsed. Children could not study. Even though the Georgian society had been still thinking about the independent Georgian concept of education. The process had started. From 1995 onwards it slowly began to move from the Soviet space to the international space. That time the country declared that it chose the European path. The idea of university was created by Humboldt: the first issue of it concerns the autonomy of the university, the second – the interconnection of teaching and science, the third issue says that the university is established in the interests of society that dictates the system of values. However, this idea has recently changed. The function of the university is determined by the consumer market. Priority is given to the subjects of employment, and therefore, the traditional model of the university has been changed. Instead of the term "university idea" appeared the term "University Mission". Each university announces its mission and the student makes a choice according to his /her own interests. At this stage, the research in universities is determined by the labor market. A new rule of funding has also been established in Georgia. (Chkuaseli 2014).

The Soviet education system had one very serious drawbacks, it was built on the party and class struggle idea.

Thus, it was actually an important historic, economic or socio-political event to withdraw from the Soviet Union's total governance, accordingly, the country withstood big challenges.

Georgia, as a country, has already chosen the form of development and made decision to create an independent state. After a centralized government, like the Soviet Union, it was difficult to move on to democratic governance. The first step towards development was the course of the country to continue to move forward. It was naturally hard to make reforms, especially in the case of Georgia. Internal disturbances, wars, revolutions or protests have deteriorated the country's progress. Education is an autonomous system capable of effective functioning of society, as well as its subsequent development. Education is an integral and necessary part of human existence. It cannot be considered in the area of the state policy, as well as it is impossible to comply it with the level of modern socio-economic development. Quality of education is directly proportionate to the quality of labour resources, therefore, it has a great influence on the economic situation of the country and the society as a whole.

The population of Georgia was accustomed to the Soviet-era of thinking within the closed boundaries. The sharp change of the way of thinking became possible through systematic and large-scale measures, from which the benefits should be clear and visible.

On June 19, 1999, Ministers of Education and Science of 29 countries signed the Declaration (Bologna Declaration) in the oldest University City of Bologna, which laid the basis for the creation of a single European educational space. The Bologna Process aims to develop certain means and instruments for connecting national education systems. Currently, Bologna process involves 49 European countries. Georgia joined the process in 2005 at the Bergen summit. The introduction of the Bologna process was the best way out of the chaos that took place in the educational sphere after the post-Soviet period [<http://eqe.gov.ge/>]

In the higher education system of Georgia, significant and quite fundamental changes were made at that time.

First of all, it is worth noting that Georgia moved to a three-stage teaching. This process has formed European education standard. It should also be said that this process has simplified Georgia's perception by other countries because the implementation of European system of credit was identical and facilitated the students' mobility and it simplified internationalization processes in Europe.

In addition, the quality assurance standards were developed and conformed to the European level, such as, recognition of the Georgian Diplomas, which in turn contributed to the integration of Georgian professionals to European framework and implemented various programs for students and teachers mobility in the world leading universities [Tatulishvili: 21-27].

The Government of Georgia turns great attention to internationalization of education and improving the quality of education and research in Georgia. Efforts for establishing successful education system are needed to continue the internationalization of education, research and knowledge empowerment and international mobility for academic staff and students in order to meet the international standard level and create local and international high-quality educational programs tailored for labor market needs.

In the process of maintaining and upgrading of higher education, it is important to strengthen European cooperation, the most important part of which is to deepen cooperation with the European Network for Higher Education Quality Assurance

(ENQA). The full status of ENQA membership will be a step forward to integrate into the Universal Higher Education Area that will significantly enhance the awareness of Georgia's educational sphere and increase its trust.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

The education system could not have values different from the political values of the country. In this case, we will get an unfavorable labor force of the state whose visibility, value or outlook differs from the country's needs. Taking into consideration the circumstances that globalization has become underway in the modern world forming international economic and cultural ties, it is evident that education cannot be left out of the process. Bologna process also involves the education system in the process of globalization.

Changes in Georgia and its globalization process started in 1999. Even though the process has passed at a slow pace, the first steps that were made during this period are still appreciated. The government faced the problem of the lack of the staff in connection with European education. Furthermore the most optimal solution of the problem was joining to the Bologna process. Georgia had little time to achieve its goal, though at the Berger Summit in May 2005, Georgia joined the number of Bologna member states with major priorities (according to the Louvain Communiqué).

- Social dimension: equitable access and completion the student body within higher education should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations. We therefore emphasize the social characteristics of higher education and aim to provide equal opportunities to quality education.
- Lifelong learning (LLL) The development of national qualifications frameworks is an important step towards the implementation of lifelong learning.
- Employability with labour markets increasingly relying on higher skill levels and transversal competences, higher education should equip students with the advanced knowledge, skills and competences they need throughout their professional lives.
- Student-centred learning and the teaching mission of higher education Student-centred learning requires empowering individual learners, new approaches to teaching and learning, effective support and guidance structures and a curriculum focused more clearly on the learner in all three cycles. Curricular reform will thus be an ongoing process leading to high quality, flexible and more individually tailored education paths.
- Education, research and innovation
- International openness - Mobility
- Data collection
- Multidimensional transparency tools
- Funding

The Budapest-Vienna Declaration assesses the Bologna process as follows: "Bologna process and its outcome in the European Higher Education Area, is an unprecedented example of regional and international cooperation in higher

education. It has significantly increased interest in other parts of the world making European Higher Education more profitable to the world."

First of all, education system moved to the three-stage teaching. This process has significantly simplified understanding of the education system of Georgia by other countries, as the credit system introduced is identical to European credit system.

Georgia's modern education system looks like this:

After signing the Bologna Treaty, there were fundamental and significant changes in the higher education system of Georgia:

1. Quality assurance standards have been developed in line with its European level, which is a step forward;
2. The recognition of the Georgian diploma occurred, which in turn contributed to the integration of Georgian professionals into Europe;
3. There are various programs implemented within the framework of which students and teachers' mobility are carried out in leading universities of the world. Mobility is important because learning is available for everybody and social and economic problems do not prevent students from getting quality education.

Georgian system of education quality assurance is dynamically developing in line with good international practice.

Internationalization of education is an unconditional priority. It promotes educational quality development, international mobility, international recognition and builds confidence. The internationalization process also facilitates: Approach of the Georgian education system to European standards and Realization of Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration.

It should be noted that the process of internationalization also ensures effective implementation of the obligations taken under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.

Higher education in Georgia consists of three stages: bachelor program, master program and doctorate program. An educational program in the institution of higher education during one academic year includes averagely 60 credits. Educational program of the first stage of teaching (bachelor) consists of no less than 240 credits.

In Georgia, three types of higher education institutions are active: University - institution of higher education which carries out higher educational programs of all three stages and scientific researches. Teaching university - institution of higher education which carries out higher educational program/programs (except for doctorate programs). A teaching university necessarily carries out educational programs of second stage - master program/programs. College - institution of higher education which carries out only the first stage educational program of higher academic education.

Obtaining of the status of an institution of higher education and implementation of respective educational activity is possible only in case of authorization of higher education institution defined by the rules of authorization provision. Authorization is a procedure of obtaining of a status of higher education institution purpose of which is to ensure compliance with standards necessary for implementation of respective activity required for issuing of education confirming document recognized by the state. Authorization is carried out by the National Center for Educational

Quality Enhancement, according to the rules defined by the authorization provision. The state recognizes only diplomas issued by accredited or equalized with them educational institutions [<http://www.mes.gov.ge/uploads/sistem-of-education-en.jpg>].

On June 19, 1999 29 European Ministers of Education signed a declaration in the oldest university town of Bologna. By signing the document the ministers expressed their willingness to participate in the creation of the European Higher Education Area.

The Bologna declaration was preceded by such documents as: Magna Chartum Universitatum (1998); Lisbon Convention (1997); Sorbona Declaration (1998). Presently 46 countries participate in the Bologna Process. Georgia joined Bologna Process in 2005 at Bergen Summit.

Main documents of Bologna Process: Bologna Declaration (1999); Prague Communiqué (2001); Berlin Communiqué (2003); Bergen Communiqué (2005); London Communiqué (2007); Louven Communiqué (2009); Budapest-Vienna Declaration (2010); Documents of Bologna process: Lisbon Convention (1997); Sorbonne Declaration (1997); Qualifications Framework for Higher Education – Dublin Descriptors (2005); European Standards and Guidelines in Quality Assurance (2005). [Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia]

Prior to 1991 only the state-established higher education institutions were operating in Georgia. Since 1991 private higher education institutions have been also offered an opportunity to conduct educational activities. However, in order for them to function as educational institutions it was mandatory to obtain a license providing the right to implement educational activities. Such license was a precondition for the issuance of the recognized educational documents. The licensing procedure monitored the compatibility of educational institutions with the state-established standards, including programme standards. The educational documents issued in compliance with the Georgian legislation before the beginning of 2005-2006 academic year by licensed higher education institutions or the HEIs regarded to be licensed, pursuant to the law, are recognized by the state, notwithstanding the accreditation status of these institutions. On December 21, 2004 the Law of Georgia on Higher Education was introduced allowing only the institutionally accredited HEIs to issue the state-recognized Diplomas. The educational license was a precondition for obtaining institutional accreditation. The licensing became compulsory also for those HEIs that had been established by the state. Thus, the state provided institutions with the authority (license) to conduct higher education activities; nevertheless, the state recognized the educational documents issued by these institutions only in case if the HEIs concerned were granted institutional accreditation. The institutional accreditation was mandatory for state higher education institutions, while for private higher education institutions it was a voluntary procedure. A licensed private HEI not intending to issue state-recognized documents was able to avoid the institutional accreditation procedure. Accredited and licensed HEIs operated, and both state-recognized and non-recognized educational documents were available in the same regime.

The Law of Georgia on Higher Education has introduced the notion of programme accreditation which involved state recognition and funding. However, the law

postponed programme accreditation first to the beginning of 2010-2011 academic year, and then further to the beginning of 2013-2014 academic year. In fact, the programme accreditation envisaged by the first version of the Law of Georgia on Higher Education has not been implemented in Georgia.

The state-recognition of educational documents was based not only on the status of the institution concerned but also on the enrolment of individuals in HEIs in compliance with the regulation established by legislation. In 2004 the Law of Georgia on Higher Education introduced the Unified National Examinations as a mandatory measure for obtaining a student status.

Due to the reforms implemented in 2010 the licensing procedure was abolished and institutional accreditation and programme accreditation were substituted by authorization and accreditation, respectively.

The authorization of educational institutions has been determined as a procedure of acquisition of the status of a higher education institution, which aims at ensuring the compliance with standards necessary for carrying out of relevant activities for the issuance of state-recognized educational documents. Therefore, only the authorised institutions are entitled to conduct the state-recognized educational activities.

Accreditation has been defined as a procedure aimed at determining the compatibility of an educational programme of a higher education institution with accreditation standards aiming at the establishment of regular self-evaluation for the improvement of educational quality and promotion of the development of quality assurance mechanisms linked to state funding. Accreditation is voluntary; however, it is only mandatory for regulated programmes (Medicine, Law and Education) as well as the Third Cycle (Doctoral) educational programmes. Accreditation started in Georgia in 2011.

Today, there are 75 authorized higher education institutions operating in Georgia, where up to 140,000 students are studying and about 13,000 academic, research and administrative personnel are employed. 2446 persons are employed in 42 scientific-research institutes integrated with universities and 461 persons at the LEPL Scientific Institute. The separate chapters of the Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union signed on June 27, 2014 were defined by Georgia's cooperation with the European Union in the field of science and education. Particularly, the Chapter 12 of the Agreement provides cooperation in research, technology development and demonstration, and chapter 16 provides education, training and youth cooperation issues.

Georgia is actively involved with ERASMUS + and holds the 8th place between the 131 partner countries in terms of successful projects. As a result, more than 1500 Georgian students have been financed in the leading European universities in 2015. During 2017 active cooperation was ongoing with the involvement of higher education institutions, academic and administrative personnel and students within the framework of ERASMUS + program [*Unified Strategy of Education and Science 2017-2021: 62-65*].

Cooperation with the leading universities of Georgia involves implementation of Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate programs.

Georgia, as a member of the Bologna Process since 2005, constantly undergoes innovations in the education system, thus, it deserves more confidence in European

higher education space. On November 22, 2013, the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement was awarded with the status of affiliated organization of the European Association for Higher Education Quality Assurance (ENQA). ENQA unites 90 European (and non-European) Quality Assurance Agencies or Public Structure. ENQA member organizations share information, experience and the best examples of higher education institutions' quality assurance issues. The goal of the Association is to strengthen European cooperation in higher education. It is the main driving force for quality assurance in Europe. The Association makes a significant contribution in maintaining and upgrading the higher education according to European standards and distributes the Bologna process signatories across the country. The status of the ENQA affiliated organization is a significant step forward to integrate into the Universal Higher Education Area of Europe. With this status Europe is increasing the awareness of the Center and its confidence index. In order to ensure the competitiveness of the graduates in the local and international labor market, it is necessary to renovate and upgrade educational programs. The latest changes in quality assurance have been elaborated and new authorization standards and procedures approved in accordance with European standards and guidelines; international experts, students, the staff and employers are involved in the evaluation process of Quality improvement of their higher institutions. [Darchia 2013:12-16]

CONCLUSION

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) is an umbrella organisation which represents quality assurance organisations from the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) member states. ENQA promotes European co-operation in the field of quality assurance in higher education and disseminates information and expertise among its members and towards stakeholders in order to develop and share good practice and to foster the European dimension of quality assurance. Over the next four years, ENQA will continue to represent its members and affiliates internationally, support them nationally and provide them with comprehensive services and networking opportunities.

In May 2017 Georgia adopted revised standards and procedures for institutional evaluations of higher education institutions. The National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) initially began preparation for the revision of the quality assurance system in 2014. The process was carried out with wide participation from higher education institutions (HEIS), national and international experts, and other stakeholders. The updated standards and procedures essentially shift the system to one which is more development oriented and focuses on student-centred learning and teaching, while supporting the development of a quality culture at HEIs and considering the national context.

For the implementation of the renewed standards and procedures, NCEQE is carrying out pilot institutional evaluations against the new standards, three of which will take place by the end of 2017. In 2018 new standards will be established nationwide. [<http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/nceqe-revises-qa-standards-and-procedures/>]

Based on the mission of the educational institutions the authorisation procedure shall establish the compatibility of an educational institution with the following standards, for higher education institutions:

- Mission and strategic development of the higher education institutions;
- Organizational structure and management of the higher education institution;
- Educational Programmes;
- Staff of the higher education institutions;
- Students and their support services;
- Research, development and/or other creative work;
- Material, information and financial resources.

Authorization Standards for Higher Education Institutions is the goal of higher education institutions (HEI); authorization standards are to promote educational quality development at HEIs and to ensure a student centred learning environment. Standards of authorization for HEIs comply with Georgia's higher education goals and European Higher Education Area (EHEA) requirements. The standards aim to fully assess the institution, including its resources, regulations, carried out, current and planned activities, results achieved and feasibility to achieve intended goals (relevant planned activities, mechanisms for their implementation, and allocated resources).

Although the measures taken in the higher education system of Georgia are aimed at obtaining international experience for students, academic and administrative personnel, they are not sufficient to make significant impact on the system level. Consequently, additional resources are needed for internationalization of higher education, attracting foreign students and establishing the country as a regional educational centre. In spite of depth reforms, many challenges remain on the quality of education services and equal access. Among those challenges are: Education Union of the Labour Market, Development of science and research.

Education and science have a strategic importance for the sustainable economic development and well-being of the country.

The Georgian system of education quality assurance is dynamically developing in line with good international practice.

The internationalization of education is an unconditional priority. It promotes educational quality development, international mobility, and international recognition and builds confidence [Modrzejewski 2011: 309-311]. The internationalization process also facilitates: Approach of the Georgian education system to European standards and Realization of Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration.

It should be noted that the process of internationalization also ensures effective implementation of the obligations taken under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement.

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REVIEW

Ingrid Borarosova, Aaron T. Walter, Ondrej Filipec, *GLOBAL JIHAD. Case studies in Terrorist Organizations*, Research Institute for European Policy, Gdansk 2017, pp. 230.

Evolution that takes place mainly on the plane of national security is the *signum temporis* of the twentieth century. It is the result of the occurrence of the new global challenges and threats. The end of the cold-war influenced the order of the world and the related transformation of the international order was directly responsible for the need of redefying the safety and the need to come up with new political concepts that would indeed guarantee it.

Creating an efficacious defense strategy does cause numerous problems, that are mainly brought about by the somewhat various and highly diverse dilemmas regarding the modern security systems. Among the many important factors that do seem to influence our current reality (like asymmetry of the world concerning the disproportion of the resources, ecological disasters, scarcity of the resources, problems with energy supplies, human rights, migrations, violation or the new, difficult to fight at any given moment civilization diseases), there seems to be one specific problem, that seems to top them all – it is the international terrorism, especially in the form of religion terrorism.

The more one tries to analyze thoroughly the matters of the modern terrorism, the more obviously one sees certain factors providing arguments in favor of the extremists. Obviously it would be difficult to deny, that it is the politics and the military powers that are the most relevant components, which are essential if one tries to comprehend the modern day terrorism. At the same time it is truly important to understand what really composes the potential and the drive of the numerous terrorists' organizations. It is undeniably the emotional factor (intransigence and the determination of the individual) together with the ideology and identity (identifying with the certain religious or ideological group) that are the most distinctive feature of the new and extremely effective terrorism.

From the beginning of the 1970's this truly global in all its forms and incarnations phenomenon had been perceived as the problem and threat of a very local and marginal measures. The last decade of the twentieth century though and the first years of the new millennium have shown how much this phenomenon has dominated the world. This domination is expressed both by the spectacularisation and escalation of the violence and in the forms of the global communication between the determined terrorists and the other actors on the international scene.

Over last two decades, especially after 9/11 attacks, both scientific and journalistic „markets” were awash with publications concerning this problematic issues. Some of them – valuable, fulfilled with analysis and original, the other ones – laconic,

imitative, not contributing a lot of content to the discussion about terrorism. Surely, *Global Jihad. Case studies in Terrorist Organizations*, published in 2017, qualifies to the first category. Three authors of the book - Ingrid Borarosova, Aaron T. Walter and Ondrej Filipec, substantively, profoundly and at the same time interestingly present the characteristics of a chosen terrorist organization functioning. The paper consists of two parts. The first part has three chapters, the second one comprises eight chapters.

The first part deliberates the phenomenon of Jihad. The authors analyze specifics of the religion terrorism, highlighting radicalism of Islam interpretation. Exploring Islamic fundamentalism, they fairly state a thesis that it is the compilation of politics and religion, signaling that in this particular case politics is strictly connected with violence. *The obstacle lies in the roots and aims of Islamist terrorism and the impossibility to distinguish between clearly religious and political aims. Radical Islamism connects both: radical religion and extremist politics* [Mudde, 2000]. This particular opinion is being shared also by Johannes Juliaan Gijsbert Jansen who states that Islamic fundamentalism is both politics and religion. It has a dual nature. When it is analyzed as if it was a movement that has a political nature only, mistakes are made because fundamentalism is fully religion at the same time. When it is analyzed as if it was a movement that has a religious nature only, mistakes are made too, because fundamentalism is fully politics at the same time [Jansen, 2005]. That sort of unity makes the origins of the Islamic fundamentalism. In our times the most dangerous seems to be the Islamic religious terrorism. The leaders of the extremists groups take advantage of the blind faith of the soldiers; they manipulate the fanaticism and the intolerance. Those manipulated soldiers become the life weapons that are willing to sacrifice their life in the name of the holy cause. While the general trend of the return to the Islamic values helped the societies in finding the rules of the truth and love in life, the extremists started to use the basic religious values to manipulate the people and to achieve the political objectives. The contemporary fundamentalism is not the proof of the renaissance of the religiousness. It is the proof of the very strong politicization of the faith [Kaczmarek, 2001].

This opinion is shared also by Krzysztof Kościelniak, who states that the world of Islam has not worked out the division into *sacrum* and *profanum*, whereas secular or other independent culture gained only partial autonomy in some of Muslim states. This state arises from the fact that democracy is understood differently there, than in western countries. While Islam brings God`s sovereignty to the fore, western democracies highlight the independence of humans [2006].

The authors of the book draw attention to multidimensionality of Islamic fundamentalism, emphasizing that it incorporates both politic dogmas such as anti-democratic ideas focused on world`s Islamization or anti-western values, and streak of overinterpretation of Quran towards achieving intended purposes. They state that... *Radical Islamism presents ideology which constituted itself as the major anti-democratic force since the fall of Communism. Moreover radical Islamism has some features close to totalitarian ideologies: on one side it has some utopian ideas about creation of the new World based on the Sharia law, on the other it shares the conservative sentiment for old ages in the aims of resurrecting the Sunni Caliphate. Unlike other totalitarian ideologies radical Islamism is aggressive and expansive in its*

nature. Moreover, within radicalism there is strong encouragement for original purity of religion embodied in Salafism which is in principle opposing modernity. This reaction to modernity has also its hostile attitude towards Western civilization which may well serve as the political program and justification for Jihad in its violent form. Jihad in connection with radical Islamism has resulted in Jihadism: the politically and religiously justified violent struggle against everything which is not purely Islamic or which is opposing pure Islam. In this sense Jihadism contains certain paradoxes: zealous and literal fulfilment of Islamist ideology by violent means (extreme Salafism) is not only against the development of society and progress of mankind, but is also against the basic principles of Islam. The religious heterogeneity of Islam as well as misunderstandings regarding Quran and its interpretation makes Islam prone to misuse by radical groups including Salafi jihadists who interpret Jihad in a very utilitarian and aggressive way [Borarosova, Walter, Filipec, 2017].

In the second chapter of the first part of the book, the authors raise an issue of a specific symbiosis between terrorists and mass media. *The relationship between media and terrorism is currently a highly discussed topic. In comparison to the past, media has become an everyday irreplaceable source of information. Most people read news, watch television, listen to the radio and also use the internet. Since media can deliver information to large amount of people immediately, it is a useful partner for terrorism. One of the most basic aims of terrorists and their organizations or groups is to inform people about their existence and to deliver fear and panic to as many people as they can. To pass this message through the media has become the most simplistic way [Borarosova, Walter, Filipec, 2017].*

A similar statement appeared in Jean Baudrillard's *Duch terroryzmu (Spirit of terrorism) - Pictures enhance the importance of events and have a huge influence. They work as a continuous multiplication [Baudrillard, 2005]*, and it was also shared by Polish scientists Krzysztof Kowalczyk and Wiesław Wróblewski who highlighted that entire contemporary world, shattered by constant conflicts, is bound by electronic media, within which mass-media play an important role. Therefore, media have become an effective tool of manipulation and a convenient kind of terrorist weapon.

Tomasz Aleksandrowicz contends the same and writes that a terroristic act is a media act and its immanent feature is public opinion. It has to be shocking so that it can fulfill its purpose, because it is the only way to draw attention of public opinion and trigger off the planned, intimidation effect [Aleksandrowicz, 2008].

At the beginning of a new Millennium nobody questions the symbiosis between media and terrorism. Different extremists are fully aware that terrorism without advertisement lacks impact. This has an influence on a frequency of attacks. Therefore, they do everything not to be forgotten even for a short period of time. Additionally, mass-media often become supporters of terrorists' demands. Through spreading of certain news they require fast reactions from governments. They often put pressure on executive powers and thus facilitate either mitigation or worsening of an international situation [Stańczyk-Minkiewicz, 2010].

It is easy to notice how a technological and IT progress, as a result of globalization processes, influences the development of military tools. These tools are easily available for different people. The increasing dependence between information web and societies is used by different kinds of extremists. With finances, which

contemporary perpetrators possess, it is easy to use all new methods of persuasion [Stańczyk-Minkiewicz, 2010].

But what is crucial, is the fact that use of mass media is repeatedly interrelated with spreading false, manipulated information, which often raise the significance of extremists or they present them as victims of Western Civilization. *For example, rationalization of terrorism is very dangerous, as the case when media explain why the terrorist group was acting in such a way and these explanations or reasoning can be very attractive for the public in specific situations. Labelling is also connected with this phenomenon: terrorists may be given the label of "good guys" who fight for their generally accepted purpose which might create sympathies amongst the public. These media mistakes or sometimes even these media aims can completely change the mood of the public about terrorism and by doing this dangerously spread positive statements towards terrorist groups* [Borarosova, Walter, Filipec, 2017].

The third chapter of the publication has a theoretical character and is an introduction to current, key issues of international law in terrorism context. Controversies about defining terrorism or terrorists, which arise from the fact, that the more precisely we analyze the phenomenon (on political science, sociologist and psychologist level), the more we are certain that it is not possible to define and determine it unambiguously.

The term „terrorism” is used to describe various phenomena. As a synonym of acts of violence it is identified pejoratively with people called “terrorists”. In this context the term “terrorist” is comparable to other, offensive epithets of political vocabulary, such as “racist”, “fascist”, “imperialist”. Those undoubtedly overexploited words lose their original meaning and become a part of an offensive rhetoric used by political opponents.

International scientific and political panels have been trying to develop a commonly accepted and effective definition of terrorism for decades. The obstacles are various political concerns (ideological matters, cultural and individual interest) and all other particularisms which overbalance a reliable, substantive approach and struggle for one consistent theory. Instead of objectively verified terms, there are still being used epithets such as “correct – incorrect”, “comprehensible – incomprehensible”, “justified – unjustified”, which simply cannot be commonly accepted. As the authors fairly tell that *...as terrorism developed over time, there were codification attempts of several issues related to terrorism. However, terrorism is in its nature a very controversial issue touching political interests of countries. For this reason, the perception of terrorism differs among them. What acts shall be considered as terrorism and actually, who are terrorists? There is not a single answer for this question and the definition of terrorism and terrorist is rather shallow and influenced by political perception. While some countries consider certain movements or groups as friendly, other states may on the contrary consider them as terrorists. There is no general consensus which groups are terrorists and which are not despite in some cases the consensus is much broader. Similarly, there is no single definition of terrorism* [Borarosova, Walter, Filipec, 2017].

Alike conclusions can be found in the book *Od Boga do terroru. Rola religii w ideologii dżihadyzmu na przykładzie organizacji Al-Kaida (From God to terror. The role of religion in ideology of Jihad on case of Al-Kaida)*, where the author states that dilemmas about methods of interpretation of terroristic actions are still current.

E.g. militants who fought for the independence of Chechnya, because of their methods were called “terrorists” due to the goals they fight for – “partisans”. It is why, it’s crucial to work out a semantic model, enabling to objective and precise specification of terroristic activities, what should implicate ability of differing them apart from partisans or criminal operations [Kosmynka, 2012].

Moreover, in this chapter the authors put an emphasis on the first attempts to codify an international law and its sources, especially in the aspect of covenants relating to the problem of terrorism. There are raised matters of extradition, questions of an international criminal law, and institutions which enforce law-abidingness. Also, this part of book provides information about methods of combating terrorism in aid of human rights or about the problem of “child soldiers” frequently used by terrorist organizations. By raising these questions, the authors conclude that, admittedly, law is not capable of preventing terrorism, but it has powerful tools – rules and regulations - with which it can combat the problem. They highlight that *this fight is sometimes controversial as the borders between terrorism and other forms of violence are very thin and sometimes overlapping. Moreover, terrorism is predominantly a political phenomenon. The role of law in the fight against terrorism has increasingly become important. The new wave of terrorism related to the existence of the Islamic state again questioned the issue of the right balance between civil liberties and freedom on one side and security on the other* [Borarosova, Walter, Filipec, 2017].

In eight chapters of the second part of the book, the authors attempted to create a case study of terrorist organizations, which, though being very different in aspects of ideologies, range, areas and methods of action, are being interrelated with each other by Islamic fundamentalism as a cause of attacks and by playing a meaningful part in the context of global and national security. The authors bring closer to readers the origins of particular organizations, their leadership, and areas and range of activity.

The first organization analyzed by the authors was Al-Qaida – which stood out in minds mostly because of the World Trade Centre attacks (11092001), though it was actually created in the 80` of 20th century. The authors, fairly and at the same time similarly to other scientists exploring specifics of this organization functioning, [Abraham, 2007] present Al-Qaida as a strong, resiliently working terrorist network, which instead of getting weaker against the background of newly established, competitive Islamic organizations, constantly proliferates, enlisting more and more supporters and stretching the geographical area of their activity [Williams, 2002].

The second terrorist organization is the Islamic State (Daesh). The authors fairly state that the activity of this organization is raising nowadays the biggest fears and affrights. They highlight that firstly, Daesh controls enormous zones in the Middle East and secondly, it is an organization which transformed into a self-sufficient, state organization with its own finances and economy. Moreover, its *modus operandi* enables it to quickly reshape from a *quasi*-state organization, into a *stricte* terroristic. The authors seem to confirm the formerly presented thesis of Benjamin Hall, which he delineated in his book entitled *Inside ISIS. The Brutal Rise of a Terrorist Army*. He stated that, even though authorities claim, that terrorists do not take over new territories, as a matter of fact, the situation gets worse constantly. ISIS strengthens itself in cities, toughens its control over occupied areas and

encourages to perform attacks on West and still tortures and murders thousands of innocent people. Moreover, their ranks extend continuously, due the radicals joining in to them, from all over the world [Hall, 2015].

Another case study in this part of publication relates to Al Nusra Front organization. In the authors' view, it can be comparably dangerous as previously mentioned Islamic State. They emphasize that *the Al-Nusra Front is formally known as Jabhat al-Nusra (JN) 27 and can be considered the official al-Qaeda (AQ) affiliate in Syria able to operate with strategic, intelligent planning and follow-up in sophisticated actions. ISIS and JN are rivals, although their strategic goals overlap*²⁸. *The most dangerous feature about JN is also the main difference to ISIS. ISIS is a creation of its own self-announced state through power projection i.e. by conquering of land. JN prefers to select a different method and operates by provoking social and religious transformations, unrests and infiltrating into local revolutions with patience and planning. The current situation in Syria has created almost ideal conditions to execute the strategy of JN, steered indirectly by Al-Qaeda* [Borarosova, Walter, Filipec, 2017].

Shaul Shay and Ely Karmon draw attention to the same features of the organization in the post-conference publication entitled *Jabhat al-Nusra at Crossroads* stating that *both ISIS and JN are Sunni Salafi-jihadi terrorist groups. ISIS has presented itself as a group that can protect Sunnis against the Assad regime, which is aligned with Iran and Hezbollah and Iraqi Shiites. Once ISIS is gone, JN could step in and assume that role. The defeat of ISIS inside of Syria is likely to increase the capability and strength of Jabhat al-Nusra, and can lead to the option of cooperation between the groups. The "emirate" of Jabhat al-Nusra could be al-Qaeda's first sovereign state. If the plan is carried out it could see two "Islamic states" –ISIS and the new al-Qaeda emirate - competing for territory and influence within the borders of war-torn Syria. While the US's strategy in the Middle East is heavily focused on ISIS, which is also known as the Islamic State, ISIL, or Daesh, Jabhat al-Nusra, which is also known as the Nusra Front, is spreading its influence through groups that oppose the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad. The United States and its western allies fear that if it establishes territorial control it could use Syria as a base for attacking the West, as Osama bin Laden did in Afghanistan*¹.

The African continent is an area of inception and operation of two next terrorist organizations presented in the publication. Al – Shabaab – a terrorist group dominating in Somalia since 2006 and Boko Haram, established in 2002 in Nigeria. As in cases of previously elaborated organizations, both groups were analyzed for their structures, scale of activity and motivations of actions. In the case of Al Shabab, the authors especially highlighted the fact that the main goal of this group is to create competitive administration to currently exercising power government and creating a Somali caliphate in "bigger" Somalia. They signaled, that the attacks conducted by extremists at the territories of Ethiopia, Uganda or Kenya may have a great impact on Somali inhabitants' decision on migration. They also underlined a constant fight of extremists with AMISOM, peacekeeping operation

¹ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309135880_Jabhat_al-Nusra_at_Crossroads, (11.05.2018).

forces of African Union stationing in Somalia since 2007, and also activities beyond the African continent, in Yemen.

In Boko Haram context, the authors drew attention mostly to the fact, that the main target of the organization is incorporation of sharia at the whole territory of Nigeria. They also stressed multidimensionality of the organization, consisting in diversity in aspect of policy of functioning, in the interest of gaining as much supporters as it is possible. *According to a report from the US House of Representatives it is possible that one of Boko Haram factions should deal with domestic problems and other one should deal with international violence. Another report states the group probably split into three factions from whom one of them would wish the end of all the violence, another one seeks the international peace treaty and third one does not wish to stop the violence until the sharia will spread through the whole country* [Borarosova, Walter, Filipec, 2017].

In both cases of those organizations functioning on the African continent, the authors emphasized that their activities are characterized by uncompromisingness, cruelty and a gigantic scale of victims.

John Maszka came to similar conclusions. He spared his whole book to those two organizations - *Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram. Guerrilla Insurgency or Strategic Terrorism?* He accents there that *Boko Haram is now the deadliest "terrorist" organization operational in the world, by virtue of the sheer number of people the group has killed. Together with al-Shabaab, the two groups account for a substantial amount of carnage on the African continent* [Maszka, 2017].

The ninth chapter of the second part of the book, was intended by authors for an analysis of the *East Turkmenistan Islamic Movement*, Muslim separatist organization whose activity's main theme is separation of Eastern Turkmenistan from China (though the grouping cooperates with Al-Kaida, outside China). In this chapter, the aspect of ethnicity is thoroughly explored. In the authors' opinion, it need not always be a violence determining factor. However, in case of this organization, which is also fueled by Salafi Jihad and coexistence with Al-Kaida, it undoubtedly radicalizes its activities.

Often, while exploring the symbiosis between ethnicity and violence, other scientists present more firm, categorical views, stating that for the majority of people in the world, especially in Asia, Africa and Europe, the identity is inextricably connected with ethnicity. People are more opened to killing each other, because of ethnic, religion and racial issues, than ideological causes [Czubochka, 2012].

Last two chapters of the book were spared for organizations working on the territories of Chechnya and Pakistan. Arab Mujahideen in Chechnya, is a groupment established in 1995 by Arabic mujahids, which realizes in its activities, *stricte* cruel, brutal methods of fight. The authors are correct in their analysis, which proves media's incorrect identification of this groupment with Wahhabit's organization, acknowledging that Wahhabits do not use any kind of violence in their actions.

Lashkar e Tajiba, the last Sunnite organization to be studied over, functioning mostly in Pakistan, though created in 1987 in Afghanistan with the support of Osama Bin Laden, is reasonably recommended by the authors as noteworthy, due to its international and national operations. Its ideology holds concepts of introducing the rules of state of Islam in southern Asia as well as it concentrates on

combat with military forces of India and civilians inhabiting disputed region of Kashmiri. The same assumptions are way more broadly presented by the workers of the Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point in publication entitled *The Fighters of Lashkar-e-Taiba: Recruitment, Training, Deployment and Death*.

It has to be admitted that the second part of the book which is some kind of a compendium about particular terrorist organizations is clearly an added value of this publication, thanks to the fact that it brings to whole book, apart from *stricte* theoretical knowledge, practical aspect - it is the analysis of functioning of fundamentalist, extremist groupments. Even though the authors detailed only eight subjects among from all the others, in reviewers' opinion, this a little subjective choice seems to be justified because it illustrates different geographical regions (e.g. Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, Nigeria, India, Chechnya, Pakistan, etc.) as well as various methods of extremists functioning and combat, and also different ideas. This clearly exemplifies multidimensionality of modern terrorism, problems with eradication of it or even its minimalization.

Obviously, previously there had been released other elaborations of this kind, e.g. *The Mind of the Terrorism. The Psychology of Terrorism from the IRA to AL-QAEDA*, Jerrolda M. Posta [Post, 2007], which had no chance for this kind of analysis, because it was published in 2007, while organizations such as Islamic State, Al. Nusra Front or Al. Shabab weren't either developed by then or even established at all. Global Jihad. Case study in Terrorist Organizations is a kind of continuation or actualization of all those publications.

The discussed publication is surely worth of noticing, because of the topicality of the subject, range of analysis and substantive knowledge. The authors precisely and deeply explored literature, what is proclaimed by abundant bibliography. What is more, this publication is a meaningful voice in a global terrorism discourse, probability of its evolution and resultant threats. It is recommendable to all the readers interested in Global Jihad's matters, because of scientific or occupational sakes. In reviewer's opinion, its righteous and legible message guarantees that it will get into the canon of publications pertaining to the problematic of terrorism, for good.

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