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TERMINOLOGICAL CHAOS IN LABELLING FALSE ONLINE CONTENT

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Abstract

The study deals with the issue of misleading information in the Internet environment. The authors define and analyse basic terms denoting various methods of disinformation. They point to the fact that there are specific terms and phenomena forming the thematic axis of the current discourse on disinformation practices in online media. They state that there is quite a lot of chaos in the field of terminology. This is the reason why they critically reconsider the existing knowledge related to disinformation, such as fake news and the like. The ambition of the authors is the conceptualisation of disinformation methods in the context of a broadening of genres and social background. They emphasise the need to research the issue because the information quality of various blogs, posts, comments, etc. raises many unanswered questions or incorrect answers. In their analysis of the issue, they use the basic methods of logical analysis, the hermeneutic approach, as well as selectively chosen examples of individual typological variants of disinformation.

Key words: Deepfake, Disinformation, Fake News, Hoax, Misinformation

INTRODUCTION

The history of mankind should teach us how important it is to communicate facts without misrepresenting information, falsely writing it, plotting it, or concealing essential facts. The history of correspondence between monarchs and even the causes of military conflicts offer numerous examples of such practices. The last century, the era of the two world wars, is an excellent example of sophisticated media manipulations and intrigues that helped unleash the war madness1. Specific ways to use misleading information can be seen in the field of journalistic practice from its conception to the present². In this case, we might be satisfied that each community has its own ways of dealing with false and misleading information. The recent era of communist regimes in Europe and their centralised censorship may be a shining example. It is common knowledge that all the media of that era was subject to its ideological imperative. Recipients intuitively followed their preferred reading, and their attitudes towards the information conveyed ranged between accepting the messages with reservations and a strictly critical interpretation³. The mass fall of the regimes between 1989-1990 gave hope in the former communist block for the recovery of the media environment. It should be emphasised that media and journalistic practice in Western liberal-democratic countries has also gone through various dramas⁴.

The digital communication platform in the Internet environment prompted the rapid onset of the information revolution. Technical-technological improvements in individual types of mass media accelerated the path of information from its author to the recipient and vice versa, from the recipient to the author and other users. If the information in traditional private media was a commodity, it was also assigned the status of an extended service or added value by the online media. This value is fully

¹ Remark by the authors: The psychological war that broke out before the First World War was preceded by sophisticated media manipulation, political hard-power chess games and intrigues. Š. Zweig sees the practices of information misleading on several levels. First of all, it was a diametrically opposing interpretation of events by French, German and Austrian journalists. The result was a loss of media credibility, the spread of half-truths and gossips by the tabloids, and the consequent tension between nations and the strengthening of nationalism. See also: [Zweig 2019].

² Remark by the authors: Although there is still no collective work explicitly focused on the history of manipulative practices in the media, the premise of the existence of information misleading from the beginnings of the mass media to the present can be defended based on partial studies as well as more extensive publications focused on the history and theory of journalism. Apart from social and political contexts and influences, it is clear that journalism has always struggled between subjectivity and objectivity, between what is a priority in informing and what is not, as well as between what is wanted and what is not wanted to be said, between truth and between truth and lie. For more information, see: [Altheide et al. 1979]; [Berry et al. 2006]; [Conboy 2004]; [Goldstein 1989]; [Holt et al. 2009]; [McCombs 2009]; [DeUze 2015]; [Remišová 2010]; [Ilowiecki et al. 2003]; [Hvížďala 2003]; [Ftorek 2012]; etc.

³ Remark by the authors: As the authors see it, the behaviour of the recipients in the communist regime very aptly illustrates Hall's theory of preferred reading. Dominant-hegemonic reading was typical for those who believed in the official ideology uncritically and without reservation. Although the negotiated reading was tolerant of the dominant ideology, the recipients built their own attitudes towards the information. The opposition's acceptance of the dominant ideology expressed a clear, negative stance towards the contents and messages. See also [Hall 1973].

⁴ Remark by the authors: In the periodical press, the development dramas were most evident. Very generally, it can be stated that the development led from a split between the tabloid and serious press through the party press to the ideological press with attitudes that agreed to various political and ideological platforms. See also: [Vojtek et al. 2010].

mediated mainly by multiplatform journalism⁵. Its information convenience as well as attractiveness for users is the combination of text, sound and image. The multimedia approach to the creation of informational and publicistic genres makes it possible to form new creations of statements about the reflected reality. It is also common knowledge that the attractiveness of communication in the Internet environment is increased by the use of hypertext links, continuous updating of information, simultaneous publication of text and audio-visual materials, online access to archives, including immediate user response. Finally, web interactivity also helped the emergence of blogging and the development of civic journalism. However, it also raised many questions concerning the adherence to elementary ethical principles, decency, and also questions concerning the dissemination of unverified information, rumours and purposefully misleading, false information. This is the reason why there is a growing demand in the public as well as in the relevant professional circles for the revitalisation of ethical principles throughout the entire field of digital communication. Critical opinions on the level of the information quality of mediated content are appearing more and more often in the relevant professional circles. In their opinion, surfing in the ocean of information requires a correct approach based on verifying its truthfulness as well as on their critical evaluation [Pravdová et al. 2017].

The study deals with the nature of the disinformation and fake news phenomena in the Internet environment. The primary goal is to define and analyse the basic terms and phenomena forming the thematic axis of the current discourse on disinformation practices in online media. The authors are aware of the fact that a relatively large chaos prevails in the terminological field of this discourse. As part of the analysis of the issue, basic methods of logical analysis and hermeneutic approaches are used as well as a selective choice of examples on which the typological variants of disinformation are demonstrated. What is to be highlighted is the fact that multiplatform journalism plays a role when defining case studies; however, communication practices go beyond it. This is because lay people or experimenters from various areas of social practice have also taken part in the communication process.

IS FAKE NEWS THE NEW DISINFORMATION?

It is thanks to the Internet that this phenomenon has become the subject of interest of lay and professional discussions⁶. This is evidenced by the fact that in 2017, according to Collins Dictionary, the word "fake news" became the word of the year [What

⁵ Remark by the authors: The authors identify with Gershberg's definition of this term. He characterises multiplatform journalism in the context of economic, cultural and technological convergence of the media. The convergence of the platforms and creative approaches has significantly affected the production, distribution and reception of journalistic information. For more information, see: [Gershberg 2017: 1037-1040].

⁶ Remark by the authors: Media professionals, but especially politicians, have begun to name their counterparts on a regular, often justified basis, as producing disinformation. These attitudes can also be understood on two levels of interpretation. In the first case, there is a lack of argument and a targeted deviation from an unpleasant topic. In the latter case, it may be a legitimate reservation against the misleading information or even the severe lies of the partner in the discussion.

is 2017's word of the year? [online]. [2019-12-11]. Available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-41838386.]. Despite the fact that fake news became popular first in 2017, its origin is often associated with the US presidential election in 2016. Since then, "it has been the subject of newspaper headlines, the special topic of academic journals, the basic of countless hashtags, and a smoking gun on both ends of the political spectrum" [Caplan et al. 2018].

The Oxford Dictionary offers a definition of this, at first glance new phrase. It states that fake news is "false reports of events, written and read on websites" [Fake news. [online]. [2019-12-11]. Available at: https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/ definition/english/fake-news?q=fake+news>.]. Thus, it confirms the fact that fake news is fundamentally connected with the emergence of online media space in the Internet environment⁷. However, in the opinion of the authors of this study, what is important is the fact that it does not speak of the intention with which the information is altered or even constructed. According to J. Markoš, in the Slovak bibliography, the authors refer to the word fake news as "the way of journalistic work in which the medium does not emphasise the accuracy of the news it offers. The medium does not verify the facts or even makes up the news" [Markoš 2019: 247]. While in English-speaking countries media theorists make a fundamental distinction between the concepts of fake news and disinformation [Caplan et al. 2018], in Slovak and Czech scientific circles, these two concepts overlap⁸, or authors use only one of the concepts [online]. [2019-12-11]. Available at: https://zvolsi.info/sk/fantomas/.] As for the concept of disinformation, in Slovak publications, it most often refers to the manipulation of facts and "outdated, inaccurate and unverified information. Its (often not provided) authors do not want to inform, but confuse, oversaturate with information and imply what we should think" [online]. [2019-12-11]. Available at: https://zvolsi.info/sk/fantomas/>.]. J. Markoš defines disinformation in a similar way, claiming that disinformation is "purposefully created and disseminated...the aim of which is to influence the public opinion of citizens in the desired direction" [Markoš 2018: 247]. Accordingly, the main feature of disinformation is an intentional manipulation of the meaning of information, incomplete communication of the information or even its complete fabrication. J. Křeček also agrees with such a definition. He describes disinformation as intentionally distorted information secretly implanted in the opponent's information system with the intention of influencing his or her activities and views [Křeček 2004: 45]. Foreign studies treat the term in a similar way. C. Wardle claims that disinformation "is content that is intentionally false and designed to cause harm" [Wardle 2019]. Therefore, the problem arises when identifying the subject of interest of the fake news creators. The above-mentioned foreign studies understand fake news as a collection of all misleading or false information in

⁷ Remark by the authors: Dissemination of rumours or disinformation has a long history. However, the online space has brought new possibilities. See also: [Ftorek 2017].

⁸ Remark by the authors: The authors claim that fake news is just a new term denoting disinformation. For more information, see: [Gregor et al. 2018: 46].

the online space, including that which is disseminated unintentionally. This means that fake news includes both the most well-known conspiracy theories and satirical media outputs. They parody a particular politician or social phenomenon; however, the recipient cannot distinguish whether it is a true or false event or situation⁹.

Based on this knowledge, the term fake news can refer to all content in an online environment containing false, i.e. incorrect, misleading or semi-true information. This can also include information taken out of context, regardless of whether it is disseminated purposefully or not. In her latest research, C. Wardle¹⁰ argues that the term fake news does not cover all types of disinformation. For example, she has expanded the issue to include the term malinformation, which includes true content, but in most cases, it is sensitive information which the author would not like to publish voluntarily. In her study, she therefore describes this issue as information disorder [Wardle 2019].

When talking about disinformation, we refer to all content, not only media content, created by its author with the intention to disseminate false information¹¹. On the contrary, if we refer to false information spread unintentionally, we talk about a hoax. This is information whose mendacity arises mainly from the recipient's inability to correctly interpret the presented information. It can also be information modified in other ways, while the most important factor for referring to it as a hoax is its unintentional mendacity. In this context, T. Ujfaluši deals with false information based on the intention, i.e. he differentiates between intentional disinformation and hoaxes. The latter were created unintentionally, for example, by wrong decoding, etc. [Ujfaluši 2018: 8]. We believe that the spread of hoaxes in the online environment is mostly affected by the low level of media literacy demonstrated by users of content and messages. The result is the great naivety with which they approach reading media texts, as well as their indifference to the need to verify sources [Vrabec et al. 2018].

It is necessary to underline the fact that researchers most often differentiate fake news based on intention [Paris et al. 2015]; [Wardle et al. 2017]. Individual types of fake news, however, can exist as both disinformation and hoaxes at the same time. C. Wardle published a typology of fake news consisting of seven types of problem content occurring mostly in English speaking countries. She ranked the individual types on the scale from the smallest to the greatest intention to disinform [Wardle 2017].

⁹ Remark by the authors: The LSNS (The People's Party – Our Slovakia) political party shared an article from the satirical website AZ247.cz. However, it was a parody [Kernová 2019].

¹⁰ Remark by the authors: Claire Wardle currently leads the strategic direction and research for First Draft. In 2017 she co-authored the seminal report — Information Disorder: An interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policy for the Council of Europe.

¹¹ Remark by the authors: This applies to both online and offline lies. As far as online is concerned, they most frequently occur in the form of hoax. For more, see the part Types of Disinformation in the Online Media Environment below.

SATIRE OR PARODY

No intention to cause harm but has potential to fool

Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual

When genuine sources are impersonated

When genuine sources are impersonated

FALSE CONTENT

MANIPULATED CONTENT

Figure 1. 7 Types of mis- and disinformation

Source: WARDLE, C.: Fake news. It's complicated. [online]. [2019-12-16]. Available at: https://firstdraftnews.org/latest/fake-news-complicated/.

We believe that the biggest drawback of the aforementioned fake news typology is the fact that the author does not take into consideration the two sides of the phenomenon. On the one hand, individual types of fake news can be published with the intention to disinform, provide false information, mislead and lie. On the other hand, they can, at the same time, take the form of, for example, satirical media output or caricatures. Although their false content can be misleading, it still represents a distinctive, in most cases avowed way of reacting to reality. Deepfake can serve as an example. It is widely used at targeted, especially political, campaigns as a very popular satirical format¹².

TYPES OF DISINFORMATION IN THE ONLINE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

Fake news has found various forms of exploitation in the online space. Individual types of fake news and specific types of disinformation have been continually evolving based on the technical availability of the tools for their creation. The emergence and adaptation of individual disinformation types was also affected by the economic, ideological and political need to influence recipients, while these individual needs are often interrelated.

One of the most widely spread types of disinformation affecting users, primarily due to the economic factor, is the so-called click-bait. It is a reference or click bait in a headline. Its sole purpose is to arouse the user's curiosity and attract their attention at any price. According to P. Nutil, it is about enticing individuals to click on a given website in order to increase its traffic, which will subsequently lead to a higher income from online advertising. Formulations such as "Dangerous Disease! Do This Simple Thing And You'll Stay Safe.", etc. are often used [Nutil 2018: 18]. Such types of disinformation have the greatest potential on social networks. By sharing they

¹² Remark by the authors: See deepfake below.

reach a large number of communication participants who, thanks to an attractive, often misleading headline, are forced to click on a given link. Such content, together with rumours and sensations, is classed as low-quality content by Facebook, which has been actively fighting these practices for more than a year¹³.

Picture 1. An example of disinformation in the form of click-bait



Source: Facebook – Babičkine dobrotky [online]. [2020-01-02]. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/babickinedo-brotky.

The economic, but also political or ideological intention can be associated with the type of disinformation marked as imposter content. It occurs most frequently in the Anglo-American online space. It denotes "websites that mimic an established news sources name like NYTimes.com.co or NBC.com.co" [Caplan et al. 2018]; [Wardle 2017]. This type of disinformation content is particularly dangerous for people with low levels of media literacy. However, identifying a false website claiming to be someone else only on the basis of the end domain can pose a challenge even to a more advanced user. C. Wardle also places in this category reports published under a false brand [Wardle 2019]. Thus, we are not talking only about the changing the domain, but also about using a false logo or artwork with the intention to arouse an individual's trust. In such cases, the author often imitates the brand the user knows and trusts. In Slovak media space, such content can most frequently be found on social networks, where it occurs in the forms of various fake competitions [Kernová 2020]. The most appropriate example of intentional, but also unintentional, disinformation is deepfake. According to J. Markoš, it includes "a false video, recording or photograph that were created using advanced artificial intelligence. Deepfake is usually such a credible counterfeit that a regular Internet user cannot distinguish it from

¹³ Remark by the authors: One of the ways of fighting low-quality content is advertising reduction. See: [Reducing Low-Quality Ads on Facebook. [online]. [2020-01-02]. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/business/news/reducing-low-quality-ads-on-facebook.]

the original" [Markoš 2019: 247]. This type of disinformation can be used at targeted disinformation campaigns¹⁴, but it can also be created as satirical material with the purpose to entertain the recipient [A brilliant CGI Imagine. [online]. [2019-12-30]. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ko9QLXLlndw.]. A fake video issue was dealt with by a court in the Czech Republic, which adjudicated on the case of spreading an alarm message directly on the public television¹⁵. At present, however, deepfake can alter a video or a photograph to make it even more credible. According to Collins Dictionary, it is a "way of adding a digital image or video over another image or video, so that it appears to be part of the original. A deepfake is an image or video that has been changed in this way" [Deepfake. [online]. [2019-12-30]. Available at: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/deepfake.]. We believe that such type of disinformation can easily become a tool of a political or ideological fight. We understand it is difficult to formulate an exact definition of deepfake, especially due to the fact that artificial intelligence is constantly evolving. However, referring to the aforementioned definition by Collins Dictionary, it follows that deepfake includes also photographs edited in post-production. These, together with edited video parts¹⁶, are placed in the category of manipulated content by Wardle [Wardle 2019]. The ambiguity in defining such online content is also confirmed by the research carried out by the Data&society institute. Based on the results of the analyses of content, it divides the manipulation with audio and audio-visual content into deepfakes and cheap fakes¹⁷.

A very similar type of disinformation, with the possibility of exploiting the content with the aim to entertain and also intentionally disinform, is hoax. It is "an intentionally false message whose author attempts to make it seem true to its readers, viewers or listeners. Hoax is sometimes created for fun, but is often a part of a disinformation campaign" [Markoš 2019: 248]. According to Collins Dictionary, hoax is a "trick in which someone tells people a lie, for example that there is a bomb somewhere when there is not, or that a picture is genuine when it is not" [Hoax. [online]. [2020-01-06]. Available at: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/hoax.]. They are alarm and especially chain messages. They usually contain a call for further sharing, either via social networks or e-mail communication. These may be messages prompting the recipient to disseminate the given information on the pretext of gaining a certain advantage or averting a threat.

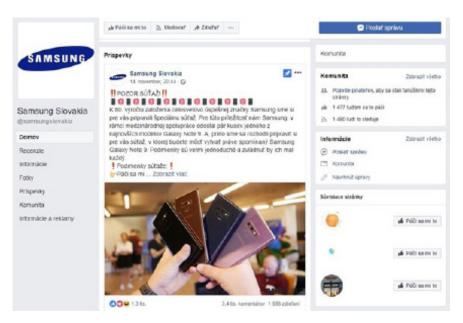
¹⁴ Remark by the authors: For example, by an altered or completely fabricated speech of a statesman. Deepfake can put the words they have never said in their mouth.

¹⁵ Remark by the authors: The members of the Ztohoven movement got into the software of one of the live broadcast cameras. Subsequently, they altered the image broadcast live and faked a nuclear explosion at a power plant. See: [Česká televízia odvysielala naživo zábery jadrového výbuchu v Krkonošiach. [online]. [2019-12-30]. Available at: https://medialne.etrend.sk/televizia/ceska-televizia-odvysielala-nazivo-zabery-jadroveho-vybuchu-v-krkonosiach.html.]

¹⁶ Remark by the authors: For example, adjusting the video playback speed to give the impression that the person shown is drunk.

¹⁷ Remark by the authors: It is based on technological complexity of individual types of media content. See: [Paris et al. 2015].

Picture 2. A deceitful competition on Facebook



Source: Falošný FB profil sa vydáva za slovenský Samsung. "Súťaží" o telefóny. [online]. [2020-01-14]. Available at: https://zive.aktuality.sk/clanok/136113/falosny-fb-profil-sa-vydava-za-slovensky-samsung-sutazi-o-telefony/>.

Picture 3. Hoax including an appeal to forward it



Source: own processing.

We also denote as hoaxes news stories which recipients share out of their own initiative due to the very core of its content, for instance, shocking information on the death

of a famous person¹⁸. P. Nutil claims that hoaxes use emotionally charged, shocking topics similar to tabloid media. According to him, hoaxes are most often built on the so-called "3S, na strachu, smrti a sexe (on fear, death, and sex)" [Nutil 2018: 140]. This type of misinformation can have various contents – entertaining, informing on urgent danger, false requests for help, emotionally extorting or warning against a disease. M. Gregor a P. Vejvodová state that some hoaxes also contain dangerous advice, e.g., how to treat a specific illness without a professional consultation with a doctor [Gregor et al. 2018: 45]. One of the most famous and widespread hoaxes is a well-known report informing the public about the endorsement of the presidential candidate Donald Trump by Pope Francis during the election campaign¹⁹.

Picture 4. Hoax during American election (left side)
Picture 5. Hoax on the death of Celine Dion (right side)





Sources: own processing.

A common feature of hoaxes is, in addition to its mass sharing, that they are also 100% false. In the Slovak media environment, we regularly encounter hoaxes about black vans attracting children, or needles containing the HIV virus in public transport means or at patrol stations [Policajti riešia ďalší hoax o dodávke, ktorá unáša deti. [online]. [2020-04-07]. Available at: https://mytrencin.sme.sk/c/22299337/ policajti-riesia-dalsi-hoax-o-dodavke-ktora-unasa-deti.html>.]

Within online communication, a wide space is also provided for disinformation marked as conspiracy theories. Here, we mean "an explanation of events in public life that without credible evidence accuses people, who actually or allegedly hold power, of conspiracy," [Markoš 2019: 248]. or, in other words, a plot. The basis of such theories is the belief that our lives are controlled by someone else, or we are told lies about certain events. Proponents of conspiracies most often accuse governments, secret services, corporations, global organisations, secret societies, representatives of

¹⁸ See: Pic. No.5. Hoax on the death of Celine Dion.

¹⁹ See Pic. No.4.

certain nations or religions, and also aliens [Nutil 2018: 19] of being involved in plotting. In the Slovak environment, such theories have gradually become an instrument of political struggle²⁰.

The term fake news refers to all types of dis- and misinformation. As the expression itself shows, this is false information produced and disseminated regardless of the intention of the author, or the spreader. Individual types of disinformation can then be perceived from different perspectives. These are economic, political, or social motives, on the basis of which individual media contents are formed. However, all types of disinformation have one thing in common – intentional untruth. They differ only in the way they originated, which in most cases is conditioned by the technological aspect of the online environment. On the other hand, rumours arise and are spread only unintentionally. The dissemination of this false information is largely due to the user's inability to decode the produced information correctly. This inability can be attributed to the already mentioned high level of media illiteracy among the users of Internet communication.

CONCLUSIONS

It follows from the discussion above that the degree of correctness versus incorrectness of working with information has an ethical level, but also a pragmatic cause. Surely, in terms of ethical and journalistic codes of conduct, disinforming is considered the greatest professional transgression. From the viewpoint of pragmatic reasons, it is necessary to take into account the information needs of the citizens of civilised countries. It is undisputed that the purpose of providing information was and still is to bring new knowledge to the recipients. It helps them get oriented in social, political, cultural, and other events, and, ultimately, satisfies their basic needs for topical information. Knowing the news is a prerequisite for the acceptance of individuals in the community, their lack of information can mean social exclusion from it. The consequence of not being familiar with the communication discourse and related news can also be various mental disorders of people [Hudíková 2015: 155-165].

Socio-cultural determination of the individual's desire to be informed first, technic-technological revolution bringing, among other things, information overload, is also a breeding ground for the production of information of varying quality. In such a situation, various variants of disinformation practices arise and establish themselves. Based on these circumstances, we can state that disinformation in the digital environment very successfully imitates true information. It does not bring new knowledge, it purposefully confuses the recipient, nevertheless, it satisfies their need to know. It evokes a false feeling of real, truthful knowledge. The postmodern era and rich diversity of contemporary pop culture, with its mental setting, is fertile ground for

²⁰ Remark by the authors: For example, the then Prime Minister R. Fico accused the President A. Kiska and the initiative Za slušné Slovensko (For Decent Slovakia) of conspiracy with G. Soros after mass protests in response to the death of the investigative journalist J. Kuciak. Mr Fico had no evidence of that allegation. See: [Kern 2018].

the creation and use of disinformation as a certain form of rebellion²¹. It is clear that in such an environment disinformation practices extend into the spheres of artistic imagination and creativity, where they usurp the whole range of means of expression²². From the perspective of multiplatform journalism, as well as other communication platforms, it is indisputable that new forms and types of disinformation have emerged, which could not exist without the Internet²³.

Although it can be stated that the fertile soil for the spread of various types of disinformation is to a large extent media illiteracy among a large part of the Internet communication users, the problem is much more complex. After all, even media scientists, experts on media communication or journalists admit that they are often in doubt when distinguishing between true and false information. According to J. Radošinská and J. Višňovský, different blogs, posts and comments on social media, shared photographs and videos or news portals run by professional or amateur journalists raise many questions. Despite all the efforts of the researchers to find satisfactory answers, they are failing in finding them. This is because the boundaries between reliable and unreliable information sources have never been as blurred and controversial as they are today [Višňovský et al. 2018: 5].

We do not have to argue and point out the serious threat posed by disinformation not only to the lay public, but also to the very democratic principles based on individual freedom and freedom of the media. The responsibility of the informants, but also of those who receive and use the information, is decisive in this case. It can be assumed that disinformation, especially in the form of deepfakes, will increase hand in hand with technological progress. The threat is posed by individual types of disinformation increasing with the number of their users. The data is very informative in this case. According to the latest research in the European Union, 69% of Europeans receive information in the form of online news and 62% of them use social networks. It is in this area that fake information thrives the most. 26% of Europeans trust the information obtained from this environment. According to the same research, 75% of social network users encountered disinformation at least one a week [Tackling online disinformation in the European Union. [online]. [2020-01-07]. Available at: https:// ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=61678>.]. These figures also confirm the need to continuously examine online disinformation, in larger numbers and in more depth, in order to avoid erroneous answers to controversial questions. We view our study as pre-research on this issue. The answers to controversial questions require more extensive and continuous content research, both quantitative and qualitative, guaranteeing the undisputed reliability and validity of the results.

²¹ Remark by the authors: According to A. Sámelová, such a mental setting is also related to the revolt against the hierarchies and vales of contemporary western culture. She draws attention to a special phenomenon, especially in the online environment, which is called anti-system. It is in opposition to the values pillars of western civilisation [Sámelová 2019: 4-15]

²² For more information, see: [Pravdová, Hudíková, Panasenko 2020: 68-84].

²³ Remark by the authors: We can see reasons mainly in legislation. It hardly restricts the authors of online media outlets. This is also related to the technical means that online environment offers.

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SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELFARE AND THE LEVEL OF LIFE SATISFACTION ON THE EXAMPLE OF SELECTED COUNTRIES

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Abstract

The article presents problems related to life quality, life satisfaction and sense of happiness, their determinants, methods of measurement and dependence on the level of wealth and other conditions. Life quality is an abstract blurred term which depends on numerous factors. There is not any single, comprehensive definition, measure or cause of such phenomena as life quality, economic well-being or sense of happiness. Their evaluation depends on economic, political, cultural and social conditions and also on individual features, expectations and attitudes. More and more often, next to hard economic coefficients, social indicators are applied, and synthetic measures of the level of life quality or social and economic well-being are developed. The level of social development is strongly affected by the quality of human capital. The article presents an attempt at matching parameters and indicators which characterise various aspects of life quality and applying them for the development of synthetic measures of life quality in its different aspects. It is also aimed at comparing them with the current results obtained by research studies in this field. The aim of the article is to provide an assessment of diversification in the levels of living conditions observed in some selected countries - its size, specificity and cause-effect relations with the use of the listed parameters and measures. The research on life quality should be applied to the assessment of the efficiency of social and economic policy which has been currently implemented.

Key words: Economic Welfare, Integrated Development, Measures of Life Quality

INTRODUCTION

Until the 1990s a basic formal measure of country development, and indirectly: a measure of life satisfaction, was the gross domestic product. Development and welfare were treated as a quantitative variable. As it is commonly known, the GDP or GNP has several weak points, and its use is clearly insufficient to characterise an economic situation or, even more, to characterise a social situation of a state and its citizens. More frequently, social indicators are applied in conjunction with hard economic ones and some synthetic measures of social and economic welfare are developed. A precise definition of these synthetic measures comes as a difficult problem to solve, but their explicit measurement appears equally problematic. This results from the fact that welfare does not only have its measurable quantitative aspect, but it also has its unmeasurable qualitative dimension as well. The aim of the research study is to present various approaches to the measurement and interpretation of the notion of welfare. It also aims to define the quality of life and its main determinants, to provide an analysis of synthetic measures which, on one hand, characterise various aspects of life quality, and on the other hand, the sense of satisfaction and happiness. The aim of the article is also to analyse relations between social and economic conditions and the sense of well-being experienced by individuals and by social groups. The following research methods and techniques have been applied: critical analysis of expert literature, analysis of reports, research results and statistical data. A method involving the synthesis of dispersed information, observation and formulation of conclusions based on the principles of logical analysis and reasoning.

TERMINOLOGICAL EXPLANATION

Social and economic welfare is defined as high satisfaction of human existential and cultural needs. It is a blurred notion of a relative nature. Welfare is a scalable, multi-dimensional and multi-aspect phenomenon. It is evaluative in character, and informs about a positive situation desirable in the society. Welfare refers to the question of satisfying individual and collective needs. A precise assessment of the level and the way of need satisfaction is different, depending on the society, the level of its development, cultural conditions and its historical epoch. The notion of basic and luxury needs also undergoes some changes. What once used to be luxury goods can now be in common use. Hence, social and economic welfare has many aspects, it has objective and subjective dimensions, and it can come as a universal, cultural and historical experience.

It is possible to wonder whether welfare and life quality are more affected by the personal economic situation of an individual or by their economic, political, social, legal, institutional and cultural environment. Is material wealth more important to an individual than social bonds, a sense of trust and stability or health? Measuring welfare cannot be limited only to economic measures. Other social measures seem equally important, for example: literacy ratios, purchasing power of people's income – that is:

how many square metres can be purchased for an average or minimal income, what percentage of income is spent on food or cultural purposes, how many policemen, physicians, teachers or hospital beds are available for the population, the availability of specialist medical treatment, how many cars or mobile phones there are for a citizen, what percentage of children attend kindergartens, the rates of oncological disease morbidity and curability, the mortality of newborn children, the crime rates in a particular population, the unemployment rates, the number of square metres per person, the corruption rates, the level of debts per person, the average time required to find employment, the suicide rate, the balance of net migration, the level of subjective life satisfaction and so on. A simple but very suggestive piece of information for an analyst of social and economic development is the average life expectancy in a particular country. Some significant information about a change in the level of social welfare in the analysed country does not refer to a change in citizens' average income but to a change in the income earned by 20% or 10% of the poorest members of the society. Life quality and the sense of well-being are affected by such factors as a clean natural environment, employment stability, a sense of recognition and friendly atmosphere at work, a sense of social security, the availability of social services, community bonds, leisure time, a lack of stress, opportunities for social promotion, passable information channels and the articulation of social problems.

Although the correlation between the level of the national income and the rates of life quality is usually positive, it is possible to provide numerous examples of countries with a relatively high income and low rates of life satisfaction and vice versa. The GDP may grow along with simultaneous impoverishment of some groups within society, leading to growing income polarisation, shrinking national assets and decreasing income of the state budget. As well as providing global values for GDP, the level of GDP per capita should be considered. Also, it should be noted that the latter rate is an arithmetic average, and it does not provide any information about the material status of particular individuals. Furthermore, the ranking of the countries with regard to their GDP per capita differs considerably, depending on whether it is expressed according to the purchasing power parity of the currency (PPP) or to the official exchange rate of the currency.

It also interesting to analyse the relations between objective measures of welfare and subjective feelings on this subject. In some regions of the world, people are more satisfied with their lives than would be apparent from the level of development in their countries. There are also countries whose citizens declare a low level of live satisfaction despite a relatively good social and economic situation. It is explicitly stated that the sense of happiness and satisfaction is a state of mind – not just a consequence of some external circumstances. The assessment of one's own life situation comes not only as a result of economic conditions but also as a result of one's family, professional, social and health situation as well. It can result from cultural, religious and even

¹ For instance, in 2007 the United Arab Emirates indicated GDP per capita at the level of USD 49 700 and the Equatorial Guinea declared USD 50 200 (more than Norway), however considering the life standards, the latter country found itself at the 127th position.

genetic factors. There are five countries in the world, namely: Bhutan, Ecuador, Scotland, the United Arab Emirates and Venezuela, where special ministries have been established to promote happiness as an important target of the social policy [Zwoliński, 2013: 15ff.]. In Denmark, there is an Institute for the Research on Happiness. On 28th June 2012, the United Nations General Assembly established the International Day of Happiness to be held on 20th March. New scientific disciplines have already appeared: welfare economics and happiness economics.

What is happiness in an economic interpretation? Danish people call it *Hygge*. The designers of a synthetic measure, the World Happiness Index, define the notion in a different way, and the authors of the Happy Planet Index have their own way to define it, depending on whether happiness is to be treated more as a subjective feeling or more as a consequence of external circumstances. In a research survey on happiness, the Gallup World Poll asked some respondents the following question: *Imagine a ladder, the rungs of which are numbered from zero at the bottom and ten at the top.* Let us assume that the highest rung of that ladder represents the best possible life you could lead – and the lowest rung – the worst life. On which rung do you think you are standing now? [Stevenson, Wolfers, 2017: 23].

SYNTHETIC MEASURES OF LIFE QUALITY

Over the last 10 or 20 years more and more measures of life quality/welfare have appeared. They involve not only economic factors but also social and cultural ones and a subjective sense of satisfaction or even happiness, e.g.: ⁴

Human Development Index (HDI) – an index published by the UNDP, applied since 1990 to assess the level of social development in a particular country or region, in comparison to others or to the results from the previous years. It is established based on measures which refer to dimensions of social development (a weighted average): average life expectancy, schooling and the GDP per capita (according to PPP). In practice, the value ranging from 0.28 to 0.943 is assumed. The research survey covers 187 countries, and the top positions in this ranking are taken by Norway, Austria, Switzerland and Denmark (See: UNDP, 2017).

Sustainable Economic Development Assessment (SEDA) – is a measure of life quality in which both economic and social criteria are considered. It is calculated with regard to 44 factors, such as the GDP, economic stability, labour market situation,

² The English term *happiness* needs some differentiation into *luck* which means *serendipity*, *a lucky chance* and *happiness* which refers to the state of mind. There is also *fortune*, interpreted as success and prosperity (identified with material wealth).

³ *Hygge* is a proper mood and something spiritual that can be experienced. This is being with people you love. This is home. A sense of being safe, protected against the world; a sense that you can drop all your defence down. (M. Wiking 2017:.5).

⁴ Other indices of life quality are: Human Poverty Index (HPI), Environmental Performance Index (EPI), Legatum Prosperity Index (LPI), Better Life Index (BLI) Human Suffering Index (HSI) Quality of Life Index (QLI), Democracy Index (DI), Eco-efficiency Index, Barometer of Watch Health Care (WHC), GLOBOCAN, Measure of Economic Welfare (MEW), Net National Welfare (NNW), Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW), European Consumer's Health Index.

conditions of infrastructure and administration, social trust, quality of education and health care, gender equality, income diversity, condition of natural environment, corruption and freedom of the media. Based on the abovementioned index, a ranking of approximately 150 countries is developed. It comes as an analytical tool for governments to identify strong and weak points with their policies. The SEDA does not consider any opinions expressed by the citizens of those countries. It is based on objective data referring to the level of economic and social development. The SEDA is composed of three dimensions which are defined by ten criteria characterising the level of welfare: economy, investments, sustainable development.

The top position in the SEDA ranking is taken by Norway which has beaten other countries in all the categories. The first ten positions are taken by the countries of Western Europe. Some countries from outside Europe appear in the top twenty: Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Canada, New Zealand, the USA and Japan. Poland is the country where the improvement of life quality is the fastest among all the European countries [Boston Consulting Group, 2016].

World Happiness Report (WHI) – has been published since 2012 by the UN on the basis of the data acquired in Gallup's questionnaire survey. It considers such factors as the actual GDP per capita, life expectancy in good health, availability of health care services, quality of social care, employment security, social inequalities, family relations, trust for the government, level of corruption, country citizens' generosity, freedom of choice and respect for civil liberties. Objective statistical data are taken into consideration along with subjective opinions expressed by the surveyed respondents on the conditions, manifestations, expectations and experience referring to a happy life. According to the World Happiness Report (WHR), the top positions are taken by the Scandinavian countries, then by Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Social Progress Index (SPI) – is based on statistical information and respondents' opinions. It does not refer to macro-economic data, and it is not based on any opinions about the sense of life satisfaction. During the analysis, it considers social, economic and environmental factors, including those referring to life conditions.

The Social Progress Index is developed by calculation of an average which is obtained after the analysis of three categories: satisfaction of fundamental human needs, satisfaction of social needs and opportunities for social promotion and personal liberties. While analysing the relation between the volume of the GDP per capita and the indices of social development, it is possible to state that during the initial stage of such development a strong positive correlation can be observed. In some countries, such as Kuwait, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iran, social changes indicate a delay in relation to the GDP per capita. In such countries as Finland, Canada, Great Britain or New Zealand social development outruns economic development. The highest rates of social development have been achieved by Denmark, Finland, Norway and Iceland [Social Progress Imperative, 2016]. Satisfaction With Life Index (SLI) – it is constructed on the basis of other indices of life quality. The basis for its evaluation comes with

the answers to the questions referring to the subjective assessment of life satisfaction, which are correlated with indices referring to health, wealth and availability of education. According to the research survey, the subjective sense of happiness indicates the greatest correlation with health, wealth and availability of primary education. In 2015 the top positions were taken by Denmark, Norway and Switzerland (White, 2015: p.17ff)

Research surveys on a subjective sense of satisfaction are also carried out by the EU. The Eurostat asks EU inhabitants about the level of their satisfaction with their current life. Respondents are asked to provide their answers with the use of a 10-point scale, where 1 refers to "not satisfied at all" and 10 refers to "fully satisfied". It turns out that EU inhabitants are satisfied with their life. About 80% of the respondents evaluate their existence at the level of 6 points. An average result of the survey for all the surveyed respondents is 7.1 points. In the survey, happiness has been considered with regard to three aspects: life satisfaction, sense of life and domination of positive feelings [Eurostat, 2015].

People who are most satisfied with their life are Scandinavians. All the countries of Northern Europe have achieved an average result above the level of 7.5 points. The least satisfied nation turns out to be Bulgarians who have reached the average result of only 4.8 points. Greeks, Cypriots, Hungarians and Portuguese people do not evaluate their life situation much higher (6.2 points). Hence, the results of the survey seem to challenge a stereotype of an optimistic life attitude manifested by the nations of the South, which is inseparably associated with a favourable climate. There are even more differences to be observed in the percentage of respondents who declare their low level of life satisfaction (from 0 to 5 points): in Holland, there are only 5.6% of such people and in Bulgaria - there are 64.2%. Hence, according to the results of the research, the subjective sense of satisfaction largely depends on the level of wealth. Happy Planet Index 2,0 (HPI) - an economic measure based on a subjective evaluation of life satisfaction in relation to life expectancy and demand for natural resources in a particular country. It has been developed on an assumption that the target of economic activities is not just growing wealthy but securing health and winning happiness as well. The index is calculated in a way that promotes countries exerting less influence on the environment and indicating less consumption of natural resources:

HPI = (perceptible welfare x life expectancy): ecological footprint

As the ranking indicates, the happiest country in the world is Costa Rica. Other top positions are taken by Mexico, Colombia, Vietnam and Bangladesh. Poland takes the 71st position. The top positions of the Happy Planet Index can be surprising almost as well as the bottom ones in this ranking: the second to last position is taken by Luxemburg which is one of the richest countries in the world [The New Economics Foundation ,2017: 17ff].

While preparing the ranking, the authors of the HPI do not refer to information about the GDP or to any other questions related to wealth. They claim that the GDP is not a reliable measure, because people wish to be happy more than to be rich. Hence, they refer to life expectancy, general well-being measured with questionnaire surveys, information about environmental pollution (ecological footprint)⁵ and problems related to social inequalities. The ranking indicates that the sense of happiness is based on cultural, religious and environmental conditions. The countries where there is balance between welfare and social capital also declare happiness, and it indicates a high level of trust in the society, a low level of inequalities and trust towards the government. Social capital is based on cultural, historical, political and living conditions and their evaluation. In the countries undergoing transformation, such as Poland, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania, Lithuania, China, social capital is at a low level. The low level of trust and social cohesion is followed by a low level of public life transparency and high corruption. Globalisation, social and economic transformation might be related to higher pollution of natural environment, worse work conditions, growth of unemployment, limited expenditures on social purposes and fierce market competition. As with other post-communist countries, Poland takes a much lower position than the countries which take top positions in the categories of mutual trust of citizens and governments, generosity and corruption.

THE RANKING OF COUNTRIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SELECTED INDICATORS OF LIFE QUALITY

Considering such a measurable economic criterion as the **GDP per capita**, the top positions are occupied by economically liberal countries, countries which base their development on raw materials for energy production and countries with high state interventionism in the social and economic field. Considering the **HDI** and the criterion of an average salary, the top positions are taken by highly developed Western countries indicating various levels of economic interventionism. The low values taken by the **Gini coefficient** can be observed in countries indicating high levels of state interventionism and in some post-communist countries. The indicators mainly based on the **criteria of social development** are characteristic for Western countries indicating the highest level of development, which apply pro-social instruments of state interventionism.

In the rankings of social development, the top positions are taken by Scandinavian countries.

With regard to the higher share of the subjective assessment provided by respondents (e.g. HPI) in the indices characterising life quality, the higher-ranking positions

⁵ Ecological footprint – an indicator dedicated to evaluating the consumption of natural resources in relation to the capabilities of the planet to recover. In accordance with the Environmental Performance Index, the cleanest countries are Iceland, Switzerland, Costa Rica, Sweden, Norway, Mauritius, France, Austria, Cuba, Colombia.

are taken by developing and weakly developed countries, which represent the poor South, most often identified with religiousness and a favourable warm climate. Next to them, the high positions are also taken by highly developed countries which are characterised by the balance between the level of economic development and social welfare and social capital. In the rankings characterising life quality, the top position is most often occupied by Norway and Denmark.

Table 1. Top ten countries in the selected rankings of social and economic development (years 2016-2017)

GDP per capita	HDI	Aver- age salary	Gini co- efficient*	SEDA	WHI	SPI	SLI	HPI(2012)
Qatar	Norway	Luxem-	Sweden	Norway	Norway	Den-	Denmark	Costa Rica
Luxem-	Australia	burg	Hungary	Holland	Den-	mark	Swit-	Vietnam
burg	Switzer-	USA	Norway	Finland	mark	Finland	zer-land	Colombia
Singapore	land	Swit-	Serbia	Germany	Iceland	Iceland	Austria	Belize
Kuwait	Germany	zerland	Luxem-	Austria	Switzer-	Norway	Iceland	El Salvador
UAE	Singa-	Iceland	burg	Denmark	land	Switzer-	The Ba-	Jamaica
Norway	pore	Norway	Malta	Switzer-	Finland	land	hamas	Panama
Swit-	Denmark	Holland	Czech	land	Holland	Canada	Finland	Nicaragua
zer-land	Holland	Den-	Rep.	Iceland	Canada	Holland	Sweden	Venezuela
USA	Ireland	mark	Austria	Begium	New	Sweden	Bhutan	Bangladesh
Ireland	Iceland	Austra-	Slovakia	Sweden	Zealand	Australia	Brunei	
Denmark	Canada	lia	Kazakh-		Austra-	New	Canada	
		Ireland	stan		lia	Zealand		
		Bel-			Sweden			
		gium						
Poland (42)	Poland (36)	Poland (no data)	Poland (51)	Poland (30)	Poland (42)	Poland (32)	Poland (99)	Poland (62)

Gini coefficient – is applied to measure the level of income inequalities. Its value ranges from 0 to 1 where a higher value of the coefficient indicates a larger scale of inequalities. In modern economies, the Gini coefficient ranges from 0.25 (the Scandinavian countries) to 0.70 (the countries of Africa and Latin America).

Source: Boston Consulting,\..., 2016; Social Progress..., 2016; The New Economics..., 2017; UNDP, Human, 2017; World Happiness..., 2018.

In the rankings of social development, the top positions are taken by Scandinavian countries.

With regard to the higher share of the subjective assessment provided by respondents (e.g. HPI) in the indices characterising life quality, the higher-ranking positions are taken by developing and weakly developed countries, which represent the poor South, most often identified with religiousness and a favourable warm climate. Next to them, the high positions are also taken by highly developed countries which are characterised by the balance between the level of economic development and social welfare and social capital. In the rankings characterising life quality, the top position is most

often occupied by Norway and Denmark.

These countries attach great significance to life and work conditions as well as to the question of sustainable development. The Nordic countries are characterised by exceptional transparency of public and social life and by a very low level of corruption. The Nordic model of social responsibility is the best one in the world. In these countries, there are practically no poor inhabitants, and the level of income inequalities is relatively low. Furthermore, any manifestations of one's wealth or high social status are disapproved. Apart from the highest level of wealth in the world, the secret of happiness reported by inhabitants of the Nordic countries consists in their modest requirements. Their sense of happiness results from a high level of trust towards other people, social activities and a sense of general safety. They strongly believe that they can decide about their own life.

In accordance with the Satisfaction with Life Index, apart from the most developed Western countries, among the top ten countries where citizens are happy and satisfied with their life, there are three small countries: the Bahamas, Bhutan and Brunei (White, 2015: 45). The Bahamas is a Christian and Protestant country, Bhutan is a Buddhist country and Brunei - an Islamic one. Hence, a particular religion is not a key factor affecting the social attitude towards life. The high position taken in the abovementioned ranking by the richest country of these three, the Bahamas, might be due to the vicinity of the USA, to its favourable climate, its beautiful and unique natural environment and also to the fact that the population of the Bahamas is the youngest in the world. Nearly 50% of inhabitants have not yet turned 30 and 15% of them have not turned 40. Bhutan is associated with its pristine natural environment, where people live their modest life in a close relation with nature. Until recently, there were no paved roads, nor any phones, radio or TV stations. Some changes have taken place over the last twenty years. The Internet appeared in 2000 and television – in 1999. The King of Bhutan introduced an idea of measuring the advancement and development of his country based on the level of happiness and psychical welfare reported by citizens in addition to hard economic indices (i.e. Gross National Happiness). The king decided that the traditional GDP does not include numerous factors related to satisfaction, such as care for natural environment, native culture, trust towards people and joy coming from close relations with nature. The philosophy of the government in Bhutan is oriented towards the development of spiritual and psychical richness which leads to the sense of fulfilment and happiness. Until recent times, there were no prisons in Bhutan and, terms such as depression, suicide, commercialism and consumerism were not known [Zwoliński, 2013, p. 56].

Brunei is a rich Muslim country with ample oil supplies – an absolute monarchy. Statistically, there are four cars per each Brunei citizen on average. People in Brunei and their companies do not pay any taxes, and they do not pay for health care and education. Contrary to other Islamic countries, in Brunei women enjoy full social rights, and they often take high positions. Citizens of Brunei have conceded some of their freedom to lead peaceful and wealthy life.

According to the HPI, there are no highly developed countries that could be listed among the happiest societies in the world, because this list is dominated by the countries of Latin America. In their culture, free time, family, tradition, community bonds and trust are as important as material wealth. The high positions in the HPI ranking taken by some less wealthy countries may also result from the fact that their citizens have fewer expectations and fewer needs than people living in highly developed societies, and they have a different hierarchy of values. It is also possible that they compare their present situation to that of previous years which were much worse for them, and this can be the source of their satisfaction.

CONTROVERSIES ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF INDIVIDUALS AND STATES AND LIFE SATISFACTION

It is intuitively assumed that in the countries with a higher level of development, people are more satisfied with their life. However, it transpires that it is not always the case. In some regions of the world people are more satisfied with their life than might be expected from the level of development of their countries. In some other regions – they are less satisfied. For example, inhabitants of South America are explicitly optimistic, and those who live in Central and Eastern Europe present a pessimistic attitude towards reality.

In 1974, R. Easterlin was the first to officially highlight the fact that, in certain societies, people with higher incomes do not always report a higher level of life satisfaction [Easterlin, 2001: 17ff.]. In some countries where there is a certain level of wealth, the income growth does not increase life satisfaction. Easterlin explains this as due to increasing aspirations and the new, still unquenched needs of rich people. Such a phenomenon, however, can be explained in some different ways. The first one refers to the existence of positional goods, which are namely: products and services the value of which is assessed mainly in relation to other products and services [Hirsch, 1976: 157]. In other words, a rich Scandinavian person will not be happy with a new car if their neighbours and friends have equally good or better cars.⁶ Another possible explanation can be a theory developed by S Linder, stating that there is a conflict between a limited budget of time and the increased level of consumption. Above a certain level of income, people are not able to increase their consumption level, because they do not have time to do so [Linder, 1970: 243].

According to a circular model of happiness, the sense of happiness results from innate predispositions in about 50% of the population; it comes as a consequence of various circumstances such as health, family situation, social and economic status, rights and civil liberties - in 10% of them and it is an ability to have control over one's own life and to find its essence – in 40% of them [Sheldon, Lyubomirsky, 2007,.57ff.]. Two scientists from the University of Virginia and London Business School [Shigehiro

⁶ The suburbs of Washington in the region of Bethesda are inhabited by the richest, the best educated and the healthiest people in the USA. Despite this fact, about a half of them feel moderately or extremely unhappy. The situation is explained by the ubiquitous atmosphere of competitiveness.

Oishi and Selin Kesebir] provide a verification of the Easterlin paradox, stating that the explanation of that paradox can involve social inequalities. They claim that the level of inequalities in a particular country reflects the level of citizens' happiness better than the growth of the GDP [Oishi1, Kesebir, 2015].

According to Kahneman, the level of satisfaction with growing income depends on individual purposes and aspirations. It is enjoyed more by people who have defined wealth as their main target [Kahneman, 2010: 149].

Life in deep poverty negatively affects life satisfaction. It mainly refers to the countries which struggle with satisfaction of their citizens' basic needs and with political stability and conflicts. The least happy countries are the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, Syria and Yemen. However, above a certain level of wealth, the limited possibilities of satisfying economic or social needs, which do not come as a direct threat to decent human existence, do not affect people's sense of well-being in a significant way, or at least they do not perform any significant role in this field. It is important for economic development to closely follow social changes and development of social capital. People compare themselves to others who live in similar conditions (to their neighbours, colleagues and relatives) – not to citizens of other countries or to people who represent extremely different social and income groups (e.g. millionaires or the homeless). People get used to their social and economic situation, and they develop adequate strategies for having a satisfying life.

CONCLUSIONS

Generally, it is possible to state that having reached a certain level of wealth, people enjoy relative wealth more than absolute wealth and then, the quantity becomes less important than the quality of consumption and speed required to satisfy one's needs. More and more expenses are spent on ostentatious and prestigious consumption which defines one's new identity and social position.

However, considering all social groups and various indicators of development and satisfaction, the fundamental factors which create and foster the sense of happiness are: health, youth, sense of security and belonging, predictability of life, rewarding job and satisfying income, personal freedom, social cohesion and solidarity, social support, having someone you can count on, sense of community and understanding for the common good, honesty in social life and fair governance. The key to boost national happiness is also for the general public to have a sense of the fair distribution of economic growth among citizens. The subjective evaluation of the sense of happiness and satisfaction is also affected by cultural models, religion, attitudes and expectations towards life. Living far from the centre decreases the influence exerted by the commercial culture, consumerism and rat race culture which are causes of serious stress, sense of loss, meaninglessness and lack of fulfilment.

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INFLUENCE OF SELECTED ECONOMIC INDICATORS ON SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL PARTIES

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Abstract

The main goal of the paper is to identify statistical relations between selected economic indicators and political party preferences. The sample contains 7 political parties, and we monitor the development of their preferences through two agencies (FOCUS and AKO) conducting regular surveys of electoral preferences. We monitor their dependence relation through a set of selected key economic indicators: Average monthly wages, GDP index, GDP in millions of EUR, Unemployment in %, Unemployment in thousands, Consumer prices and Inflation. The observed period covers a total of 52 months from the beginning of the year 2016 to April 2020. The results show a statistical dependence between specific economic indicators and the development of preferences of political parties that were active in the government from March 2016 to March 2020. The form of dependence shows itself as indirect, which means a positive balance development of economic indicators, but on the contrary, a negative development of electoral preferences of Smer-SD, SNS and Most-Hid political parties.

Key Words: Economic, Political Parties, Electoral Support, Electoral Behaviour, Slovakia

INTRODUCTION

The issue of electoral behaviour represents a wide area of interest, which means that we can currently find a relatively large summary of studies that deal directly with this phenomenon, or they point to it indirectly in some respects. The presented study focuses on specific areas, in particular it monitors the potential turnout and tries to find out the possible effects of macroeconomic indicators.

The main goal of the article is to identify the statistical relation between selected economic indicators and the preferences of political parties. When researching the correlation, we focus on the available studies mentioned below. We assume that the positive development of economic indicators should primarily positively affect the development of preferences of the former coalition political parties (in the period 3/2016 - 3/2020: Smer-SD, Most-Hid, SNS; in the period 4/2020: OLaNO, SaS, Sme-Rodina, Za ľudí); on the other hand, they should adversely affect the former opposition political parties (currently OLaNO, SaS and Sme-Rodina are part of the coalition). In this context, it should be clarified that the purpose of the study is not to verify the causal cause of the relationships but to demonstrate a possible statistical relationship between the variables. To verify the causality between variables, it is necessary to start from the research of voter decision-making factors, which has not yet been carried out. To perform statistical measurements, it is necessary to determine the development of selected economic indicators and the preferences of political parties. We transform these two tasks into a secondary goal. The secondary goal of the paper is to find out the development of selected economic indicators and the preferences of political parties, while these values represent variables for the measurement of dependencies. We limit the set of monitored political parties to the sample of three former coalition parties: Smer-SD, SNS and Most-Hid; three former opposition parties: OLaNO, SaS and Sme-Rodina (current coalition partners OLaNO, SaS and Sme-Rodina, Za ľudí political party - we do not monitor this latter party due to its absence in the previous election period) and one opposition political party present in the NCSR in the whole monitored period - Kotleba's party - LSNS. In total, seven political parties were sampled. Voters' support for political parties represents a dependent variable. The independent variables are selected economic indicators. The selection and setting of economic indicators combines and takes into account the following models of scholars Kramer [1971], Kerr [1944], Stigler [1973], Pearson and Meyers [1948], Powell and Whitten [1993], Cameron and Crosby [2000], Leigh [2005] and available macroeconomic statistics categorised as key state indicators [Štatistický úrad SR 2020].

In our analysis we include all the economic indicators found in the above models. As a result, we evaluate the following economic indicators in relation to voters' support for political parties: The Average Monthly Wage of an Employee in the Economy (in EUR), Unemployment (in %), Unemployment (in thousands), GDP Index, GDP in millions of EUR, Net Inflation (change from the previous period in %) and Consumer

Prices (change from the previous period in %). Due to the different availability of data, economic indicators are divided into two groups. Indicators represent the first group in the quarterly record: average monthly wage in EUR, unemployment in%, unemployment in thousands, GDP Index and GDP in millions of EUR. The second group is represented by indicators in the monthly record: net inflation and consumer prices. The setting of the second variable, the preference for political parties, considers the division of economic indicators into two groups. For this reason, the results of political preferences are not monitored in monthly view, but they are converted into a quarterly view. In this case, the arithmetic mean for the relevant three months of a quarter is measured. The sources for recording the development of economic indicators are officially available data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. For the preferences for political parties, we use the publicly available statistics of the portal teraz.preferencie.sk or source documents from selected agencies. To ensure control of the measurement, we perform the measurement of statistical dependencies from the data of two agencies, which regularly publish surveys of political party preferences. For the article, we use data from the FOCUS and AKO agencies. We limit the timespan during which we monitor the data for economic indicators and the preferences for political parties from January 2016 to April 2020. With regard to monthly records, we measure a total of 52 cases; and, in the case of quarterly records, we include 17 cases. Data for all the monitored months are not available for political party preferences, but in the case of economic indicators, these are then taken into account in the measurement and we include in the measurements identical data for several months and quarters. Despite the reduction in the number of cases, we still have enough cases to maintain the statistical significance of the results. On the other hand, for results and findings this fact represents a specific limit.

Data are measured by using a standard regression coefficient according to the models of Kramer, [1971], Stigler [1973], Powell and Whitten [1993], Leigh [2005]. Each independent variable in relation to the dependent variable is measured by bivariate regression. In addition to bivariate regression, we also measured data by using a multivariate regression as indicated by Cameron and Crosby [2000]. For multivariate regression two samples of three independent variables are measured in relation to the dependent variable. The first multivariate regression evaluates the relation between: The average monthly wage, unemployment rate in thousands and GDP in Millions of € (independent variables) and voters' support for political parties (dependent variable). The second evaluates the relation between: inflation and consumers prices (independent variables) and voters' support for political parties (dependent variable). The reason for two groups of multivariate regression is the different data evidence. The first group of independent variables has quarterly evidence; the second group has monthly evidence. For the specifying of the relation between variables the linear regression line is also applied in cases where the relation is statistically significant. According to the limit of study range is the type of relationship marked as a note in

results tables.

Research into electoral behaviour and especially the election of specific parties or politicians, must be understood very sensitively. In some respects, it is also possible to state that several research designs already researched within specific countries may encounter limits when applied in another country. This is due, among other things, to the fact that in two specific countries, the institutional setting of elections may not be the same, for example, the form of the electoral system. To some extent, each electoral system requires a different approach and method of voting of the voter (directly election of a candidate or political party; the number of votes available to the voter, existence of preferential voting, etc.) and, at the same time, creates the condition for the different form of the party system.

The presented study consists of two main parts. In the first part, the introduction to the issue is covered with the presentation of the basic categorisation of the research focused on the issue of electoral behaviour, taking into account economic variables. In the following section, the results of the research itself are presented, while the defined variables and potential statistical causality are monitored.

RESEARCH OF ELECTORAL BEHAVIOUR AND MACROECONOMIC VARIABLES

Current trends in the development of representative democracies are associated with the introduction of new tools through which individuals and groups can be involved in the functioning of society and determine its future direction. This also expands the scope for research into new phenomena. As an example, we could mention recent experiences from the presidential and parliamentary elections held in Slovakia, when for the first time, the general public was more significantly involved in campaign financing. However, at the same time, transparent accounts also served as a space for expressing opinions, often negative ones. Besides, we also encounter the implementation of various innovative elements falling into the category of direct democracy [from the perspective of Central Europe), such as participatory budgeting (research in this area is provided by Minárik 2020; Horváth - Machyniak 2018; Džinić - Svidroňová - Markowska-Bzducha 2016]. Despite the scope mentioned above of the space for research on political and civic participation, electoral behaviour and the issue of elections themselves remain one of the most significant areas of interest for scholars from various scientific disciplines. In connection with this electoral behaviour, it can be stated that it represents a broad research area that can be categorised with a relatively large group of categorisation criteria. From the whole group of divisions, we can mention a general division consisting of three broad categories. The first category includes monitoring of voter turnout or non-participation as such [Nový 2013; Chapman - Palda 1983], while the second category includes monitoring differences in the election of political parties or candidates [e.g.: Gyárfášová – Slosiarik 2016]. However, it is common for these two categories to be combined [e.g.: Gyárfášová - Henderson

2018], thus fulfilling the content of the third category¹. The advantage of researching this phenomenon (this also applies with many other social phenomena) is that we can get new knowledge from research that is not directly focused on the issue of electoral behaviour itself but focuses on other issues. A typical example is research on the transformation of political parties and the subsequent consequences of these transformations on the character of the party system [e.g.: Filipec 2018].

An essential place in the categorisation of research on electoral behaviour is the differentiation of approaches working at the aggregate [Nestorová-Dická – Molnár 2013; Nový 2013] and individual level [e.g.: Macháček 2011], or at the combined level [e.g.: Leigh 2005].

To understand electoral behaviour, studies trying to find out the factors that determine its form are also important. In this area, we can also include research of economic behaviour, or in other words, monitoring the influence of economic indicators on elections, possible non-election or decision-making on the election of a particular party. A publication which holds an essential place in this area is by A. Downs [1957], where one can find a connection between an economic view and electoral behaviour in the existence of a basic assumption of rational voter behaviour. However, this approach differs from the focus of this study in that it explains the election itself through the question of the benefits that the voter will receive by providing their vote to a particular party. It is, therefore, not a question of monitoring specific economic indicators within the country or the economic characteristics of specific individuals and their impact on electoral behaviour.

Studies that directly focus on the impact of economic variables on electoral behaviour include Kerr [1944], Pearson and Meyers [1948], Kramer [1971]; Stigler [1973]; Powell and Whitten [1993]; Cameron and Crosby [2000]; Leigh [2005], including literature review such as Monroe [1979]. The models offer different sets of economic indicators in relation to voters' support for political parties. Kerr [1944] analyses national income, cost of living and wholesale price index. Pearson and Meyers [1948] focus only on general price levels. Kramer [1971] uses a wider set of economic indicators: monetary income (per capital personal income), consumer cost-of-living index, real income and unemployment. Stigler's [1971] model includes the same indicators as Kramer's models. Powell and Whitten [1993] evaluate three main economic variables following the previous literature. Powell's and Whitten's model analyses inflation, unemployment and real national growth. Cameron and Crosby [2000] add to their research model perspective of wage growth in addition to inflation, unemployment and GDP. Leigh's [2005] model follows all the previous models and, as independent variables, uses GDP, unemployment and inflation. Within the set research design, they appear as independent variables in which the potential influence on the election is monitored. Despite the relatively broad scope of such studies, there is no absolute agree-

¹ A separate category creates literature reviews that summarise the research of voting behaviour from various criteria [cf. Bartels 2008].

ment on the existence of their influence on electoral behaviour and, in some of them, we can only find confirmation of the existence of one or just a few of such monitored indicators. Also, it is worth adding that we may also encounter views which state the need to consider other factors in addition to the already mentioned economic variables, especially when it comes to the election of the political parties themselves. For example, Powell and Whitten [1993: 409] state: "We argue that to explain differences in retrospective economic voting across nations and over time we must take account of the political context within which elections take place".

A significant milestone in research in this area is the study by Kramer [1971], as pointed out in some studies [compare: Fiorina 1978]. Based on his findings, he identifies real personal income as a significant factor influencing voting behaviour. On the contrary, unemployment or inflation did not prove to be significant factors in this case². In direct response to his results, a study by Stingler [1973] emerged that criticised his chosen approach and his work with data. In his study, we also identify a statement about the significant sensitivity of this type of data, which means that the chosen approach may, according to him, affect the results. For example, in this case, the author himself chose a two-year interval to capture economic changes.

The economic behaviour itself is monitored in individual studies not only at the aggregate level, but we also encounter studies that process the individual level [e.g.: Fiorina 1978]. Besides, it is used as well as a partial aspect in monitoring a more extensive range of factors; a typical example is research in the field of political geography [e.g.: Mikuš – Gurňák – Máriássyová 2016].

A unique role in research in this area is played by research on potential voting behaviour, which is often represented through surveys of voter preferences outside elections themselves. These are also considered to be the source of possible identification of several potentially important factors -potential trends with a possible reflection in the election results. In the conditions of the Slovak Republic, we observe their implementation mainly by agencies such as Median SK, Focus, AKO, Polis.

ANALYSIS OF THE CORRELATION OF SELECTED ECONOMIC INDICATORS AND POLITICAL PARTY PREFERENCES

Our analysis to date has focused on clarifying the development of selected economic indicators in quarterly and monthly records. It is now followed by an overview of the development trends of political party preferences from the perspective of the two agencies: FOCUS and AKO. The final part of the analysis deals with the primary goal of the article, to evaluate the statistical dependence between variables: economic indicators and preferences of political parties. The inclusion of two agencies provides a control mechanism for measurements.

Figure 1 shows the development of selected economic indicators from a comparative

² In this context, Fiorina [1978] adds that Kramer revised his work and in its modified form also attached importance to the variable of inflation.

perspective. Quarterly values follow the period from the present back to the beginning of 2016. We analyse the value of GDP in two indicators: the GDP Index and the total value of GDP in millions of EUR. The value of GDP in millions for better clarity of other economic indicators is presented separately in the following Figure 2. The development of the average monthly wage of an employee in the economy has a positive overall balance of EUR 219. We record the most significant increase in the last quarter of the monitored years; on the other hand, the negative balance is reflected in the following first quarters. Compared to 2016-2019 first quarters, the decline in the average monthly wage in the economy in the first quarter of 2020 is the most significant. Unemployment records a constant decline in values throughout almost the entire reviewed period. Exceptions are 3Q2019 and 1Q2020, if compared to the previous quarter, there is an increase of 0.2 up to 0.4%. In specific numbers, an increase of 6.2 and 6.7 thousand of newly unemployed people. The last economic indicator in Figure 1 assesses GDP performance. The value of the GDP Index has relatively equal values without significant increases or falls. The most significant values of decline characterise the last measured quarter 1Q2020.

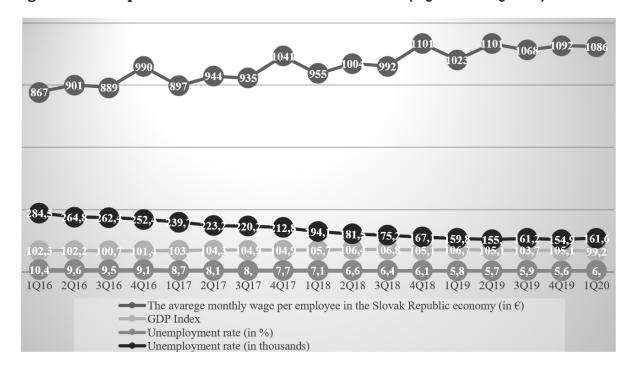


Figure 1. Development of chosen economic indicators I. (1Q 2016 - 1Q2020)

Source: Authors, Based on the data compiled by the Statistical Ofice of the Slovak Republic (2020).

Figure 1 is followed by Figure 2, according to the above text and monitored values. It expands the value of the GDP Index by providing an overview of the amount of GDP in millions of EUR. The separate presentation increases the transparency of values because GDP values in millions of EUR are at higher numerical levels. Also, the in-

dicators remain with a quarterly period. According to the obtained values, similar to the case of the average monthly wage in the economy, we identify a decline in GDP in the first quarter in all years. The drop with the highest value is recorded in the last quarter analysed, 1Q2020. The reasons are currently most closely related to the government measures taken due to the current situation with Covid-19. Year-on-year, the total value of GDP always increases compared to the previous year.

20927,1 21958,9 22509,3 23724,123078 23666,9 24251,1 20285,2 183,2 19195, 20294,5 21056,7 21458,3 18642,6 1919 5, 2021 3Q16 4Q16 1Q17 2Q17 3Q17 4Q17 1Q18 2Q18 3Q18 4Q18 1Q19 2Q19 3Q19 4Q19 1Q20 GDP (in Milions of €)

Figure 2. Development of chosen economic indicators II. (1Q 2016 - 1Q2020)

Source: Authors, Based on the data compiled by the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2020).

We present the last group of economic indicators in Figure 3, where we provide a monthly comparison of data. The values of net inflation and consumer prices are in the form of a percentage change compared to the previous period. Significantly similar changes in the curves characterise the character of the values in the observed period. The most frequent increase was in consumer prices and, at the same time, for inflation in the first month of the respective years. On the other hand, more stable periods without significant positive or negative fluctuations in values can be seen for the months of March to September, except for this period in 2016.

The development of electoral preferences, according to the first agency – FOCUS, in Figure 4 shows the changes in support for the monitored political parties. According to the available data, SMER-SD holds the most influential position in the monitored period. Since the parliamentary elections in February 2020, it has become the second strongest party, while its preferences have been continually declining. The two former coalition partners, the parties of SNS and Most-Hid, have fallen significantly below the 5% electoral threshold after the last elections, and their position has not yet changed. According to the FOCUS agency, we observe the opposite trend in the increase of preferences in the OĽaNO and Sme-Rodina parties. OĽaNO recorded the most significant positive increase in our reviewed period. In the opposite situation,

we record a negative decline, with the party being part of the coalition - SaS. The development of this party's preferences since the beginning of 2016 has reached the limit of eligibility in the National Council of Slovak republic (NCSR). At present, it is already registering a slight increase again. According to the FOCUS agency, the party of Marián Kotleba - ĽSNS has been stable in the range of 8.1 to 12.8% throughout the reviewed period.

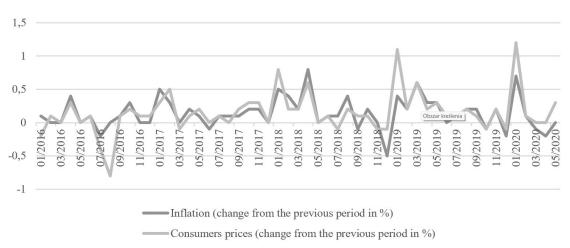


Figure 3. Development of chosen economic indicators III. (1Q 2016 - 1Q2020)

 $Source: Authors, Based \ on \ the \ data \ compiled \ by \ the \ Statistical \ Office \ of \ the \ Slovak \ Republic \ (2020).$

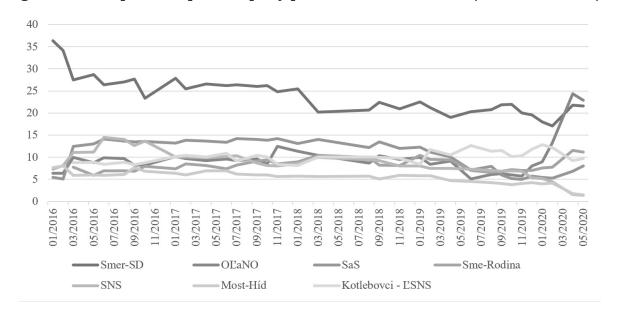


Figure 4. Development of political party preferences in % - FOCUS (1/2016 - 5/2020)

Source: Authors, Based on the data compiled by FOCUS agency (2020).

We provide a second analysis of the development of political party preferences in Figure 5, which contains the measured values according to the AKO agency. Similarly, in this case, the strongest subject in most of the reviewed period is the Smer-SD. This party records the second strongest preference only at the end of the period. The drop below the 5% electoral threshold has been reflected in its former coalition partner Most-Hid since May 2019, similar to the opinion of the FOCUS agency. According to the AKO agency, the third member of the previous coalition, the SNS party, still has its share just above 5% at the beginning of 2020. At present this party shows values below 1%. We identify two different development trends in the current coalition parties of OLaNO and SaS. The AKO agency also confirms the measured values from the previous case. While the OL'aNO party, after stable preferences at the level of approximately 8 to 10%, managed to get up to the limit of 20%, the opposite happened for SaS, which falls from almost 20% to close to the 6% limit. Sme-Rodina, similarly to the Kotlebovci - LSNS showed relatively equivalent values during the entire monitored period, with a few exceptions in the drop in preferences. Unlike the FOCUS agency, the AKO agency shows that Kotleba's party - L'SNS manifests itself differently. The last result of the survey of preferences measured the worst result for the mentioned period, 6.4%.

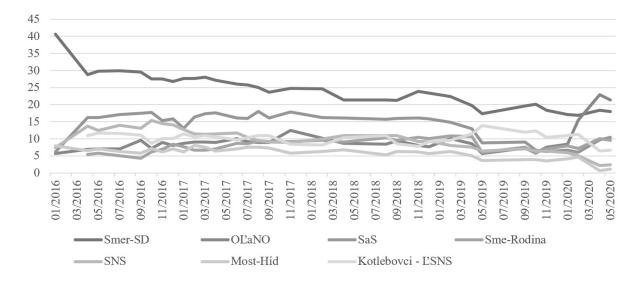


Figure 5. Development of political party preferences in % - AKO (1/2016 - 5/2020)

Source: Authors, Based on the data compiled by AKO agency (2020)

The following Tables 1 and 2 present the results of statistical measurements of correlations between economic indicators and the preferences of selected political parties in quarterly records. To ensure a comparative view and control of measurements, we use the preferences for political parties from the two agencies mentioned above / FOCUS (Figure 4) and AKO (Figure 5). The results try to prove the statistical de-

pendence between the variables. However, to identify possible real causality between variables, it is necessary to carry out further research into the factors influencing the decisions of voters.

Table 1 Results of measuring statistical dependence - FOCUS

Economic variable / Political party (FO- CUS)	Smer- SD	OĽaNO	SaS	Sme-Ro- dina	sns	Most- Híd	Kot- lebov- ci-ĽSNS
The average month- ly wage per em- ployee in the SR economy (in €)	0,812 (IN)	0,022	0,514 (IP)	0,007	0,668 (IN)	0,756 (IN)	0,687 (P)
GDP index	0,237	0,052	0,238	0,608 (P)	0,248	0,159	0,002
Unemployment rate (in %)	0,875 (N)	0,099	0,429	0,238	0,738 (N)	0,787 (N)	0,731 (IP)
Unemployment rate (in thousands)	0,875 (N)	0,099	0,441	0,235	0,750 (N)	0,789 (N)	0,738 (IP)
GDP (Millions €)	0,650 (IN)	0,243	0,337	0,092	0,448	0,700 (IN)	0,548
Multivariate (The average monthly wage, Unemployment rate in thousands, GDP in Millions of €)	0,885	0,532	0,524	0,574	0,788	0,828	0,805

Note: Indirect Positive (IP), Indirect Negative (IN), Negative (N), Positive (P)

The results of measurements of statistical relationships show several interesting findings in Table 1. First of all, we mention the positive development trend of four economic indicators and, at the same time, their negative relationship to the preferences of the former coalition political parties Smer-SD, Most-Hid and SNS. Despite the positive balance in the development of the average monthly wage of an employee in the economy, an increase in GDP and a decrease in unemployment, concerning their development of preferences, they do not have a positive but a negative or indirect relationship. The negative form of the relationship in the case of the parties, Smer-SD, Most-Hid and SNS is present in the case of a decrease in unemployment. The increase in the average monthly wage and GDP does not have a positive but a negative effect on these parties; this fact demonstrates an indirect form of relationship. Control measurements also confirm the achieved results at the FOCUS agency with the values of the AKO agency - Table 2. From the OĽaNO, SaS and Sme-Rodina parties, the only cases are recorded in the SaS and Sme-rodina cases. We find a

particular case with the political party Kotleba - ĽSNS, which records the results expected primarily for the former coalition political parties Smer-SD, SNS and Most-Híd - the positive development of economic indicators should potentially have a positive effect on preferences. This form of the relationship was proved only in the case of the opposition party of Kotlebovci - ĽSNS, which, however, does not have a real impact on the performance of economic indicators from the opposition position. In any case, the statistical measurement shows in the case of an increase in the average monthly wage and a decrease in unemployment, positive or indirect relation to the preferences of the Kotleba's party - ĽSNS. The difference compared to the previous cases is also the absence of confirmation by control measurements.

Table 2. Results of measuring statistical dependence I. - AKO

Economic variable / Political party (AKO)	Smer- SD	OĽaNO	SaS	Sme-Ro- dina	SNS	Most- Híd	Kot- lebov- ci-ĽSNS
The average monthly wage per employee in the SR economy (in €)	0,818 (IN)	0,181	0,176	0,560	0,597 (IN)	0,798 (IN)	0,075
GDP index	0,305	0,031	0,322	0,731 (P)	0,140	0,037	0,231
Unemployment rate (in %)	0,903 (N)	0,235	0,153	0,699 (N)	0,629 (N)	0,745 (N)	0,064
Unemployment rate (in thousands)	0,899 (N)	0,235	0,166	0,697 (N)	0,642 (N)	0,746 (N)	0,073
GDP (Millions of €)	0,774 (IN)	0,071	0,034	0,451	0,381	0,771	0,045
Multivariate (The average monthly wage, Unemployment rate in thousands, GDP in Millions of €)	0,907	0,476	0,346	0,713	0,684	0,833	0,377

Note: Indirect Positive (IP), Indirect Negative (IN), Negative (N), Positive (P)

Economic indicators with an available monthly record concerning the development of political party preferences represent the second group of analysed data. We present the measurements and the results obtained about the preferences from the FOCUS agency in Table 3 and the AKO agency in Table 4 respectively. The purpose of the two measurements is again to ensure a broader comparative perspective and data control.

Table 3. Results of measuring statistical dependence II. - FOCUS

Economic variable / Political party (FOCUS)	Smer- SD	OĽaNO	SaS	Sme-Ro- dina	SNS	Most- Híd	Kot- lebov- ci-ĽSNS
Inflation (change from the previous period in %)	0,125	0,188	0,173	0,142	0,127	0,169	0,067
Consumers prices (change from the previous period in %)	0,263	0,069	0,026	0,357	0,232	0,114	0,108
The average month- ly wage of industri- al worker (in €)	0,690 (IN)	0,049	0,345	0,088	0,491	0,555	0,377
Multivariate (Infla- tion, Consumers prices)	0,272	0,261	0,195	0,361	0,425	0,293	0,135

Note: Indirect Positive (IP), Indirect Negative (IN), Negative (N), Positive (P)

According to Table 3, the monthly values of economic indicators of net inflation, consumer prices and the average monthly wage in the industry concerning the preferences of political parties do not show more fundamental statistical significance. We find the only case of statistical dependence between the variables in the first and control measurements in the case of an increase in the average monthly wage in industry and a decrease in the preferences of the Smer-SD party. The aspect of increasing the average monthly wage and decreasing the preferences of the Smer-SD party has been confirmed based on the measurement in the first group of economic indicators as an indirect form of the relationship. The fundamental difference, however, is the presence of a relationship only with the Smer-SD party, while we do not observe this relationship with their other former coalition partners, Most-Hid and the SNS. In the case of the other political parties, the measurement did not show any statistically significant correlations between the variables in the first perspective of the FOCUS agency and the control measurement of the AKO agency observed in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of measuring statistical dependence II. - AKO

Economic variable / Political party (AKO)	Smer-SD	OĽaNO	SaS	Sme-Ro- dina	SNS	Most- Híd	Kot- lebov- ci-ĽSNS
Inflation (change from the previous pe- riod in %)	0,153	0,165	0,095	0,003	0,029	0,052	0,226

Consumers prices (change from the pre- vious period in %)	0,394	0,009	0,160	0,128	0,125	0,118	0,073
The average month- ly wage of industrial worker (in €)	0,634 (IN)	0,022	0,359	0,338	0,460	0,542	0,071
Multivariate (Inflation, Consumers prices)	0,469	0,280	0,167	0,204	0,243	0,264	0,283

Note: Indirect Positive (IP), Indirect Negative (IN), Negative (N), Positive (P)

CONCLUSION

The introduction of the study assumes the positive impact of the development of selected economic indicators on political party preferences. We are primarily referring to political parties that have had a direct impact on policymaking in the reviewed period. Parties such as Smer-SD, SNS and Most-Hid, as representatives of the Government of the Slovak Republic during the period of March 2016 through March 2020, had the highest potential to draw success from the positive development trends of the economic indicators analysed by us. Statistical measurements concerning these parties indicate the exact opposite. While the indicators of the development of the average monthly wage increased or the data on unemployment decreased, the preferences of Smer-SD, SNS and Most-Hid parties nevertheless had a decreasing tendency. For the political parties SNS and Most-Hid, even up to the threshold of 5%, the positive development of economic indicators means a statistically negative impact on preferences of the mentioned three political parties. It is worth emphasising that in this article we verify statistical dependence as not causal. For this reason, we cannot mention the positive development of economic indicators as the cause of the possible failure of the political parties Smer-SD, SNS and Most-Hid. The cause of the failure probably includes a broader set of factors, where political variables, among others, may have played an important role (for example: the form of government realised by these parties). The form of dependence confirmed in all cases and statistical significance is confirmed as well. Concerning the other political parties included in the study, we find the opposite trend of positive dependence in the case of the political parties Sme-Rodina and Kotlebovci - L'SNS. However, the preferential growth and popularity of the parties are again likely due to a diverse set of factors. To make this statement, it can be assumed that the parties were not able to create a political agenda, as they were not part of the government.

In relation to previous research that we mentioned above, the results of our study showed some different approaches. On the other hand, we found some similarities as well. The results are opposite to other findings which discuss how real income (the monthly average wage – our case) [Kramer 1971], inflation [Powell – Whitten 1993;

Cameron – Crosby 2000], unemployment [Powell – Whitten 1993; Cameron – Crosby 2000] are positively influential on government parties. The study results confirmed previous findings that fluctuations in unemployment [Kramer 1971; Stigler 1973], real income [Stigler 1973; Cameron – Crosby 2000; Leigh 2005] or GDP [Cameron – Crosby 2000] do not have a positive impact on government parties. The important fact of this study results is the negative connection between positive fluctuations of general economic variables and governing coalition parties. Previous studies showed only that there are not positive correlations. That statement we confirmed, but we add the findings of our case with strong negative correlation.

Finally, in this context, we should mention the absence of research that would confirm the decision-making of voters for the parties in terms of positive economic results; the same form of dependence confirmed by statistical significance is found for these parties and some economic indicators.

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UNDERSTANDING THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE ELEMENTS OF EU SPACE POLICY

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Abstract

In line with the European Union's (EU) commitment to the United Nations mandated sustainable development, implementation is under way across various policy sectors. An example of this is the mainstreaming of environmental concerns and the integration of environmental aspects in non-environmental policy fields. This article considers the status of environmental concerns in EU policy on outer space. Despite the EU's complex institutional setup, the cooperation within the space policy sector indicates that EU space policy making adheres to the principle of sustainability and that space activities can contribute to the implementation of environmental protection objectives in other policy sectors.

Key words: European Union, Environmental Policy, Space Policy, Sustainable Development, Environmental Integration

INTRODUCTION

Since the *Brundtland Report* was published in 1987, sustainable development has substantially advanced in the international discourse. The Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as a "process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs" [United Nations 1987]. Underpinning this, and more importantly, is the idea that environmental protection, economic growth and social development constitute mutually supporting objectives, not contradictory ones [United Nations 1987]. Hence, sustainable development provided a platform for the European Union's (EU) strategic actions, emphasising the convergence of EU policies with environmental concerns.

The idea of environmental integration re-emerged in the EU during the Cardiff Process¹, aimed at triggering *Article 6* of the *Treaty establishing the European Community* [Unfried 2002], which states that "[e]nvironmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Community policies and activities ... in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development" [EU 1997]. Since then, consistent with its rhetoric and commitment to these principles, the EU has adopted a plethora of strategic documents and action programmes related to sustainable development and environmental protection.

Moreover, the European Commission has outlined areas in which environmental integration could be feasibly applied, such as cohesion policy, development policy, transport or internal market policies [European Commission 2021b]. In our paper, we consider a rather unconventional and unmapped policy area – space policy. The aim is to analyse and assess the status of the environmental and climate policy elements and their potential integration in EU space policy. Methodologically, we take EU space policy sector as our case study and assess the implementation of the policies, programmes and strategies in this field. By adopting a qualitative approach and performing a content analysis of the relevant documents, we hope to identify the status of environmental concerns in outer space policy making.

1. UNPACKING THE ENVIRONMENT-SPACE NEXUS

The outer space environment has changed in the last decade. New types of actors and scientific and technological developments have brought new types of challenges [Bajzová et al. 2021]. On the other hand, outer space technologies may help to tackle diverse challenges on Earth, such as migration flows, natural disasters, border controls, climate change and sustainable development issues.

Outer space exploration has a remarkable impact on other fields and policies. Some of the biggest impacts, positive or negative, may be observed in environmental and climate policies. For example, Earth observations provide new data on environmental consequences and early warning systems, where the launch of such technologies and

¹European Council Summit in Cardiff in 1998.

use of systems leaves an environmental footprint on Earth, in the atmosphere or even in orbit [Klinger 2019].

The EU understands space policy to be a response to the social, economic and strategic challenges that greatly affect the well-being of European citizens, which are related to the unprecedented growth and development of society. For the EU, combating climate change and protecting the environment are pressing social factors, and a coherent space policy may help it tackle these.

European citizens hold a very similar view, as is evident in the Special Eurobarometer findings. The Special Eurobarometer [European Commission 2014] conducted in 2013 focused on Europeans' attitudes towards space activities and found that 73% of respondents thought that investing in Earth observations could improve our understanding of the consequences of climate change. Respondents were asked in which areas they thought space activities would play an important role in 20 years' time; energy (37%) and the environment (33%) were the two most frequent answers. Furthermore, 72% of respondents thought that space technologies could contribute to better environmental protection and more efficient agriculture.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE POLICY INTEGRATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Environmental policy integration (EPI) has been identified as a crucial component of sustainable development, underlining that the environmental sector alone would not be able to achieve the environmental objectives and tackle the challenges [Lafferty et al. 2003]. One of the principles behind EPI is to stimulate the implementation and institutionalisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [Lenschow 2002]. As conceptualised by Lafferty and Hovden, EPI denotes the "incorporation of environmental objectives into all stages of policy making in non-environmental policy sectors [emphasis added]" and the prioritisation of these objectives in achieving coherence between environmental and sectoral policies [Lafferty et al. 2003]. Thus, under the sustainable development paradigm, acknowledging and incorporating environmental objectives should be the guiding principle in policy making in all sectors. It is particularly relevant to consider the EPI in the context of the European Union, given its normative basis [Manners 2002] or role conception [Holsti 1970] is to promote and uphold sustainable development both domestically and externally.

Two EPI dimensions can be distinguished relating to the focus of integration – the horizontal and the vertical dimension – and these complement one another. The starting point of the analysis in this article is horizontal integration and cooperation. In horizontal integration, the emphasis is on the central authority (in this case the European Commission) and its cross-sectoral policy for incorporating EPI [Lafferty et al. 2003], as it is the Commission that holds overall responsibility for the implementation of the sustainable development agenda. As part of the EU's institutional setup and structure, "the horizontal coordination that is the key to EPI requires that the DGs

in the Commission ... work with their respective colleagues in other areas" [Lenschow 2001]. It corresponds to the notion of environmental mainstreaming, aimed at environmental sustainability across all EU policy sectors. This can be seen in the overarching strategies the EU has adopted. Van der Leyen's Commission is continuing this holistic approach to sustainable development (primarily environment-friendly mechanisms) and commitment to the UN SDGs [Mokrá et al. 2019], most notably in the form of the European Green Deal [European Commission 2020b], Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy [European Commission 2019] or A Farm to Fork Strategy [European Commission 2020a].

While outlining the logic behind the EU's horizontal EPI, the primary focus of this paper is on vertical EPI, that is, environmental inclusion in one particular policy sector. Vertical EPI "involves the degree to which sectoral governance has been 'greened'; the extent to which it has merged environmental objectives with its characteristic sectoral objectives" [Lafferty et al. 2003]. This particular dimension has been the subject of academic attention in various EU policy fields, such as agriculture [Alons 2017], energy [Nilsson 2005] and the Arctic [De Botselier et al. 2018]. In this paper, we consider EU space policy within the framework of sustainable development, particularly environmental policy integration in this sector. We do not anticipate the environment becoming the guiding principle in the set of space policy objectives at this stage, and nor do we expect an extreme form of "active integration" [Lenschow 1999] to be adopted in the form of ambitious environmental targets. Nevertheless, based on earlier indications of a cross-sectoral horizontal EPI, we do expect the "defensive integration" process, which does "not explicitly challenge the traditional priorities in other fields, but calls upon policymakers to assess the environmental impact of all policy initiatives and to limit environmental side effects" [Lenschow 1999], to spill over into space policy as well.

Furthermore, we examine the penetration of environmental considerations into EU space policy and EPI to take place along two parallel lines. In both of these, EPI is regarded as policy output, focusing on the substantive outcome of that process and whether it leads to a "positive sector environmental impact" [Persson 2007]. The first aspect could be described as *passive* policy output, meaning that there is a level of coherence/discrepancy between the specific policy objectives and broader environmental goals. In other words, it is about if and how the environmental considerations were taken into account when designing sectoral policies that could have a potentially negative impact on the environment. The second dimension is *active* policy output. As outer space is often associated with the technological innovation discourse [Olla 2009], *active* policy output assesses the direct instrumental attributes of a particular sectoral policy, that is, whether and how it contributes to environmental protection, or to advancing particular environmental objectives.

Additionally, in this context, climate policy integration (CPI) is conceptually derived from the EPI, narrowing the 'what' (climate objectives) and 'where' (policy sector, e.g.

energy) of integrating the environmental agenda into the given policy sector [Adelle et al. 2013], and plausibly providing a more tangible approach than EPI. Nevertheless, the exploratory nature of this encouraged us to implement the concept of environmental policy integration, so as not to exclude non-climate environmental considerations (as climate is part of EPI *per se*) in the chosen sectoral policy.

3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND EU SPACE POLICY

According to European Union law, space is a shared competence between the Union and the Member States [EU 2012]. However, the academic discussion is concerned with whether the space competence is not sui generis in character because Article 4(3) *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union* defines space as an area in which, although the EU has competences, it cannot prevent Member States from exercising their competences. Therefore, classifying it as a 'parallel competence' is a better representation of the actual status of space policy competences [von der Dunk 2011]. EU competence in this area includes drafting the European Space Policy, promoting joint initiatives and coordinating the efforts required for space exploration and exploitation.

The idea of a European space policy was first mooted in 2007, but it did not become institutionalised until 2016. Basically, it coordinates the EU's approaches, activities and programmes, the Member States, the European Space Agency (ESA) and other organisations, such as the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT). EUMETSAT is responsible for operating the Copernicus Sentinel series of satellites, namely Sentinel-3 and Sentinel-6, and will deliver the Sentinel-4 and Sentinel-5 satellites as well. It is also responsible for the operational management of another EU flagship programme, Galileo, operated by the European Global Navigation Satellite System Agency (GSA).

ESA is a partner organisation of the EU and plays a crucial role in many EU-led space activities. It was established in 1975 by seven European states as a separate, independent institution from what was then the European Communities. ESA is predominantly a technical agency with expertise and capabilities, but it lacks political power. It initiated Europe's first space programmes that ended the dominance and virtual monopoly of the United States. Its first mission was the launch of the rocket carrier Ariane, Meteosat and the telecommunication satellites. Furthermore, in the last decade ESA has developed the VEGA launcher used for launching the Galileo satellites into orbit in cooperation with Soyuz. The European Commission recognises the integral role of the ESA in the enlargement of the European Space sector and independence of Europe's space infrastructure. Galileo, its flagship project, is a good example of successful EU-ESA cooperation. EU-ESA cooperation is directed at avoiding the redundant duplication of efforts and focuses on complementary or reinforcing activities, whilst respecting their mutual independence. ESA provides the space infrastructure; hence, it is the EU's implementing agency to meet service requirements [Hörbert 2016].

Space policy implementation includes a broad range of other policy domains, such as fisheries, transport, agriculture, research and the environment. Additionally, these areas function better thanks to space applications. In terms of competences, the EU has no legal institutional framework for 'governing' European Space policy. Nevertheless, the European Commission bears the major responsibility for shaping space policy. The European Commission's right to initiate is accompanied by the co-decisions of the European Parliament and Council of the European Union. This is a change to the situation in the late 1990s, when space programmes were the exclusive competence of Member States and intergovernmental organisations, such as ESA. The European Commission has incorporated outer space into other policy events, such as the Kyoto Protocol on environmental protection, so as to gain political legitimacy for space activities. Additionally, several security issues led the Commission to promote the development of EU space assets as a response to global changes and to reflect competition in the field. However, the European Commission has only an implicit lead on European Space policy (e.g. agenda-setting) and needs assistance from other bodies or agencies owing to its limited scope of expertise and personnel. It focuses instead on drafting proposals and framing policy priorities and consequently, technical and scientific expertise is delegated to ESA, for instance [Marta et al. 2016].

The EU and ESA signed a Joint Statement [ESA 2016] on their shared vision for outer space, in which they agreed on the importance of the space sector and on contributing to other sectorial policies, priorities and purposes of space mission. However, the Joint Statement does not propose any direct environmental incentives for the future, focusing mainly on cooperation and the common recognition of space policy aspects. Through its key space documents, the EU recognises the impact of the space sector on other policies, repeatedly highlighting environmental protection and climate change mitigation. Furthermore, the EU is committed to long-term monitoring through the Copernicus and Galileo programmes as well as conducting high quality measurements using its space assets to address various environmental issues. The intention behind the EU's space programmes is to help close the environmental implementation gap and advance knowledge on the Sustainable Development Goals [European Commission 2018].

The European Commission is exploring possible dual-usage synergies and space programme interactions/cooperation to achieve better (combined) effects rather than separate ones. It is also promoting its role in ensuring the demands of other EU agencies in need of space solutions are met to provide more accurate outcomes, such as the European Environment Agency (EEA), the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFSA), the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA). The EEA uses space technologies to deliver vast amounts of environmental and climate data and combine these with traditional sources of information, such as in-situ monitoring data [EEA 2020].

The EU's Space Strategy is aimed at ensuring a safe and secure environment for

sustainable outer space activities. The European Commission, in particular, supplements the efforts of the other European space entities (ESA, Member States, etc.) to incorporate innovative approaches to mitigate the environmental impacts of space programmes, such as the reusability of material and launchers [European Commission 2016].

3.1. Copernicus

One of the European Union's flagship programmes is Copernicus (formerly Global Monitoring for Environment and Security), the most advanced Earth observation system in the world. Copernicus benefits a variety of users in different ways. These can be divided into six categories [European Commission 2021a]. Two categories directly relate to climate and environmental policies: *Atmosphere* and *Climate Change. Marine* (focusing on climate and the environment, partly in terms of coastal and marine environment, and weather forecasting and climate), and *Emergency* (early-warning systems, flood awareness, forest fire information and drought observation) are similarly aimed at environmental or climate degradation prevention and awareness. *Land* and *Security* are also about prevention but are not explicitly climate integration policies. Copernicus targets a variety of non-space domains with climate or environmental benefits policy outcomes that have spillover effect on other policies, for example the energy sector, through solar power production monitoring.

3.2. Galileo - a negative or positive environmental impact?

Galileo is the EU's Global Navigation Satellite System, a leading flagship programme that is exclusively under civilian control. It generates, for example, data concerning positioning, navigation or the timing required for emergency response services. It rivals the US GPS system but provides more accurate data. Currently, Galileo consists of 26 satellites already placed in orbit, and the EU expects the full constellation to be 30 satellites. The programme comes under the overall responsibility of the European Commission, including implementation on behalf of the EU, and a managing and controlling role. ESA was mandated to provide the general technical development of the infrastructure required for the Galileo satellites [European Commission 2021c]. The aim of Galileo is not environmental, as is the case with Copernicus, but covers the impact of satellite deployment. In cooperation with Copernicus, Galileo can generate useful data that is suitable for use in environmental protection, but that is not its primary purpose. Furthermore, given the launch of 26 Galileo satellites, there are questions regarding its environmental footprint.

3.3. ESA activities

The European Space Agency is an independent intergovernmental organisation with 19 EU member states and three non-EU member states. ESA cooperates with the EU on various space programmes. Its activities may be coordinated with the EU, but

some are independent because some of its members are not EU member states. Furthermore, ESA initiated formal cooperation with all EU Member States, even those that are not ESA members. There are different types of cooperation, under the general Cooperation Agreement as a European Cooperating State (ECS), or through Associate Membership.

The Plan for European Cooperating State (PECS) prepares states seeking to join the organisation, initially as an associate member and later as a full member. During this preparatory stage, applicant states contribute 1.4 million euros a year for a period of five years, enabling them to take part in procurement and space activities and consolidate their knowledge and further develop their own space industry [ESA 2021a, ESA 2021b].

In early 2013, ESA recognised the impact of space asset construction and launched its *Clean Space* initiative. ESA's action plan set out its approach to becoming a model organisation practising clean, sustainable and responsible activities in outer space. It is pioneering an environmental impact study for the space sector, focusing on European launchers and supply chains, and aimed at drawing up a framework for European space agencies, corporations, companies and research entities. The idea is to collect the necessary information about the materials and manufacturing processes used in space, and their origins and environmental impact [ESA 2014].

The environmental awareness and knowledge transfer from ESA to countries may enable them to replicate the necessary pattern of responsible supply chains and manufacturing processes that may have an impact on national space policies, or European Space policy as such. Furthermore, this joint action by ESA and the EU or individual Member States may help reduce the number of launches and prevent mission duplication [Durrieu et al. 2013].

CONCLUSION

Sustainable development has become integral to the European Union and its agenda over the last few decades, and this is in addition to the universal obligations arising from the MDGs, and later the SDGs. The principle of sustainable development, building on the values of justice and solidarity, has been "widely used in the EU framework" and, accompanied by the principle of responsibility (particularly in the environmental policy area) [Lucarelli 2006], is shaping the EU's political stance. Hence, the environmental paradigms [Mokrá 2021] have gained considerable momentum and are being implemented across the various sectors of EU policy. The synergy between the environment and space policy may be underestimated at first sight; nevertheless, the two are connected. The objective of this article was to assess the performance of the EU space policy sector through the prism of environmental policy integration (EPI). Having acknowledged that EPI has a horizontal dimension, the focus was on the vertical 'greening' of space policy and assessing the corresponding policy outputs.

In its space policy, the European Union conducts two different set of activities within

the framework of environmental policy integration. The establishment of the flagship space programmes has an impact on other policy sectors, mainly environmental and climate action [Wertlen et al. 2020]. The Copernicus programme is directly incentivised to produce high resolution Earth-observing data for helping tackle environmental issues, such as air pollution, maritime safety, climate change, land degradation and many more. In combination with Galileo, it can even accurately track the position and timing of key aspects of environmental protection. The EU incorporated these two sectors as the primary target of space actions in its strategic documents, and the European Commission was assigned the leading role in shaping European Space policy. For this purpose, the Commission closely cooperates with EU agencies and intergovernmental organisations such as ESA. ESA is an independent organisation responsible for the technical aspects of European Space missions, such as launching Galileo satellites into orbit. ESA introduced an initiative called Clean Space that tracks supply chains, materials used in space modules and launchers, and manufacturers, to reduce the environmental impact of space activities on Earth, the atmosphere or in orbit. As a result of this initiative and ESA's responsibility for manufacturing processes, the EU performs the technical side of its space programmes with minimal environmental impact. Galileo is still ongoing and a few satellites have yet to be placed into orbit, so it is very hard to assess the environmental footprint it will leave.

Furthermore, the findings ascertained within the scope of the theoretical and methodological framework, indicate that environmental issues [Mokrá 2021] do indeed resonate within EU space policy. To a certain extent both the active and passive policy outputs of the EPI relate to this sector – 1) the EU flagship space programmes are designed to directly contribute to monitoring and data collection in the context of environmental protection and climate change mitigation [Mokrá et al. 2019]; 2) in pursuit of various space policy objectives, its recognition of the sustainable and environment-friendly 'way of doing things' provides a platform to build on in the future. This underlines how space policy provides opportunities in other policy sectors and how space policy generally can contribute to sustainable development and environmental protection.

Nevertheless, based on the comparison with similar activities in space, we may conclude that the ongoing EU space programmes raise serious environmental awareness concerns, which have to be considered in relation to the European Union's activities in the space sector. The sustainability of the outer space environment and minimisation of the risks of the potential negative impact on space should form an integral part of the relevant strategies, programmes and decisions adopted by the EU or its Member States.

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ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACY AS A RESULT OF LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC REGRESSION IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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Abstract

The purpose of the article is to provide insight into illiberal democracy as a result of liberal democratic regression in the EU-integrated Central and Eastern European counties. Changes in the political pathways of Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic have been analysed, indicating the distinctive qualities of their political regression. Factors increasing democratic regression of the analysed CEE countries after their joining the EU have been established. Conclusions regarding the reasons for the illiberal transition and specific aspects of democratic deconsolidation of the region's nations have been made. Specific characteristics of illiberal dynamics in the analysed group of countries have been defined. Deformation of liberal democracy has been studied in accordance with the methodology which combines the cognitive potential of neo-constitutionalism, political comparativistics and transitology paradigm.

Key words: Illiberal Democracy, Liberal Democracy, Central and Eastern European Countries, Democratic Regression, Democratic Performance.

INTRODUCTION

A decline in the quality of democracy has been a global trend of the past decade. Conservative nationalists, as well as other political actors opposing liberal democratic values, became more active in many countries. The initial support of populists and various ideologically oriented radicals who promoted narratives in discordance with the foundations of liberal democracy became more pronounced across Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Therefore, one question becomes relevant: how much is the preservation of liberal democratic values threatened by the illiberal challenge faced by the young democracies of the CEE. Studying the reasons, history and possible outcomes of the decline in the quality of liberal democracy in those CEE countries which have been deemed compliant with the Copenhagen criteria in the course of the European integration process, under the situation when they go through an illiberal transition or stagnation in the strengthening of liberal and democratic values more or less pronounced, seems an important mission.

After 2010, when the Fidesz party in Hungary gained electoral advantage for the first time (parliamentary majority), illiberal democracy, deconsolidation of democracy, illiberal consolidation etc. started clearly manifesting itself in the analysed region. Following the 2015, when illiberal overthrow started in Poland, argumentation for the democracy deficit, decline in democracy, democracy deconsolidation, illiberal consolidation etc. gained ground in the political discourse. Therefore, scientific interest the cases of departure from liberal democracy in the CEE region increased as well.

DEMOCRATIC DECONSOLIDATION: DEFINING THE CONTENTS AND THE REASONS

Illiberal democracy analysis is not possible without looking into the essence of the processes bringing about the modification of the political regime towards illiberal democracy. Therefore, we need to investigate the contents and reasons for democratic deconsolidation and manifestations of liberal democracy effects etc. in the first place. The quick transformation of democracy is a characteristic feature of the XXI century. A Freedom House report for 2018 identified "democracy in crisis" [Freedom in the world 2018]. An antidemocratic pivot is a current global tendency [Císař O. 2017: 7]. It is in the past decade when the most significant negative change in the exercise of human and citizen rights and freedoms took place. There were considerably more loser countries in liberal democratic transformation than winners. Political processes in various regions of the planet mean that the problems of strengthening and preserving liberal democracies become more pronounced. Recently, the regimes which are authoritative in form, with capitalist economies and commitment to conservative nationalist ideologies became powerful political competitors of liberal democracy [Ignatieff M. 2014]. We are witnessing the construction of defective democracies which formally reproduce institutional design of western democracies, while giving a different substance to it. Formal democratic procedures turn into a façade concealing

authoritarian mechanisms. The following question becomes even more pressing: is democracy now doomed to lose its liberal core?

These disturbing trends did not emerge instantaneously. F. Zakaria stated in his 1997 study that authoritarian elements were present in at least half of the democratising countries [Zakaria F. 1997]. T. Carothers voiced an opinion in 2002 that of the nearly 100 countries considered as transitioning to liberal democracy, only fewer than 20 were on the way to becoming successful, and the rest would remain in the 'grey zone' [Carothers T. 2002: 9-10]. These countries were marked by democratic deficits: poor representation of citizens' interests, low levels of political participation, frequent abuse of the law by government officials, elections of uncertain legitimacy and other liberal democracy defects. Such grey zone regimes were characterised by a partial incorporation or imitation of liberal democratic procedures and formal institutions, while simultaneously being undermined by limited pluralism. They combined features of liberal democracies (competitive elections, pluralism, parliamentarism, constitutionalism etc.) and authoritarian mechanisms and methods, including open or latent repression. New political processes provided empirical evidence of these regimes being highly adaptive, strategically changeable and flexible; they were adjusted to the global capitalism rules they were fully integrated into.

In order to maintain a democratic façade while remaining in the 'grey zone' between democracy and authoritarianism, deficient illiberal regimes seek to earn the widest possible support of the people. They usually succeed owing to populism or pinpointing a certain ethnic, national, security, gender or other issue. It is worthwhile noting that while authoritarianism in its classical form is always directed against human and citizen rights and freedoms and ready to repress, the new 'grey zone' regimes act like a chameleon, adjusting to new circumstances, if only to prevent the possible application of international sanctions against the country. They hold institutional representation of various democratic institutions and, in a way, implement the majority of democratic procedures [Dzihic V. 2016: 31].

'Grey zones' between democracy and authoritarianism are clearly visible across different parts of the world these days. Moreover, the beginning of the 2008 global economic crisis revealed the fragility of liberal democratic systems even more, jeopardising the democratic consensus [Dzihic V. 2016: 31]. We can see that some consolidated democracies have been moving in a new authoritarian direction during the past decade. Presumably, it does not mean that their future is clearly authoritarian; however, their democratic institutions have been diminished and continue losing their stability.

S. Levitsky and D. Ziblatt [Levitsky S., Ziblatt D. 2018] who have been studying democratic crises for over twenty years, claim that present-day democracies 'die' not so much of revolutions or military coups, but due to the slow, steady weakening of critical institutions and the gradual erosion of long-standing political norms. Overall, there are numerous reasons for democracy deconsolidation. First of all, it is the rise

in inequality that results in a squeeze of the middle-class. This causes the surge of antiliberal populism. For instance, E. Luce pointed this out in his study 'The retreat of western liberalism' [Luce E. 2017].

The idea of 'democratic backsliding' is used in political science to denote the alteration of formal and informal institutions, which further changes a political regime towards a hybrid and new authoritarian one [Dresden J. R., Howard M. M. 2016; Erdmann G. 2011]. Most often, democratic backsliding will be treated in political discourse as certain 'corrosion' and weakening of the 'building blocks' of democracy, when compared to the more aggressive regime transformation from democracy to authoritarianism. Retreat from democracy is most frequently defined as 'democratic regression', 'democratic de-consolidation' and 'democratic breakdown'. For instance, N. Bermeo understands democratic backsliding as a regress in the evolution of liberal democracy principles; the researcher believes that it is the deceleration of democratic progress, but not its regression [Bermeo N. 2016: 6]. At the same time, democratic backsliding can assume various forms, from moderate to radical.

As fairly stated by S. L. Hanley and M. A. Vachudova, democratic backsliding means that political actors take conscious and progressive steps to cause democratic regress, i.e. it is not about sudden rejection; i.e. the sudden negation of democracy, like happens, say, in the case of a military coup [Hanley S. L., Vachudova M. A. 2018: 298]. Usually it is the executive authorities that become the main instrument of economic regress [Crowther W. 2017]. At the same time, governments act within the limits of relevant institutions and regulatory mechanisms, rarely participating in open antidemocratic activities.

ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACY: CHARACTERISTICS, CAUSES AND LIKELY OUT-COMES

Illiberal democracy is the most common subtype in the system of deficient democracies [Romanjuk O. 2017: 119; Merkel W. 2004: 49; Puhle H. J. 2005: 12]. It serves to strengthen the powers of authoritarian rule and interferes with the progress of freedom. Above all, illiberal democracy is characterised by a distortion of civil rights and freedoms: limitations of freedom of speech, information, priority of association and pressure on the judiciary etc. [Puhle H. J. 2005: 12]. Rights and freedoms that emphasise an individual's independence from state power and define the limits of state interference with personal life, become prejudiced. As a result of "violation of civil rights and freedoms by legislative and/or executive authorities as well as its inefficient protection by the judiciary, these deficiencies limit constitutional and legal nature of the state" [Romanjuk O. 2017: 119].

Illiberal democracy is characterised by attempts by certain politicians to concentrate their power [Bermeo N. 2016]. Populism, limiting pluralism in political discussion, infringement upon the mechanism of restraint and counterbalance, assumption of power by radical parties, assault on the democratic 'third sector' and free media char-

acterise the non-liberal transition. Pseudo-democratic authorities aspire to emphasise their seemingly democratic character; however, in reality democratic principles and values mostly start being used as a façade. It is done with a strong declarative rhetorical commitment to democracy which is not matched by decisions and actions. Illiberal democracy reduces the essence of democracy first of all to a multiparty system and alternative elections. Instead, all the other fundamental components required for the proper functioning of a pluralist democratic society are suppressed or institutionally marginalised. Croatian political scientist D. Jović actually calls these deformed democracies totalitarian [Jović D. 2017], though we believe such critical evaluation has been slightly blown out of proportion.

The formation of a rather radical illiberal segment in the structure of civic society, a so-called pseudo civil society, is an important characteristic of illiberal democracy. Using its civil and political activism, this type of society creates an atmosphere where various radical actors formulate the narratives aimed at vulnerable groups (ethnic and sexual minorities, refugees etc.), organises citizens for supposed border protection (from migrants), supports extreme religious conservatism (directed against abortions, LGBTI community rights etc.) and attacks multicultural values [Bustikova L., Guasti P. 2017: 169]. These civic and political actors become valuable allies to the state leaders who set off on the road to build an illiberal democracy. On the contrary, the official discourse describes liberal democratic actors as destructive 'foreign agents' who intend to undermine national sovereignty [Guasti P. 2016].

Therefore, our authors' approach envisages positioning illiberal democracy as a subtype of deficient democracy which preserves democratic appearances (elections, formally democratic constitution, multiparty system, separation of powers etc.) with the concurrent infringement on the rule of law; insufficient protection of civil and political rights and freedoms; pressure on civil society and formation of an illiberal (pseudo civil) segment within its structure; manifestation of the informal destructive institutionalisation of politics; increase of populism and popularity of radical political forces; pressure on the courts, media and other independent institutions; spreading conspiracy theories; authorities' attempt to 'conceal' illiberal reforms in order to avoid sanctions from international, European institutions etc.

There are numerous reasons for illiberal democracy becoming a reality in certain countries. For instance, P. Deneen [Deneen P. 2018] points at an increased disappointment on the part of citizens with liberal democracy. In the researcher's opinion, only egoism remained from the promise of individualism; equal opportunities are replaced by a new plutocracy; freedom is pushed out by a mixture of the state and commercial monitoring; cultural diversity becomes similar with the homogenous substance of globalised commerce. From P. Deneen's viewpoint, excessive market liberalism gives birth to an even larger number of authoritative politicians-populist supporters.

Therefore, decrease in the level of trust in democratic institutions, emergence of a

quasi-civil segment in the structure of the civil society, strengthening of the informal destructive influences on the politics of the interested actors, attempts to establish political control over the media (both state and private) and pressure on the judiciary etc. destroy a liberal democratic project in many countries across the world, and CEE countries in particular.

FRAGILITY OF DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION OF CEE COUNTRIES AFTER JOINING THE EU

During the first two decades after communism collapsed, the trend towards democratic progress was clear cut in the majority of CEE countries, first being those countries that took the course towards European integration. The countries in the region were characterised by a stable process of democracy consolidation. However, they quite quickly came across the processes of de-democratisation and democracy regress. The countries from the analysed group quite quickly started to differ in terms of their democratisation level; and today, following the major global trends, the democratic progress in the region has slowed down. S. L. Hanley and M. A. Vachudova identified the democratic retreat here and even withdrawal towards a new authoritarianism [Hanley S. L., Vachudova M. A. 2018: 276]. We fully uphold the authors' position.

It should be noted that scientists arrived at the present scientific consensus on the deteriorating democracy quality in the CEE territory [Kochenov D. 2008; Sedelmeier U. 2014]. What M. Plattner called a 'declinist' sentiment' [Plattner M. F. 2015: 7]) regarding democracy, is gaining more popularity. J. Dawson and S. L. Hanley argue that democratic malaise in the CEE is better understood as a long-term pattern of 'illiberal consolidation' [Dawson J., Hanley S. L. 2016: 20].

The last decade of election results in a number of CEE countries which became EU member states, demonstrate an increase in illiberal trends. There is no scientific consensus at present on which CEE countries can be definitely classified as illiberal democracies and those which have a major democracy defect which endangers the future prospect of liberal democracy. The most frequent opinion that we support is that Hungary and Poland are fully illiberal democracies, and the characteristics of most 'young democracies' accumulate the elements of illiberal transition, which justifies their analysis in the context of studying the threat of extending the illiberal democratisation realm in the CEE. We believe that the illiberal democratisation risk has long ago crossed the borders of Hungary (V. Orban's politics) and Poland (J. Kaczyński's politics). We also trace its manifestations and ascending dynamics in the newest politics of Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Croatia and other CEE countries. Overall, the CEE region is an important area for studying liberal democracy deficiencies, as all the countries of the region have been undergoing post totalitarian transformation, but this process deformed in the past decade in the majority of them.

The integration of some CEE countries into the EU was regarded for some time as the most successful instrument of expanding the liberal democracy realm. In 1990s-early 2000s the prospect of EU membership was a stimulus for democratisation in a candidate state. CEE 'young democracies' went along a complicated path of adaptation to the Copenhagen criteria for the sake of becoming an EU member. The very fact of them becoming a member state was regarded by the researchers as providing unconditional evidence of democracy consolidation [Merkel W. 2008; Schimmelfennig F. 2007]. Therefore, the political discourse of that time sharpened the expectations that EU membership would support the introduction of the 'democratisation through integration' concept. [Dimitrova A., Pridham G. 2004]. There was an expectation that the European prospect will 'keep back the extremist and populist trends' [Bayer J. 2002]. It should be noted that just after the large expansion of the EU in 2004, the discussion was of two possible alternatives for political regime transformation of the EU's 'young democracies': a 'backsliding' theory and a 'Euro-straitjacket' theory. According to the backsliding theory, following the intense reforms to acquire the desired membership, the CEE young democracies would come back to more useful things with elements of authoritarianism, populism, violation of the rule of law principle, etc. One of the reasons of such a likely retreat is that the EU, whilst being active in its control of the EU joining member states, does not have any effective mechanisms to prevent the reverse of liberal democratic achievements after the finalisation of the process of adhering to the procedures by the candidate countries. The 'Euro-straitjacket' theory reads that there will be a long-term and stable positive consequence of the CEE countries joining the EU in due to consolidation of their national democracies. The political processes of the next 15 years after the CEE countries entered the EU demonstrated absence of support of the unified scenario theory for all of the mentioned countries. Back in 2007 a Bulgarian political scientist I. Krastev warned that the liberal consensus in the CEE countries gave way to a non-liberal populism. [Krastev I. 2007]. However, on the eve of the 2008 global economic crisis, the World Bank jumped to a rather hasty, in our opinion, conclusion: the era of democratic transition for the countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 had ended and they already functioned as liberal democracies. The creation of stable institutions that guarantee democracy, rule of law, human rights, respect and protection of minorities was optimistically acknowledged. [Alam A. et al. 2008]. However, as of today, this World Bank's opinion is regarded with criticism, for it is obvious that in many CEE countries the illiberal democracy is pushing out a still weak liberal democracy, and a democratic retreat of EU member states is taking place. For most CEE countries, the risk of undermining the existing achievements of post-Communist democratisation grew and continues growing, the fact of EU membership is not an absolute deterrent.

Our analysis of the political processes in the CEE countries which are EU members, proves that the influence of radical and populist political subjects increased immensely, and the countries demonstrated the symptoms of democratic 'tiredness'

and the exhaustion of liberal democratic elites. All of this became a fruitful ground to implement the principles of illiberal democracy. Some of the CEE countries had already moved away from the development of liberal democracy. We presume that it even might endanger their membership in the EU in some way, future EU prospects and undermine the authority of this integration union which has some member states with new authoritarianism elements in their political regime. For instance, R. D. Kelemen rightfully stated that "the largest threats to democracy in Europe manifest themselves not on the EU level, but on the national level, in the emerging autocracies of the EU countries" [Kelemen R. D. 2017: 212]. Evidently, at present it compels the EU to analyse the candidate countries more thoroughly, as these, hypothetically, can follow the steps of already deformed young democracies.

Antidemocratic processes of the past decade in EEC countries lead to an interest to study the fragility of democratic consolidation in post-totalitarian countries and finding the efficiency level of the EU tools to have these countries inexorably adhere to the Copenhagen criteria. Democracy deficiency cases in a number of EEC countries draw attention to the so-called 'Copenhagen dilemma': the stringency of the Copenhagen criteria regarding promotion of the rule of law and the absence of effective EU tools to secure the promotion of the rule of law after the candidate countries have joined the EU. Therefore, certain doubts arise regarding the sustainability of democratic reforms which were conducted at the EU request [Dimitrova A., Pridham G. 2004]. Predictably, the most 'sensitive' reforms may be reversed after the candidate countries obtain the desired EU membership. Within the public discussions of potential EU expansion, some speculation on certain EU 'leniency' to candidate countries is being voiced, which these days supports the enhancement of new authoritarian tendencies [Kmezić M., Bieber F. 2017].

DEMOCRATIC REGRESS REASONS IN THE CEE REGION

Liberal democracy narrowing to a larger or smaller extent is presently observed in the CEE countries joining the EU. Following the overthrow of the Communist system, initial euphoria from the democratic changes gave way to growing distrust in formal political institutions and politicians, as well as ongoing criticism of the liberal democracy itself. It should be taken into account that strong liberal political culture able to support stable democratic regimes, never existed in the countries of the region, so these regimes started falling down as soon as economic and/or cultural problems arose, and additional motivation to democratisation evaporated just after the acceptance of certain candidate countries in the EU. A number of authors support this view [Dawson J., Hanley S. L. 2016: 20; Vachudova M., Hooghe L. 2009: 179].

The beginning of the 2008 global economic crisis 'sprang' the deformation mechanisms on the still immature liberal democracy in the CEE countries. Obviously, economic crisis will strongly challenge the stability and quality of liberal democracy, as well as undermine legitimacy of democratic political order. J. Habermas laid spe-

cial emphasis on this at the very beginning of the global economic crisis. [Habermas J. 2008]. The writer proved the threat from inadequate political actions related to the financial crisis, which would lead to the collapse of citizens' confidence, lowered democracy quality and, finally, would lead to the end of democratic legitimacy. It is during these years of economic crisis that democratic indices started to deteriorate: the quality of the mechanism of restraint and counterbalance, stability and representative resources of the party system, citizens' approval of democratic norms and procedures, freedom of mass media etc. [Guasti P., Mansfeldová Z. 2018: 74]. The migration crisis of 2015 made populist discourse even more active and pinpointed the issue of the stability of liberal democracy.

Among new EU members, where democratic institutions are still weak, political discrepancies gave birth to considerable doubt regarding the liberal model and democracy as a whole [Bedratenko 2018: 45]. At the same time, it is evident that for most European 'old democracies' the vector of development was not so profoundly deformed by financial and migration problems. We can largely agree with E. Hobsbawm that, despite the 'wind of change', objective conditions to constitute genuine lasting democracies in non-Western countries of Europe had not formed yet [Quoted after: *Jović D.* 2017: 442–443].

Public opinion surveys testify that Europeans grow increasingly ambivalent about basic democratic values, and many of them even call in doubt the importance of liberal democracy values. For instance, a YouGov survey results show that around half of the population of the 12 surveyed EU countries are committed to illiberal ideas, like countering migration, bias towards refugees and ethnic minorities, excuse for restriction of certain human rights, support of nationalism etc. [Youngs R., Manney S. 2018]. Therefore, we can presume that liberal democracy is threatened not only from 'above' (by governments), but also from 'below' (by citizens) due to their common commitment to illiberal values [Norris P., Inglehart R. 2019].

Therefore, we can speak of a certain 'disappointment scenario' with liberal democracy values which is true for quite a large number of citizens of EU integrated CEE countries. Democracy idealisation and inflated expectations were observed at the start of the democratic transition. However, democratic enthusiasm came into stark contrast with the poor political and economic efficiency of the regimes. Therefore, the young CEE democracies encountered complicated socio-economic issues and are facing political scandals and corruption that deepens the citizens' disappointment with the liberal democracy institutions, contribute towards their withdrawal from active social and political life, provoke erosion of trust in formal political institutions and encourages populists. According to I. Krastev, what the CEE is experiencing now is not just the democratisation crisis, but a genuine liberal democracy crisis which manifests itself in economic failures, civil opposition and liberal cosmopolitanism. [Krastev I. 2016].

Researchers are trying to trace the sources of the present-day illiberal revolution in

the CEE countries. I. Krastev and S. Holmes believe that we do not have to concentrate purely on ideological or economic factors, but search for the answers in political psychology in order to understand the problem. The above scientists believe that the present-day democratic regression is caused by the 'normalcy' policy after 1989, when the main task was imitating the West in order to turn 'normal'. [Krastev I., Holmes S. 2018: 118]. The way to 'normalcy' envisaged importing liberal democratic institutions, using western political and economic 'recipes' and public approval of western values. This literal imitation of western models ended in a number of moral and psychological failures (feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, dependency, lost identity and unintentional insincerity). This imitation was even perceived as a loss of sovereignty, and I. Krastev and S. Holmes use it to explain the surge in authoritarian chauvinism and xenophobia in the CEE countries.

It is also important to emphasise that when looking for the reasons of illiberal democracy strengthening in the CEE countries, it is useful to consider that these were economic and not civil transformations that became the main direction of reforms after 1989 [Szent-Iványi B., Tétényi A. 2008]. This means that economic value was the top priority. Liberal democratic norms and practices have never been fully integrated in these societies; we can regard that as a reason for the present-day liberal democracy crisis, at the same time remembering about the aspect of the historical past.

B. Bugarič and T. Ginsburg prove the existence of a connection between the liberal democracy crisis in the CEE countries and the establishment of guided democracy in Russia [Bugarič B., Ginsburg T. 2016]. The truth is that in the past years the Russian Federation has been strengthening its destructive influence on young democracies in Europe using the following mechanisms: corruption, propaganda, disinformation and support of populists, extremist, marginal, quasimilitary political actors.

ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACY MANIFESTATION IN CEE COUNTRIES

Let us try and find the manifestations of illiberal democracies in the cases of several countries (Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic), pointing out their peculiarities. Identification of illiberal transformations in Hungary is the evidence of rapid radicalisation of this country's politics, growth of populism and substitution of liberal democracy for Christian conservative narratives. Withdrawal from liberal democracy values and narrowing of the space for civil society activity has been observed here for decades. An illiberal transition promoted the popularity of populist parties (first of all, Fidesz i Jobbik). The separation of powers principle has been compromised in Hungary, the Constitutional court role has been reduced, and the opposition, media and civil society are under pressure. Constant searches for the enemies of the nation take place and conspiracy theories are produced. Gender equality, same-sex marriages, open society and minorities' rights are defined as existential threats to the survival of the Hungarian nation. The model of the illiberal national state based on labour is idealised. A conservative illiberal national state with a strong vertical power structure,

with an emphasis on history, culture, language, patriotic upbringing, family values and spiritual revival of the nation is being constructed. V. Orban announced they will focus on illiberal 'conservative Christian democracy' with underlying criticism of multiculturalism, antimigrant rhetoric, supporting exclusively Christian family values and traditional family etc.

Poland's democratic façade also hides numerous deformations. A quite strong consensus on the basic elements of liberal democratic order has been maintained for 25 years here (until 2015). Poland's political trajectory changed after the Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS) political party came to power. The democratic climate of the country has been deteriorating since then due to attempts to impose government control primarily over the court structure and social media; artificial modification of the 'third sector' through redistribution of state and EU funding to government-loyal NGOs; formation of illiberal sectors of civil society and focusing on antimigrant issue etc. We can see both common and different features between Poland and Hungary in the form of construction of their illiberal democracy models. Both countries are introducing a socio-political model with the preservation of 'traditional values' and a clear national identity being the primary task of the authorities. J. Kaczyński and V. Orban are using similar methods; however, the Polish leader is an ideologist expressing the Catholic Church ideology, and the Hungarian prime minister pragmatically focuses on oligarchs. The political methods and institutional structure of the Hungarian regime are evidence of the intensification in the use of authoritative mechanisms, which is the major difference between the Hungarian and Polish models of illiberal democracy. This is primarily manifested in the growing pressure on the civil society and an aggressive position towards the EU. Meanwhile, despite strong antidemocratic deformation, the Polish regime keeps the mechanisms of restraint and counterbalance owing to the proportional election system and the multi-layered structure of the

Despite the recent high level of political power consolidation in the Czech Republic in relation to the liberal democratic transformation of the country, the quality of democracy has been in decline for the past years as well. It gives ground for acknowledging the beginning of illiberal changes. The increased influence of the ANO party and its leader A. Babiš, as well as the political position of the head of state, M. Zeman, pose certain challenges to the Czech liberal democracy. Following the 2017 parliamentary elections, the issue of breaking the liberal pro-European consensus becomes relevant. The 2008 global economic crisis did influence the Czech political system; however, it did not cause the country's turn to conservative nationalism (unlike Hungary and Poland). Instead, new populist centric parties became more active. Appealing to the national identity policy gradually became a politically significant instrument in the Czech Republic, but appealing to the idea of protecting the Czech nation is not so common today (which differentiates technocratic populist A. Babiš, an ethnic Slovak, from conservative politicians V. Orban and J. *Kaczyński*). Therefore, the erosion of

local self-governing bodies.

the Czech traditional parties was not caused by the language of cultural or political singularity (unlike Hungary and Poland). Owing to the dominating centrist populism (ANO party), Czech democracy still has none of the full-blown features of an illiberal regime, but the risk of rising to it is increasing greatly, as A. Babiš' technocratic approach to power causes a gradual rejection of pluralism and bears the signs of authoritarian trends.

CONCLUSION

The CEE region is evidently facing serious challenges in the functioning of liberal democracy. These difficulties go above the poor quality of democracy resulting from the heritage of the communist or pre-communist life. A whole range of other factors has given birth to an illiberal transition: authoritarian trends of the ruling elite, weakness of national civil societies; high level of distrust in formal political institutions and politicians; social capital weakness; presence pf parties with no social roots and corrupted and inefficient state administration etc. Despite the fact that every CEE country has experienced its peculiar aspect of democratic deconsolidation on a different level, each of these processes is based on the underlying activity of a national illiberal (usually a populist) party that started a conservative nationalist project owing to its electoral success; it concentrated executive power, liquidated or weakened the principle of restraint and counterbalance and exerted party control over governmental agencies etc.

Illiberal dynamic in the CEE countries manifests itself, first of all, in such illiberal tendencies as pressure on the media and freedom of speech, infringement of independence and repressions against civil society. Moreover, it is evidenced by hate speech against migrants' surges in the CEE territories, pressure on female and LGBTI rights and increases in crimes committed on racial and homophobic grounds etc. Therefore, the presence of illiberal characteristics in the structure of democracy became a challenge for the CEE countries which faced an internal split due to the still lingering effects of the 2008 global economic crisis. The 2015 migration crisis additionally enhanced these processes, as it provided a convenient instrument of political manipulations for the right-wing radical nationalist parties.

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THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINE IN 2014-2019

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the main trends and problems of the socio-economic development of Ukraine in 2014-2019. The authors identify two phases of development that the Ukrainian economy went through during 2014-2019: a) crisis (2014-2015); b) depressed with signs of gradual recovery (2016 - 2019). The article investigates how these have affected the social sphere, in particular, socio-demographic and labour indicators, health care, education, quality of life and social security. At the end of the article the main problems in the socio-economic sphere are identified at the current time.

Key words: Socio-Economic Development, Economy of Ukraine, Social Policy, Crises

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of socio-economic development, especially in a period of social transformation, is a key factor in the life of both the average citizen and the state as a whole. The topicality of the article is that, on the one hand, the identification of trends and problems in the socio-economic sphere allows us to better assess the results of modernisation at the current time and take them into account in the reform process. On the other hand, an objective analysis of the contemporary development of the socio-economic sphere in Ukraine makes it possible to forecast threats to state development and make the necessary adjustments to the state development strategy. The main tendencies, problems and threats to the security of the Ukrainian state since its independence have been at the epicenter of the attention of politicians, scientists and publicists. This topic was especially popular after the events of Euromaidan and at the commencement of the war in Donbar and the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. Various aspects of this problem were explored in works by L.Akimova (2016), Z.Varnalii (2016), T.Vlasiuk (2015), M.Vozhniak (2016), T.Korkh (2015), S.Tkalenko (2014), O.Sharov (2017), M.Kalnytska (2017) and others. However, modern historiography lacks a comprehensive analysis of the main trends and problems of the socio-economic development of Ukraine in 2014-2019. The aim of this article is to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the main trends and problems of socio-economic development of Ukraine in 2014-2019.

FEATURES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINE, MAIN PHASES AND CONSEQUENCES

In 2013/2014, the Ukrainian economy faced a whole set of serious challenges that created a new system to coordinate its development within which the crisis of the current structural and technological model of management sharpened. Key challenges were:

1. The incompleteness of the post-socialist economy transformation into a modern market economy which resulted in the exhaustion of the industrial base and production infrastructure formed in the Soviet Union. Symptoms and indicators of the growing crisis in the socio-economic sphere were, on the one hand, a huge exacerbation of the old problems that originated from the Soviet past (backwardness of the technological base, critical level of deterioration of fixed assets, economic disparities between regions; high level of energy intensity and resource intensity; low competitive level of product quality and high production costs, etc.), on the other - layering new destabilizing factors on old troubles, complications and obstacles related to the transition to the market (the oligarchs' influence on the national economy; high level of "black economy" and criminal activities in economic processes; criminal-clan system of public resources distribution, sharp devaluation of the national currency, etc.).

- 2. Implementation of the Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement and a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area between the parties which, on the one hand, created conditions for the development of the Ukrainian economy (increased access of Ukrainian goods, services, capital and technologies to the European market; improvement of conditions for Ukrainian export products with the gaining of a price advantage due to the abolition of import duties; increase of EU members investment in the economy of Ukraine, including the creation of joint enterprises; increase in bilateral trade and in the flow of foreign currency; competitiveness of domestic products in connection with the introduction of new European standards, etc.), but on the other, caused a number of problems and risks (necessity for significant financial resources to ensure the adaptation and implementation of new legislation; increase of manufacturers' financial costs due to high standards of production and quality; increase in the negative balance of bilateral trade in Ukraine due to the deterioration of the export structure because domestic exporters have reoriented from manufacturing of finished goods to the export of raw materials and semi-finished products; the appearance of a shortage of domestic goods on the internal market due to export reorientation of manufacturers; displacement of the Ukrainian manufacturers from the internal market; increasing the level of import dependence of the domestic market on products from the EU; Russia's initiation of a number of economic wars to block Ukraine's participation in European integration processes, etc.) [Kuharskaya 2016: 39].
- 3. The war in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation led to the destruction of the economy and life support systems in the temporarily occupied territories and to a loss of their human potential. As a result of the Crimea annexation, Ukraine lost 4.3% of its population, 1.5-1.6% of foreign trade turnover and 4% of GDP. According to the estimates of the Ministry of Ecology and the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine the total amount of losses is now estimated at more than UAH¹ 1 trillion, of which the amount of direct losses amounted to UAH 950 billion, losses of the market value of the material and raw material base of Crimea amounted to UAH 126.8 billion. Ukraine has incurred significant losses as a result of the Donbas occupation as 14% of the population of Ukraine live there. The region was the country's main industrial and energy hub, accounting for 16% of national GDP, including 25% of industry and 7% of agricultural output. Before the occupation, Donbas provided 95% of domestic coal needs and a large share of Ukraine's commodity exports 23.2% [Zghurovskyi 2015: 11].

During 2014-2019 the Ukrainian economy passed through two stages of development: a) crisis (2014-2015); b) depression with signs of gradual recovery (2016-2019). During the crisis phase GDP decelerated rapidly: in 2014 - by 6.6%, in 2015 - by 9.8%. In 2015, public debt increased almost by three times compared to 2013 and amounted

¹ KAH: Ukrainian Hryvnia – national currency of Ukraine.

to UAH 1 trillion 573 billion. The rate of inflation was increasing at a galloping rate: in 2014 - 12.1%, in 2015 - 48.7%. There was a sharp devaluation of the hryvnia, the rate of which has fallen threefold in the period 2013-2015 from 8 to 24 hryvnias for one dollar [Ukraina: perspektyvy 2017: 4]. In addition, the Ukrainian economy in that period was characterised by all the classic features of the crisis phase - the decline in production; bankruptcy and liquidation of many businesses (especially banks); rising unemployment; non-payment crisis, and diminished investment in the economy, etc. The war in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation were the catalyst for negative processes. It led, on the one hand, to a significant weakening of Ukraine's economic potential (according to experts, the loss of Crimea cost the state 4% of GDP, the war in the Donbas - 7% of GDP, and another 3% of GDP Ukraine lost due to the outflow of investment), on the other, it forced the state to spend more than 5% of GDP on national security and defense [Yatsenyuk 2015].

The depressive phase was characterised by the fact that the first signs of weak macroeconomic stabilisation and recovery from the crisis appeared in 2016. The real GDP growth was 2.3% compared to 2015. Inflation rates slowed down - the consumer price index in 2016 was 12.4% compared to the previous year. Incomes per person increased almost by 15%. However, these positive developments did not mean that the crisis was finally over. A high level of unemployment, which not only decreased in 2016, but also increased by 0.2% reaching 9.7% of the active population, was an indicator of low level of economic activity during this period [Ukraina – 2016. Statystychnyi zbirnyk 2017: 10, 14, 15; Sotsialno-ekonomichne stanovyshche Ukrainy 2016].

The economic situation in Ukraine in 2017 did not improve significantly. GDP growth has remained, although this year it decreased slightly compared to the previous one and amounted to 2.2% and it was a positive sign. Tax revenues increased significantly. They increased by 2.5 times in 2014-2017: from UAH 299 billion up to UAH 760 billion. In the same time, local budget revenues almost tripled - from UAH 68.6 billion in 2014 to UAH 192.7 billion in 2017. For the first time in the history of the country, local budgets accounted for 50% of the national budget [Khandusenko 2018]. The construction industry, whose output grew by 20.9%, markedly improved its performance. Good growth was demonstrated by retail trade. The turnover in 2017 increased by 8.8% compared to 2016. Such positive dynamics in the trade sector was due to the fact that in 2017 the average monthly nominal wage compared to 2016 increased by 37.1%.

At the same time, the economy did not come out of the depression phase. Industry and agriculture showed in 2017 albeit a slight but falling of their indicators and stagnant characteristics. In particular, the industrial production index fell by 0.1%, while the agricultural production index fell by 2.7% compared to the same period the previous year. Inflation had increased, in 2017 it amounted to 13.7% (in 2016 - 12.4%) [Sotsialno-ekonomichne stanovyshche Ukrainy 2017]. The catalysts for

inflationary processes were a rise in production costs and the revival of consumer demand, including the raising of minimum wages and pensions; the abolition of retail prices regulation for food; an increase in world prices and external demand for domestic food (including meat and dairy products).

At the beginning of 2018, there were some signs of macroeconomic stabilisation and a revival in the Ukrainian economy: in the first quarter of the year, GDP growth in Ukraine was 3.1%. It was possible to achieve this figure due to large-scale reforms, European integration processes, increased investment activity, growth of household incomes and a gradual decline in inflation. As a result, during 2016-2018 the real GDP of Ukraine increased by 8.4% (in 2016 - by 2.4%, in 2017 - by 2.5%, in 2018 by 3.3%) to 91.3% of the 2013 level [Prohnoz ekonomichnoho i sotsialnoho rozvytku Ukrainy 2019]. However, the economic situation has not yet become stable since in the first quarter of 2019 GDP has increased only by 2.5 %. Hundreds of enterprises were closed, and the volume of industrial production in 2019 amounted to only 71% of 2013. Domestic turnover (in dollars) in Ukraine in 2018 decreased by 3.2 times compared to 2013 [Statystyka roznychnoho tovarooborota 2019]. This is explained by the fact that the process of the Ukrainian economy recovery was complicated by a number of old unsolved problems from the Soviet past; the politicisation of economic decisions; the challenges arising during the process of transition to the market economy and unpredictable changes in the global market, etc.

PROBLEMS IN THE SOCIAL SPHERE AND ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THEM

The contradictory dynamics of Ukraine's economic development in 2014-2019 significantly complicated the situation in the social sphere and limited the opportunities for implementing effective social policy. Experts highlight a number of socio-economic factors that created unfavorable prerequisites for solving social problems: reducing GDP per capita; the existence of significant real differentiation in the standard of living of rich and poor people; the large volumes of black labour market, employment, incomes and expenditures of the population; the high level of corruption in educational, cultural, housing and communal services, public social services spheres; the irrationality of the structure of the population income and expenditure and the low level of state financing of social sphere; the decrease in life expectancy, decrease in population and narrowing of educational potential; the deterioration of the development and quality of the functioning of objects of social and communal infrastructure, etc.

When assessing the state of the social sphere development and the effectiveness of social policy, experts use the analysis of a complex of economic, demographic, cultural, medical, socio-psychological factors that characterise the quality and standard of living of citizens. Key factors among them are:

1. Socio-demographic (birthrate, mortality, average life expectancy, migration). For the period of 2014-2018 the mortality rate decreased from 632 thousand in 2014 to 588 thousand in 2018. The birth rate also decreased - from 465 thousand to 336 thousand people. In 2016, the average life expectancy in Ukraine was 71 years. According to the World Economic Forum, the country ranks 88th among 144 countries in the world.

The situation in the socio-economic sphere is significantly influenced by migration processes. In the first half of 2017, there were 1.7 million internally displaced persons (IDP) from Donbas and Crimea in Ukraine. With this number of internally displaced persons, Ukraine ranked fourth in the world after Syria, Iraq and Yemen at that time. (In June 2019, the number of internally displaced persons from Donbass and Crimea in Ukraine decreased slightly, but remained quite significant - 1 million 387 thousand people) [Unian.ua, 24.06.2019]. The scale of external migration is significant. In particular, in the period of 2015-2017, 1.3 million people or 4.5% of the population migrated from Ukraine. Of these, 43% returned, 49% were temporary migrant workers. Most Ukrainians migrated to Poland, Russia, Italy and the Czech Republic. According to experts, the total number of Ukrainian migrant workers in 2017 was about 2.3 million or 8% of the population. But the process, intensified by visa-free travel regimes, increasingly gained momentum and in 2018 there were already 3.2 million citizens working abroad, i.e. 17.8% of the working population of Ukraine. As a whole, on average, from 7 to 9 million Ukrainians participated in the migration process [Slovoidilo.ua, 11.12.2019]. Large-scale labour migration not only hindered the growth of Ukrainian production, but also exacerbated the imbalance between demand and supply in the labour market. In addition to labour migration, educational migration has been gaining momentum. In particular, the number of Ukrainian students at foreign universities in the 2016-2017 academic year increased by 56% compared to the 2012-2013 academic year and amounted to 72 thousand people [Finbalance.com.ua, 03.02.2018]. Forecasts for a reduction in the working-age population are also important. The International Monetary Fund on July 15 2019 published a report, "Demographic Headwinds in Central and Eastern Europe". According to this report, the largest reduction (more than 34%) in the workforce in Eastern Europe by 2050 will occur in Ukraine [Batog, Crivelli, 2019, p. 16].

2. Social and labour (state of labour resources, dynamics of employment and unemployment). The state of labour resources was negatively affected by a decrease in the number of economically active population in 2015-2018, which made the process of retirement difficult. The unemployment rate remained consistently high. In particular, if in 2012-2013 this figure did not exceed 8.1% of economically active population, in 2015-2019 it fluctuated within 9.5-9.9% [Riven bezrobittia v Ukraini 2019]. This is explained by the fact that in 2014-2015 the military conflict in Donbas began, Ukraine lost a significant part of its industrial

potential, production declined sharply, and GDP fell sharply.

3. The level and quality of life of the population (dynamics of real money income, consumption of goods, social benefits, etc.). In the period of 2014-2018, the average monthly nominal wage increased by more than 2.5 times: from 3480 to 8865 UAH. The average monthly wage rate in the industry and in the country's production sector tended to increase steadily upto 2013. However, initially the internal political and then economic crisis of 2013-2015 led to a sharp depreciation of the national currency and, consequently, a decrease in the average monthly wage in US dollars. It was not until 2019 that the average monthly wage exceeded the level in 2013 [Tiurina N. & Karvatska N. 2020: 145]. The average monthly income per person increased gradually - in 2015 it amounted to 2650 UAH, then in 2018 - 4825 UAH. In 2015-2017, the amount of social allowance increased by almost 30%. The purchasing power of the nominal wage increased. In particular, the index of real wages in Ukraine increased from 86.5% in 2014 to 109.7% in 2018 [Indeks realnoi zarobitnoi platy 2019; Dokhody ta vytraty naselennia Ukrainy 2018].

Some improvement in the standard of living was caused by a slowing down of prices increase: if in 2015 they increased by almost 43%, in 2017 - by 14%, then in the first half of 2019 - only about 4% [Indeks infliatsii 2019].

The pension reform that began in 2017 was to resolve the problems of financial support for the elderly population. The main reasons for its introduction were: the progressive aging of the population and a reduction of the economically active population in the structure of labour resources; the exacerbation of problems with financing the pension fund; the inadequate payment of a single social contribution (SSC) - employers and the state paid the SSC for 75% of the employed population, and 25% of the employed population did not pay it at all because they worked in the shadow economy; the low level of the minimum pension received by 67% of pensioners; the discrepancy between the average pension, which was only 29% of the average wage, and social standards [Chomu pensiina reforma 2017]; the unavailability of pensions differentiation depending on earnings and insurance payments, etc. The implementation of the pension reform envisaged the modernisation of pensions, a social standards increase, a gradual increase in the length of working before retirement and the introduction of an automatic annual indexation of pensions to protect against inflation, etc.

4. Housing support for the population (characteristics of the housing resources by square footage, communal welfare). Housing resources grew at a slower pace, increasing slightly more than 1% during 2015-2017. In 2017, almost 80% of Ukraine's households were provided with water supply, sewage, heating, gas and 63% with hot water supply.

5. Population health and health care system (dynamics of morbidity, characteristics of medical infrastructure and staffing). The dynamics of Ukrainian citizens morbidity was controversial. If for the period of 2014-2016 the number of first detected diseases increased by 480 thousand (2%), in 2017 it decreased by almost 750 thousand (27%) compared to the previous year. The same contradictions can be traced in staffing and in the development of medical infrastructure. On the one hand, in the period of 2014-2017 the number of doctors of all specialties working in the system of health care remained unchanged, but the number of hospitals reduced by 6% (from 1800 to 1700) and the number of hospital beds decreased by almost 8% (from 336 to 309 thousand).

The health care reform launched in 2017 was intended to improve the situation in health care. It aimed at introducing insurance medicine, radical restructuring of the entire medical infrastructure, ensuring real autonomy of medical institutions and approving a guaranteed package of medical services, etc. However, this reform has been conducted slowly. The main brake factors were the unfavourable socio-economic situation in Ukraine, characterised by the emergence of recurrent crisis phenomena; the lack of systematic analysis of the real causes of inconsistency of the current Ukrainian health care system with public expectations; the lack of public consensus on the reform model and an insufficient level of public awareness of the main directions and mechanism of medical reform implementation.

- 6. National education, culture, information services (dynamics of the number of students, characteristics of cultural and educational infrastructure). In 2014-2018, the number of pupils in general educational institutions increased by almost 8% (from 3757 to 4042 thousand people), and the number of schools decreased by almost 12% (from 17.6 to 15.5 thousand) [Zaklady zahalnoi serednoi osvity 2019]. In the cultural and information sphere, in 2014-2017 the number of museums increased by 6% and the number of performance visitors increased by 15%; the number of newspapers decreased by 22% and library funds decreased by 8%. Educational reform was aimed at the comprehensive modernisation of the educational and scientific sphere. It was implemented in four directions: reform of secondary education, vocational (vocational-technical) education, higher education and the creation of a new system of management and financing of science. It was planned to improve the quality of education by introducing new educational standards, improving the material and technical base of educational and scientific institutions, the allocation of broad autonomy, creating the conditions for developing and enhancing the staffing potential of the educational and scientific spheres and introducing a fair, transparent system of financing.
- 7. Economic and social security (environmental security costs, crime rates). In 2014-2017, environmental investments increased by 38.5%. The criminal situation in

- Ukraine is contradictory. In particular, in 2014-2016 the crime rate increased by 12% (from 529.1 thousand to 592.6 thousand crimes), in 2017 it decreased initially by almost 14% (523.9 thousand crimes) since 2016, and in 2018 it decreased by another 7% compared to the previous year (487 thousand crimes) [Dynamika zlochynnosti v Ukraini 2017].
- 8. Socio-psychological well-being of the population (social satisfaction, anxiety, conflicts). According to the poll conducted by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology in May 2018, the Ukrainians are more satisfied with their own life than with the life of the country. In particular, the respondents' social well-being index is rated 46 (indexes can range from -100 to 100 points, where -100 indicates total dissatisfaction, and 100 indicates overall satisfaction). However, this estimate has increased slightly compared to 2017. On average, Ukrainians are much more satisfied with their own lives than with the life of the country (the index is higher by 52 points). Over the last three years the index of individual well-being has increased from -8 to +6 and now corresponds to the level of pre-war 2013 [Samopochuttia meshkantsiv Ukrainy 2018].

An integrated picture of the state and effectiveness of social development in Ukraine in comparison with other states gives the Human Development Index. This generalised indicator is regularly calculated by the UN to monitor the development of the social sphere of different countries. The Human Development Index combines the analysis of three key indicators - gross domestic product per capita, literacy and life expectancy rates. By this indicator, in 2017, Ukraine was in the group of countries with high levels of human development and ranked 88th among 189 countries. From 1990 to 2017, the Ukrainian human development index increased by 6.5%; life expectancy at birth increased by 2.3 years, the average period of education increased by 2.2 years and the expected period of education by 2.6 years; at the same time, GDP per capita decreased by 24.4%. Although Ukraine is in the group of countries with a high level of human development, its results remain below the average of the countries from this group and below the average for the countries of Europe and Central Asia [Human Development Indices and Indicators 2018].

MAIN PROBLEMS OF THE STATE IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SPHERE

1. The domination of the monopoly-oligarchic model of business management. The impetus for this model formation was the privatisation of state property after the dissolution of the USSR, which did not lead to the emergence of an effective owner who would invest in new technologies and progressive structural changes. This is because only 10% of Ukraine's population has benefited from the transformational changes. As a result, privatisation in Ukraine, especially of large concerns, became the basis for the formation and enrichment of clan-oligarchic groups.

The following characteristics and features are inherent in the oligarchic economic

model: the artificial creation of monopolies in order to avoid competition; a low level of reaction to changes in market conditions due to the multi-sectoral and diversified composition of financial-industrial groups and the inflexibility of their management and state subsidies; gaining advantages over potential economic competitors through the use of political power as an economic resource, which allows the generation of surplus profits and the elimination of potential competitors by non-market methods; the use of political levers - lobbying through their representatives for customs-tax, budgetary-subsidy, credit, price, raw materials, energy and other privileges and preferences; the coverage of losses by subsidies from the state budget; the rejection of modernisation and innovation due to a lack of competition and the bringing of economic objects to depreciation, moral and physical destruction. The dominance of the monopoly-oligarchic model of the economy led to the fact that 10 oligarchic clans control 70 to 80% of the Ukrainian economy [10 oliharkhichnykh klaniv 2013]. As a result, experts estimate that in 2015 the cumulative income of 10% of the richest people in Ukraine was 17 times higher than the income of 40% of the poorest ones [National Sustainable Development Goals 2017]. Analysing integrally and evaluating the mechanism of the formation and influence of the monopoly-oligarchic model of management in Ukraine, Polish researcher M. Vozhniak points out:

"The inconsistent process of implementing a market economy and related political reforms has led to the establishment of a capitalist oligarchy under state control. It impedes the rule of law, effective state control over development-oriented activities, the proper functioning of the democratic society, and local government" [Vozhniak 2016: 13].

- 2. The high level of the black economy and criminalisation of the national economy, criminal-clan system of public resources distribution. According to IMF experts, the average size of Ukraine's black economy is 44.8% of GDP. For comparison, in developed countries the figure is in the range of 7% to 15% of GDP (the USA, Netherlands, Japan, Switzerland, Singapore) [MVF nazval 2018]. In 2016 Ukraine ranks third in the list of countries with the largest black economy (45.16%). Only Nigeria was ahead of Ukraine with an indicator of 48.37% and Azerbaijan 67.04%. The scale of the losses caused by the black economy is eloquently evidenced by the amount of unpaid taxes. In particular, in 2016, the GDP of Ukraine amounted to UAH 2.38 trillion, the revenue part of the state budget UAH 595 billion, and unpaid taxes amounted to UAH 1.1 trillion [Ukraina zanyala 2017].
- 3. The low level of competitiveness of the national economy due to the backwardness of the technological base, high energy consumption and resource intensity, low quality of production and high production costs. Today, Ukraine continues to be one of the first countries in Europe with high energy intensity in terms of gross output. It is 3.5 times higher than in industrialised countries in Europe and 1.6 times higher than in Belarus [Khalatov 2017]. According to the Global Competitiveness Index 2016-2017 published by the World Economic Forum, Ukraine ranked 85th

among 138 countries (it ranked 76th in 2014-2015) [Pozytsiya Ukrainy v reitynhu 2016].

- 4. A significant level of corruption, its presence in all spheres of public administration. According to Transparency International's 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Ukraine gained 30 points out of 100 possible and ranked 130th out of 180 countries (Indicators 0-30 mean a significant level of corruption, 31-60 the state is trying to fight with corruption). According to the IMF, corruption in Ukraine annually costs the country 2% of economic growth [Ukraina posila 2018].
- 5. The critical state of fixed assets in leading industries, agro-industrial complex and life support systems. During the period 2000-2014 the technological backwardness of the Ukrainian economy increased, and the obsolescence of production facilities increased significantly, the level of wear of which doubled during this time and increased from 43.7% in 2000 to 83.5% in 2014 [Zhuk 2016: 252; Vartist osnovnykh zasobiv 2017].
- 6. A shortage of fuel and energy resources and insufficient level of diversification of energy supply sources and technologies. Ukraine meets its needs for natural energy at the expense of its own production by about 45%. At the same time, energy intensity of GDP in Ukraine is 3-5 times higher than in economically developed countries [Zghurovskyi 2015: 16].
- 7. The strengthening of structural deformations and disproportions of the national economy and their acquisition of systemic inter-sectoral and regional character. These negative processes were manifested in the growth of production of the most energy-intensive, material-intensive, fuel-raw materials industries and the reduction of the share of high-tech industries and those producing final products. In 2010, in the sectoral structure of the Ukrainian economy, 57.9% were represented by the branches of the third technological paradigm, which is dominated by ferrous metallurgy, railway transport, electric power, inorganic chemistry, coal consumption, universal mechanical engineering, and the share of products of the fifth technological paradigm, which determines post-industrial type of production (the development of the aerospace industry, computer science focussed on complex computer technology, modern types of weapons, software, telecommunications, robotics and new materials) was only 4% [Vasilenko 2013: 68]. According to experts, in 2014-2016 the share of the third technological paradigm in the overall structure of the national economy increased to about 80% [Gaevskiy 2017].

Serious deformations in the economy of Ukraine persisted at the regional level. Statistics show that the indicators of maximum and minimum gross domestic product in the different regions of Ukraine at the end of 2015 differed more than 11.5 times, capital expenditures - 9.33 times, social allowance - 4.92 times, and the difference in income per capita between different regions was almost 38.5% [Vershyhora 2017: 25].

8. A critical dependence of the national economy on external market conditions and low rates of internal market expansion. An indicator of this trend is a significant

increase in the negative balance of foreign trade in 2017, which increased by 2.2 times compared to 2016 and amounted to \$ 6.3 billion (in 2016 - \$ 2.9 billion) [Negativnoe saldo 2018]. The increase in imports led to a gradual loss of the domestic market by a domestic manufacturer. In 2014-2015, Ukrainian manufacturers lost more than 53.9% of domestic sales [Bazyliuk at al. 2017: 19].

- 9. An irrational export structure with a predominantly raw material nature and low specific value of high value-added products. The considerable dependence of national production on the global market is due to the raw material nature of exports. In 2016, 62% of domestic exports consisted of vegetable products (21.3%), fats and oils (10.6%), finished food (6.2%), precious metals and goods thereof (23.9%) [Koziak at al. 2017: 262].
- 10. The great debt dependence of the state with critical volumes of state external and internal debts. During 2013-2018, Ukraine's general debt grew at a very rapid pace. In particular, if in 2013 it accounted for 40.1% of the gross domestic product of the state, then at the beginning of 2018 81% of GDP (in monetary equivalent, UAH 2 131 849.5 million, of which the external debt amounted to UAH 1 373 182.8 million, internal UAH 758 666.7 million) [Derzhavnyi borh Ukrainy 2019]. Such a sharp increase is largely explained by the loss of economic potential of the annexed Crimea and the occupied Donbas, the need for additional expenditures on the Ukrainian Armed Forces, the devaluation of the national currency, the costs of maintaining the banking system and the fact that the largest payments to the IMF and holders of government bonds in 2015 –2016 were for loans received as early as in 2008–2010.

CONCLUSION

In these circumstances, the slowness and inconsistency of reforms that could have solved these problems and ensured sustainable, effective economic development of the country and the improvement of quality and standards of living, on the one hand, led to the emergence in society of fatigue and apathy from the constant expectation of quick and correct steps towards economic recovery and, on the other hand, led to a radicalisation of public views, judgments and demands. That is why, according to experts of the National Institute for Strategic Studies of the NAS of Ukraine, "if earlier public requested to change the economic model of development, now it is worth mentioning the public demand for its modernisation" [Analitychna dopovid 2016: 245]. Therefore, the economy of Ukraine in the period of 2014-2019, after a serious recession in 2014-2015, began to show gradual recovery since 2016. However, the pace of economic indicators improvement is rather slow, which requires an accelerated transition of the Ukrainian economy to a new innovative model of development/ management which would be based on: a forced transition to a new technological method of production; the modernisation of fixed assets and the technological base; a reduction in the share of primary production sectors and the growth of the services

sector; a comprehensive support for technical and technological innovation; ensuring the priority development of higher technological structures; stimulating the development of high-tech industries; the introduction of resource- and energy-saving technologies; the diversification of energy supply sources and energy-related technologies; the removing of obstacles for the development of domestic business, supporting and stimulating its economic activity especially with regard to small and medium-sized enterprises and reducing inter-sectoral and inter-regional disparities.

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REFORMING THE INSTITUTE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT: CURRENT POLISH AND UKRAINIAN CASES

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Abstract

The process of decentralisation and reform of local government in contemporary Ukraine are explored on the basis of Polish experience, from the introduction of local government institutions in the political practice of Poland and Ukraine to the present day. The aim of the article is to identify problems, unresolved issues, possible risks and prospects for further decentralisation and local government reform in Ukraine, taking into account the Polish experience. Such methods as dialectical, historical, systemic, functional, formal-legal, comparative and predictive are used to prove that these countries had roughly the same political and administrative-territorial conditions at the start of reforms but have achieved different results and now meet new specific challenges forcing each country to use the political will of all citizens to continue reforms.

Key words: Decentralisation, Reform, Local Self-Government, Voluntary Territorial Communities' Integration, Political Will

INTRODUCTION

Decentralisation of power implies the creation of an extensive system of local self-government. The success and effectiveness of this project are highly dependent on the quality of the organisation of this process. Local and regional self-government institutions, as a link between the state and civil society in a democracy, are called upon to bring the government closer to the people, to enable the united territorial communities to autonomously solve the tasks they face.

In 2014 Ukraine, having received external guarantees of its democratic development as a result of the government model changing and Ukraine's aspirations for accession to the European Union, started full-scale reforms in all spheres of public life.

Decentralisation and local self-government reforms were given a leading role in the reform system. The Ukrainian reformers during the choosing of a decentralisation model had analysed the positive experience of Denmark, France, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Poland, Slovakia, Latvia and other countries and concluded that the reforms of decentralisation and local self-government in Ukraine would be carried out taking into account the Polish experience.

Five years have already passed since the Revolution of Dignity after which the decentralisation reform received a new impetus for development, so there is a scientific need to study the real status of the decentralisation process and the local self-government institution development in Ukraine in the context of compliance with European criteria and the Polish experience in particular.

The study's source base includes the normative documents of the European Union, Ukraine and Poland, analytical materials and scientific research by Ukrainian and Polish authors on decentralisation and the Ukrainian-Polish experience of reforming local government institutions.

THE INSTITUTE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN POLAND: EVOLUTION AND CURRENT CHALLENGES

The Republic of Poland transformation experience, which was the first among the states of the former Soviet bloc to embark on the path of democratisation, is to some extent the model for post-communist countries. Experts from the Council of Europe have recognised that Poland was considered a model for a number of administrative reforms in Central and Eastern Europe. M. Sakowicz asserts that reforms in Poland have moved in three main directions. "Firstly, they included political changes to create the foundations of a democratic system including individual rights, civic and political liberties. Secondly, reforms refer to economic system aimed at reviving market economy based on private ownership, and thirdly, they focused on the system of government, particularly decentralisation" [Sakowicz 2017:329]. The latter was connected to reforms of public administration, especially local self-government, which is perceived as a constituent of decentralisation and an essential part of the political systems [Decentralisation and local democracy in the World 2009: 316].

Poland has become one of the more decentralised states in Europe. Local governments now control a third of all public expenditures and a remarkable 70% of public investments [Levitas 2017: 23]. At the same time, the discussion does not stop as to what extent this model can be applied to different countries, which are in different specific historical and different specific stages of the transformation process. That is why the Polish success has been chosen to be studied in this paper taking into consideration the Ukrainian case for decentralisation.

The principles laid down for territorial and local government reforms in both Ukraine and Poland were identical and based on the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, namely:

- 1. Recognition of local self-government in national legislation and, if possible, in the Constitution (Article 2).
- 2. The realities of local self-government, which is reflected in the emphasis on the substantial (and not any arbitrarily determined by state) amount of public affairs, regulation and management which are empowered to exercise local self-government (Article 3).
- 3. Local government subordinate legislation, as the capacity of the relevant authorities to regulate and manage local affairs, is solely within the limits of state law (Article 3).
- 4. Defining the nature of local self-government as a public authority acting on behalf of the local population (territorial community) on the one hand (Article 3), and on the other is derived from sovereign state power, since the main powers and functions of local self-government are determined by the Constitution or the law (Part 1, Article 4) [European Charter 2010].

Poland's policy makers saw local government as a functional component of its national system of power. They wanted to make local governments responsible for the wide number of day-to-day public services because they were convinced that this was the only way to ensure that decentralisation was the foundation of a broader state-building strategy.

At the initial stage of reform, both in Ukraine and in the Republic of Poland, the principles of local self-government were revived: autonomy and independence of local electoral bodies within the limits of their powers to resolve issues of local importance; economic and financial independence of the territory; self-financing and self-sufficiency; optimal decentralisation.

Local government reform in Poland was oriented toward fully re-establishing democratic self-government at the municipal level proposing eight requirements for the new system of local government:

- abolition of the constitutional principle of uniform state authority (i.e., local councils should represent the local community only and be released from hierarchical dependencies);
- a new democratic electoral law;
- re-establishment of the municipal legal entity and property rights;

- a stable and controllable system of supplying local budgets, free of arbitrary state administration decisions;
- state interference in local affairs limited to controlling the legality of municipal decisions;
- transfer of state administration to municipal control;
- freedom to establish intercommunal associations; and
- right to juridical appeal against decisions of state administration [Kocon 1991].

Decentralisation in Poland was carried out in two phases. The first in 1990 and the second in 1999.

In the first reform of March 1990, the current status of the municipalities was enshrined in the Law on Municipal Self-Government. In May 1990, the first fully democratic local elections took place for 2500 municipal and communal governments called Gmina, which made them responsible for all the basal metabolic functions of urban life.

To sum up the first years of the transformation it is worth mentioning one of the founding fathers of the Polish 1990 decentralisation reform, Jerzy Regulski, who pointed out that the main challenge of breaking with the centralist heritage of the communist state can be summarised as dealing with five monopolies: the political monopoly of the one party; the monopoly as regards homogeneous state power; the monopoly as regards state property; the monopoly on public finances and, finally, the monopoly on state administration. All of them were stopped [Regulski 2003:208-215]. In the second reform, a legislative package passed in 1998 and in force from 1 January 1999, re-established the districts (powiaty) dissolved in 1975 and created 16 regions (voivodeships) based upon pre-existing similar territorial demarcations. Each territorial sub-State authority is governed by distinct national legislation: the regional authorities (voivodeships) are regulated by the Law on Voivodeship Self-Government; the districts (powiaty), by the Law on Powiat Self-Government; and the municipalities, by the Law on Municipal Self-Government. Warsaw, the capital city is specifically regulated by another ad hoc statute: the Law on the System of the Capital City of Warsaw [Baro Riba & Mangin 2019].

In 2014, Poland was ranked among the "top ten" countries within EU Member States for the level of local autonomy. Polish legislation and its political framework were in compliance with the Charter. This meant that, in general, local and regional democracy in Poland presented an overall acceptable situation from the perspective of the Charter and the Reference Framework for Regional Democracy.

At the present time, there are in Poland 16 voivodeships, 34,380 districts (powiaty) (including 66 cities with powiat status), and 2,478 gminy [Baro Riba & Mangin 2019]. The gminas "grew in size and gradually took ownership of local administration. Note that while powiats "subordinated" gminas and voivoidships "subordinated" powiats, the unit of local governance was gmina. In other words, it was the local community that was an independent unit while powiats and voivoidships were designed to help

gminas to coordinate their activities. In part, this philosophy was reflected in the fact that powiats and voivoidships owned little property and employed few people relative to gminas" [Gorodnichenko & Kim 2014].

Many initiatives promoting new forms of public participation have emerged over the last 30 years. They have proved the transformation from government to governance. As M. Sakowicz mentioned: "The recent reforms of decentralisation have consciously attempted to improve the quality and efficiency of public service delivery and to increase the participation of citizens in public decision-making processes. The key problem is to work on the creation of a true civic society, which proactively engages in the full range of the political processes. Poles are not willing enough to integrate and act on behalf of the common good" [Sakowicz 2017: 350].

The Act on Civil Service (2008) has introduced a new strategic approach to human resource management in the civil service, which should transfer into better functioning of the civil service and the whole public administration in Poland. However, the formation of an apolitical and professional civic service was not immediate, as the administrative reform and its personnel policy. So, there is a necessity to professionalise local government administration by introducing civic service at a local level.

However, there are expectations of a third wave of local and regional government reforms that will be of a «soft» nature and will avoid any organisational changes. Such reforms will include:

- developing and strengthening tools for broader public participation in decision making processes and performing public tasks at both local and regional levels;
- developing and strengthening tools and incentives for intragovernmental cooperation schemes (multi-level governance schemes);
- territorial stabilisation, after more than two decades and hundreds of boundary changes that altered the map of municipalities and counties. This process should lose its impetus once plans are implemented to amend the procedure that governs these transformations [Kulesza & Szescilo 2012].

In 2019 Poland is celebrating the 30-year Anniversary of local government reform and nobody can say that everything is good in this sphere. Unfortunately, in just a few years, the situation has changed significantly. The current conflict between central government (controlled by the PiS) and local government (mainly controlled by the opposition) has demonstrated that the process of re-centralisation of competences, the increase in detailed national regulation aimed at setting standards for local services, and the pervasive supervision over local authorities, all appear to be elements of a larger political struggle that is currently taking place in Poland.

In April 2019 the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities after local government and democracy monitoring in Poland underlines the relatively alarming trends in local and regional democracy in Poland. It notes that the principle of local self-government is recognised both by the Constitution and domestic legislation. However, the recentralisation of certain competences has taken place in a context of conflict

between the central power and local authorities. The Monitoring Commission is concerned about interferences by central authorities in local functions, shortcomings in the consultation process, deterioration of the status of elected representatives and a loss of confidence of local authorities in the judiciary. "National authorities are called to return to the path of decentralisation and genuine local and regional democracy by ensuring that the subsidiary principle is applied in practice and that the supervision over the activity of local authorities is proportional or by reinstating a fair consultation process with local authorities. They also invite the Polish authorities to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority" [Poland: Monitoring Report 2019].

The political parties and civic society representatives agree with such a solution. "We live in a globalised world. Whether we like it or not, many matters must be resolved at the international level; and here the efficient diplomacy of nation-states counts. But as the decisions in various matters move away from the citizens, the principle of subsidiarity, the decentralisation, acquires a new meaning... Why has the centre delegated more and more tasks to the local government for years? Because it knows that they can find practical solutions. However, it is shameful that the authorities are imposing more and more tasks on local governments forgetting to give finances for their implementation" [Przybylski & Wojciuk 2019].

That's why, in light of the foregoing, Congress requests that the Committee of Ministers invite the authorities of Poland to: get back on the path to decentralisation and reverse the trend towards the re-allocation to the State of local and regional competences; avoid overregulation of delegated tasks and thus allow local authorities to have more discretion in adapting their exercise to local conditions; reinstate a fair consultation process with local authorities; make sure that the supervision over the acts of local authorities is proportional to the importance of the interests that it is intended to protect; allocate sufficient financial resources to local authorities; enable local authorities to establish local taxes and to determine their rate to increase fiscal capacity of local authorities; ensure that the adoption of any measures impacting upon the conditions of office of local elected representatives, including their financial remuneration, does not negatively affect their ability to freely exercise their functions; refrain from adopting numerous regulations at the central level that would unnecessarily rigidify local internal administrative structures and make them less adjustable to local conditions; follow the recommendations of the Venice Commission, contained in its opinions on the judiciary in Poland: etc. [Recommendation 431 (2019)].

DECENTRALISATION AND REFORM OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN UKRAINE: THE CURRENT COURSE OF REFORMS

The 1996 Constitution of Independent Ukraine acknowledged the general principles of local self-government (article 140–146), which has been separated from the State Government. These constitutional principles were detailed in the Law on Local Gov-

ernment in Ukraine dated May 21, 1997.

In 1997-2007, the system of local self-government in Ukraine largely retained a decorative character. The political system of the state did not meet the constitutional provisions and the tasks, and the functions of local government were not matched by the material and financial resources [Muzychenko 2007: 166].

Fixed by the Constitution of Ukraine, the systems for the local organisation of power were archaic and inefficient, they did not address the issue of working to European standards and did not ensure the provision of public administrative and social services at the appropriate level. Thus, in 2014, Ukraine proclaimed a plan for the implementation of reforms of the institution of local self-government and decentralisation of the administrative and territorial division of Ukraine. When choosing a foreign experience of conducting such a reform, the experience of Poland was taken as a model, since, in the opinion of the government reformers, its decentralisation model was the most successful and most closely approximate to domestic conditions, and that was exactly the reason why the experience of introducing Polish reforms was considered to be quite suitable for its successful implementation in Ukraine.

However, the Polish experience was not a sufficiently substantiated choice, since the basic administrative, legislative, social and economic conditions for the implementation of the decentralisation reform in Poland and Ukraine are quite different. Experts from the public organisation "European Dialogue" highlight that the Polish decentralisation model is in line with Ukrainian realities and individual differences in the starting conditions and in the reform process in Ukraine and Poland are not fundamental [Yevropeiskyi dialoh 2017].

Moreover, the Polish way of decentralisation is not a "benchmark of impeccability", it also has significant drawbacks. Of course, both in Poland and in Ukraine it is considered that the Polish county is the weakest level of self-government and is not sufficiently secured either with powers or with the appropriate resources. Moreover, there is still a problem of interaction in Poland: on the one hand, between strong gminas and weak counties, and on the other hand, between cities with county status and counties that are situated close by [Savastieieva, Butenko, Zhuravlova & Fic 2019: 406].

Poland was one of the first countries in the world that expressed its willingness to help Ukraine on the path of conducting reforms in local self-government and decentralisation. After the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation in December 2014 to support the reform of local self-government at the level of the Ministry of Regional Development, Construction, Housing and Communal Services of Ukraine, a special advisory group, which included Ukrainian and Polish experts, started its work.

It should be noted that the system of administrative and territorial division of Ukraine is characterised by the following constituent elements:

- "oblast" represents the territorial basis for the functioning of the executive authorities and the regional council, which is a body of local self-government and a rep-

resentative of the interests of the communities that belong to the administrative division;

- "rayon" (region) includes a certain number of communities. In turn, the region is the basis for the functioning of the Regional Council, the local self-government of this level;
- "hromada" (community) includes several settlements, it is the territorial basis for the organisation of local self-government by residents of settlements within the territory of the community.

So, the administrative and territorial division of Ukraine and Poland is similar in structure and consist of three levels, with the communities: "hromadas" in Ukraine and "gminas" in Poland being the basic level of local self-government.

In 2014 the formation of the legislative framework to cover the activities of local self-government bodies and executive authorities on a new territorial basis was completed. Adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on April 1, 2014 the concept of the reform of local self-government and territorial organisation of power in Ukraine defines that the essence of change are: determination based on a territorial basis for the activities of local self-government bodies and executive bodies; creation of appropriate material, financial and organisational conditions to ensure the implementation of local governments own and delegated powers; distribution of powers between the local governments and authorities at various levels of administrative-territorial system on the principles of subsidiarity and decentralisation; maximum involvement of the population to management decision-making, promotion of the development of the forms of direct democracy [Pro skhvalennia Kontseptsii 2014].

The main problem when conducting reforms, as Yu. Kregul ans V. Batrimenko mention, is not to make a choice between decentralisation and centralisation, but to provide the required and appropriate balance between them, which would prove adequate to meet the real socio-economic and political conditions of a particular country. By adopting the Law on Voluntary Association Local Communities from 5 February 2015, parliament opened the way for the beginning of the consolidation of communities capable through their own taxes and fees of ensuring the provision of public and administrative services, which are required by residents of the communities, and to qualitatively perform the delegated state authority with public funds [Kregul ans Batrimenko 2016: 20-21].

During 2015–2017, it was envisaged to carry out the public service delivery unification and standardisation, institutional reorganisation of local self-government bodies and local executive authorities on a new territorial basis, holding local elections, improving the community planning system and other contingencies.

During the first period, a package of decentralisation laws were introduced. Law on Local Self-Government in Ukraine (2014), Law on Cooperation of Territorial Communities (2014), Law on Voluntary Association of Territorial Communities (2015), Law on Principles of State Regional politics (2015) and others were adopted. The Sustain-

able Development Strategy "Ukraine 2020" (2015) became the legal framework for reforms. Its main objective on the issue of decentralisation is "moving away from the centralised model of government in the country, ensuring the capacity of local self-government and creation an effective system of territorial organisation of government in Ukraine, fully implementing the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, the principles of subsidiarity, ubiquity and financial self-sufficiency of the local level of power" [Stratehiia staloho rozvytku 2015].

In 2015 the state power decentralisation and the united territorial community formation through the integration of basic territorial communities (cities, villages, towns) on a voluntary basis began. But at the end of the second period scholars (P. Zhuk, V. Kravtsiv, T. Kuzhda, T. Kulyk, O. Mosiy, O. Novikov, L. Simkov, O. Sorokivska, I. Storonyanska, etc.), Ukrainian and Polish experts (L. Balcerovich, Y. Havrylechko, M. Krat, M. Latsyba, I. Lukerya, M. Svenchitsky, O. Sophia, K. Stanovsky, A. Tkachuk) and Ukrainian citizens as well had recognised the fact that this process had not provided the results of the expected changes. The comparative analysis of the Polish and Ukrainian models of decentralisation conducted by M. Krat and O. Sophia, identified factors that hinder the effective use of the Polish reform experience in Ukraine, namely:

- the principle of voluntariness, which underlies the administrative-territorial reform in Ukraine, does not allow for simultaneous changes (as happened in Poland), which delay the process of decentralisation and cause some disappointment in society and strengthen its opponents;
- there are a significant number of reform management centres at the central level and insufficient management at the regional level (unlike Poland, where the single "reform headquarters" operated), which dramatically reduces the efficiency of the process, the inconsistency of decentralisation reform and sectoral reforms;
- the low efficiency of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine activities towards the adoption of legislative acts on decentralisation;
- a more complicated situation in Ukraine, where two reforms began at the same time
- reform of the administrative-territorial system and reform of local self-government at the basic level (community association) unlike Poland, where the administrative-territorial reform at the gmina level took place in 1970, and local self-government reform in 1990 [Krat M. & Sofia O. 2017: 224–25].

Considering these facts Ukrainian experts have resorted to adjusting the reform policy, drafting new bills, amending the existing legal acts and the Basic Law of Ukraine in particular, but the consideration and adoption of a large part of them by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is rather slow.

In this context it should be noted that a significant problem behind the effective implementation of decentralisation reforms remained "the adoption of bills that regulate the principles of the administrative and territorial structure of Ukraine and establish a subject that will have the authority to make decisions on the level of territorial com-

munities of villages, towns, cities" [Minrehion ta Rada 2019].

In 2019 the newly elected Parliament and the Government have stepped up work to complete the process of creating a new administrative and territorial structure in the country. Thus, in August 2019 the parliamentary committees drafted the bill No. 1187 "On the principles of administrative and territorial organisation" and sent it to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, which was recalled for revision in a week.

In October 2019 the Verkhovna Rada Committee on the Organisation of State Power, Local Self-Government, Regional and Urban Development presented the Concept of Amending the Constitution of Ukraine regarding Decentralisation [Bez raioniv i derzhadministratsii 2019].

These changes imply the introduction of a three-tier system of administrative and territorial structure - community (primary link), district (sub-regional level), region (existing regions and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea). Proposed changes include: local administrations will be eliminated; consolidating an effective local government system by giving local governments broader powers; introduction of the Institute of Prefects in the system of executive power, which will be representatives of state power on the local level; state guarantee of material and financial basis of local self-government. So, similar to Poland, Ukraine is due to introduce a three-tiered administrative-territorial division of the country. Based on the proposals outlined in the Concept the main idea of the constitutional changes is to give local governments broader powers and to bring the controlling role to the state, but not for the sake of control, but for coordination and adjustment.

However, the new Concept does not solve all problems in the modern system of power and local self-government in Ukraine. The position of the Ukrainian Association of Local Self-Government Bodies is that "we consider the decentralisation as irreversible thing, but we do not see any feasible proposals for how to provide it. We also do not see an exclusive self-governmental competence in managing local affairs in different spheres of public life, as well as real and not declaratory provisions regarding local government financial resources. It is necessary to optimise the public authorities supervisory of the local self-government delegated responsibilities under Article 8 of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, and refuse to introduce additional control institutes like prefects" [AMU vyslovyla svoiu pozytsiiu 2019].

Started in 2015, the process of territorial communities' unification (UGCs) has received a positive dynamic in Ukraine. According to the Monitoring, in 2015 without taking into account the temporarily occupied territories, Crimea and Sevastopol, 159 UGCs were formed; in 2016 - 366; in 2017 – 665. In October 2019, there were already 975 united communities - out of 1,356 UGCs added to existing forward-looking plans [Monitorynh protsesu detsentralizatsii 2019a].

The territory of the formed UGS is more than one third (41.8%) of the total area of Ukraine. Such communities are home to more than 10.4 million people (29.5% of the total population of Ukraine). The average number of territorial communities united

into one UGS is 4.6, and the average population of one UGS is about 10 650 people. The largest share of UGS residents is in Zhytomyr (69% of the total population of the region), Sumy (66.33%) and Ternopil (61.36%) regions [Monitorynh protsesu detsentralizatsii 2019b].

A big challenge in the unification and functioning of territorial communities is the lack of proper support and sometimes even local administrative and political elite's resistance due to fears of authority loss as well as their ability to regulate financial flows and influence on the community in decision-making. On the other hand, recognising the need to integrate with cities, the territorial communities of villages have expressed reasonable fears that they cannot have their own budget and big urban municipalities will not pay attention to their problems [Stvorennia obiednanykh terytorialnykh hromad 2018: 10].

There is one more challenge for some territories - the natural-geographical particularities and the character of permanent residence of the active part of this territory's population, who are the main initiators of voluntary association. For example, Transcarpathia, which is an area combining mountainous and flat terrain thus making it difficult to clearly define the criteria for community unification. Furthermore, it borders with Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania, which are EU members.

The sustainable economic development of these countries, the new job opportunities and, at the same time, their vacancies because of the citizens' migration into Western European countries with advanced economic development, have become attractive to Ukrainians due to the prospective labour market. Vyshlinsky mentions that the unmet demand caused the opening of the Polish labour market to Ukrainians [Ukrainska pravda 2019].

According to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, as of the end of 2018, there are 3,200,000 Ukrainian migrant workers permanently abroad. At the same time, this figure is not constant, because there are those who live there permanently and those who come and go. And on average, 7 to 9 million people a year are involved in this moving migration process [Do uvahy ZMI 2018]. Polish experience on attracting foreign labour migrants to the place of those who have left the country can be the way to solve this problem in Ukraine. But the next problem is appearing. Ukraine must offer them favourable conditions, create more productive jobs and be competitive by infusing domestic and foreign investment into the country's infrastructure. However, there are several risks for investors in the country: inefficient public administration, imperfect legal framework, incomplete nature of reforms, "shadowing" of the national economy, corruption, business and politics spillovers, conflict in the East, etc.

On the other hand, the Polish experience can exacerbate an already existing tendency in Ukrainian society, namely, to bring about the consequences of modern Poland - the integration of citizens into countries with advanced economic development. It is necessary to develop the country's infrastructure for its citizens first, to motivate and involve them in the process of reforming local self-government and decentralisation.

The issue of local identity in the context of community unification deserves special attention. Among the important factors influencing the local identity formation it is worthwhile mentioning a stable balanced economy with high productivity, high standard of living, balanced relations between the state and civil society, social consolidation and more.

To form a new basis for the united community's identity the decentralisation reform in Ukraine should ensure the following main tasks:

- to achieve cohesion of communities around the territorial development priority goals;
- to build the "institutional ecosystems of communities" as a basis for social capital revival;
- to optimise and diversify the structure of community economies;
- to deep the capitalisation of community potentials;
- to introduce an adaptive strategic planning model with the key community stakeholders' involvement;
- to realise the potential of inter-territorial cooperation;
- to correlate the community development with national sectoral and regional development strategies [Zhalilo 2019: 77].

The further success of identity formation processes will largely depend on the establishment of partnerships between voluntary associations and between them and public authorities on the principles of mutual trust and responsibility; human rights; support and protection of territorial communities' rights and interests; enhancing the welfare of their members to European development standards.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the Polish and Ukrainian experience of decentralisation and reform of the institution of local self-government makes it possible to conclude that there are certain general trends, as well as some discrepancies in implementing reforms in every country.

First, it is necessary to point out the commonality of the starting positions for local self-government reforms in Ukraine and Poland. Their political and legal basis were the European Charter of Local Self-Government provisions and the desire of both states to democratise the country by giving the right of self-government to local communities. Each country has achieved this goal in several stages, gradually deepening decentralisation and financially strengthening local communities and their authorities. But the results are different.

The main reason for the differences between the reform results is the political will of the authorities, politicians and the entire population to democratise the political process and follow European standards of governance. The presence of political will fueled by the European Union membership at the start of reforms in Poland made it possible to create a new three-tier administrative-territorial structure and sufficient local self-government system that meets the European Union requirements and al-

lowed us to speak about the Polish experience of reforms as one of the most revealing and successful in Europe. The lack of political will to develop local self-government has also determined the main reason for reforms stalling in Ukraine. Only after the Revolution of Dignity and the coming to power of the new leadership team did the process shift. At present, the success of further reforms and the autonomy of local self-government depends on the political will of politicians and locals. For Ukraine a combined political will is necessary for the creation of local self-government institutions, but for Poland it is urgent to preserve the results of decentralisation and not allow the rollback back to centralisation.

Guided by the results obtained during the study, we consider it appropriate to formulate the following recommendations to accelerate the process of decentralisation in Ukraine:

- to adopt the Law on the administrative-territorial administration;
- to carry out budgetary decentralisation, in which local governments should be provided with sufficient financial resources and adjust the tax system by increasing the share of tax revenues in local budgets;
- complete the process of creating united territorial communities and establish a new administrative and territorial structure of Ukraine, etc.

Based on common values and the interests of both countries Ukraine looks to further cooperation with its Polish counterparts in the exchange of experience in decentralisation and reforms of local self-government, and to establish partnerships as well as to develop mutually beneficial relations with other countries.

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THE PROBLEM OF LEGAL REGULATION OF THE SECURITY OF A PERSON, SOCIETY, STATE IN THE FORMATION OF THE INFORMATION SOCIETY IN UKRAINE

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Abstract

In this article a scientific hypothesis is proposed, dividing the subject of legal regulation of the security of a person, society and state into three components: information security, the security of information with limited access and cybersecurity. Legal regulation that relates to the field of information security is aimed at the following: creating a legal framework to provide security for information with limited access, as well as providing access to necessary information, etc. Making regulations to provide cybersecurity involves the detection of, prevention of and counteraction against real and potential threats to parts of the critical information infrastructure. While ensuring the information security of a person, society and state, the dispositive method of legal regulation predominates. However, in this study, we discovered a need to imperatively strengthen the security of a person, society and state by creating new legislation to make, in some cases, the spread of disinformation a criminal offence. Legal regulation of the security of restricted information is carried out using the imperative method of legal regulation, and the dispositive method of legal regulation in the circulation of information with limited access is applied when collecting and disseminating necessary information publicly. Providing cybersecurity in the public domain is done by the imperative method of legal regulation, although for the regulation of public-private partnership issues, it is concluded that there is a need for an exclusively dispositive method of legal regulation.

Key words: Information Security, Cybersecurity, the Security of Rstricted Information, Legal Regulation, Method, Information Law

INTRODUCTION.

One of the principles of information society development in Ukraine is free access to information and knowledge, except for the restrictions established by law. Our state declares and adheres to the constitutional principles of freedom of speech and the right to have free access to information.

The subject of regulation of information law involves the circulation of information, in particular, its creation, reception, collection, storage, protection, usage, dissemination, etc. The relevant sources of information law are the Laws of Ukraine "On Information", "On Access to Public Information", "On Public Appeals", "On Printed Media (Press) in Ukraine", "On Television and Radio Broadcasting", "On Information Agencies", "On the National Archive Fund and Archives", "On Libraries and Librarianship", "On State Statistics", "On State Secrets", "On Access to Judicial Decisions", "On Electronic Documents and Electronic Documents Circulation", "On Protection of Information in Automated Systems", "On Cinematography", "On Scientific and Technical Information", "On the National Informatisation Program", "On Mandatory Copy of Documents", "On the Procedure for Covering Activities of Bodies of State Power and Local Self-Government by Mass Media in Ukraine", "On Advertising", "On the System of Public Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine" and "On Main Principles of Maintaining Cybersecurity of Ukraine", etc.

Most legal studies refer to the classical methods of legal regulation: the dispositive and imperative methods. R. A. Kaliuzhnyi and A. H. Martseniuk (2008) updated the

discussion on the subject and methods of information law. A team of scientists led by M. Ya. Shvets, R. A. Kaliuzhnyi, and V. P. Melnyk (2009) attempted to systematise the information law of Ukraine on a single methodological basis. The methodological foundations of information law in Ukraine were also presented by A. Marushchak (2011).

It was I. V. Panova (2011) who laid the foundation for research that would help develop the information law system of Ukraine. In her works, L. P. Kovalenko (2014) proposes considering, as a means of creating information law, the possibility of using all the methods of influencing public relationships already fixed in the norms of this field. Their use would make it possible to create the proper environment for the realisation and protection of citizens' rights in the information sphere and normal functioning of the information society. However, these authors do not dwell on the exact means of applying such techniques in the modern information society.

METHODS

This study employed the theoretical methods of analysis, synthesis and comparison. In particular, it involved an analysis of domestic legislation, as well as an examination of the initiatives of the European Union in the information sphere, aimed at controlling relevant matters to ensure the security of a person, society and state. The comparative legal method was used when conducting a comparative study of Ukrainian and European legislation.

Analysis of the empirical foundations of the study, namely the regulative acts of Ukraine, the practice of the relevant public authorities, scientific papers, etc. provided an opportunity to formulate a research hypothesis. Regarding the problem of the protection of legal regulation of the security of a person, society, state in the formation of the information society in Ukraine, we also set up a provisional hypothesis that the normalisation of public relationships in the information sphere depends on the types of information and legal status of the entities entering into legal relationships.

The main methodological approach to the study of legal regulation of security of the individual, society, state in the formation of the information society in Ukraine has been based on the fact that current public information matters are gaining further development compared to paper resources. Among them are the new types of relationships, including information (digitalisation) of public life, activities in the field of telecommunications, state policy in the field of electronic communications and radio frequency spectrum, geospatial data, etc.

Considering the above, both theoretical and practical problems were solved at each stage of research on the basis of the theory of cognition by applying the dialectical method of studying reality in its contradictions, integrity and development. The use of the dialectical method in this study has determined the disclosure of phenomena and processes that occur in the information sphere, in their movement, development and change. This method has revealed the causal relationships, shortcomings and

inconsistencies of legal regulation. The issues of improving the legal regulation of various cooperation types arising in relation to the security of the individual, society, state in Ukraine have been revealed with the use of the legal analogies method.

With the use of these methods, we have revealed patterns and positive and negative experiences of relevant information activities. The set of these methods has given the opportunity to achieve the goal of the study, solving the problem of formulating the content and features of the basic concepts and determining the nature of the legal regulation of certain security matters. In particular, we have introduced in Ukraine the organisational and legal mechanisms aimed at forming an effective cyber security system in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On Basic Principles of Cyber Security of Ukraine"; raised the issue of human rights and established grounds for their restriction only in accordance with law and in exceptional cases. It has been determined that such cases should include the fight against terrorism in cyberspace, such as disruptions in the operation of process control information systems in critical infrastructure. That is why the formulation of long-term legislation in order to improve the protection of the interests of the individual, society and the state in Ukraine should take into account international democratic standards in this area, in particular the requirements of the Convention on Cybercrime.

In this study, the works of specialists in the field of information law were analysed, first of all, the work of L. P. Kovalenko (2014) on this subject and the methods used for determining the information law of Ukraine. Using the method of system synthesis, the definitions given by him were compared with the provisions of the legislation of Ukraine, revealing the specific properties of legal regulation for the security of a person, society and state in Ukraine.

The work of I. Panova on the tendencies in the development of the information law system of Ukraine was also investigated in detail, taking into account the subject of this paper (Panova, 2011). To compare the domestic experience of legal regulation with European approaches, the works of D. Frau-Meigs, B. O'Neil, V. Tome, A. Soriano (2017) on digital citizenship education and C. Wardle and H. Derakhshan (2017) on information disorder were considered.

In the course of this study, national and international legal acts were developed, among which are important acts such as the Convention on Cybercrime of the Council of Europe¹, the Law of Ukraine "On the Basic Principles for the Development of an Information-Oriented Society in Ukraine for 2007–2015"², the Law of Ukraine "On State Secrets"³, the Law of Ukraine "On Information"⁴, as well as other regulatory legal acts.

¹ Conventions of Council of Europe about Cybercrime from Nov. 21, 2011 (2011). [E-Resource]. Available at: http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994_575.

² Main Foundations for Development of Informational Society in Ukraine for 2007-2015 (2007). Bulletin of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 12. P. 102.

³ Law of Ukraine "On State Secret" from April 19, 1994. Bulletin of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 16. P. 93.

⁴ Law of Ukraine "On Information" from December 01, 1992. Bulletin of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 48. P. 650.

DISCUSSION

1. A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE SUBJECT OF THE LEGAL REGULATION OF THE PROBLEM OF INFORMATION SECURITY

In the face of external aggression against Ukraine, there arises a scientific and practical problem of how to define the boundaries of the regulation of the issues regarding the security of a person, society, and state in the information sphere. Calling the subject of our research «the security of a person, society and state in the information sphere» was chosen not by chance, but with the following considerations in mind. Firstly, recent legislation of Ukraine is moving towards a distinction between «information security» and «cybersecurity». This is not simply the inherent classical approach used to provide the security of restricted information.

The definition of «information security», as expressed in the Law of Ukraine "On the Basic Principles for the Development of an Information-Oriented Society in Ukraine for 2007–2015", is all-encompassing, as it was considered a way to protect the vital interests of a person, society and state from harm which can be inflicted by:

the use of incomplete, untimely and untrue information;

the impact of negative information;

the negative effects that can be produced using information technology;

the unauthorised dissemination or use of information, as well as taking information out of context, disclosing confidential information or depriving access to information. These things have been prevented.⁵ In 2007, a definition of «information security» included the issues of information security (information resources), the security of information space and the security of the functioning of the information and telecommunication infrastructure [Marushchak, 2013].

Today, however, the concept of "information security" acquires another, narrower meaning. Having analysed, for example, item 4.11 of the National Security Strategy of Ukraine, regarding the priorities of providing information security, we understand that it concerns "the counteraction to information operations against Ukraine, used to manipulate public consciousness and disseminate distorted information, as well as to protect national values and strengthen the unity of Ukrainian society. It also involves the development and implementation of coordinated information policies of public authorities, the identification of Ukrainian information space entities created and/or used by Russia to wage an information war against Ukraine, as well as the creation and development of institutions responsible for information and psychological security, taking into account the practices of NATO member states", etc. (Shvets et al., 2009) Thus, information security covers the processes and communication that take place in the information space of the state. A similar approach is utilised in the Doctrine of Information Security of Ukraine, which defines Ukraine's national interests in

⁵ Main Foundations for Development of Informational Society in Ukraine for 2007-2015 (2007). Bulletin of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 12. P. 102.

the information field, threats to their fulfilment, and the directions and priorities of state policy in the information sphere. After all, the priorities of the state policy in the information sphere are determined in the Doctrine by ensuring the protection and development of the information space of Ukraine, as well as the constitutional right of citizens to information; the openness and transparency of the state to the citizens; and the formation of a positive international image of Ukraine.⁶

Given such «narrowing» of the concept of «information security», as well as the position of scientists on the problem of security in information flow (Kravets V. M, Petrov V. V, Laputina Yu. A., Tkachuk T. Yu.) we assume the scientific hypothesis that the security of a person, society, and state in the information sphere should be defined as a type of national security, and the relevant public relationships as a subject of legal regulation is conditionally divided into three components: information security, the security of restricted information (hereinafter referred to as RI), and cybersecurity. In determining the methods of legal regulation of the security of a person, society, and state in the information sphere, it is necessary to take into account the conceptual difference between the regulation of communication in information security (where a decisive factor is the counteraction of the influence of negative information), the circulation of RI (which requires clear regulation of the procedures for creating an appropriate organisational-determining mode and access rights) and cybersecurity (which is related to the timely detection, prevention and neutralisation of real and potential threats to critical information infrastructure).

2. METHODS OF LEGAL REGULATION OF INFORMATION SECURITY OF A PERSON, SOCIETY, STATE

Today, much of the information confrontation takes place precisely in the information space, where disinformation processes are increasingly influencing the security of a person, society and state. For example, the expediency of legal regulation of communication within social networks for a long time did not even emerge as a relevant problem in the field of law, due to the existence of the democratic concept of free circulation of information and the possibility of its free dissemination by any means and in any way.

Currently, the negative effects of such dispositive regulation are detrimental to the interests of a person, society and state, for example, the spread of the New Zealand massacre video, the use of social media to overthrow the constitutional order and calls for violence, etc. The nature of the development of information flow has given rise to scientific controversy over the need for the legal regulation of communication in social networks, in particular regarding the dissemination of harmful information. There are already objective reasons for this, as well as the willingness of executives to regulate Internet interactions. In particular, at the end of March 2019, M. Zuckerberg

⁶ Strategy of National Security of Ukraine (2015). Decree of President of Ukraine on May 26, 2015 #287/2015 "On Decision of Council of National Security and Defence of Ukraine from May 6, 2015 "On Strategy of National Security of Ukraine". Official Bulletin of Ukraine, 43. P. 1353.

stated the need for state regulation of such activities to counteract the spread of harmful content, to guarantee fair elections, and to protect citizens' personal data, as well as the possibility of transferring data between services.⁷

It is also worth noting that the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine and Facebook representatives discussed cooperation in the field of information security on January 23, 2019. The result of the meeting was that Facebook limited political advertisements for Ukrainian users during elections (from February 1, 2019) Namely, to prevent external interference, the placing of campaign ads from abroad was forbidden [Zuckerberg, 2019].

Similar trends in the regulation of information security issues during the elections are also observed in the European Union. For example, in late February 2019, the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) developed recommendations to improve cybersecurity (a term used presumably as a type of information security author's note) of elections. In particular, EU Member States are advised to improve national legislation in order to address the problems of Internet disinformation while respecting the fundamental rights of EU citizens. In particular, it has been proposed that the following be introduced into national legal systems: possibilities for the identification and blocking of botnets, the strengthening of the regulation of digital service providers, social media, online platforms and providers of messaging at the EU level, the deployment of unusual traffic detection technologies by the abovementioned entities, and the consolidation of legal Member States' commitment to classifying election infrastructure as critical. It was also proposed that political parties ensure a high level of cybersecurity in their systems, processes and infrastructures.8 In recent years, EU Member States have been paying particular attention to countering the disinformation of society, defining it as "any form of verifiably false or misleading information that is created, presented and disseminated for economic gain or to intentionally deceive the public, and may cause public harm". In January 2018, the European Commission set up a high-level group of experts (HLEG) to develop proposals to counter this illegal phenomenon. The HLEG recommends in its report that the European Commission should not apply restrictive measures that would affect freedom of speech and the right to information. At the same time, it indicates the need to comply with the following measures to counter disinformation spread online: to improve the transparency of news media by implementing adequate systems of information dissemination to ensure the protection of personal data;

to entrench media and information literacy to tackle disinformation and help citizens use the digital media environment;

⁷ Doctrine of Informational Security of Ukraine (2017). Decree of President of Ukraine on February 25, 2017 #47/2017 "On Decision of Council of National Security and Defence of Ukraine from December 29, 2016 "On Doctrine of Informational Security of Ukraine". Official Bulletin of Ukraine, 20. P. 554.

⁸ MIP and Facebook discussed counteraction to intrusion to electoral processes (2019). [E-Resource]. Available at: https://mip.gov.ua/news/2917.html.

⁹ ENISA makes recommendations on EU-wide election cybersecurity (2019). [E-Resource]. Available at: http://www.enisa.europa.eu.

to bring into use technical tools for users and journalists to identify disinformation and facilitate positive engagement with rapidly evolving information technologies; to promote diversity and the sustainability of the European media ecosystem; 5) to continue research on the effects of disinformation in Europe to develop measures for various bodies with continuous improvement in the proper response. ¹⁰ As is evident, in 2018, experts, including scholars, proposed "soft" dispositive legal solutions to counter the threat of disinformation to the information security of a person, society and state. In February 2019, ENISA, in its recommendations (which are mainly dispositive and aimed at information security issues during elections), suggests introducing peremptory norms to prevent negative consequences for a person, society and state.

Now, the problem of EU citizens' exposure to wide-reaching disinformation is even more of a serious challenge than it was before. Since 2018, large companies and networks, operating within the EU, have joined the Code of Practice on disinformation (Facebook, Twitter, Mozilla, Google, Microsoft, etc.). The Code of Practice is the first initiative where platforms and advertisers have voluntary agreed to self-regulatory standards to combat disinformation. The main goal is to achieve the objectives set out by the Commission's Communication presented in April 2018. To achieve the goal, all platforms that have agreed to follow the Code have to become transparent in political advertising, close fake accounts and demonetise disinformation providers. Signatories of the Code of Practice are also working on limiting COVID-19 disinformation and produce regular reports on this issue as well. The EU Commission is going to issue a guidance to intensify the efficiency of the Code of Practice in spring 2021. The European Digital Media Observatory funded by CEF is a new project and it is also aimed at combatting disinformation and fact-checking.¹¹ Another initiative that function within the EU is the StratCom task force. It has a distinctive platform for the monitoring and analysis of data, and for communication. The main goal is to monitor and combat misinformation, disinformation, and influence operations mainly originating from the Russian Federation. The EU is planning to extend the initiative to other regions and cover more strategically important countries [Pamment, 2020]. It should also be noted that disinformation is not currently classified as an offence in the information field. This is due to the construction of legal systems based on the principles of freedom of expression and right to information. However, given the socially negative consequences of disinformation, a bill has already been registered in Ukraine that provides for legal liability for this type of information offence in order to "protect a person's constitutional rights to honour, dignity and business reputation by *Ppreventing the dissemination of inaccurate information in the mass media.*"¹² Ukraine

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Tackling online disinformation. (2020) **European Commission.** [E-Resource]. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/tackling-online-disinformation

¹² European Commission (2018). A multi-dimensional approach to disinformation: Report of the independent High-level Group on fake news and online disinformation. European Commission. Tackling Online Disinformation: A European Approach". COM 236. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/

is not the only country to implement such a bill. For example, in 2019 the Albanian parliament passed a new anti-defamation bill aimed at the criminalisation of disinformation. That bill allows the government to fine the media for publishing false information. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the government also implemented similar rules designed to combat disinformation (mainly related to COVID-19) and fake news in 2020 [Greene et al., 2020]. In the end of 2020, Poland also implemented a new bill, which, however, was aimed at combating censorship and allows filing a complaint against social media platforms that censor posts, which do not meet with Polish law. In the UK, the parliament is going to implement a 2021 Online Safety Bill aimed at protecting users from harmful content online, naming cyber bullying and disinformation as harmful content [Calagui, 2020]. In Germany, the Network Enforcement Act was passed in 2017. It is aimed at removing posts that include mis-, dis-, and mal-information. France, likewise, implemented a bill against the manipulation of information in 2018. This law allows the removing of fake information on social media websites and even blocking those sites. The bill also forces social media platforms to produce financial transparency reports on sponsoring content published before elections. In 2020, Taiwan also implemented a similar bill, aimed at preventing foreign forces from interfering in the internal affairs of the country. The bill prohibits political campaigns carried out with the support of foreign forces. It also designed to prevent the spreading of mis- and disinformation [Nagasako, 2020].

Objectively, civil society actors are against criminal responsibility for the spread of false information in the media and the Internet. For example, the FreeNet Ukraine Coalition emphasises the inadmissibility of introducing criminal liability for the media and persons who publicly disseminate their ideas and information, as "such legislative initiatives can be a dangerous tool for censorship and pressure on independent media". Such bills are usually highly criticised by international organisations, domestic NGOs and human rights activists. For example, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe warned Ukraine over the bill aimed at tackling disinformation, stating that it can cause various violations of human rights and could create a risk to freedom of speech ¹⁴.

Summing up what is stated in this part of the work, we note that in ensuring the information security of a person, society and state, the dispositive method of legal regulation predominates, since the processes of circulation of mainly open information are regulated and there is a requirement to observe the constitutional principles of freedom of speech and the right to information. Participants in such interactions exercise the freedom to choose forms and methods of obtaining and disseminating information. However, in this direction we propose the prospective strengthening of

dae/document.cfm?doc_id=51804.

¹³ Project of Law on introduction of changes to certain leagislative acts of Ukraine about preventing distribution of false information in mass media #10139 from March 12, 2019. Available at: http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc34?id=&pf3511=65657&pf35401=479177

¹⁴ OSCE warns Ukraine over disinformation bill, from Feb. 6, 2020. **Euractiv**. [E-Resource]. Available at: https://www.euractiv.com/section/europe-s-east/news/osce-warns-ukraine-over-disinformation-bill/

the imperative settlement of issues for ensuring the security of the individual, society and the state, and also propose making the spread of disinformation a type of legal offence.

3. METHODS OF LEGAL REGULATION OF THE CIRCULATION OF RESTRICTED INFORMATION

When regulating the security of RI, it is preferable to use the imperative method of legal regulation, since it concerns mostly the protection of the right to such information. Examples of the application of the imperative method of legal regulation are most clearly traced in the formation of regimes for the protection of state secrecy, personal data, bank secrecy, and trade secrecy. For example, the regime of protection of state secrecy implies a citizen signing a written obligation to keep a state secret, which will be entrusted to him as a necessary condition for granting admission to such secrecy¹⁵ or imposes on the citizen additional duties to keep the state secret, namely:

not to allow the disclosure of state secrets that are entrusted to him or became known in connection with the performance of official duties;

not to participate in the activities of political parties and public organisations whose activities are prohibited in the manner prescribed by law;

not to assist foreign states, foreign organisations or their representatives, as well as individual foreigners and stateless persons in carrying out activities detrimental to the interests of the national security of Ukraine;

to comply with the requirements of the secrecy order, etc.¹⁶

In the European Union, restricted information is one of the types of classified information. In most cases, this type of information is the least classified one and indicates the information that is contrary to the interests of the organisation and/or its members¹⁷.

Domestic legislation contains a global democratic approach to the existence of RI in terms of the possibility of its dissemination (RI) if such information is "socially necessary, that is, a subject of public interest and the public's right to know this information outweighs the potential harm from its spread". ¹⁸ Moreover, the subject of public interest is considered to be the information that indicates:

a threat to the state sovereignty or the territorial integrity of Ukraine;

the implementation of constitutional rights, freedoms and duties;

a possibility of human rights violation;

deception of the public;

¹⁵ Law of Ukraine "On State Secret" from April 19, 1994. Bulletin of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 16. P. 93.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Guidance Guidelines for the classification of information in research project, from Jan. 7, 2020. European Commission. [E-Resource]. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/secur/h2020-hi-guide-classif_en.pdf

¹⁸ Law of Ukraine "On Information" from December 01, 1992. Bulletin of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 48. P. 650.

harmful negative consequences of the activity (or inactivity) of individuals or legal entities, etc.¹⁹

Such norms are the result of the use of the dispositive method of legal regulation in the circulation of RI, that is used by journalists and other entities to conduct journalistic investigations in the modern information society.

4. METHODS OF LEGAL REGULATION OF CYBERSECURITY

In contrast to the definition of «information security», which, as noted, is somewhat outdated and does not objectively correspond to the current activities and realities of legal regulation, a rather progressive definition of the term «cybersecurity» is utilised in Ukraine - it is the protection of vital interests of a person and citizen, society and state through the use of cyberspace, which ensures sustainable development of the information society and digital communication environment, timely detection, prevention and counteraction to real and potential threats to the national security of Ukraine in cyberspace.²⁰

The Law of Ukraine of 05.10.2017 "On the Main Principles of Maintaining Cybersecurity of Ukraine" has expanded the understanding of the term "cybercrime (computer crime)", which is defined as a socially dangerous act in cyberspace which is recognised as a legal crime by Ukrainian law and/or by Ukrainian international treaties. We draw attention to the fact that, given the general "imperativeness" of the Law, there is a dispositivity in referring to cybercrimes not only as "classical", namely, as provided for in Section XVI of the Criminal Code of Ukraine "Crimes in the field of the use of electronic computers (computers), systems and computer networks and telecommunication networks," but also when designating other public threats using cyberspace to carry out cybercrimes. With the development of information technology, the list of such crimes will increase steadily, as today there remain fewer crimes perpetrated without the use of the Internet. The list of historically known criminal offences of phishing, carding and in banking fraud (payment) systems will expand. It should be noted that the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime ratified by Ukraine on November 21st, 2001 (hereinafter - the Convention) is aimed at increasing the efficiency of criminal investigations and prosecutions related to criminal offences involving computer systems and data, and at the possibility of the collection of electronic crime-related evidence.²¹ Fifty-six countries have joined the Convention: EU members as well as the USA, Japan, Australia, Argentina, Chile, Senegal, Ukraine and others. In 2016, a representative of the Security Service of Ukraine was elected to the governing body of the Committee - the Bureau of the Committee of the Convention.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Analysis of Project of Law #10139 on introduction of changes to certain leagislative acts of Ukraine about preventing distribution of false information in mass media Available at: https://medium.com/@cyberlabukraine/аналіз-законопроекту-10139-щодо-запобігання-розповсюдженню-недостовірних-відомостей-у-змі-c27dcce53d06.

²¹ Conventions of Council of Europe about Cybercrime from Nov. 21, 2011 (2011). [E-Resource]. Available at: http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994_575.

Predominantly by utilising the imperative method of legal regulation, the Convention focuses on combatting cybercrime as the greatest threat to cybersecurity - that is, to the vital interests of a person and citizen, society and state in cyberspace.

The principles of the Convention regarding the promptness of executing requests for the preservation of electronic evidence and providing answers to requests for legal assistance by national ISPs, etc. are based on imperativeness.

The EU has three Cybersecurity strategies, with the last one recently being implemented. The first two strategies resulted in regulations, namely the Network and Information Security Directive and the Cybersecurity Act, which explains the role of the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA). Many legal measures regarding cybersecurity are stated in directives (e.g. the NIS Directive and the Directive on Attacks against Information Systems). In practice, this means that "Member States are free to choose the form and methods to implement requirements stemming from such directives." (Fuster & Jasmontaite, 2020) The EU's Cybersecurity Strategy for the Digital Decade (Joint Communication - the third strategy) was presented on 16th of December in 2020 by the European Commission. This strategy will improve the EU's resilience against cyber threats and help with solving cybercrimes. Moreover, the Commission has made proposals "to address both cyber and physical resilience of critical entities and networks: a Directive on measures for high common level of cybersecurity across the Union (revised NIS Directive or 'NIS 2'), and a new Directive on the resilience of critical entities." These directives influence a broad spectrum of sectors and address "online and offline risks, from cyberattacks to crime or natural disasters, in a coherent and complementary way." The sphere of cybersecurity became an even more urgent priority for the EU in recent years and it is also included in the EU's long-term budget 2021-2027. Moreover, during the COVID-19 pandemic the number of cybercrimes and cyberattacks has increased, hence the EU has invested further in cybersecurity under the Recovery Plan for Europe. The key pillars of the new strategy are resilience, operational capacity and advancing cyberspace.²²

The new strategy also indicates the EU lacks collective awareness of cyber threats. That is because the governments of the EU member countries do not gather and disseminate information about cybersecurity and its current level in the EU. The EU's new Cybersecurity Strategy for the Digital Decade is a core element of many other of the EU's key documents in various areas of foreign and security policies. For example, it is directly connected to such document as the Security Union Strategy 2020-2025, Shaping Europe's Digital Future, the Commission's Recovery Plan for Europe, and the Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy. The strategy demonstrates the way the EU's cybersecurity network works and it also shows the aim of becoming an international leader in securing the safety of an open Internet and cyber networks. The information security area is the most important part of the strategy

²² New EU Cybersecurity Strategy and new rules to make physical and digital critical entities more resilient, from Dec. 16, 2020. European Commission. [E-Resource]. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_2391

and the EU has made a great step forward towards better understanding of cyber threats, their detection, prevention and towards better protection of classified information and sensitive unclassified information within the EU. The implementation of this strategy will contribute to the strengthening of the EU's cybersecurity sphere and its position worldwide. Moreover, the EU should also improve its rules and standards for "cybersecurity for essential services and critical infrastructures, as well as the development and application of new technologies." The Commission and the High Representative, in accordance with their separate competences, will review progress under this strategy and create rules for assessment. The Commission and the High Representative will also continue to classify practical measures to bridge the four cybersecurity communities in the EU, where necessary. Furthermore, the Commission and the High Representative will carry on with engaging with the multi-stakeholder community, underlining everyone's commitment to play their part in maintaining a reliable and protected cyberspace, where each person can operate safely ²³.

European and world practice shows that public-private partnership is an integral part of law enforcement action in the field of cybercrime. The settlement of these relationships, both in the context of crime and in the context of cybersecurity, should be addressed with due regard to the rights and interests of stakeholders. In this context, it is advisable to create a basis for cooperation by signing a Memorandum of Understanding between ISPs and the Ukrainian law enforcement agencies. Ultimately, domestic practice confirms that imperative decisions are not properly implemented. For example, the NSDC decision of April 28, 2017 "On Application of Personal Special Economic and Other Restrictive Measures (Sanctions)", enacted by Presidential Decree No. 133 of May 15, 2017, on the provision of information security and cybersecurity, requires the development and introduction of a mechanism for blocking information resources by operators and providers through their telecommunication and data telecommunications network.

However, it is known that the Draft Law on amendments to certain legislative acts of Ukraine on countering national security threats in the information sphere, which envisaged the creation of mechanisms aimed at prompt detection, response, aversion, prevention, and counteraction of cyber threats, cyber-attacks and cybercrime and the restoration of the stability and reliability of the functioning of communication and technological systems, has not yet become law. This was largely due to a lack of proper public discussion of the relevant mechanisms (the existence of which, during hybrid aggression against Ukraine is, in most cases, justified) as well as the lack of a basis for effective public-private partnerships. It should be noted that in this respect the Situational Center for Cybersecurity of the Security Service of Ukraine is a rather progressive platform from which we can promote such partnerships in the field of cybersecurity.

²³ Joint Communication: The EU's Cybersecurity Strategy for the Digital Decade, from Dec. 16, 2020. European Commission. [E-Resource]. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/eus-cybersecurity-strategy-digital-decade

Thus, measures regarding ensuring cybersecurity are settled mainly by the imperative method of legal regulation (for example, when setting the technical requirements for the protection of state electronic information resources). However, a dispositive method should be used to normalise public-private partnership issues.

CONCLUSIONS

his work proposes a scientific hypothesis suggesting the dividing of the subject of legal regulation of the security of a person, society, state into three components: information security, the security of restricted information and cybersecurity.

The legal regulation of measures for information security is aimed at counteracting the impact of negative information in the information space of the state, and controlling matters regarding security. The goal of the RI is the regulation of measures on cybersecurity in relation to the prevention and counteraction of real and potential threats to critical information infrastructure facilities, as well as creating an organisational and legal regime and providing access, etc.

The paper concludes that when ensuring the information security of a person, society and state, the dispositive method of legal regulation dominates since the processes of circulation of mostly open information are regulated and there is a requirement to comply with the constitutional principles of freedom of speech and the right to information. However, in this study, we discovered a need to imperatively strengthen the security of a person, society and state by creating new legislation to make, in some cases, the spread of disinformation a criminal offence.

Legal regulation of the security of RI is carried out largely using the imperative method of legal regulation since it mainly concerns the protection of the right to such information. The emphasis is on the fact that the dispositive method of legal regulation in the circulation of RI is applied in terms of collecting and disseminating socially necessary information.

Public activities aimed at the ensurance of cybersecurity are regulated mainly by the imperative method of legal regulation, although, in order to normalise publicprivate partnership issues, it is concluded that it is necessary to use an exclusively dispositive method of legal regulation.

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IS THERE AND HAS THERE BEEN A "POLISH VOTE"? A PARTLY CONTRARY VIEW

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Abstract

This paper looks at the "Polish vote" in U.S. presidential elections since 1940, when Polish American voters – the foreign born who had become citizens and their American born offspring – had become a significant factor. The issue of Poland was found to be salient in just five of these twenty elections. In only three of these, in 1944, 1948, and 1976, were the elections closely contested, thus enabling a true Polish vote to 'matter' in the outcome. Poland was not salient in the other fifteenelections. In them, Polish Americans' voting preferences were more likely to be based on their views of the candidates, their party identification, ideological leanings, socio- economic background, and economic conditions at the time. In only one of these fifteen elections did the Polish American vote play a possibly decisive role in the outcome – the election of 1960.

Key Words: Polish Vote, "Polish" States, Poland, Polish American Congress

A PARTLY CONTRARY VIEW

An introductory note: Following the 2020 U.S. presidential election the role of voters ofPolish origin and ancestry became a topic for discussion for several political science professors, among them- David Jackson of Bowling Green State University in Ohio, John Kromkowski of the Catholic University in Washington, DC, Anne Gurnack of the University of Wisconsin in Kenosha, and the author. All were intrigued about the role of Polish American voters in affecting the results in three hotly contested states with large numbers of Americans of Polish origin and ancestry - Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. While looking at the 2020 election, they also looked at the factors affecting Polish Americans' vote choices over the years, a topic nearly unnoticed in the presidential election literature. What follows is indirectly focused on the 2020 election and deals with a broader question - that of the existence, of a significant "Polish vote" in presidential elections over the past eighty years. At first glance, the question about the Polish vote in U.S. elections gets a quick 'Yes' answer. Of course, there has been, and may even continue to be, a "Polish vote" in America's elections! At times it may have been significant, even if seldom recognized. But is this the case? The Conventional View. We do have a lot of information that leads us to recognise that a substantial Polish vote in U.S. elections has existed for many years. For example, anentry in Wikipedia provides survey data, some dubious, on the Polish vote in U.S. presidential elections going all the way back to 1916. We also have a few scholarly studies on the Polish vote in presidential elections, both published and unpublished². And we know, for example, that since 1918, 49 Polish Americans have won seats in the U.S. House of Representatives; 30 from districts having large numbers of Polish residents - in Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee and Buffalo.3

Focusing on Presidential elections I have constructed a table of information (below). Itcovers various data connected with the twenty elections from 1940 to 2016. These

¹ Wikipedia, "Polish American Vote." Last modified 20 November 2021. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish-American_vote While I do not deal here with the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections, in 2016 Republican Donald J. Trump, while losing the popular vote, won in the Electoral College, narrowly carrying three states (and 46 electoral votes) with substantial numbers of voters of Polish ethnic origin – Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania. In losing in 2020, his Democratic opponent Joseph R. Biden, narrowly took those same three states.

² Among published works the most notable one is by Richard C. Lukas, The Strange Allies: The United States and Poland, 1941-1945 (Knoxville: U. of Tennessee, 1978). Unpublished and survey-based papers completed in 2021 are those by Anne Gurnack, "Polish Americans, Political Partisanship, and Presidential Election Voting, 1972-2016," David Jackson, "The 2020 Polish American Vote," and John Kromkowski, "Replacing Ethnicity with Nationality." Whiletaking up the subject in different ways, the three agree that a 'Polish American vote' continues to exist and may be particularly important in closely contested elections where large numbers of Polish Americans live, that it remains more pro Democrat than the vote by other European ancestry Americans, that it has become more conservative and pro Republican in recent years, that it is affected by intermarriage between individuals of Polish origin and persons of other ethnic ancestries, that it is weakening among the grandchildren, great grandchildren and even earlier descendants of Polish immigrants, but that "being Polish" retains a certain and even strong symbolic influence on individuals who identify as Polish or are so identified by others.

³ Biographies of U.S. Congressmen and Senators of Polish origin are in James S. Pula, ed., The Polish American Encyclopedia (Jefferson, N.C. and London: MacFarland, 2011). On local officials, see Angela T. Pienkos, ed. EthnicPolitics in Urban America: The Polish Experience in Four Cities (Chicago: Polish American Historical Association, 1978).

data are the basis of this essay. In it we see who won each election, their political party, their all-important electoral college margin of victory, and the share of the popular vote cast for the Democratic candidate. Next a column identifies the percentage of the vote cast by Polish Americans for the Democratic candidate in each election, data readily compared with the overall Democratic party vote. They show that Polish Americans have usually voted more heavily for Democratic candidates than Republicans, often by very wide margins (1940, 1944, 1948, 1960, and 1964). But in eight elections, six beginning in 1972, more Americans of Polish origin voted for the Republicans than the Democrats.

Table 1. Presidential Elections and the Polish Vote: 1940 - 2016*

Year	Winner	Vote	Democrat	Vote %	"Polish"	States Vote
1940	FDR (D)	449-82	54.70%	90.00%	9D	199-19
1944	FDR (D)	432-99	53.40%	90.00%	8D	177-37
1948	Truman (D)	303-189	49.6%	80.00%	4D	81-133
1952	Eisen. (R)	442-89	44.30%	30.00%	0D	0-210
1956	Eisen. (R)	457-73	42.00%	49.00%	0D	0-210
1960	Kennedy (D)	303-219	49.70%	78.00%	8D	173-37
1964	Johnson (D)	486-52	61.10%	80.00%	10D	206-0
1968	Nixon (R)	303-191	42.70%	56.00%	6D	125-81
1972	Nixon (R)	520-17	37.50%	47.00%	0D	0-200
1976	Carter (D)	297-240	50.10%	60.00%	6D	128-72
1980	Reagan (R)	489-49	41%	43.00%	1D	10-190
1984	Reagan (R)	525-13	40.60%	49.00%	0D	0-186
1988	Bush (R)	426-111	45.60%	43.00%	4D	70-116
1992	Clinton (D)	370-168	43.00%	42.00%	10D	173-0
1996	Clinton (D)	379-159	49.30%	48.00%	10D	173-0
2000	Bush II (R)	271-266	48.40%	45.00%	9D	152-21
2004	Bush II (R)	286-251	48.30%	47.00%	9D	144-20
2008	Obama (D)	365-173	52.90%	52.00%	10D	154-0
2012	Obama (D)	332-206	51.10%	50.00%	10D	155-0
2016	Trump (R)	304-227	48.60%	26.0-42.0%	6D	90-64

^{*} Note that significant third-party presidential candidates campaigned in 1948, 1968, 1980, 1992, and 1996.

Republican candidates won the "Polish vote" in 1952, 1956, 1972, 1984, 1988, 2000, 2004, and 2016.

Finally on the right side of this table I have identified those states, ten in all, that havehistorically been home for the overwhelming majority of Americans of Polish origin. The basis for this information comes from the U.S. Census for 1930, the U.S. CensusBureau's surveys of national ancestry of 1980, 1990, and 2000, and from the CensusBureau's American Community Surveys of 2008 and 2018. These pieces of information do differ a bit from one another. Thus, the decennial Census counts everybody but only reports the number of foreign born and their native born ("foreign stock") children. The national ancestry data were based on estimates from surveys

of one of every six U.S. households. The community surveys are based on findings derived from information from one of every thirty households. Nonetheless I conclude that all provide reliable information on the Polish ethnic population in the U.S. over the years. Thus, the 1930 Census reported that the Polish immigrants and their native-born offspring, but not the grandchildren of immigrants (who may have counted for another 1.5 million persons) numbered 3,342,000 persons in a U.S. population of 122 million. Adding them into the mix, my guess is that in all roughly four percent of the country'stotal population was ethnically Polish in origin in 1930. In 1930, 86 percent of the Polish immigrant and foreign stock population resided in just ten U.S. states. These were Connecticut, where they constituted 8.3 percent of the population, Michigan (6.6), New Jersey (6.5), New York and Illinois (6.2 each), Pennsylvania (5.4), Wisconsin (4.7), Massachusetts (4.4), Ohio (2.6), and Maryland (2.2). Together persons of Polish origin comprised 5 percent of these states' combined population. In contrast, in the country's other 38 states they counted for less than 1 tenth of 1 percent of the population. In the years since 1930 one sees a downward trend in both the proportion of the population of Americans of Polish origin in the U.S. and their presence in the ten "most Polish" states. In 1980, 8,228,000 persons identified as Polish, either fully or in part, or 3.7 percent of the total U.S. population. In all, 77 percent of those so identified resided in the ten "Polish" states. In 2008, 9.6 million so identified (3.2 percent of the total U.S. population), with 63 percent in the historically "Polish" states. In 2018, the figures were 9,153,000, or 2.8 percent of the population in a country of 325 million inhabitants, with 61 percent in the ten "Polish" states. Here the rankings were Wisconsin (8.6 percent of the state's population), Michigan (8.3), Connecticut (7.3), Illinois (6.8), Pennsylvania (6.3), New Jersey (5.5), New York (5.4), Massachusetts (4.5), Ohio (3.7), and Maryland (3.1). Two additional points can be made from a look at Table 1. First, one sees a dramatic decline in the relative significance of the ten states having the largest Polish populations compared to other states around the country, most notably the South and West.

This is due to their slower rate of growth due to economic changes in the country, along with the retirement decisions of many Americans, including Polish Americans to move to warmer, less expensive parts of the country. Politically, the decline has been especially dramatic. In 1940, the ten "Polish" states had 218 electoral votes out of 531, or 41 percent of the country's 531 electoral votes. In 2020 their share of 153 electoral votes out of 538 electoral votes in all was just 28 percent.⁵

⁴ U.S. Census data for 1930 are in Andrzej Brozek, Polish Americans 1854-1939 (Warsaw: Interpress, 1985), pp. 238-40. The 2008 Census Bureau's American Community Survey is in Thaddeus C. Radzilowski and Dominik Stecula, Polish Americans Today (Detroit: Piast Institute, 2010). See Wikipedia for the Census survey of 1980 and the American Community Survey of 2018

⁵ These states have also lost seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, from 198 in 1940 to 133 in 2020. Along with this decline has been a steep drop in the number of Polish Americans in Congress, from twelve in 1958 to just three in 2020, two from a "Polish" state. In 1958, Chicago had four congressmen of Polish origin, Detroit three, Buffalo and Milwaukee one each. In 2020, none of these historically "Polish" cities had a congressman of Polish origin.

Two: Why start with the year 1940? A good reason involves the rising significance of Poles as voters. Yes, Poles as residents had long been visible, especially in those parts of the U.S. where their numbers were great. Indeed from 1880, when the 500,000 mainly Polish immigrant population was 1 percent of the U.S. population, the number had grown to 2 million in 1900 and to 4 million in 1914. By then the Poles accounted for four percent of the total American population. But numbers alone were but part of the story. By the 1920s, there were the 1,000 plus churches the immigrants and their offspring had built, their countless neighbourhood fraternal societies and social clubs, and their impressive Polish language press, which by the 1930s included ten daily papers and dozens more weeklies and monthlies. However, numbers and visibility alone did not immediately translate into voting powersince many immigrants - who made up the bulk of the total Polish population into the 1930s - did not rush to apply for U.S. citizenship. But by 1940, with mass immigration having ended nearly twenty years before, nearly all the Poles who had come to America had decided to remain here and become naturalized citizens. This made them, along with their American born sons, daughters and grandchildren, eligible to vote. With respect to the 20 presidential elections themselves, in the first seven - from 1940through to 1964, the 'Polish vote' went overwhelmingly for the Democratic party's candidate. It ranged from 19 percent to 36 percent above the candidate's overall popular vote won. The only exceptions were in 1952 and 1956 when General Dwight D. Eisenhower, a genuine "above party" figure, won as a Republican.

In the thirteen elections from 1968 to 2016 (and most likely 2020), Polish voter support for the Democratic candidate dropped, sometimes substantially. In six of themit was the Republican nominee who actually won the "Polish vote".

How to account for this change? Here we are dealing with two distinct factors. Into the 1960s, the Poles in America were part of America's urban industrial working class. Moreover, they, like so many other people of east central European immigrant origin, were hit hard by the Great Depression that began in 1929. As a result, in 1932 they turned in overwhelming numbers to the Democratic party and the Depression-fighting, pro-labour union "New Deal" presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Their Democratic party ties were further reinforced by their adherence to the Cath-

 $^{^6}$ One example of the Polish vote in the days of mass migration: in 1916 President Woodrow Wilson narrowly defeated his Republican opponent by a 277-254 electoral college margin. In all 18,540,000 votes were cast. While Poles then made-up 4 percent of the population, only male citizens over the age of 21 could vote – most likely around 300,000 or

^{1.5} percent of the total. While over 70 percent are estimated to have supported Wilson, only Ohio's 26 electoral votes went to him. The other nine's 183 electoral votes went to his opponent. By comparison, in 1940 as many as 2.5 million Polish Americans may have voted (about 5 percent of the total).

On the immigrant-dominated Polish community before World War II, see Brozek, pp. 311-325 and Pula. Here, my own family story may be of interest. My four grandparents arrived in the U.S. from Austrian ruled Galicia between 1907 and 1913. But it was not until 1940 that all four had become "naturalised" U.S. citizens – one in 1924 at age 34, a second in 1932 at age 41, a third in 1935 at age 44 and a fourth in 1940 at age 45. In 1932 none of their ten U.S. born children were old enough to vote. By 1944, nine were. In 1916, my family had no potential voters. In 1944 there were 13

⁷ Indeed President Truman supported Eisenhower's candidacy in 1952 if he chose to run as a Democrat. David McCullough, Truman (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), pp. 887-889.

olic Church, whose advocates preached social teachings that ran parallel to those of the "New Deal". But these ties began unraveling in the 1960s and 1970s, as many third and some second-generation Polish Americans moved into the "middle class". Whether we definethis movement in terms of their entry into, and completion of, college, their work experiences in private and public service and away from the jobs their parents and grandparents had held in factories, mills, mines, meatpacking houses, or their relocating to new homes away from the ageing central city neighbourhoods that had defined Polish community life since the end of the nineteenth century, the Polish American population was changing – and changing significantly. Polish American voter loyalty to the Democratic party was also severely tested in the 1960s and 1970s. There was frustration over its leaders' handling of the endless war in Vietnam, together with the emergence of other, divisive, cultural issues in American society and within the Democratic party itself. Most notable was the impact of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Roe v. Wade in 1973.

What is more, the polarising divisions of the 1970s have continued for decades. In short, Polish Americans today, 95 percent of them native-born, divide almost evenly between Democratic party loyalists, many of them in, or retired from, "blue collar" jobsand 'middle class" Republican identifiers who much more frequently have college and post college educations. Complicating things is their Catholic identity since the Church holds socially conservative positions on issues like abortion and same sex marriage while taking liberal stands on behalf of the poor and on immigration. In short, the voting behavior of Polish Americans, like other Americans of east central European ancestry, has come to be more than adequately predicted by knowing their income, the kind of work they do, their educational attainments, strength of religious ties, place of residence, and traditional party loyalty. Indeed, given the powerful explanatory value of these voter characteristics, pollsters no longer bother to ask about the national ancestry of so called "white ethnic" Americans.⁸

But is this the whole story? I do not think so. Yes, there has indeed been a "Polish vote" in presidential elections. But, I argue, this has only come into play as a potentially important factor (with one exception to be noted below) when the fate of Poland itself was a salient issue and when the contest was closely contested. Only when these two conditions have been met have voters of Polish origin had reason tovote as Polish Americans.

Of these presidential elections, eleven were relatively closely contested. But in only three closely contested elections was Poland a salient issue. These were in 1944, when

⁸ On Polish Americans' changing social class character from the 1960s, see Pula, Encyclopedia, pp. 101-111, 178-184; Helena Z. Lopata, Polish Americans (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1976), pp. 88-117; and Radzilowski and Stecula. On the issues dividing the Democrats, see Donald E. Pienkos, The New Ethnicity Movement and Polish Americans," Polish American Studies, 76, Number 2 (Autumn 2019), 67-69. Note too the Polish American Congress' Amicus Curiae objections to Affirmative Action to the U.S. Supreme Court, in Donald E. Pienkos, For your Freedom Through Ours: Polish American Efforts on Poland's Behalf (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1991), pp. 159-160. Note Radzilowski and Stecula p. 2

President Roosevelt ran for an unprecedented fourth term in office; in 1948, when his successor, Harry Truman, surprised everyone but himself by his photo finish win overNew York Governor Thomas E. Dewey, and in 1976 when Jimmy Carter defeated President Gerald R. Ford.

Table 2: A look at Poland's Salience in U.S. Presidential elections

Poland as an Issue	Close Election	One-Sided Election
Poland as Salient	1944, 1948, 1976	1952, 1980
Poland Not Salient 1960, 1968, 1988, 1992		1940, 1956, 1964, 1972,
	2000, 2004, 2012, 2016	1984, 1996, 2008

Poland was also salient in two elections that were not close. In 1952, the cause of Soviet-dominated Poland was important at a time of grave Cold War antagonism. But General Dwight D. Eisenhower, a true "above party candidate," won in overwhelming fashion and with substantial Polish voter support. In 1980, crisis-ridden Poland, its Solidarity labour union, and John Paul II, "the Pope from Poland," were often on the front pages of America's newspapers. Yet, because both Republican Ronald W. Reagan and President Carter both strongly backed the Solidarity cause, Poland did not surface as a campaign issue. Indeed, after it joined the NATO alliance in 1999, post-communist Poland was not a factor in George W. Bush's narrow wins in 2000 and 2004.9

In only three elections were the results both quite close and Poland-related in a salientmanner – in 1944, 1948, and 1976. Yet how very differently the issue of Poland played out in each!

NOVEMBER 1944 – AN ELECTION THAT MIGHT HAVE TURNED OUT DIFFERENTLY

That year, and in the midst of World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt won an unprecedented fourth term over Thomas E. Dewey. At first glance his impressive, evenmassive victory of 432-99 in the electoral college – that of a trusted veteran wartime president, looks unsurprising. But there is a back story to this election, and it involved Poland and the Polish Americans.

In December 1943, just eleven months before the election, FDR and his two wartime allies, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Josef Stalin, the ruler of the

⁹ On Eisenhower's appeal, see Samuel Lubell, The Future of American Politics (New York: Doubleday, 1955). Poland's salience in 1952 was real. One sign of this was the ongoing special U.S. Congressional investigation into Soviet responsibility for the Katyn Forest Massacre of 1940 of over 20,000 Polish military officers and civic leaders. Excerpts of the committee's findings are in Pienkos, For Your Freedom, pp. 300-308. On Carter's support for Solidarity, see Donald E. Pienkos, review of Justin Vaisse's biography of Zbigniew Brzezinski, in The Polish Review, 64, Number 4 (Winter 2019), 115-116. On Reagan and Carter, see Pienkos, For Your Freedom, pp. 182 -196, 371-387, and Seth A. Jones, Covert Action: Reagan, the CIA, and the Cold War Struggle in Poland (New York: Norton, 2018)

Soviet Union, held their first, critically important, summit conference in Tehran, Iran. There, in a private talk with Stalin, Roosevelt told Stalin that he agreed that the SovietUnion should keep the eastern half of pre-war Poland once the war was won. This wasterritory Stalin had seized in September 1939 when he and Hitler had destroyed the Polish state. Ignoring the U.S. alliance with Poland's exile government in London, Roosevelt asked only that Stalin keep the matter private, since he was planning for hisre-election in 1944 and needed the votes of the "six to seven million Americans of Polish extraction" to help insure his victory.¹⁰

FDR had good reason to worry about the consequences if his words were leaked. In June 1944, Polish Americans, at a massive patriotic congress they held in Buffalo, New York, declared their support for a free, post-war Poland with its 1939 eastern border restored. In response, on October 11, Pulaski Day, Roosevelt invited Polish American Congress President, Charles Rozmarek and his fellow officers to the White House. There he gave them the misleading impression that he backed their position onPoland's eastern border. Still concerned, at the very end of his campaign, he met againwith Rozmarek in Chicago. There he pressed him for his personal support. FDR then put out a widely published statement that the Polish American Congress had endorsedhim. By this time Roosevelt had a new reason to be concerned. Just weeks before, Poland's Prime Minister had met with Stalin in Moscow. There Stalin's foreign minister, Molotov, blurted out that FDR had agreed to give away Poland's eastern territory at Teheran. Afterwards, U.S. Ambassador Averill Harriman urged the distressed Pole to be silent about Molotov's shocking revelation."

What might have occurred had this "political dynamite" exploded before the U.S. election?¹² How many Polish American voters might have turned against FDR? And what about the general public's reaction? Would the outcome have been different? We will never know.

In fact, Roosevelt won re-election but his popular margin, despite the 9-1 support he received from Polish Americans, was the smallest in his four presidential campaigns. He did carry eight of the ten states where the Polish vote was most substantial, winning the 177 electoral votes of New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Maryland. Only Ohio and Wisconsin's 37 electoral votes went to Dewey. But his victory margin in Michigan was just 22,000 in 2.2 million votes, 26,000 in New Jersey out of 2 million, 105,000 in Pennsylvania out of 3.8 million, and 140,000 in Illinois where over four million votes were cast.

¹⁰ James McGregor Burns, Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), pp. 413- 414, 533-34; Susan Butler, Roosevelt and Stalin: A Portrait of a Friendship (New York: Knopf, 2015), pp. 123-140; Charles Bohlen, Witness to History 1919-1969 (New York: Norton, 1973), pp. 144-152. On Roosevelt's view of Poland prior to the Teheran summit, see Piotr S. Wandycz, The United States and Poland (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard U. Press, 1980), pp. 258-277.

¹¹ Jan Karski, The Great Powers and Poland, 1919-1945 (London and New York: University Press of America, 1985), pp. 559-562. Richard C. Lukas, "The Polish American Congress and the Polish Question, 1944-1947," Polish American Studies, 38, number 2 (Autumn 1981), 39-54.

¹² The words were those of FDR's key advisor Harry Hopkins, Wandycz, p. 277.

Unaware of his actual Poland policy, the voters in these four states alone gave FDR 98 electoral votes.¹³

But we do know that in March 1945, after FDR addressed a joint session of the U.S. Congress following his second summit meeting with Stalin at Yalta, Rozmarek and the PAC bitterly denounced the decisions on Poland as a betrayal of America's reasons for fighting the War. This at a time when the war was moving to a successful conclusion, FDR was at the peak of his popularity, and the public's initial response to his speech on Yalta was overwhelmingly positive. ¹⁴

In 1948, Roosevelt's successor, Harry Truman, who like his opponent, Dewey again, had become a staunch cold warrior, won – but barely. And while he held onto eighty percent of the Polish vote, the PAC, which could not forget Yalta, opposed him. Indeed, he lost six of the ten "Polish" states. And in two of the four where he won, his margin was very narrow - just 7,000 votes in Ohio and 36,000 votes in Illinois. He easily carried the other two, Massachusetts and Wisconsin. Had Truman lost Illinois' 28 electoral votes and Ohio's 25, he would have failed to win a majority of the electoral college votes. The House of Representatives would have then had to choose the next president.¹⁵

1976 - A UNIQUE ELECTION?

Poland and the "Polish vote" may have come into play in a most dramatic if accidental way, thanks to President Gerald R. Ford's amazing misstatement in his October 6, 1976 nationally televised debate – on foreign policy - with his Democratic party challenger, ex-Georgia governor Jimmy Carter. There, Ford asserted that communist- run Poland, a Cold War Soviet satellite, was not under Soviet domination. He droppedsix points in the polls and wound up losing the election by 50-49 percent in the popular vote and 297-240 in the electoral college. Polish voters went 60-40 for Carter, who won the 128 electoral votes of six of the "Polish" states. Ford won the 72 electoral votes of Connecticut, New Jersey, Michigan (his home state), and Illinois, where PAC president Aloysius Mazewski 'moved mountains' on his behalf.

But did Ford's 'Poland gaffe' cost him the election? Or was it the weak economy? Or his pardoning of Richard Nixon? Or that he was a weak candidate who had barely wonhis own party's nomination just months before the election?¹⁶

¹³ Lukas, The Strange Allies, pp. 126-127.

¹⁴ Polish American Congress Memorandum to President Roosevelt in Connection with the Yalta conference, March 15, 1945, excerpt in Pienkos, For Your Freedom, p. 279, and pp. 114-119, 265-278. Privately, FDR accepted the view of his confidant, Admiral Leahy, that the agreement on Poland at Yalta was worthless. Wandycz, p. 298. The public initially backed his rosy report on Yalta by a margin of 61-9 percent.

¹⁵ McCullough skirts the whole subject in his Truman biography.

¹⁶ Ford's gaffe had much to do with his concerns over the "Sonnenfeldt doctrine" concerned him. Wandycz, pp. 404- 407; and Pienkos, For Your Freedom, pp. 170-171, 350-360. Ford's view is in Tom De Frank, 'Write it when I'm Gone': Remarkable off the Record Conversations with Gerald R. Ford (New York: Putnam, 2007). A look at the public opinion surveys shows Ford trailing Carter by a 50-37 margin in September but had him just behind 47-45 on the eve of the October debate. After Ford's debate blunder, he dropped behind 48-42. Still, on the eve of the election the two candidates were exactly even. Jeffrey M. Jones, "Gerald Ford Retrospective," Gallup Poll News Service, December 29, 2006.

THE ONE EXCEPTION: 1960

In one Presidential election the Polish vote may well have played a major role. This wasin Senator John F. Kennedy' paper thin 112,881 vote victory (out of 68,832,818 cast) over Vice President Richard M. Nixon. Indeed. in this still memorable contest, both candidates - young, articulate, hard line Cold Warriors - did make much of their concerns about Soviet-dominated Poland in appealing to Polish Americans. That May Nixon spoke to over 100,000 listeners at the annual Polish Constitution Day observance in Chicago. In October Kennedy addressed the Polish American Congress at its national convention. However, their identical views meant that Poland in practical terms vanished as a campaign issue in 1960.

Polish Americans, by voting for Kennedy by a 78-22 margin, did help him win all but two of the 10 most "Polish" states – Ohio and Wisconsin. He received 177 of the 303 electoral votes he needed from the eight "Polish" states he did carry to defeat Nixon, who won 219. Remarkably, Kennedy won Illinois' 27 electoral votes by just 8,858 votes (out of 4,746,834) and New Jersey's 16 electoral votes by only 22,191 votes out of 2,748,738. Had he lost them, the election would have been decided in the House ofRepresentatives.

Kennedy did benefit greatly by winning the Polish vote. But his success was due to his putting together a "New Deal" style coalition that brought working class, unionised, Catholic Polish American voters back into the Democratic fold - and at a time when the country was experiencing an economic recession.¹⁷

A Postscript: An issue that never was. A debate arose over the future of the NATO alliance with the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the end of the Cold War. Here the Polish American Congress came out strongly, not only for keeping NATO but for bringing in post-communist Poland, Hungary and the Czech and Slovak republics. Its efforts came to a head in January 1994 at an extraordinary meeting in Milwaukee of representatives of President Clinton and leaders from the four ethnic communities. There PAC President Edward Moskal spoke out bluntly, declaring that the failure to expand NATO would amount to nothing less than a "second Yalta." Two months later at the White House, President Clinton told the same group that "the door to NATO expansion is open". In April 1998, the U.S. Senate approved expansion by a 80-19 vote. In the fourteen states where the PAC was strongest (the ten "Polish" states and Indiana, California, Rhode Island and Florida), the Senators' vote was 26-2. In May 1999 NATO welcomed three new members into the alliance. These actions also took the issue off the table in the 2000 election. In conclusion, since entering NATO in

¹⁷ Theodore White, The Making of the President 1960 (New York: Atheneum, 1962), p. 385. On Kennedy, see Jan Wszelaki, ed., John F. Kennedy and Poland (New York: Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, 1964). For Nixon, see his impressive Six Crises (New York: Doubleday, 1962), pp. 283-287 and elsewhere.

¹⁸ Donald E. Pienkos, "Witness to History: Polish Americans and the Genesis of NATO Enlargement," The Polish Review, 44 number 3 (Autumn 1999), 334-335; Leszek Kuczynski and Wojciech Bialaszewicz, Expansion of NATO: Role of the Polish American Congress (Chicago: Alliance Printers and Publishers, 1999), pp. 48-50

1999, Poland has ceased to be salient in U.S. presidential elections. Of course, Polish Americans have voted in great numbers in thesix elections that were held from 2000 to 2020. But in them they, like their fellow Americans, have made their choices based on their own party identification, ideological preferences, economic situation, religious convictions, and evaluations of the candidates. And while many Polish Americans will doubtless continue to maintain their appreciation of their heritage and share it with their fellow Americans, Poland itself will, hopefully, no longer become a salient issue in U.S. politics and presidential elections!

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THE "FATALISM" OF BELARUSIAN POLITICS AND THE "SOCIAL CLIMATE" IN THE COUNTRY

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to analyse the socio-political situation in Belarus, which has changed dramatically after the presidential elections in 2020, the paradox of striving for real social transformation in Belarusian society against the background of a fall in confidence in the mechanisms of how it functions. The assumption about the historical specificity of the Belarusian society and the weakness of its social system is tested using socio-cultural methodology, a historical-analytical method, institutional analysis, statistical analysis. The fatalism of Belarusian politics the authors find lies in the history of the country and in the formation process of its social system.

Key words: Social Trust, Institutional Trust, Election, Social System, Culture

INTRODUCTION

Earlier, researchers were interested in Belarus as one of the states that emerged in the post-Soviet space; on the one hand, it inherited a number of post-Soviet phenomena similar to other post-Soviet states [Salnikova 2013, 2014a] but, on the other hand, it had some distinctive features and a specific trajectory of development. Today Belarus has attracted the attention of the world community in connection with the presidential elections in August 2020 and their consequences [Liga.News, 05.23.2021], and the understanding that Belarus does have its own special features.

The complexity of analysing the Belarusian space is associated with a lack of sociological research data, which would help explain a number of trends, and also requires the researcher to constantly engage thematically and understand the historical development of this country. The co-author therefore studied the value-normative systems of the post-Soviet countries within the framework of the project «Social Transformations in the Borderlands – Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova» with the support of the Carnegie Corporation (New York) in 2012-2014 [Muradyan et al. 2014]. As part of this study, we will consider some of the conclusions obtained several years ago through the prism of the events that took place in Belarus, and also supplement them.

1. METHODOLOGY: PURPOSE, EMPIRICAL DATA AND METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The **purpose** of this article is to analyse the socio-political situation in Belarus, which has changed dramatically after the presidential elections in 2020, the paradox of striving for real social transformation in Belarusian society against the background of a fall in confidence in the mechanisms of its functioning. The authors suggest that the fatalism of Belarusian politics requires an explanation, which must be sought in the history of the country and the process of forming its social system. The historical specificity of Belarusian society and the weakness of its social system are tested with the use of sociocultural methodology, a historical-analytical method, institutional analysis, as well as statistical methods for analysing empirical data.

Analysts of the British Royal Institute of International Affairs [Chatham House 2021] conducted a survey of residents of Belarusian cities about the political crisis (N = 926, E = 3.22%, January 2021) using a computer web interview (CAWI). The survey is representative by gender and the age and size of the city, and its results can be extrapolated to the whole of Belarus, since, as the analysts note, there are no big differences in the views of rural residents and residents of small towns. The authors of the article used the primary data from this study, which are freely available. You can also see the secondary data [Astapenia 2021].

To compare some indicators, the authors used the primary data of the international projects World Values Survey (WVS) [World Values Survey] and European Values Study (EWS) [European Values Study] of different years.

Analysis of primary data was made using the SPSS program; descriptive statistics,

methods of univariate and bivariate analysis, and correlation analysis were used, in particular Pearson's Chi-square test and Cramer's coefficient. To temporarily compare data from different studies, the two coefficients of balance were constructed: trust-distrust balance coefficient (T-DT Coef. b.) and agreement-disagreement balance coefficient (A-DA Coef. b.). The coefficient of balance is calculated as follows: (X% -Y%) / 100, where X% is a group of those who trust / agree, Y% is a group of those who do not trust / disagree. The interpretation of the balance coefficient is as follows: a coefficient value close to 0 means a balance between both groups, the closer the coefficient value is to 1, the stronger the imbalance; the "+" sign denotes the dominance of the "trust / agreement" group, the "-" sign denotes the dominance of the "disagreement" group.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The desired goal of social transformations in the post-Soviet space is civil society as a driver for the development of various spheres of life. On the one hand, there are theoretical approaches to the study of civil society in sociology. For example, there is the theory of social capital and institutional theory, etc. On the other hand, every society has its own basic prerequisites for development. For example, G. Sheck substantiates why African countries, despite the colossal external influences of resources, cannot develop in accordance with the external expert view [Schoeck 1987]; other studies show that in matters of trust, the influence of institutions is stronger than the cultural code [Mishler, Rose 2001]. Based on these two factors, we will provide a theoretical framework for the study. It is also worth clarifying that we call the state of long-term unchanged political power established with the use of democratic instruments (elections) as the "fatalism" of Belarusian politics. The "social climate" in Belarus is interesting in terms of both the behavioural aspects of society during and after the elections, and the attitude to the socio-political situation in the country.

2.1. About the «social climate» and politics

Why is the presence of a civil society so important for the development of a country and the state? And how is it connected with the political sphere of life? These questions are not new scientific tasks, but we will focus our attention on them.

From the standpoint of politics, trust is a necessary condition for the development of democracy and civil society; from the standpoint of economists – it is necessary for the functioning of market relations; from the standpoint of sociology – trust serves as the foundation for the activities of public institutions [Sapsford et al. 2015].

«Civil society directly stimulates the development of social capital [...], which in turn facilitates political participation in society» [Salnikova 2014b: 148] and is also «a precondition for effective self-government» [Putnam 2000: 19]. As a public good, social capital at the individual level is measured as inclusion in the system of institutionalised social relations, the so-called social network, of mutual trust and recognition [Bourdieu 1985]. This network of relationships

is built by the individuals themselves – free, open, rational individuals [Portes 1998, Coleman 2000]; thus, the weight of the network depends on the number of such individuals, and the quality of the network depends on their quality, respectively; goals achievable by the network are determined by the personal goals of individuals; for social networks, their quality is more important, which sometimes determines the quantity. But trust has another important property – it diminishes the role of government coercion in relation to the observance of norms, both legal and conventional. Trusting relationships arise where the expectations of legal, honest, normalised behaviour of all participants in the process are justified.

F. Fukuyama says that social capital is a consequence of the presence of trust between members of society, or a part of them; thus, the formation of a social network is a long-term process, involving the change of at least one or two generations. But the most important thing that researchers point out is that social capital is created and transmitted through cultural mechanisms such as religion, tradition, custom [Fukuyama 1996], «is a consequence of culture» [Salnikova 2014b: 148] and is formed and based on historical tradition [Putnam 2000]. R. Putnam points to the historical determinism of social capital, while F. Fukuyama points to the spontaneity of its formation, but subject to a stable political system and the rule of law [Fukuyama 2000: 145]. In addition to trust, the peculiarities of the social network of relations should also include political, administrative, informational, economic, symbolic and other resources. They are common and structure the public space of society, they are a bridge between civil institutions and political and administrative ones, controlling and legitimising their work. Thus, the effectiveness of the country's socio-political development directly depends on the state of such resources, and on the availability of a sufficient number of non-state legitimate institutions.

2.2. About the current state: back to the past

Using the statements about the fundamental role of culture in the social, political, economic process (F. Fukuyama, R. Putnam, M. Weber, K. Jaspers, R. J. Collingwood, V. Stepin, A. Akhiezer, etc.) we will consider the cultural foundations of the functioning of the Belarusian society in the region of Eastern Europe.

Belarus became an independent sovereign state in 1990, and it had no prerequisites for a quick and painless adaptation to its new conditions of existence as a subject of the European political process. Belarusians were not ready for the drastic social, cultural, economic and ideological changes as well as changes in the structures of power, as long as we exclude the small group of the intelligentsia.

The Polish researcher of Belarusian history D. Michaluk notes the leading negative role of the geographical factor in the history of country, in the process of the formation of the Belarusian nation and the creation of an independent state. The existence of Belarusians between East and West, that is, two different civilisational projects, led to the state that *«the idea of a separate, independent state hardly made its way into the minds of Belarusians»* [Michaluk 2009: 63]. There were no examples of suc-

cessful state building next to them. The Belarusians went through the same stages of political history that neighboring peoples (Lithuanians, Latvians, Ukrainians) went through (from calls for cultural autonomy to political autonomy, and then to the proclamation of independence), but passed them with a tragic delay. They came to the moment of independence with the result, which V. Bulhakau defined, of *«an unfinished national project»* [Bulhakau 2001: 80].

The processes of statehood formation are faster and easier among historically "prepared" peoples with the spread of literacy, the assertion of individual rights, property rights to land, the presence of a middle class, urbanisation and social mobility, etc. Usually, such social achievements occur simultaneously with the expansion of consciousness, the formation of the ability to rise above the interests of their group, settlement and the traditions of their parish. In turn, these processes depend on the cultural context – linguistic and ethnic, especially in societies with an incomplete social structure or the absence / weakness of elites.

During the XX century, Belarusian society was at the core of large-scale European political processes, so it experienced internal transformations in crisis conditions, not bringing them to full completion and not having time to consolidate them in the public consciousness [Radzik 2007b].

What numbers and facts can illustrate the situation? At the end of the XIX century, 97.7% of the Belarusian-speaking population of country lived in rural areas, and in cities (poorly developed industrially) this population was 17%. In 1897, 86.5% of Belarusians were illiterate (for comparison, in neighboring Czech Republic in 1900, only 4.26% of the population could not read and write). Before the First World War, about 600 thousand people lived in Prague and its suburbs, and about 90% of them were ethnic Czechs. At the same time, in the capital of Belarusians, Minsk (100 thousand population), there were only about 8% of Belarusians themselves. The first Belarusian newspaper was published in 1906, when in 1905 there were already more than 750 of them in Czech Republic. The Czech press successfully conveyed the ideas of the elite and its cultural achievements to the population of different status, and the elite itself was formed in the era of enlightenment and romanticism in the context of a common European cultural project, which took place simultaneously with the development of industry and cities. The growth of the urban population in the Czech lands accelerated the growth of self-awareness and national identification of the Czechs. The elite on the Belarusian lands was in different conditions, they were inclined towards Polish culture, but after the partition of Poland they found themselves outside it [Radzik 2007b].

Polish sociologist R. Radzik, a well-known researcher of Belarusian ethnic culture and identity, notes that European peoples came to their present cultural and socio-political form in at least three ways. Most of them have formed over the past two centuries as modern societies around the idea of a nation, therefore national values determined their internal and external social processes. Some local ethno-cultural

groups, due to resource limitations, relied on ethnic culture and linguistic specifics to focus on maintaining their presence in the political field of Europe as subjects (Slovaks, Latvians, Estonians, etc.). It is also possible to single out, according to R. Radzik, "political" peoples with long-standing traditions of statehood and mechanisms for maintaining the loyalty of the population. The Belarusian people could not form a nation due to an external factor (the influence of the political regimes of Russia and Poland), there were no traditions of statehood, and internal social processes were not favourable either [Radzik 2007a: 101].

There was no leading ethnic group capable of becoming the main element of the ethno-social structure of society by the beginning of the XX century. Representatives of several European nations lived together within Belarus territory for a long time (Belarusians, Jews, Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, Ukrainians, Russians), but none of them were able to lead for a long time and become the centre of social processes [Yemelianova 2019].

According to R. Radzik, the text of the famous poem of the Belarusian poet and public figure Yakub Kolas «New land» very vividly conveys the situation on the Belarusian territory at the beginning of the 20th century, at the time of the revival of the Belarusian national "spirit". The protagonist of the Belarusian world (local, rural) is a landless peasant (who later already has land), who positions himself as an aloof living outside the village. In the text of the poem, there is practically no characterisation of the rural peasant community, and the Belarusians emphasise their individualism, which distinguishes them from the Russians. The gentry and the small gentry represent in the poem an alien, unkind, strange world, on which at the same time the peasants depend. On the one hand, the peasants feel the lack of common values with this world; on the other hand, they blame it for all the troubles and injustices in their lives. Kolas emphasizes that the peasants feel a desire to transfer responsibility for their lives to the landlord class, and he condemns them for this irresponsibility.

It is important that the enmity towards the gentlemen / gentry in the poem is of an irrational nature, since under certain conditions the border between peasant poverty and a certain prosperity of a small gentry could be overcome. However, Kolas makes it clear that peasants do not feel they are part of a certain wholeness, large social group or social structure.

The city is also a foreign territory, where the hierarchy of status is incomprehensible and alien to the peasant.

R. Radzik also notes that Kolas shows how the social-class dimension of the Belarusian society dominates in the minds of Belarusians throughout the subsequent Soviet era. Kolas shows a Belarusian village, whose inhabitants think in terms of everyday life, class, and only then ethnocentric, but not national ones. Time in social groups, praised by Kolas, has a clear dimension of the 4 seasons, but it is not historical, not linear. The text of the poem lacks a clear historical plan.

It is noticeable that the concepts «Russia», «Russian», «Poland», «Pole», «Belarusian»,

«Belarus» do not have a symbolic, abstract character, they are generally found in the poem very rarely or are absent. The word «Belarus» is served only in the applied (culinary) aspect when it comes to the delicacies of the Belarusian cuisine. It is important that the famous poet writes about the absence of "national activity" and the historical and ideological corpus of texts and cultural practices among Belarusians, while they are fully formed among neighboring peoples striving for an independent state life [Radzik 2005].

There is an opinion that the success of building the Soviet type of the Belarusian socio-cultural and political system became possible precisely in such an immature (in the ethno-socio-cultural dimension) society; therefore, the Belarusians were relieved to accept the return to the Soviet type of system in the mid-90s already in independent Belarus [Salnikova 2014b: 138-139]. Researcher Je. Waszkiewicz describes the characteristic features of the Belarusian society of the Soviet period in the late 1930s: external stability hid the destruction of all social structures and the destruction of the traditional rural economy; high levels of internal migration due to industrialisation and urban growth; increasing the group of nomenclature bureaucrats; forced labour and the terror of the population in 1936-1938. The result of the actions of the new government in Belarus was the «atomisation of society» and a lack of trust between people, an atmosphere of fear and the impossibility of conducting joint social activities. The most dangerous for social development in the Belarusian territories was the phenomenon of «double consciousness», which eventually led to a schizophrenic perception of the social world: on the one hand, the world is artificial, "official", imaginary, on the other hand, the normal human logic of individual perception of events and phenomena [Waszkiewicz 2011: 159-160].

During the Soviet period, Belarusians were mostly indifferent to actions directed against the flag as a national symbol or the Belarusian language. The Russian language was prestigious and had social support; Belarusian was considered a peasant, provincial and was not loved by the authorities [Waszczyńska 2008]. In present day Belarus, Russian has become the language of power, bureaucracy, education, popular culture, public events, and the language of city residents. The opposition speaks Belarusian; this is its political position in relation to the authorities. Rural residents often use the so-called "trasianką".

According to many Belarusian and Polish researchers, language, mythology, historical memory, a pantheon of heroes, long-term social and cultural (including religious) practices as the main ethnic markers – all this and much more in modern Belarusian society are in a depressing / deplorable / destroyed state.

On the territory of Belarus, we observe the results of the unfinished [in the previous centuries] process of the formation of the Belarusian ethnos as the integrity / unity of various ethno-cultural groups. The most important factor is the lack of a stable ethnic identity, when tens of thousands of people, mainly residents of the Lithuanian-Polish-Belarusian and Ukrainian borderlands, cannot determine their belonging to a

certain cultural group, do not feel their connection with country, therefore they call themselves "tuteyshyya" (indigenous), i.e. living in the local area. The identity of the "tuteyshyya" has a weak connection with the ethnic group or civil society of country; it is the identity of the inhabitants of the territory and that of a territorial community. The word "tuteyshyya" has been known since pre-Soviet times, possibly from the era of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. There is an opinion that today the phenomenon of "tuteyshyya" characterises the entire Belarusian society, in which de-Sovietisation has not taken place, there is no clear definition of ethnic and national identity, and there is no understanding of the importance of identity at state level. An unstable identity becomes an obstacle to the decisive political changes that the country needs today, since the local thinking of many Belarusians excludes responsibility for events taking place throughout country, in society and the state. Despite the fact that no other people of the USSR gave the Soviet identity such a priority as the Belarusian, nevertheless, the Belarusian identity has a weak civic and ethnic connection [Titarrenko 2006: 76].

An unstable identity is becoming a barrier to the decisive and rapid political changes that the country needs today, since the local thinking of many Belarusians excludes responsibility for events taking place throughout the country, in society and in the state. The absence of a stable identity can be replaced either by its reinterpretation, or by redefining the meaning of identity as a Belarusian, as suggested by the Polish ethnologist K. Waszczyńska. She argues that the identity of Belarusians is in the process of formation, and the concept of Belarusian identity is expanding from territorial to socio-political. In other words, the contextual, unstable Belarusian identity is filling with traditional and modern content [Waszczyńska 2008: 177]. This is important for our study, since the awareness of belonging to a large cultural group leads to the strengthening of trust. Participation in overall social and cultural actions, when the reactions to events and behaviour of group members are predictable and understandable to everyone, stimulates the growth of trust in the group [Yemelianova 2012]. It is known that every ethnic culture organises social solidarity in an original way, using models tested by time and history, by authoritative leaders of a cultural group; but this is not the case for Belarus: there is no "pantheon of historical leaders" respected by the whole society. It can be assumed that the current government is becoming a simulacrum that will not be accepted by the changing public consciousness of Belarusians.

As the Belarusian researcher notes, the complex process of building statehood in the post-Soviet territories is usually associated not only with the strengthening of government institutions, but also with the pursuit of a policy of "nationalisation" (formation of a nation - the authors' note) by accelerating the ongoing ethnogenesis [Boridczenko 2020: 112]. In the Belarusian situation, this experience is especially valuable, as we have already noted, the unfinished process of the formation of the Belarusian ethnos as an integrity becomes an obstacle to the decisive political changes that the country needs today.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this part of the article, we will try to argue theoretical theses with empirical data, and analyse them and reflect. We assume that some questions will remain open for discussion.

3.1. Social trust: has it really or reactively changed

Social trust in sociological research is measured as a characteristic of relationships - as trust in most people or caution in any relationship with them. The behavior of this indicator reflects many processes in society. For example, a high value of the indicator may indicate the following factors:

- the state's authoritarianism [Adam, Podmenik 2010], the Republic of Belarus is such a state;
- the stability, regardless of the quality of this stability, or lack of development; socio-political conditions in Belarus are defined as "unstable stability" (term by S. Salnikova [Salnikova 2014b: 185]);
- the ambivalence of the population due to the symbiosis of old and new values and norms in society, etc.

Strengthening these factors will contribute to an increase in the values of social trust indicators. But abrupt social changes will entail a decrease in the corresponding indicator because the desired stability will be disrupted ("albeit lives poorly, but it is known how") and disorientation in the double institutional space will increase.

Until 2008, Belarus showed the largest increase in confidence among European countries [Salnikova 2014b: 152-154], and we interpreted this trend as the relative protection of the population (in fact, the economic isolation of country) before the global financial crisis. A strong social upheaval in 2020 in conditions of unstable stability led to a sharp decline in trust and almost returned to the position existing at the beginning of the republic's state independence (Table 1).

Table 1. Social Trust Indicators, Belarus (EVS*, WVS**, Chatham House)

Survey, year	In general, would you be trusted or that yo in dealing	T-DT Coef. b.	
	Can trust	Need to be very careful	
EVS, 1990	25.5	74.5	-0.49
WVS, 1995	39.9	55.7	-0.16
EVS, 2000	41.9	58.1	-0.16
EVS, 2008	44.8	55.2	-0.10
Chatham House, 2021	30.4	69.6	-0.39

^{*} European Values Study

Sources: Authors

^{**} World Values Survey

The fall in trust is unambiguously associated with the 2020 elections. We have selected the most significant answers to the question of how the respondents voted in the presidential elections in Belarus (Table 2). The relationship between the variables of social trust and electoral certainty is statistically significant at the level Sig. = 0.026 (Pearson's Chi-square test). It turned out that those Belarusians who have decided on a political position (either A. Lukashenko or S. Tikhanovskaya) are more inclined to trust the majority of people, and vice versa. At the same time, only 11.2% of Belarusians agree with the statement «that people who share my political views are a minority» and 59.4% do not agree. Thus, belonging to a social group nourishes a sense of trust. It can be assumed that a certain decrease in trust preceded the elections because of the disunity of society, because «distrust engenders disunity – disunity nourishes distrust» [Salnikova 2014b: 154].

Table 2. Indicators of social trust in different electoral groups, Belarus, 2021 (Chatham House)

	In general, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people? %					
	Can trust	Need to be very careful				
Alexander Lukashen-	37.1	62.9	100			
ko	25.2	20.7	22.1			
Svetlana Tikha-	35.1	64.9	100			
novskaya	56.8	50.7	52.6			
Against arragrans	22.6	77.4	100			
Against everyone	9.5	15.7	13.6			
I do not want to an-	24.1	75.9	100			
swer	8.6	13.0	11.6			
Total	32.6	67.4	100			
iotai	100	100	100			

Sources: Authors

3.2. Institutional trust: what happened?

Great changes have taken place at the level of institutional trust. According to the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus in 2009, the ranking of institutes «clearly shows the order: the population of country trusts the state authorities according to their importance in the hierarchy of the power and does not trust all those institutions (there are no social institutions in the list), which are characterised by the "non-" particle in relation to statehood with a strong vertical of powers (see table 2.24 in [Salnikova 2014b: 162-163]). The institutions of the church and the army were removed from this list because they «have traditionally occupied high places in all previous monitoring studies» [Shavel 2011: 113].

Indeed, according to the international research WVS in 2011, Belarusians most trust-

ed the church (T-DT Coeff. b. = 0.70), the army (0.69) and universities (0.65), as well as the government (0.16) and equally the courts and the companies (0.11), the banks (0.01); all other institutions had a negative trust-distrust balance coefficient (see also data in [Bornukova et al. 2018: 4]).

According to the data of Chatham House in 2021, the trend has changed (see the univariate distributions in [Astapenia 2021: 24-25]): the key institutions of post-election confrontation with the people (the President, the Constitutional Court, state security agencies, the judiciary, state media, etc.) turned out in the second half of the rating, mostly non-state, neutral and newly created institutions in relation to the confrontation turned out in the first half of the ranking.

According to the trust-distrust balance coefficient, non-state media, the churches, independent trade unions, administrations of enterprises and the headquarters of the presidential candidate V. Babariko have a positive indicator, and three institutions (the Coordination Council, headquarters of the presidential candidate S. Tikhanovskaya, army) have balancing at zero level, the other institutions have negative indicator of varying value (table 3).

Table 3. Institutional trust indicators, Belarus, 2021 (Chatham House)

	Trust, %	Distrust, %	Difficult to answer,	T-DT Coef. b.
Non-state media	49.50	30.30	20.20	0.192
Catholic Church	41.70	27.70	30.50	0.140
Orthodox Church	45.40	32.50	22.10	0.129
Victor Babariko's headquarters	42.70	31.50	25.80	0.112
Independent trade unions	39.10	32.30	28.50	0.068
Administration of your enterprise	40.00	34.20	25.90	0.058
Coordinating Council	38.20	37.60	24.10	0.006
Svetlana Tikhanovskaya's headquarters	38.80	41.20	20.10	-0.024
Army	36.50	46.70	16.80	-0.102
National Anti-Crisis Management	22.00	37.30	40.80	-0.153
Tax authorities	30.60	50.90	18.40	-0.203
Protestant Church	18.40	39.00	42.70	-0.206
President of the Republic of Belarus	24.10	59.90	16.10	-0.358
Constitutional Court of the Republic of Belarus	23.30	59.30	17.50	-0.360
Militia	25.30	63.20	11.50	-0.379
State Security Agencies	22.30	61.30	16.40	-0.390
Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus (government)	21.80	61.10	17.10	-0.393
Official trade unions	19.80	62.20	18.10	-0.424

Local authorities	20.90	63.70	15.30	-0.428
National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus	18.30	62.40	19.30	-0.441
(parliament)				
Judicial authorities	20.10	65.00	15.00	-0.449
State media	16.30	70.00	13.70	-0.537
Central Election Commission of the Republic	14.90	69.30	15.70	-0.544
of Belarus				

Sources: Authors

K. Bornukova and colleagues described institutional changes adopted at the state level (access to information and transparency, decentralisation, etc.) as mechanisms to increase trust in institutions, and assessed their implementation as promising with tangible results in 10-30 years [Bornukova et al. 2018: 14]). It is important to note that in the state regulation of institutions it is necessary to take into account the fact that the level of trust depends on the development of the legal system (the protection of property rights, the rule of law, the efficiency of public administration, the transparency of government actions and the low level of corruption, etc.). Thus, the most effective way to increase institutional trust is to build relations «institutions-society» in accordance with the needs of society, ensuring freedom, human rights, transparency and the accountability of the government [Mishler, Rose 2001]. On the contrary, the needs of society in 2020 were ignored, as were the rights of many people who either participated in peaceful protests or simply found themselves at a certain time in a certain place.

Significant changes in the structure of institutions, to which Belarusians express trust or distrust, against the background of a decline in trust in them and in society, also testifies to a certain stratification in the «state-society» relationship. If earlier the situation in Belarus was interpreted in terms of «domination of the state» and «authoritarian power», today in public discourse one can hear about «Lukashenka's regime» and «state terrorism», etc. regarding Belarus [Liga.News, 23.05.2021].

The state of Belarus has always controlled the actions of its citizens in all spheres of life, and Belarusians were satisfied with the development of democracy in the country (25.4% in 2000, 50.8% in 2008 (EVS)), it means they were satisfied with the development of institutions too.

But in 2020 the situation changed and Belarusians "saw" many institutions from a completely different perspective (Table 4). It is likely that they knew about the peculiarities of the institutional development of Belarus but maneuvering in a double institutional space was defined and known, and it was this "knowledge" that suited the Belarusians. The rationale that the dual institutional space of Belarus is a norm-regulating mechanism is well described [Salnikova 2014b: 127-165, 174-186]. During the presidential elections and especially after them, some institutions acted on the orders of the president and against the will of the people, so the attitude towards them changed.

After the 2020 elections, Belarusians realised the vulnerability of ordinary people to the arbitrariness of the authorities (73.6% of respondents said this A-DA Coeff. b. = 0.61; hereinafter, in part 3.1, the data from Table 4 are given), and «the violence of the security forces» (71.5%, 0.56), and the fact that state bodies do not properly investigate this violence (69.2%, 0.58), and Lukashenka's competitors are in prison unreasonably and unfairly (62.7%, 0.47). There are decent managers in country (59.3%, 0.45), but the one «who publicly speaks out against A.G. Lukashenko will be persecuted by the authorities» (68.6%, 0.56), because the president personally controls all spheres of the state (73.8%, 0.65). «A. Lukashenko is incapable of reforming the political structure of Belarus to meet the wishes of the majority of Belarusians» (61.5%, 0.46), who know that «the president should not be in power for more than two consecutive terms» (74.1%, 0.61).

The majority of Belarusians assert that «the law in Belarus for the last six months (the period from the elections to the poll - the authors' note) has not worked" (61.3%, 0.43). The problem of understanding how laws work is not new for Belarusians. Back in 2011, A. Laurukhin wrote: «The abundance of laws not only does not help to improve the situation, but, on the contrary, aggravates it, because the number of laws is inversely proportional to the severity of their implementation, and therefore, before following the law, [we] have to make additional efforts to clarify that an occasional situation (depending on the political situation, corporate and / or personal interests), which makes it possible to understand in relation to whom and how exactly the law should be interpreted». This creates a «vicious circle of incapacitated laws and illegal actions, [Laurukhin, 2011: 89]. Unfortunately, the problem is extrapolated to the outside world: international law is established by international institutions, so it is not legitimate for the "main observer of the law" of the republic. The situation with the forced landing of a Ryanair plane at the Minsk airport and the arrest by the security forces of the founder of the Telegram channel NEXTA, Roman Protasevich is a clear example of this [Liga.News, 23.05.2021].

Agreeing that Belarus is a social state (40.0%, 0.02 in Table 4), practically the last socially oriented state in the post-Soviet space, whose social needs are covered mainly by loans from Russia, Belarusians understand a number of related problems. State domination has generated «too many officials and state structures» (80.3%, 0.74) - this is a key institutional problem in Belarus according to the Chatham House survey 2021. The centralisation of power deprives the regions of resources, in particular financial ones (63.9%, 0.53). Neighbouring Ukraine is successfully implementing its decentralisation reform, its experience and practical cases demonstrate not only the positive effect of the socio-economic development of the regions, but also the national and ethnic identity of Ukrainians [Salnikova et al. 2021]. Therefore, it can be assumed that the rigid top-down structure of power is one of the key factors of «an unfinished national project» (term by V. Bulhakau [Bulhakau 2001: 80]).

A surplus of officials negatively affects the quality of public administration, since «the

overwhelming majority of officials, including high-ranking officials, are incompetent and do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to govern the state» (62.2%, 0.46). Belarusians are not so optimistic about their healthcare and education systems in comparison with neighbouring countries, as is commonly believed, for example, in Ukraine. The balance coefficients for the corresponding statements are negative (-0.18 and -0.17 for healthcare and education systems, respectively), that is, there are more of those Belarusians who consider the working of these systems no better than in neighbouring countries (47.9% and 45.7%, respectively) than those who agree with the statement "better than in neighboring countries" (30.3% and 28.8%, respectively).

Table 4. Indicators of agreement with some statements, Belarus, 2021 (Chatham House)

	Agree- ment, %	Disagree- ment, %	Difficult to answer,	A-DA Coef. b.
There are too many officials and state structures in Belarus	80.3	6.4	13.2	0.739
The President must not be in power for more than two consecutive terms	74.1	13.1	12.8	0.610
All spheres of the state are controlled personally by A. Lukashenko	73.8	9.1	17.1	0.647
An ordinary person in Belarus is not protected from the arbitrariness of the authorities	73.6	13.1	13.4	0.605
In August, after the elections, the security forces showed excessive violence	71.5	15.5	13.0	0.560
A lot of talented people left Belarus after the elections 2020	69.9	12.7	17.3	0.572
The facts of violence by security forces against protesters are not properly investigated by state bodies	69.2	11.5	19.3	0.577
I am often embarrassed and ashamed of some of the actions and expressions of A.G. Lukashenko	68.9	14.6	16.5	0.543
Anyone who publicly speaks out against A. Lukashenko will be persecuted by the authorities	68.6	12.5	18.9	0.561
In Belarus, most of the money goes to Minsk, and there is little money left for regional and, especially, district cities	63.9	10.9	25.2	0.530
Babariko, Znak, Kolesnikova, Tikhanovsky and a number of other people are in prison unreasonably and unfairly	62.7	15.3	22.0	0.474
The majority of officials, high-ranking ones too, are incompetent and don't have the necessary knowledge and skills to manage	62.2	16.4	21.4	0.458
Alexander Lukashenko is unable to reform the political structure of Belarus to meet the wishes of the majority of Belarusians	61.5	15.4	23.1	0.461

		T	1	1
The law in Belarus has not worked for the last six months	61.3	18.8	19.8	0.425
In Belarus, there are people among officials and managers who are more worthy to become President than A. Lukashenko, but they are afraid to nominate their candidacy	59.3	14.6	26.1	0.447
Parades of combines, tractors, trucks are a shame for our country	45.6	34.1	20.2	0.115
The change of power is beneficial only to those who come to power. Ordinary people are likely to suffer	43.4	38.2	18.3	0.052
Unprofitable state-owned enterprises should be closed, even if this leads to an increase in unemployment for 3-6 months	40.8	33.2	25.9	0.076
In general, Belarus is a socially oriented state	40.0	38.4	21.5	0.016
In fact, I don't care what flag will be in our country	38.9	47.7	13.5	-0.088
In modern Belarus, everyone who wants to work can find a job	36.0	55.6	8.4	-0.196
It was A. Lukashenko saved industry and economy from collapse	31.9	48.6	19.5	-0.167
The healthcare system in Belarus works better than in neighboring countries	30.3	47.9	21.8	-0.176
The education system in Belarus works better than in neighboring countries	28.8	45.7	25.6	-0.169
Belarus successfully copes with the coronavirus epidemic	26.2	57.5	16.3	-0.313
A. Lukashenko makes good decisions on the whole, but they are poorly implemented locally	25.0	52.9	22.1	-0.279
The reaction of the authorities to the protest actions taking place now is absolutely justified	24.1	57.4	18.5	-0.333
White-red-white flag – fascist one; it should be banned	23.6	57.3	19.0	-0.337
A. Lukashenko is close to the people and expresses their interests	20.4	62.3	17.5	-0.419
In general, I support the forced, but not always popular, actions of the state, such as raising the retirement age, etc.	19.0	69.3	11.7	-0.503
Belarus copes with economic crisis better than neighboring countries	17.8	58.6	23.6	-0.408
Good conditions have been created in Belarus for business development and entrepreneurial initiative	17.8	62.7	19.4	-0.449

Sources: Authors

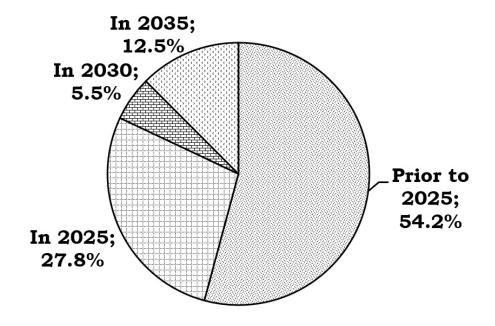
The situation with the understanding of how the state institutions of Belarus cope with the coronavirus epidemic and the economic crisis is similar (26.2% and 17.8% of Belarusians said «successfully and better than neighboring countries», respectively; 57.5% and 58.6% of Belarusians disagreed with this statement, respectively; the balance coefficients are -0.31 and -0.41 respectively). The largest negative imbalance (-0.45) was caused by the statement regarding good conditions for the development of business and entrepreneurial initiative (17.8% of Belarusians agreed with the statement, 62.7% of them disagreed).

3.3. Lukashenko vs change of power

Forecasts of the length of A. Lukashenko's presidential term can be determined by three options:

- "He will leave the post before the term of office" this is the largest and most variable group (54.2%), in which 6.0% and 8.9% of Belarusians believed that Lukashenko will leave the presidency, or until March, or until June 2021, respectively; 22.0% of Belarusians are convinced that this will happen at the end of 2021, while 7.7% of them predict 2022 and 9.6% 2023-2024.
- "He will leave the post after the expiration of his term of office", here is without variation 27.8%.
- "He will not leave the post after the expiration of his term of office" and he will either go for another presidential term (5.5%), or at least two ones (12.5%) (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. «What do you think, when A.G. Lukashenko will cease to be the President of Belarus?», Belarus, 2021 (Chatham House)



Sources: Authors

Analysts at the Royal Institute of International Affairs segmented the audience into three variables:

- Attitude towards the protest (full or partial support, neutral attitude, against protest),
- Voting (Tikhanovskaya, Against all or Refused to answer, Lukashenko) and
- Perception of violence (excessive force was used, Akrestsin prison torture, the actions of the authorities are not justified; Difficult to answer; the actions of the security forces are justified, not excessive force was used, Akrestsin prison no torture or Difficult to answer) [Astapenia 2021: 8].

Thus, they selected the core of the protest (37.3%), citizens sympathetic to the protest (19.5%), skeptics (8.8%), citizens indifferent to the situation in the country (16.3%) and Lukashenka's bastion (18.1%) (Table 5). We assumed that the forecast of the length of A. Lukashenko's term depends on the political position of respondent or its absence, and we were not mistaken. The relationship between the variables is statistically significant at the level Sig. = 0.000, Cramer's V = 0.325.

Table 5. The relationship between the political position and the forecast of the duration of A. Lukashenko's term, Belarus, %, 2021 (Chatham House)

	The core of the protest	Sympa- thisers	Skeptics	Indiffe- rent	Lukashenko's Bastion	Total
He will leave the post be- fore the term of office	28.9	12.4	3.6	5.1	4.3	54.2
He will leave the post at the end of the term of office	5.1	3.0	3.3	7.0	9.4	27.8
He will not leave the post after the end of the term of office	3.3	4.1	1.9	4.2	4.4	18.0
Total	37.3	19.5	8.8	16.3	18.1	100

Sources: Authors

The perception of symbols, which was written about earlier, also depends on the political position: statistical significance at the level of Sig. = 0.000, Cramer's V = 0.517 (see descriptive statistics in Table 6). It is also statistically significant between electoral groups (see groups in Table 2) and the state symbols closest to the respondent (Sig. = 0.000, Cramer's V = 0.483).

Table 6. Relationship between political position and acceptability of state symbols, Belarus, %, 2021 (Chatham House)

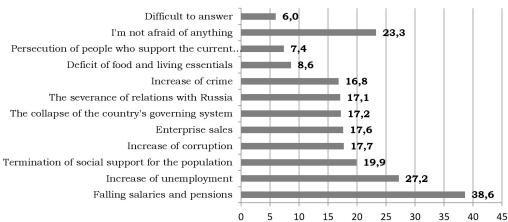
	The core of the protest	Sympa- thisers	Skeptics	Indiffe- rent	Lukashenko's Bastion	Total
White-red-white flag, coat of arms "Pagonya"	24.2	6.9	0.6	0.6	0.1	32.5
Red-green flag, state emblem of Belarus	4.8	4.4	4.6	10.7	17.0	41.5
Neither symbols	8.4	8.3	3.6	4.9	0.9	26.0
Total	37.3	19.5	8.8	16.3	18.1	100

Sources: Authors

The intentions to shorten the illegitimate term of the current president are quite understandable (the illegitimate term can be determined by the fact that 74.1% of Belarusians believe that the president should not be in power for more than two consecutive terms (Table 4), and 61.3% of respondents are convinced that the election results were falsified; but the best evidence is the mass protests after the elections). According to Table 4, one can also "collect" the image of Lukashenka. 68.9% of Belarusians feel ashamed of some of the actions and expressions of the first person of the state, but the opinion of citizens does not prevent him from controlling all spheres of the state (73.8%) and punishing uncontrollable citizens (68.6%). The Belarusians rather disagree (48.6%) than agree (31.9%) with the fact that the preservation of the industry and economy from collapse is attributable to A. Lukashenko, because the balance coefficient is negative (-0.17). The situation is the same with the correctness of the president's decisions and the transfer of responsibility for his decisions to local authorities (52.9% of those respondents who disagree, 25.0% - agree, the balance coefficient is -0.28), and the president's closeness to the people and the expression of them interests (62.3% - disagree, 20.4% - agree, -0.42), etc.

Do Belarusians want changes? The statement «change of power is beneficial only to those who come to power» (43.4% of Belarusians agree, 38.2% – disagree) has no imbalance (0.05). They want change and are afraid of them. Belarusians are afraid of a fall in wages and pensions (38.6%), an increase in unemployment (27.2%) and the termination of social support for the population (19.9%) (Fig. 1). By the way, Belarusians are equally afraid of the increase of corruption (17.7%) and crime (16.8%), the sale of enterprises (17.6%), the collapse of the governing system (17.2%) and the severance of relations with Russia (17.1%); and these fears are stronger than the persecution of dissidents (7.4%) and the deficit (8.6%); the absence of the deficit is partly provided by loans to Russia.

Figure 2. «What probable consequences of the change of power do you personally fear?», Belarus, %, 2021 (Chatham House)



Sources: Authors

The main fears were the same before the economic crisis of 2008: the fear of inflation, unemployment and other troubles are firmly rooted in the mass consciousness and admit the possibility of their occurrence. This is not surprising, because the key position of the 2008 anti-crisis programme was a decrease in wages and social benefits (this was felt by 33.3% of the population), as well as a delay in these payments (16.2%) and the depreciation of ruble savings (30.6%) (the empirical data from [Shavel 2011: 99]). This means that with the stated social stability in Belarus, not a single generation of Belarusians lived in economically good conditions, so they did not have the experience of confidence in the future. Therefore, the paradoxical Belarusian (term by L. Titarenko [Titarenko 2003]), on the one hand, wants the economic development of the country with the obligatory preservation of social guarantees and, on the other hand, believes that this can be achieved with the "strong leader" [Salnikova 2014b: 141] while censuring civic activism. Belarusians are eclectic in their understanding of state governance: according to EVS 2008, "having a strong leader who does not have to worry about parliament and elections" is good for 61.6% of Belarusians and bad for 25.4% of them; and at the same time "having a democratic political system" is good for 63.0% of Belarusians and bad for 9.4% of them. Belarusians have a "wonderful" understanding of the mechanisms of civil society: according to the data of Chatham House in 2021, protest is a threat to the existence of the state (67.9%) and can develop into a civil war (49.7%), since they pass under fascist symbols (46.0%); and you cannot destroy everything that has been built in Belarus for the last 20-30 years (84.1%). «The protests are pointless» – say the Belarusians, – «you need to use the opportunities for dialogue» (80.8%). Is a protest not a democratic way for a large group of people to express their opinion to its representatives? Did they practice many peaceful protests? No, we did not practice, but we are sure that it does not work.

This "democratic political system with a strong leader" without a "civil society-power" dialogue contains all the fatalism of Belarusian politics, which is rooted in the country's historical past. But there was a big peaceful protest after the elections. Yes, it was, since social networks are being formed in Belarus, but these networks do not have enough resources. There is no understanding of the mechanisms for achieving something and of how democracy works, and why authoritarianism and democracy are incompatible, nor understanding that leaders are born in the process of communication between civil society and the authorities and that they are a "product" of a resource social networks, etc. "The leaders do not represent the interests of people like me" (69.7%), because they are formal ones, and therefore "will not cope with the management of the state" (73.9%). A "strong personality" is needed here or not?

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the socio-political situation in Belarus after the presidential elections in 2020 focused on some of the most noticeable phenomena and processes, and it leads to the following conclusion: the desire for real social transformation in Belarusian society observed in opinion polls is in contradiction with a simultaneous decline in trust of the mechanisms of its functioning. We explain this state by the lack of experience of the Belarusian population in the formation and preservation of a sovereign state based on the developed social institutions of a traditional society. The lack of experience in institutionalised social relations can also explain the long existence of authoritarian power in the person of the current President of country and the fear of forming an alternative power in the form of a responsible civil society.

This state of public consciousness can be explained by the absence of a national historical model of governance: for several centuries the Belarusian lands were part of different civilisational and political states. This circumstance also explains the absence of important cultural elements of social life: a well-developed / complex mythology, a pantheon of national heroes, a stable practice of using a single language, confessional unity, etc. Under such conditions underpinning the functioning of the Belarusian society, centralisation of power and a "strong hand" are naturally perceived as a condition for maintaining social order. However, although authoritarianism does not destroy leaders, it does not support the institution of political leadership, individual rights and individual subjectivity.

Empirical studies note that an artificially structured social space has developed in Belarus, in which the ultimate dichotomies (power / not power; loyal to the country's leadership / not loyal to one's leader, etc.) organise all other structures. The artificial structure presupposes the non-subjectness and the absence of real leaders even in the formation of virtual social networks and their resource base (the name of the popular protest information network NEXTA - "Someone" confirms the authors thought). We consider the simplified formal social structure and the lack of historical experience of self-government as the main characteristics of modern Belarusian society.

The consequences are disbelief in the effectiveness of collective social action in the event of a transit of power and possible social (economic, financial) problems and fear of chaos (unemployment, poverty, increased crime rates, etc.). The resource of internal stability presupposes the long-term existence of non-state legitimate institutions, social and cultural practices of population, their "archiving" in the public consciousness, and the continuity of the historical tradition. Belarus does not have such a stable historical experience.

An important indicator of internal instability in Belarus is the paradox of the presence of national symbols and the absence of a national idea, ambition, and an active social group that would support the authorities in their desire to make the state a political subject. As part of the USSR, such actions were not possible, and after the collapse of the USSR, the de-Sovietisation of Belarus was a formal process.

The most noticeable and important factor in assessing the socio-political situation in Belarus is the phenomenon of the presence of a large group of people who have not decided on their identity – "tuteyshyya" as a marker of an unclear ethno-social structure of the Belarusian society. The phenomenon of the "tuteyshyya" indicates the absence of ethno-sociocultural dynamics, which contributes to the formation of a cohesive nation. The lack of a sense of belonging to a large ethno-cultural and national group leads to the emergence of mental discomfort, the growth of social distrust, fatalism in assessing the future and the search for a "fetish".

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