

## HAPSc Policy Briefs Series

Vol 2, No 2 (2021)

HAPSc Policy Briefs Series



# HAPSc

## Policy Briefs Series

Democracy, Green Transition,  
Security and the Economy

Volume 2 - Issue 2  
December 2021

The “HAPSc Policy Briefs Series” is published by the Hellenic Association of Political Scientists (HAPSc), in collaboration with the Laboratory of Health Economics and Management (LabHEM), University of Piraeus, the Public Policy and Administration Research Laboratory (LABDIPOL), University of Crete, the Jean Monnet Chair EduTRIP, University of Piraeus, the Laboratory of Education Policy, Research, Development and Interuniversity Cooperation (ERDIC), University of Piraeus and the Centre for Political Research and Documentation (KEPET). The journal is included in those actions using the emblem of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI).

The printed edition has taken place in Athens, Greece.  
Indexed in: Google Scholar, Microsoft Academic, OpenAIRE, CORE, Crossref, BASE (Bielefeld Academic Search Engine), ROAD, SciLit, WorldCat, Research Bible, Journals Directory, Citefactor.

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This journal is hosted by the Greek National Documentation Centre in its e-Publishing service (e-Publisher: EKT).

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All external links were active at the time of the publication.

ISSN Paperback: 2732-6578

e-ISSN: 2732-6586

Printed in Athens, Greece for the Hellenic Association of Political Scientists.

December, 2021

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# Topic 1

## Democracy and Civil/Human/Social Rights

# “The Power of Language”: Young People in Greece as “Scapegoats” in Covid-19 Crisis<sup>1</sup>

Sofia Alexopoulou<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Governments around the globe take measures to protect citizens against the coronavirus threat. At the end of the day, security becomes a top priority issue and therefore is included in almost every policy agenda. In light of this, some governments seem to victimize certain social groups when they are incapable of addressing successfully the health crisis of Covid-19. An indicative example is the Greek government's tactic (New Democracy Party) to blame young people for the spread of the virus, while the real ‘culprit’, according to some (Tziantzi & Papadopoulou, 2020), was the restart of tourist industry that resulted in a sharp rise of the Corona incidents. In doing so, language was the key ‘vehicle’ for this purpose along with statistical numbers, but the latter is a whole different discussion that this paper is not going to open. On the contrary, this paper constitutes a problematization on the usage of language for political reasons. Language is not a neutral tool but plays the games of political elites, while it has the power to create new scapegoats. Is this a wise political choice when Greek society encounters so many problems related to the Covid-19 pandemic? Logical reasoning says no. Will young people be the only exception to this rule? Certainty not, today new scapegoats come into light: citizens who refuse to be vaccinated and/or the sprayed’ ones.

**Keywords:** language; ruling party; young individuals; scapegoats; victimization; coronavirus.

## Introduction

Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, the language played and continues to play a key role in describing the daunting reality. A series of new terms invaded our vocabulary literally ‘overnight’ for describing the unprecedented health crisis. The barrage of words was immense such as “lockdown”, “herd immunity”, “social distancing” and so on. It was even developed a special dictionary dedicated to the Covid-19 that was released in Greek (Katsoyannou & Stefanidou, 2020). Very indicative is the phrase of Marianna Katsoyannou, Associate Professor in the Department of General Linguistics at Cyprus University, during an online seminar under the title “*Public Language in the Era of the Pandemic*” that has been organized by the Laboratory for the Study of Social Issues, Media and Education, at the University of Ioannina: “*the (linguistic) communication, the terminology, and the translation were suddenly matters of life and death*” (Katsoyannou, 2021).

Taking this comment into account, the Greek government together with other important stakeholders such as some members of the medical community, treated the language as a ‘vehicle’ that was aimed

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Alexopoulou, S. (2021). “The Power of Language”: Young People in Greece as “Scapegoats” in Covid-19 Crisis. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 9-13. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29486

<sup>2</sup> Sofia Alexopoulou is Ph.D. Candidate in Political Science at Örebro University, Sweden.

not only to inform citizens about the new virus (see the Press releases circulated by the Greek Ministry of Health), but also to create new scapegoats. The paper at hand offers to the reader a critical reflection on how the ruling party attempted to victimize young people, as a social group, with the usage of language to hide its failure(s) in handling the Covid crisis. The victimization of young individuals took place mostly in the first year (2020) of the pandemic in Greece. At this point, it is worth mentioning that my intention as a researcher is not to exercise a critique against the government in place. By contrast, what needs to be highlighted is that language is not neutral but is ‘colored’ by the state authorities for the promotion of certain political aims. Language influences greatly the public opinion and turns social groups against each other.

### Opening Up the ‘Language Fan’ for victimizing Young People in Greece

The victimization of young people makes part of the so-called “blame game” to establish a common enemy (social automation), who is going to support the political system and the dominant political rhetoric. In this ‘game’ the Mass Media participate actively and tend to formulate public opinion with the usage of evaluating judgments and characterizations, often produced in an arbitrary way. In this section, the public statements of members of the government and not only, are presented in bold (the author used bold for adding emphasis and the translation was conducted from Greek to the English language). These statements seek to construct the profile of young people and have a very didactic tone. In particular:

*"The basic cause of (virus) diffusion was **the entertainment of young people**" (Naftemporiki, 2020a).*

Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister.

*"This is not a critique, but young people are **more susceptible to such behavior (entertainment)**, but this is just a judgment. I am getting the accusation by the opposition that you victimize young individuals as if they are completely irresponsible and beyond criticism" (Samara, 2020).*

Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister.

*"I want to make a special appeal to young people, to young children. I am also a parent having kids at this age, 17, 23, and 22, I know the **carelessness of this age**. But please, I have an appeal to make: Protect yourselves, **you are not invulnerable**, and particularly those who are not invulnerable are your parents and your grandfathers and your grandmothers" (Euronews, 2020).*

Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister.

*"I make for once more an appeal to the young individuals and the citizens who do not follow the basic measures of individual protection, masks, hygiene rules, security distances, **to consider their responsibilities** against the vulnerable groups, the rest of the citizens who live in the country" (Rigopoulos, 2020).*

Mr. Vasilis Kikilias, Minister Health.

*"As a society, we are facing a danger: a sanitary rupture between generations. **The young people have been accused as irresponsible, the young were victimized for the spread of virus ...**" (Naftemporiki, 2020b).*

Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Opposition's Leader (SYRIZA).

*"Until now, **the young people were to blame, now the older people are to blame**, as long as people do not understand how useless Mr. Mitsotakis himself is" (Newsit, 2021).*

Mr. Nassos Iliopoulos, spokesman of SYRIZA.

*"**The students are responsible for the spread**, critical are the following 10 days" (THETOC, 2020)*

Experts on coronavirus in Thessaloniki.

*"**The irresponsible behavior of young people is paid by older adults**" (Skai, 2020)*

Mr. Nikos Sypsas, Infectious Diseases Specialist.

*"**It's young individuals who are indifferent to the protection and safety measures that we have proposed and we say repeatedly**" (Newsbomb, 2020)*

Mr. Nikos Sypsas, Infectious Diseases Specialist.

*"We have said scientifically that the mask and the distances will lower the number of cases. **Unfortunately, not all understand that. The gatherings continue in the evenings. Nobody said that young people can not go out. Let's go out in a group of four people, let's wear a mask, and let's sit to chat. It is not possible to watch what we are watching every night...Let's consider their families**" (Ethnos, 2020)*

Mrs. Matina Pagoni, Chairman of the Association of Doctors of Hospitals of Athens and Piraeus.

*"Another important source of infection is **the irresponsible young people who, for a drink or a date, they stand close to each other, without distances, without a mask in bars or parks, they do not care about their grandparents: they say, come on, it's a simple flu, the capitalists and the journalists fabricate everything**" (To Vima, 2020)*

Mr. Achilleas Gravanis, Professor of Pharmacology at the Medical School of the University of Crete and researcher at the Institute of Molecular Biology & Biotechnology of Institute of Technology and Research.

To sum up, using the conventional content analysis approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), I analyzed the previous speech statements. The dominant depiction of young people in Greece is described as follows: they are "irresponsible", they are "carelessness", they are "responsible for the spread", they feel "invulnerable", they do not "understand" the seriousness of the situation, they are "indifferent to the protection and safety measures", while they are interested only in their "entertainment" and not in protecting their "families"/"grandparents". Unquestionably, the crisis of coronavirus was an excellent 'opportunity' for disorienting the public opinion in an attempt of the Greek government to

overlook its collective and individual responsibilities for the management of this pandemic (read more on this subject in the paper of Alexopoulou & Pavli, 2021). However, the reality is completely different. According to recently published research, it has been discovered that young people are not irresponsible against the coronavirus, but around 83% of them follow strictly the measures (Protothema, 2020).

## Conclusions

Indisputably, young people in Greece were victimized harshly. It is often said that young people represent ‘the future of Greece’ and suddenly they are demonized as ‘destructive forces’ because of their ‘reckless’ behavior to demand a few moments of entertainment. Conversely, throughout the economic crisis of 2009, the young people were depicted as a ‘valuable resource’. The dominant narrative back then was that several foreign countries were taking advantage of the Greek youth, which displayed a very high level of qualifications/skills, to support their labor sector. As a consequence, the phenomenon of “brain drain” was emerged. Today, young people are a ‘dangerous burden’ to the governmental plans for tackling the pandemic, while it is silenced deliberately and systematically that the individual responsibility has nothing to do with the age factor. Everything else falls into the category of political fantasies that concentrate on an aggressive and constructed political discourse targeted against young people.

All in all, the point highlighted by Mrs. Tsitsanoudi - Mallidou is correct, when she said that in the context of the Covid pandemic the *"language was manipulating and has been manipulated"* (Tsitsanoudi-Mallidou, 2021). This is the case of young individuals in Greece. Experience has shown that once such tactics are put into practice, it is only a matter of time until the next ‘victim’ is chosen. At present day, the victimization has been transferred into citizens who refuse to be vaccinated and/or are characterized as ‘sprayed’ because they often embrace conspiracy theories to justify their choice to remain unvaccinated. What can be done at the policy level (policy recommendation)? The Greek policymakers have to stop playing the "blame game" against vulnerable groups because social unrest and divisions can probably cause more problems than they solve. It is a very critical moment to stand all united -as a society- against this lethal, invisible virus that disrupted our ‘normal’ life. Any other practice is not only dangerous but also follows the logic of irresponsible politics, something intolerable for a country that wishes to call itself a modern representative democracy.

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# Making Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Canada Visible<sup>1</sup>

Anastasia-Maria Ntalakosta<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Although the United Nations have established mechanisms to exercise political authority and influence states' policies and even though the global civil society puts pressure on their actions, indigenous peoples continue to face discrimination and violations of their rights. Canada constitutes a great example of a democratic country that is supposed to respect and protect human rights but violates the aboriginal rights extensively. The massive energy projects, Coastal GasLink pipeline, Trans Mountain pipeline and Site C dam, being developed in North and West Canada, do not respect the traditional lands and resources of the indigenous populations that live in the region and have been strongly condemned by the First Nations, the actors of the global civil society and the UN. Nonetheless, the Canadian government continues to fully support their construction. This paper aims to analyse the violations conducted against indigenous populations' lands by the Canadian government and the reaction of the UN and global civil society, using a series of qualitative and quantitative data based on papers, analyses and reports of Institutes, Study Centers and Organizations.

**Keywords:** indigenous peoples; land rights violation; Canada; United Nations; civil society.

## Introduction

There was “*an alarming increase in attacks, killings and the criminalization of the activities of indigenous human rights defenders*” according to the annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the rights of indigenous peoples published on 14 July 2020 (OHCHR, 2020: 15). The case of Canada is being selected to be analysed, because even though the state of Canada is considered to be one of the freest countries in the world, based on Freedom House (2021), in recent years great concerns have been raised regarding the challenges that indigenous peoples face in the country. This paper focuses on the violation of their land rights correlated to the infrastructure development of North and West Canada and concentrates on the action of the United Nations (UN) and major actors of the global civil society, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

Although the Canadian legal framework safeguards the aboriginal rights to a certain extent, according to the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya (2014: 23), the country encounters a chronic crisis. In 2019, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed its concerns over the prolongation in the construction procedure of large-

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Ntalakosta, A. M. (2021). Making Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Canada Visible. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 14-23. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29487

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scale development projects on indigenous communities' traditional lands, such as the Site C dam and the approval of new infrastructure initiatives, such as the Trans Mountain Pipeline Extension and the Coastal Gas Link pipeline “*without the free, prior and informed consent of affected indigenous peoples*” (CERD, 2019: 1).

### **The international legal framework for indigenous peoples' rights**

The first major step in recognizing and protecting indigenous populations' rights was the adoption of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1989. As far as land rights are concerned, states shall recognize and have regard to the “*total environment of the areas which the peoples concerned occupy or otherwise use*”, incorporating the safeguard of the natural resources belonging to these regions (ILO, 1989: 5). However, this Convention is legally binding exclusively for states that have ratified it (ILO, 1989: 11) and these include only 24 countries so far (ILO, n.d.).

In the course of time, the UN has developed certain mechanisms to raise awareness of indigenous issues and enhance their role within the UN system, such as the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Special Rapporteur's mandate and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN DESA, n.d.).

In September 2007, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted. As Article 26 clearly underlines, “*Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired*” (United Nations, 2008: 10). Moreover, the Article 32 stresses that “*states shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources [...]*” (United Nations, 2008: 12). The statement is not legally binding upon Member States and is characterized as a recommendation (Economic and Social Council, 1962). Nonetheless, in accordance with the UN Economic and Social Council “*in so far as the expectation is gradually justified by State practice, a declaration may by custom become recognized as laying down rules binding upon States*” (1962: 15).

### **The Canada Case**

#### **I. The Legal Framework**

Canada has not ratified the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention of 1989 (ILO, n.d.) and voted against the UNDRIP in 2007 (UN DESA, n.d.). However, in 2016, the Canadian government decided

to fully support the Declaration and officially adopted it (Fontaine, 2016). Despite that, the government failed to integrate the Declaration into the Canadian Constitution until the 22nd of June 2021 (Department of Justice Canada, 2021).

The Canadian Constitution of 1982 was among the first ones worldwide that recognized the aboriginal rights, indicating three categories: the Indian, Inuit and Métis populations (Ministry of Justice, 2021: 56). Since then, in various cases the Canadian courts have affirmed Aboriginal peoples' rights to lands (Anaya, 2014: 5). The courts across Canada have also determined the mandatory consultation and conciliation between the state and the indigenous communities on the activities that could have an impact on their lives prior to making decisions (UN DESA, 2021: 98).

The inherent right of self-government related to the identity, culture, tradition, land and natural resources of indigenous peoples' communities, is enshrined in the Canadian Constitution (Anaya, 2014: 6). In this context there are numerous territorial self-governance agreements between these populations and the provincial governments and the federal Government that authorize the former to *"create their own constitution, as well as their own regulations on land, resources, [...]"* (Lindeman, 2019). According to the Land Claims Agreements Coalition there are also 26 *"comprehensive land claim"* or *"modern"* agreements that have been signed between the Crown and indigenous communities and settle their land and resource rights (Land Claims Agreements Coalition, n.d.). Although these agreements along with multiple laws and policies can be demonstrated as good practices and have positive outcomes, Anaya (2014: 18) states that they present numerous challenges, such as the long duration of the negotiation procedure primarily caused by the contradictory approach of the Canadian government that downplays or even rejects the recognition of aboriginal rights. Additionally, as far as First Nations are concerned, the regime that predominates in the exercise of self-government remains the Indian Act which does not allow the effective implementation of this constitutionally secured right (Anaya, 2014: 13).

## **II. The industrial development in Canada violating indigenous populations' rights**

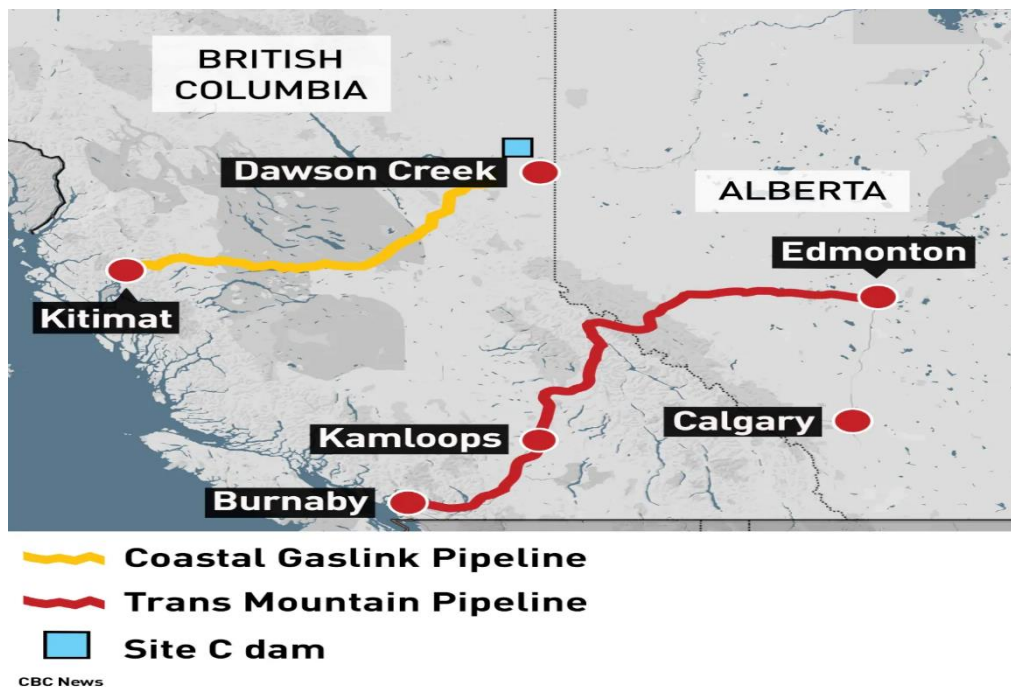
### **The Coastal GasLink Pipeline**

The Coastal GasLink Pipeline that crosses the northern region of British Columbia was approved in 2014 by the BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) (B.C. Ministry of Environment, 2014). A vital part of the CGL route traverses the territory of the Wet'suwet'en community, with the hereditary chiefs rejecting the pipeline construction, estimating that it will damage both their traditional lands and their activities, such as hunting and fishing (Office of the Wet'suwet'en, 2014: 13). Although the band councils that have endorsed the project have the right to make decisions over individual reserves

based on the Indian Act (Hunsberger & Larsen, 2021: 5), the indigenous group claims that hereditary leaders can assert authority over the whole traditional area. In the case of “*Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*” in 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada indeed recognized that the “*Wet’suwet’en hereditary chiefs were the rightful holders of title to their unceded territories*”. However, the case was sent back to trial and thus the title claim of the Wet’suwet’en nation has remained unresolved (Kestler-D’Amours, 2020)<sup>3</sup>.

Although the so-called Wet’suwet’en pipeline conflict had spread across the country, in October of 2019, the Executive Project Director of the B.C. EAO accepted the five-year extension of the Certificate (B.C. Ministry of Environment, 2019). After the Supreme Court of B.C. granted an injunction in 2018 ordering the defendants to express their objection without blocking the access to the project (Coastal GasLink Pipeline LTD. v. Huson Freda et al, 2018: 9), the police enforced the decision in January 2019, arresting 14 protesters (Hunsberger & Larsen, 2021: 2). As Dhillon and Parrish from *The Guardian* reveal (2019), “*Canadian police were prepared to shoot indigenous land defenders*”. One year after the massive protests, the CGL’s construction progressed, reaching now almost 50% completion (CGL, 2021).

**Figure 1: The Coastal GasLink pipeline (CGL), the Trans Mountain pipeline and the Site C dam**



Source: CBC, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> For more about the “*Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*” case, see: *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*, 3 S.C.R (1997). Available at: <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/1569/1/document.do> (Accessed: 18/08/2021).

## The Trans Mountain Expansion

The Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX) running from Alberta to British Columbia, was initially approved by the Canadian government and the National Energy Board in 2016, but in 2017 a legal case was opened against them, after the protest of indigenous communities, environmental actors and Vancouver and Burnaby cities (Kraushaar-Friesen & Busch, 2020: 4). The Federal Court of Appeal (FCA) decided against the TMX in 2018 concluding that the state failed in its obligation to consult First Nations in advance of endorsing the project (Tsleil-Waututh Nation et al v. Attorney General of Canada et al, 2018: 7). Shortly after these conclusions, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government purchased the TMX and in 2019 the project was approved once more by the government (Kraushaar-Friesen & Busch, 2020: 4). The FCA also decided in favour of the pipeline expansion, concluding that this time "*adequate and meaningful*" consultations had been conducted (BBC, 2020).

As the Aboriginals claim, the pipeline "*threatens thousands of clean glacier creeks, streams and lakes. [...] We have seen first-hand that government and corporations do not invest enough into cleaning up environmental disasters from these projects*" (Kroemer, 2019: 96). The violation of the aboriginal land rights is highly correlated with the increased impacts of climate change from expanded fossil fuel use that result in the degradation of the marine ecosystem in the British Columbia coast. It is argued that the project poses serious threats to the sovereignty and cultural rights of the indigenous peoples as well as the health predominantly of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, through contamination by chemical toxins and hazardous biotoxins and restrained access to traditional foods (Jonasson et al., 2019: 507-509).

## The Site C dam

The Site C dam, a dam and hydroelectric generating station that lies in the B.C province *would significantly affect the current use of land and resources for traditional purposes by Aboriginal peoples*" and "*these effects cannot be mitigated*", according to the Report of the Joint Review Panel that was conducted on behalf of the federal Minister of the Environment and his counterpart in B.C. in May 2014 (Joint Review Panel, 2014: Summary iv, 109).

However, a few months later, the federal government approved the construction. The Decision Statement mentions that B.C. Hydro shall adopt measures to diminish the effects to use of lands and resources, even though the Joint Review Panel had concluded that the impacts cannot be addressed (Environment and Climate Change Canada, 2014: 2, 20). Since the beginning of the construction procedure in 2015, the First Nations groups in B.C. have started a legal fight against the controversial

Site C dam, with their appeal being rejected by the FAO in 2017 (Prophet River First Nation & West Moberly First Nations v. Attorney General of Canada et al, 2017: 10) and their bid for an injunction order being dismissed by the B.C. Supreme Court in 2018 (CBC, 2018). After a short period of talks being conducted during 2019 between the First Nations, the B.C. Hydro and the B.C. government, the parties did not reach an agreement, with the indigenous peoples continuing their fight and expecting the results of the trial that will begin in March 2022 (Oud, 2019).

### III. The UN and the global civil society

In the context of the UNDRIP, James Anaya had already recommended in his 2014 report that resource extraction should not take place “*on lands subject to aboriginal claims without adequate consultations [...]*”, regarding the indigenous peoples’ concerns over TMX and the Site C dam (Anaya, 2014: 18, 22). In November 2020, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) addressed the permanent representative of Canada to the UN and condemned the construction of these projects due to the lack of “*the free, prior and informed consent*” of indigenous populations (Li, November 2020: 1). The Committee had called upon Canada to halt any construction processes initiated related to the TMX, the Site C dam and the CGL pipeline “*until free, prior and informed consent is obtained*” from the aboriginal groups affected. The Canadian government was further urged to ensure that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) will not apply force to the Secwepemc and Wet’suwet’en nations and along with any relative services will depart from their traditional territories (CERD, December 2019: 1-2).

In January 2020, Amnesty International Canada addressed directly to the Prime Minister of Canada, underscoring the urgency of achieving full compliance with the CERD’s decisions (Neve, Langlois, 2020). A few months later, the human rights agency submitted a report to the UN Human Rights Committee, highlighting the fact that the Site C dam and the Trans Mountain and Coastal Gaslink pipelines continue to proceed, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police remains in the region, arresting land and human rights defenders against CERD’s conclusions (Amnesty International, 2021: 5-6). The agency had raised awareness for the destructive impact of Site C on the human rights of indigenous peoples since 2016 and was calling the federal and provincial governments to immediately suspend the project (Amnesty International, 2016: 3-4, 19).

Human Rights Watch commenting on the TMX approval in 2019, claims that “Thus far, Canada has favoured short-term economic interests over meeting emissions targets”, demonstrating the environmental impact of the project (HRW, 2020). The human rights agency addresses the Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, recommending measures to be adopted to ensure



the respect and protection of indigenous populations' authority over their lands and resources (HRW, 2020: 116-117).

Likewise, in the Minorities Rights Group International (MRG) report released in 2019, Kanahus Manuel, an indigenous activist describes her peoples' fight against the major development projects, particularly regarding the TMX pipeline (Kroemer, 2019: 95-98). MRG recommends states to ensure that any development initiatives demand to take into consideration of aboriginal communities' rights and in case that they are affected, the projects should be halted (Kroemer, 2019: 17-18).

## Conclusions

In all three cases examined above it is proved that land rights were infringed. Although CERD called upon the halt of the construction of these projects due to lack of adequate consultations with the indigenous communities concerned and the human rights agencies urged Canada to abide by CERD's decisions, the government did not respond to the call, thus continuing violating their land rights.

Since the decisions made are not legally binding, the UN's exercise of power as a political authority is limited. Although the aim of this paper is not to provide an extensive list of specific suggestions, transforming the UNDRIP into a resolution with legal binding effects and implementing economic and political sanctions on any states that violate its commitments would contribute to the protection of indigenous peoples' rights. Specifically in the case of Canada, it is strongly recommended to solve aboriginals' claims to their ancestral lands and establish a legal and institutional framework to ensure adequate consultation concerning all projects affecting indigenous communities. As Kanahus Manuel says "Everything we are is from the land... Right now, one of the biggest threats to our land and livelihood is industry, as it has always been".

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# Violence Against Women in Turkey and the Impact of Civil Society<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

In recent years, gender equality and women's rights have been in the spotlight of international policymaking. However, in many cases, those efforts are not met with equal results. Women internationally continue to face discriminatory behavior and violence in all forms, both in socio-economic and political life. In Turkey, this issue remains largely unsanctioned, encouraging this type of violation of women's basic human rights. Civil society organizations in Turkey play a very important part in applying pressure on the government and raising awareness on the importance of protecting women's rights and eradicating gender-based violence. This policy brief examines the current situation of women rights in Turkey as well as the impact of civil society in the protection and empowerment of women.

**Keywords:** women's rights; Turkey; gender equality; civil society; Istanbul Convention.

## Introduction

Women's rights and empowerment in Turkey were elevated as a result of the prevalence of secularism and modernization that took place during the Kemalist Republic (1923). The "Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP)" with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, ever since its rise into power in 2002, has established a new wave of conservatism, Islamism and abolishment of Western influence which has reshaped the perception of human rights, and in particular gender equality. While women's rights are guaranteed by international legislation, in Turkey they are questioned by laws that encourage discrimination as well as patriarchal traditions and practices. The sudden abolishment of the Istanbul Convention in March 2021, despite the ever-increasing rate of gender-based violence and femicides, triggered backlash not only from women organizations and supporters nationwide but also from international actors, such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

## Trampling on the self-determination of women's bodies

Women's rights, in terms of the self-determination of their bodies, are being trampled increasingly day by day. For more than a decade, the AKP has made outrageous statements about how many

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Ziabara, E., Mikroudaki, K. and Papazafeiropoulou, C. (2021). Violence Against Women in Turkey and the Impact of Civil Society. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 24-30. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29489

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children a woman should have, abortions by rape, and even about childbirth by cesarean section, trying to further increase its influence on women's bodies.

Even though abortion in Turkey has been legalized since 1983 (Gürsoy, 1996), in a statement during the Fifth International Congress of Parliamentarians on the Implementation of the ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development), the President of Turkey still condemns abortions (Tolunay, 2014). In any case, abortion is limited in practice, despite the legality of the procedure. Most public hospitals carry this procedure out within the first eight weeks of pregnancy, even though the law stipulates that they can be carried out up until the tenth week (Tolunay, 2014). Moreover, to prevent women from going through with it, doctors refrain from using general anesthesia during the operation (Tolunay, 2014), which makes it inhumane and vindictive. From the age of 18, women are entitled to abortion. However, doctors who operate within a system of premiums, choose not to conduct them (Tolunay, 2014), as the bonus for these operations is low. They also require the presentation of marriage certificates, thus significantly limiting this practice for unmarried women. At the same time, they subject them to a form of psychological "warfare" by submitting them to listening to the baby's heartbeat and giving them a period of 2 to 3 days to think again about their choice (Tolunay, 2014).

Eventually, at every opportunity, the government tries to control women's bodies through the reproductive process, while strengthening the already existing patriarchy. Specifically, the Ministry of Health sends circulars to all laboratories (Tolunay, 2014) that provide pregnancy tests, requiring the names and mobile phone numbers of women whose test is positive. This information is passed on to their family doctors and, afterward, either to their husbands, if they are married, or to their fathers, if they are celibate; this process violates not only women's personal data and their rights but blatantly encourages violence and honor killings (Tolunay, 2014).

## **Violence and femicides**

Violence against women is still a major problem in many parts of Europe. In Turkey, on March 8, 2012, the "*Law on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women*" was enacted by the AKP, while in 2020 a "*National Action Plan to combat violence against women*" was drawn up. Nevertheless, the government and the courts have concealed cases of rape and violence against women, thus tacitly encouraging these human rights violations. There are many cases in which government officials and even the President himself have made statements directly blaming rape or murder victims and their families (Tolunay, 2014).

At the same time, many girls in Turkey, especially those that come from vulnerable groups or low socioeconomic status, continue to face pressure to fulfill traditional gender roles and are at particular risk of entering into a child, early or forced marriage. Despite the rising average age of marriage, where the legal threshold is 18 years, child marriage remains a challenge for Turkey and reflects a model of gender inequality that enhances stereotypical roles for girls, limits their education, endangers their health, and exposes them to the risk of violence (UNICEF, 2021). According to National Survey on violence against women, 4 out of 10 women in Turkey have been subjected to physical or sexual violence since 2014, 48% of girls in Turkey who marry from the age of 18 are exposed to physical violence, while only 1 in 10 women in Turkey that are exposed to violence are applying to an institution for help (UN Women, 2021). The outbreak of COVID-19 promptly made matters worse in domestic violence cases. Throughout Turkey, there has been a 40-80% increase in domestic violence from March 2019 to March 2020 (UN Women, 2020).

Nonetheless, the phenomenon of femicide is increasing, as a "natural" follow-up to the existing violence. The Turkish government admitted that it does not keep detailed records of violence against women, but the Turkish feminist organization "We Will Stop Femicide" reported that 474 women were murdered in Turkey in 2019, mostly by their relatives or associates (Thelwell, 2020). Misogynistic feelings are deeply etched in Turkish culture and society and are further reinforced by the attitude of government representatives and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan himself (Thelwell, 2020).

### **Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence ("Istanbul Convention")**

*"Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between women and men, which have led to domination over, and discrimination against, women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women"* (Council of Europe, 2011: 5). The State must address all forms of violence against women and take action to prevent it, protect the victims and prosecute the perpetrators (Council of Europe, 2011). The convention makes it clear that violence against women can no longer be considered a private matter for states. Once the convention has been ratified, governments must amend their internal legislation, take measures, and allocate resources to eliminate violence against women in its entirety. Once signed, the document becomes a legally binding obligation for the state. (Council of Europe, 2011).

Turkey was the first country to sign (2011) and ratify (2012) the Istanbul Convention (United Nations, 2021). On March 20, 2021, the President announced the country's withdrawal from the Convention,



despite the ever-increasing rate of femicides taking place. According to many Turkish officials and the Minister of Family, Labor and Social Policies, Zehra Zumruth Selcuk, internal regulations and the judicial system are sufficient to ensure protection from gender-based violence and implement new regulations (Deutsche Welle, 2021). In addition, they claim that the Istanbul Convention undermines the family institution and encourages divorce and is also being exploited by the LGBT+ community to achieve greater social acceptance, which goes against the traditional values, social and family, of Turkey (Karakas, 2021).

### **Why the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention is unconstitutional based on national and international law?**

President Erdogan's move to announce Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention is not only morally wrong but also legally and constitutionally. First and foremost, it defies the fundamental principle of the Turkish Constitution, according to which the Executive cannot usurp the powers of the Legislature. According to Article 90 of the Constitution, two important legal points are mentioned. Firstly, ratification of international agreements is always performed by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (The Parliament). Secondly, in the event of a conflict between international and domestic law, as far as fundamental rights are concerned, international law prevails. Under Article 104 of the Constitution, a Presidential Decree cannot disregard procedures and override what is provided for in the Constitution. Therefore, the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention with a Presidential Decree is unconstitutional. President Erdogan did not have the power to issue such a decree, as it obstructs the exclusive powers conferred on the Legislature.

At the same time, the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties does not provide for a mechanism for the entire withdrawal from a treaty or its termination. Specifically, Article 54 of the Vienna Convention states that a treaty may be revoked or terminated by the relevant withdrawal provision provided for in the treaty in question. Regarding the Istanbul Convention, Article 80 states that a contracting party may renounce it by notifying the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe. It shall enter into force on the first day of the month after the expiry of a three-month period, following the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary-General. Therefore, the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention by Presidential Decree, and not by official notification, is not legally acceptable under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (Singh, 2021).

### **Civil society**

In 1934, the women's movement under the Kemalist narrative in Turkey achieved a very important victory in terms of women's rights, through the amendment of the civil code. Specifically, they



managed to guarantee the right to vote and to be elected and 17 women managed to gain a parliamentary position (Ragias, 2020). Moreover, from the 1980s and after the political coup that took place in Turkey, a second phase of the feminist movement begins, during which they are trying to restore the power vacuum and the male-dominated political space. They aim to combat discrimination and inequalities in the political, religious, and social fields as well as to improve their living conditions, professional rehabilitation, and spiritual development (Ünay, 2015).

Some of the most prominent civil society organizations are KADAV (Kadınlarla Dayanışma Vakfı – Women's Solidarity Foundation) and Kadınlar Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platformu (We will stop femicides). In particular, KADAV is fighting for the rights and claims of women in Turkey, for the change of the Civil and Penal Code in their favor, but also the improvement of working conditions. “We will stop femicides” aims at the proper legal representation of women as well as the reform of the already existing procedures. It helped to create “Law 6282” for the protection of the family and the prevention of violence against women. Through this, they managed to implement 35 amendments of which the most important was for women to be considered the sole holder of their bodies, free from the patriarchal remnants of conservative Turkish society (Ragias, 2020).

At the international level, the United Nations, in its efforts to promote gender equality and women empowerment, established the UN Women body in 2010. This entity is responsible for supporting policymaking, providing knowledge and expertise to member states, and coordinating with other civil society organizations with common objectives (UN Women, 2021). Other international stakeholders operating in Turkey for women's rights include Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Global Fund for Women, and more.

The importance of civil society's presence in Turkey can be measured not only by its tangible contribution to the challenges women face due to gender inequality but also by its action as a unifying factor. Undoubtedly, many segregations exist within Turkish society, from the political polarization to religion and secularism, which inhibit the consolidation of women's rights. Given that the state still needs to pick up the pace regarding the protection of women against inequality and violence, civil society's part in enhancing social cohesion and supporting women in all aspects of their lives is crucial.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, gender equality should not be perceived as a simple concept or a slogan, but as a complex socio-economic and political situation. Women's rights are fundamental human rights. Although significant progress has been reported, not only in Turkey but throughout the world, the

unanticipated abolishment of the Istanbul Convention causes new concerns about the protection and empowerment of women. In addition to that, challenges that inhibit women's journey towards achieving equality still lingers, both officially, that is, by law, and unofficially, by the patriarchal and conservative society. If Turkey hopes to be incorporated into the European Union, the protection of human rights is at least a critical step towards that direction. Thus, based on the above, we suggest that the appropriate recommendations are the following;

1. Institutional consolidation of women's rights and reinforcement of domestic law
2. Avoid secondary victimization
3. The state should encourage women to get educated, stay in the labor market and engage in economic activity by providing affordable childcare, flexible work arrangements and parental leave. Financial independence is key for women's emancipation and a prerequisite for minimizing the possibility of being subjected to violence.
4. Collection of data on the cases of violence, domestic abuse and femicides plays an important part in keeping track of the situation and finding ways to mitigate it.
5. Establishment of an effective support system for the victims (support hotline, counseling centers and temporary accommodation centers)
6. Awareness-raising in coordination with civil society in order to spread the ideal of gender equality among the deeply conservative and patriarchal society.
7. The UN Women entity should focus on empowering women directly through educational programs and psychosocial support for the victims of gender-based violence.
8. The UN, as an international organization and through the Sustainable Development Goals, should enforce stricter measures and set more optimistic goals, in order to achieve wider participation in socio-political life and gender parity.

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# Being a Woman under Taliban's Theocratic Regime<sup>1</sup>

Stavroula Xristina Kallini<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

In the light of the recent events that have taken place in Afghanistan, the purpose of this policy brief is to turn back to the time when the Taliban were in power (1996-2001) and to explore the brutality of their theocratic regime against women. In particular, this policy brief examines the restrictions imposed by the Taliban on Afghan women, by depriving them of essential rights, as well as the changes that are claimed to have taken place in the post-Taliban era. It is concluded that the international community and NGOs should play a significant role in upgrading the position of women in Afghan society.

**Keywords:** Taliban's regime; women's rights; extremism; international community; civil society

## Introduction

There is no doubt that the darkest times Afghanistan have ever experienced were under the Taliban regime. When they ascended to power, they attempted to establish a theocratic regime, through which they would apply their own interpretation of Qur'an (Farhoumand-Sims, 2007). More specifically, they repeatedly violated the human rights of Afghan people and in particular those of women, who were the main target of Taliban's political action (Farhoumand-Sims, 2007). As Goodson (2001) notes, directly after the occupation of Kabul, they seek to underrate the place of women in society, based on a modified version of Pashtunwali traditional beliefs. Historically, in Pashtun culture, women's public life was restricted, as they constituted the personification of family and clan honor, which had to be protected (Goodson, 2001).

It has to be noted that the way the Taliban interpret Islam does not represent the Islamic community as a whole, neither is supported by it (US Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2001). Even though in their political discourse they argued that their actions were aimed at protecting the role and the position of women in society, in reality they deprived them of their rights to health, education, work, religion etc. (US Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2001). Among other things, girls were not allowed to attend school, women were required to follow a strict dress code when they were away from home (Goodson, 2001), it was not easy for them to have access to medical health, and the majority of them were forced to quit their job (US Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2001). In fact, as reported by the US Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Kallini, S. X. (2021). Being a Woman under Taliban's Theocratic Regime. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 31-38. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29490

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and Labor (2001), there are many cases of women who have been raped, abducted or forced into marriage. These incidents demonstrate the Taliban regime's violent treatment of women and how that had an impact on their position in Afghan society.

In the first section, the living conditions of Afghan women under the previous Taliban regime are examined. In the second section, the changes that took place in the post-Taliban era are analyzed. Finally, some recommendations are presented on how women can claim a better future with the help of the international environment and the NGOs.

### **Living in fear under the Taliban Regime**

Much is known about the brutality of Taliban regime, but the policy of racial segregation towards women, has governed the most negative attention. As Goodson (2001) observes, the role of women and girls was the only central purpose of Taliban's Islamization program. Their backward policy was justified in Sharia religious law but also in allegedly traditional perceptions of Afghan society (Goodson, 2001). As it will be analyzed below, their prohibitions covered both the private and public sphere of women's lives.

The first thing Taliban did right after the occupation of Kabul was to ban girls from attending school and even deprived the right from women to study at universities (Cole, 2003). According to Taliban's ideals, schools were the way to hell, as through them girls would turn into prostitution (Cole, 2003). In fact, they argued that a girl's education was not supported by either the Qur'an or the Islamic law of Sharia. Girls were only allowed to be educated with the teaching of Qur'an, starting from the age of 8 (Goodson, 2001). Furthermore, under the Taliban regime, women had the right to be seen outside under two conditions: first, it was obligatory by the law to make public appearances under the escort of a relative male such as father, brother (mahram) or husband. Secondly, having secured the appropriate escort, women in order to be able to appear in public places had to wear the suitable attire which was the head to toe burqa. In other words, to be full veiled (Goodson, 2001). The logic behind the head to toe veil was that the body of women was a private matter and had to be protected. More specifically, Taliban presented themselves as Islamic modernizers and protectors of the privatization of female body, but in reality this policy intensified the discrimination of women (Cole, 2003). Moreover, Taliban ideology did not allow women to work, forcing them to quit their jobs and leading many of them to begging in the streets or even to prostitution (Skaine, 2003; De Leede, 2014).

In addition, according to Goodson (2001), taxi drivers were prohibited from taking unaccompanied women or letting them sit in the front seat. Also, they were not allowed to attend social events in hotels. At times, many cases of women being beaten for violating the above prohibitions have been

reported, as well as taxi drivers who have agreed to transport unaccompanied women. It is worth noting that married women were more limited and had the least social life, as demanded by the divine will (Cole, 2003). The extremist views of Taliban's regime went one step further, when they required that houses must be painted black so no one could see the women inside their home (Farhoumand-Sims, 2007). In order to ensure compliance with the above measures the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice established a "religious police", responsible for maintaining order. In particular, the religious police raided the streets and publicly punished (via flagellation, beating or stoning to death) those women who did not respect the rules of the regime, such as going out in public unescorted, going to work or revealing parts of their body (Farhoumand-Sims, 2007). However, the prohibitions of the theocratic regime did not end up here. As Cole (2003) points out, women were not permitted to express feelings of joy publically or wear high heels, because they could become provocative to the opposite gender. Also, specific clothes and jewelry were forbidden for them (Goodson, 2001), as well as all beauty products (Cole, 2003). Amnesty International documented an incident in which a young girl's finger was amputated by the "religious police" because her nails were manicured (Mukherjea, 2021). According to a Presidential Decree in November 1996, women that were sprucing themselves up and were wearing elegant and fashionable clothes "would be cursed by the Islamic Sharia and should never expect to go to heaven. The Religious Police have the responsibility and duty to struggle against these social problems and will continue their efforts until evil is finished" (Tanner, 1996: 140). The right to medical care was another area where the Taliban sought to exclude women socially (Skaine, 2003). It is a fact that many sick women have suffered under the Taliban regime, as it was morally acceptable to be examined only by female physicians or nurses. However, the government did not provide the required facilities, as few hospitals were accessible for women and the female employees were inadequate (Goodson, 2001). Among other extreme measures, doctors were not able to examine women who did not wear burqa nor perform a physical examination on them (Goodson, 2001). According to the Taliban's belief system, "if a woman was sick, it was better for her to die than to be treated by a man. If she refuses male doctor to touch her, she would be certain of going to Heaven. If she let herself be treated by him, she would be condemned to Hell" (Zoya et al., 2002: 102).

It must be highlighted that women did not have the chance to address their problems to a judicial body capable of protecting and defending them. The segregation and devaluation of female gender was expanded also in the political sphere of women's life (Goodson, 2001). There was no law able to protect their political and social rights, as the Taliban's government did not treat or consider them as equals. Goodson (2001) cites some examples, through which the political discrimination of women

is understood; It was not easily accessible for women to get in touch with men who held high positions, they were not allowed to take part to political initiatives and they did not have the right to work in governmental positions or as lawyers, judges and journalists. The social degradation of women was apparent even before courts, where their confession did not have the same validity in comparison to men and in family law matters men prevailed against them (Goodson, 2001).

It is clear that the Taliban despite their claims in their formal discourse about protecting the integrity of the female gender, sought to marginalize women by depriving them of any right to public and social life (Skaine, 2003; Bonh, 2018). According to RAWA (Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan), many women ended their lives because they were not given the necessary medical care (Cole, 2003). For instance, a young girl set herself on fire with gasoline as she felt helpless, because there was no available female physician to treat her in the city of Herat. RAWA has also recorded a great number of women diagnosed with depression due to their confinement at home and the humiliating treatment they received daily from the Taliban. Radio Sharia had brought into light about 225 cases of women being beaten because they had violated the dress code (Cole, 2003). It is a paradox that through their violence Taliban believed that they were protecting and improving the lives of women, as their actions constituted the personification of Sharia Muslim law (Cole, 2003; Mukherjea, 2021). In fact, the ideology of Taliban's theocratic regime represents, in a great degree, the way in which Muslim fundamentalism receives public and private life (Cole, 2003).

By examining Taliban's violent and inhuman policy towards women, the following question arises; why were they so absorbed in regulating women's lives and did not focus on other areas of social policy? Goodson's (2001) paper gives some interesting explanations. Some scholars believe that by focusing their political action on women, they could ensure the coherence of their supporters, even those with the most extreme perceptions. Others argue that the Taliban leadership feared the "corrupting" influence women could exercise upon their young followers, so they sought to marginalize them. However, the prevailing view is that the Taliban regime was not in reality capable of engaging in other areas of politics, as it did not possess the necessary funds, sufficient administrators and there was no industry to invest. In the absence of a solid political orientation, Taliban had to introduce a reason for the existence of their regime and thus promoted the Islamic ideology. An important part of this ideology considers women as the weakest and inferior gender, to whom they have to protect their moral integrity at all costs (a "politics of fear").



## **Can we talk about real liberation since the collapse of the Taliban regime?**

The fall of the Taliban regime in 2001 was accompanied by feelings of relief and optimism, because it was expected that women's living conditions would change for the better and that no one would be able to impose restrictions on them anymore. Women began to walk carefree in the streets with or without the imposed by the Taliban burqa, laugh freely, go to beauty salons, and attend social events (Riphenburg, 2004; De Leede, 2014). Furthermore, education for both women and girls became accessible again, women were allowed to take part in political events, sports, entertainment and to start working again (Kabir, 2012; BBC, 2014). More specifically, they were now able to hold political positions such as governors, ministers, join the police or enlist in the armed forces (Kabir, 2012; Reynolds, 2021). In 2003 the newly formed government of Hamid Karzai validated the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, under which states commit to treat both genders equally under the domestic law (Reynolds, 2021). Additionally, in 2009 the Constitution introduced a law that provided protection to women from forced and underage marriages, as well as from acts of violence. As a result, many incidents came to light and began to be investigated by the police, although fewer reached the courts (Reynolds, 2021).

According to De Leede (2014), following the dissolution of the Taliban regime, more organizations became active in defending women's rights. In particular, these organizations seek to protect them from becoming victims of domestic violence and to give them voice in the political arena. Similarly, individuals with political power and influence are fighting for the protection of women's rights and for the condemnation of those who violate them. For example, Malalai Joya, the youngest Member of Parliament, constantly highlights the difficulties faced by women and publicly exposes the representatives of the local warlords in the Lower House (De Leede, 2014).

Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that living conditions have improved only for women living in the capital of Kabul. Women in rural areas do not have as much freedom and fear still dominates their lives (Riphenburg, 2004). Despite what they have achieved, Afghan women are way far from gaining the full independence that women in the rest of the world enjoy. According to a testimony of a woman in Herat "Only the doors to the schools are open. Everything else is restricted" (Riphenburg, 2004: 403). The hope and optimism for a better future that prevailed after the overthrow of the Taliban regime began to disappear. Although provisions for the protection of women's right have been incorporated into the Constitution, the fact remains that "In Afghanistan, no law can be contrary to the beliefs and provisions of the sacred religion of Islam" (Riphenburg, 2004:405). In other words, women must continue their struggle in order to gain access to basic human rights (Riphenburg, 2004).

At the same time, De Leede (2014) points out that even though the participation of women in the Lower House has increased significantly, in reality they do not play a significant role in the decision-making process. Unfortunately, the changes that have taken place under the Karzai government are yet very fragile, and despite the promises of gender equality and protection of human's rights, women are still at a disadvantage (Kabir, 2012).

As De Leede (2014) confirms, the truth is that since 2005, the Taliban have begun to regain power and exert influence in many parts of the country, mainly in the South. This in return has a serious impact on women's lives and on the changes they seek to establish in the public and political domain. For example, women who strongly oppose the predominant perceptions of female role in society are constantly threatened by the Taliban and the country's conservatives (De Leede, 2014). Moreover, in the southern part of the country, teachers are daily threatened by the Taliban to stop teaching young girls and to quit their jobs. If they do not obey they will endanger the lives of their children. In other areas, girl's schools have been set on fire and many cases of students being attacked with acid have been reported (Kabir, 2012). Taliban terrorism has resurfaced, with numerous bombings, arsons and suicide attacks being carried out, in order to undermine the effectiveness of the new government (Skaine, 2003). In 2010, in northern Afghanistan, the committee of Herat decreed that women could not make appearances in public without being escorted by a male relative (Kabir, 2012). Women may have been able to include the matter of their rights in the political agenda, but there are still many incidents of violence against them, mainly of domestic violence (Kabir, 2012; BBC 2013). In 2014, the Afghan government reported that 80% of suicides were committed by women because of the daily violence they endured in their lives (Bohn, 2018). In addition, although the majority of girls can now attend school and study at universities, there is still much room for improvement. According to UNICEF, 3.7 million children do not have access to basic education, with 60% being girls (Reynolds, 2021). Overall, for some, life after the fall of the Taliban and the support received by the international community, has improved significantly, while for others things have remained the same (Snow, n.d).

## **Recommendations - Conclusion**

Although the role of women is considered necessary for the transition of Afghan society from a culture of violence to a culture of peace (Farhoumand-Sims, 2007), Afghan women need the help of the international community to achieve even more change. For instance, RAWA, a political/ social organization and one of the most active in Afghanistan, aims to promote both women's rights and social justice. If the great political actors of the international system, such as the US, UN and EU, helped its action, the organization would become more visible and would be able to press for more

drastic changes within the afghan socio-political system. Meanwhile, local organizations operating in educating girls and women, should seek ways to attract external financial assistance, so that they can provide them the necessary education and give them access to the workplace. Only then women will be able to obtain bargaining power and political legitimacy, in order to claim their socio-cultural rights (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2006). Finally, it is imperative to awaken the international public opinion through the constant disclosure by the media, private initiatives and NGOs, about incidents and testimonies of women who endure difficulties on a daily basis. By extension, the pressure that the civil society will exert through demonstrations and mobilizations will force governments to turn their attention to Afghan women.

To conclude with, Afghan women have not stopped fighting for the rights they deserve, and no one can overlook what they have achieved. However, Afghanistan remains the worst country to be raised as a woman. “Women’s rights were supposed to be the success story of the 2001 invasion, but the legacy of war is still killing them” (Bohn, 2018: par. 20). The Taliban’s return to power in 2021 has raised many concerns about the impact it will have on women’s lives from now on. Although they claim that they will respect them and will not deprive them of their participation in the public sector (Pikulicka-Wilczewska, 2021) it makes us wonder; Will history repeat itself or will there be real progress? The interest of the international community is once again focused on the future of Afghanistan.

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# Human Rights and the State of Exception in the Covid-19 Era: The Cases of Hungary and Poland<sup>1</sup>

Moustou Areti<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

The present paper examines the ways in which the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting declarations of emergencies posed great threats to the rule of law and human rights. Giorgio Agamben's narratives on exception were used and constituted the theoretical framework of this study. The study begins with the clarification of the idea of state of exception and the explanation of a certain phenomenon; the "medicalization of politics". Subsequently, the cases of Hungary and Poland are being presented. The study concludes that the extreme measures undertaken by states in order to counter the health emergency, pose a huge threat to the operational qualification of the rule of law, as democracies tend to abuse the state of exception as a way to diverge from its provisions.

**Keywords:** Rule of Law; State of Exception; Covid-19; Hungary; Poland; Human Rights; Biopolitics

## Introduction

During the first quarter of March 2020, in which coronavirus had already taken great and life-threatening proportions, W.H.O. (World Health Organization) declared that the world is dealing with a serious pandemic and urged the states to swiftly start taking measures in order to counter it (World Health Organization, 2020). Many governments, gradually, judging the situation was posing a fundamental threat to their countries decided to declare a "state of emergency". It was more than expected that some everyday behaviors and normal governmental functions were about to change in the name of public health. However, as the coronavirus was getting more and more contagious, it was also obvious that human freedoms were suppressed in order to decrease the infection rates. Strict curfews, school closures and press restrictions are some but a few of the most usual and widely applied measures by the states. In fact, certain countries saw the state of emergency as an opportunity or more correctly as a mean, to pass new bills which contradict the provisions of the rule of a law.

Around the same time, Giorgio Agamben, an Italian philosopher, famous for his work on the state of exception, raised certain concerns regarding the protection of democratic institutions combined with the strict measures undertaken by states. These strict measures, according to Agamben, pose unquestionably a huge threat to the operational qualification of the rule of law, as democracies tend

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Moustou, A. (2021). Human Rights and the State of Exception in the Covid-19 Era: The Cases of Hungary and Poland. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 39-49. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29499

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to abuse the state of exception as a way to diverge from it (Agamben, 2008). Agamben also explains that the one with absolute sovereignty in their hands is protected by the constitutional legality, and by extension, they can control the application and refusal to apply the rule of law (Agamben, 2008).

This study aims to test Agamben's claim concerning the rule of law violations during the pandemic of Covid-19 in the European framework and explore those violations through certain case studies following an inductive reasoning process. It examines the cases of two of the most striking and intrusive examples of states in the European Union; Poland and Hungary, countries that had even declared some type of emergency in their domain during the pandemic (Diaz Crego and Kotanidis, 2020). It can be considered as a review paper that provides some examples of human rights violations during the Covid-19 era in two EU member-states, pursuant to the international human rights law.

Moreover, from the point of data collection, journals, researches and reports of international think tanks were used, as well as articles from periodical and non-periodical Press. In addition, data from human rights protection committees were also put in use. However, this paper should be read while considering that the pandemic is not over yet and that the human rights violations indicated from these particular countries are only the most prominent ones.

The structure of this present effort begins with analyzing the term of the state of exception while also linking it and examining it with a new phenomenon; "the medicalization of politics" (Salzani, 2021). Later, the cases of Hungary and Poland are being discussed in terms of human rights violations during the pandemic. And last but not least, the conclusions of this study are cited.

### **The state of exception and the medicalization of political and social life**

The state of exception as a term has a very long history and Giorgio Agamben was not the first one to ever address it. It was mostly formulated by the German Philosopher Carl Schmitt and the German-Jewish cultural critic and analyst Walter Benjamin during the first half of the twentieth century. Benjamin's belief on the state of exception can be perceived as a state excluded from the juridical provisions of law on command of the sovereign (Benjamin, 2004). On the other hand, Carl Schmitt's interpretation revolves around the fact that the absolute sovereign is the one who is able to decide when the state of exception shall be declared (Carl Schmitt, 2005). Therefore, Schmitt's concept of sovereignty mainly concerns the ability to declare the state of exception and by extension, the ability to suspend the legal framework in which the sovereign is operating.



Agamben driven by Foucault's inquiry approaches this issue with a "biopolitical" lens. In order to understand his thought of the exception, it is vital to bear in mind that for Agamben by suspending the law in any way, people's lives are automatically affected as well. Moreover, his reasoning considers two types of lives; the private life which he calls "zoe" and the public one also known as "bios" (Agamben, 1998). However, this distinction derived from Aristotle, is extremely blurred by the sovereign in order to gain excessive powers over the citizens' lives as a whole and legitimize their actions (Giordanengo, 2016). The being created during this process is called "homo sacer".

The sovereign has complete control over the homo sacer as a political being but also over their natural life which results in creating barriers to their right to live. His most eminent example is that of the "camp", clearly referring to the Nazi concentration camps during the WW2. Inside the camp each person is denied their political rights and the right to live as decent human beings (Agamben, 1998).

These concerns were also present with the pandemic as a background but at the same time, the discussion of the medicalization of social and political life had already commenced. Since the beginning of 2020, it was evident that every aspect of life was immediately linked to this unprecedented health crisis. Plainly, any blunders in the managing of this issue were more than expected, however, by the medicalization of political measures resulted in some countries coming through conditions extremely dangerous for their safety and by extension, for the inviolability of their rights. For example in Belgium, the disproportionate usage of law enforcement officials in working class neighborhoods, where minorities also find residence, caused a wave of outrage from media and NGOs (Amnesty International, 2020). More specifically, in the period between the 18th of March and the 29th of May 2020, the Human's Rights League, gathered 102 cases of abusive police practices 40% of which were racial based (Human's Rights League, 2020).

The connection between the medicalization of politics and the exception is apparent. Medicalizing political decisions such as the enhancement of law enforcement personnel in minority-based areas with the reasoning of public health safety, is highly motivated by the conversion of the state of emergency into a state of exception. The tooling of this kind of state, gives the permission to legislators in a nonstandard way, to defy the rule of law in the name of common safety. The exception is continuingly an extension in its duration, giving reasons for further concerns regarding the protection of the rule of law provisions.

## Case studies: Hungary and Poland

### *Hungary*

The Hungarian government under the rule of Prime Minister Victor Orbán, saw the pandemic outbreak as an opportunity to acute its authoritarian ruling. From the beginning of the pandemic, Hungary started to resemble a typical autocratic state rather than an EU member-state. More precisely, on the 11th of March 2020 the government declared a “state of danger” in order to counter the coronavirus pandemic (Noémi, 2020). In this particular frame, given that the ruling party of Hungary has the majority of 2/3 in the Hungarian Parliament, the government passed an Authorization Act which gave it the power to rule without any parliamentary supervision (Human Rights Watch, 2021a). This Act permits the government to apply important restrictions, without time limitations, without any parliamentary discussion, and without any certainty whether there will be any constitutional review (Hungarian Helsinki Committee, 2020).

Practically, the most striking violations were noted on media and academic freedoms, the rights of asylum seekers but also on gender and sexuality based issues. More precisely, in March 2020, Orbán’s government passed a new legislation to criminalize “fake news” by which the accused persons could be sentenced up to five years in prison (International Press Institute, 2020). According to a Human Rights Watch report on Hungary, by July there were noted 134 criminal investigations related to “fear mongering” most of whom were critiques on the governmental regulations in handling the pandemic (Human Rights Watch, 2021a).

Considering immigration, the Hungarian government took certain measures that created overwhelming obstacles for the immigrants’ fair and lawful living in the country. The right to seek asylum is a fundamental right which is laid down on international law by the Refugee Convention of 1951. Instead, Hungary closed its borders and restricted the arrival of migrants in its territory, which caused the Union’s criticism towards Orbán’s measures to counter the virus spread. As a matter of fact, the European Commission sent a letter of formal notice to Hungary about the non-respect of EU asylum legislation (European Commission, 2020a). According to this letter, the European Commission judges that the new Hungarian procedures which include the beforehand application of non-EU national asylum seekers to Hungarian embassies outside the country, is highly against the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (European Commission, 2020a).

As far as academic freedom is concerned, the most striking example can be that of Hungary’s University of Theatre and Fine Arts. The government decided to appoint the University’s board

causing a wave of negative reactions as it was considered a way of undermining the University's autonomy (Reuters, 2020). This governmental move was going against the democratic principle of autonomous operation of academic institutions, discrediting the government's motives even more.

With regard to Women's and LGBTQ rights the government continued to drag them down. In May, the parliament hindered the confirmation of the Istanbul Convention – the first legal binding act for the prevention and combat against gender-based violence and domestic violence under the pretense of promoting “destructive gender ideologies” and “illegal migration” (The Guardian, 2020), which is perceived ideologically against Hungary's law and governmental belief system. More specifically, it was claimed that the Hungarian law already provides legal assurance for women's rights. The convention was already signed by the Hungarian regime in 2014, which was obliging it to follow certain lines of reasoning: to prevent domestic and gender-based violence, to protect survivors and to prosecute perpetrators (Humans Rights Watch, 2021a).

Also in May 2020 the government worsened trans and intersex people's position by passing a new law, which was making it impossible for them to transition legally. The move in question posed a great threat to these specific individuals as it made them hermits to discrimination, harassment and everyday inconveniences in which identity documents were put in use. Dunja Mijatovic, Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner, stated that she was disturbed by the accentuating stigmatization of LGBTQ people and the political use of their dignity by the government (Council of Europe, 2020).

To conclude on Hungary's case, it must be mentioned that the Authorization Act was for the most part, a permission to Orbán's government to abuse the state of danger and by extension to undermine fundamental human rights or to minimize the parliamentary opposition. The mandate in question deteriorated the already deconstructed checks and balances in the country and it provided yet another instrument to the government for future declaration of health-related emergencies. It can be perceived that the state of emergency, or danger in this present case, suspended the legal framework in which the parliament and the government were collaborating, by limiting or silencing the parliamentary voice and the constitutional limitations and provisions were overruled by the government's powers. The Authorization Act was called-off in the beginning of summer of 2020 but the Hungarian government managed to introduce a new law allowing the government to declare future health-related emergencies while to apply measures without any parliamentary approval (Human Rights Watch, 2021a). Under this certain pretext, it is manifested that political actions were medicalized in order to justify their cause of existence and to restrict the reactions of public opinion, while creating the perfect

authoritarian frame for further limitations on individual rights. The line between peoples' public and private life was also extremely blurred, as it was uncertain when the state of danger would be uplifted, enabling the sovereign to legitimize his excessive gain of power.

### *Poland*

In the case of Poland, the Covid-19 pandemic also threatened the integrity of the rule of law provisions. The country's health minister, Łukasz Szumowski, declared the state of epidemic emergency under a recently updated special act passed in order to counter the covid-19 pandemic (Notes from Poland, 2020). This particular act gives provides powers as imposition of mandatory vaccination, prohibiting certain types of movement, limiting or banning the sale or use of certain items, banning assemblies, and restricting the functioning of specific institutions and workplaces, while also allowing authorities to access to properties and means of transport for the purposes of countering the epidemic.

In addition during the same period, due to concerns of unfairness in the upcoming elections, the country's presidential elections scheduled for March 2020 were postponed to July, much to the ruling party's disapproval. In fact, the so-called Law and Justice party, under the presidency of Andrzej Duda, requested that the elections should be held in May through a mail-in vote system or to extend the present term of Andrzej Duda by two years, raising important concerns about the democratic conduct of the elections (Human Rights Watch, 2020b). Duda's conservative nationalist government won the two-round ballot in July by a slight eminence, however, the opposition insisted on its accusations about the undemocratic process that was followed (Deutsche Welle, 2020). During that year, the judiciary and media freedom continued to face important challenges, but also immigrants', women's, children's and LGBTQ peoples' rights were put in danger.

The government continued its attacks on members of the judiciary. Judges and prosecutors are facing important challenges when defending the principles of rule of law or pointing out deficiencies in judicial reforms, a situation which interferes with their judicial independence. For example, in December 2019, the government passed a law about firing judges, with the excuse of efficient judicial control, which in extension raised the concerns of the European Union (Euro News, 2019). This law leaves no ground for judges to question the credentials of judges designated by the President. The very same law restricted the statements and actions of judges, courts and other independent bodies and prohibited from questioning the powers of judicial and constitutional bodies and law enforcement agencies (Human Rights Watch, 2020b). In response, on 29 April 2020, the Commission introduced

an infringement procedure on the law of 20 December 2019 amending certain legislative acts concerning the functioning of the justice system in Poland (European Commission, 2020b). As for the presidents of courts, after the dismissal of more than 70 by the Minister of Justice, no means have been proposed for their restoration, despite the expressed concerns of national institutions and the Venice Commission (European Commission, 2020c).

Moreover, the government strengthened its control over the press and the media. The independence and transparency of Polish media is ensured by law, however, in reality it seems to differ. According to Reporters Without Borders, in the lead up to June elections, 97% of the items on Poland's public television presented President Duda in a positive light, while references of the opposition were 87% negative (Reporters Without Borders, 2020a). The harassment of journalists was also eminent. For example, in January 2020, two independent and experienced journalists from Poland's public broadcaster were dismissed without any given reason (Reporters Without Borders, 2020b). Physical attacks on journalists also took place. In October 2020, during the protest against the abortion restrictions, at least three reporters covering it were injured by masked men (Makarenko, 2020). Other journalists were charged or fined after covering protests by the All-Poland Women's Strike movement, which played a key role in the October demonstrations (Human Rights Watch, 2020b).

With regard to migration, in March, Poland had refused entry to asylum seekers from Belarus, in response to the pandemic. This unlawful action made it impossible for asylum seekers to access Poland. It was recommended that the government would prolong the state of emergency along the border, while it was declared for 60 more days. Reports of people being shut off for weeks and five confirmed migrant deaths in the Poland-Belarus border, raised human rights activists' responses stating that those measures are unjust and inhumane (Euro News 2021).

Concerning women's rights, the government followed an aggressive policy. In July, it was declared that Poland is going to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention, claiming the Convention is "harmful" as it requires educators to teach children about gender (BBC, 2020). At the same time, during the lockdown, domestic violence rates gradually increased but the government took no measures to prevent or to protect the victims by ensuring availability of services and appropriate police response. However, one of the most striking events in Poland concerning women's rights was the near-total ban on abortions causing great waves of protests in the country. It would only be allowed in cases of rape, incest or when the mother's life is in danger. Hospitals and medical physicians would no longer be allowed to conduct the abortion procedure are in the case of a foetal anomaly. These cases consist the

majority of terminations in the country, which had already had, even before the ban, the strictest abortion law in Europe.

The rights of the LGBTQ community were also threatened in this period. In fact, in August, police made arrests of LGBTQ activists, under the pretext of placing rainbow flags on public monuments (Human Rights Watch, 2020b). Duda also stated that the LGBTQ is not people but an ideology even more harmful to mankind than communism, while also signing a “Family Charter” pledging to “protect children from LGBTQ ideology” and banning the propagating of LGBTQ ideology on public institutions (Euro News, 2020).

All in all, the pandemic gave Duda’s ruling party a chance to medicalize his political actions in order to gain more power and to pass down inhumane laws in the name of public health. According to Agamben’s argument, Duda can be considered the one deciding the exception, thus the absolute sovereign. However, right now the exception in Poland is more of normality rather than a fleeting condition. The endless extension of emergency permits the government to influence aspects of everyday life and to threaten the integrity of rule of law provisions.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, Agamben’s argument on the state of exception and the disproportionate measures undertaken by states during the Covid-19 era, is not a result of conspiracy theories or unfounded logic rather than in sense where modern biopolitics are laying with the overall control of human life for the benefit of the sovereign. The zone of anomie, in which the rule of law provisions start to dull, creates fertile ground for totalitarian means of governing. The state of exception is becoming the very paradigm of everyday life. Hungary and Poland constituted important examples of rule of law subversion during the pandemic, as an excessive amount of fundamental human rights were put on hold in the name of the pandemic. Moreover, in the constitutional framework of these countries, many laws were replaced, reshaped or even introduced.

Bearing the above in mind, it is considered that it is better for the states’ democratic conservation, not to abuse their emergency powers and to avoid disproportionate measures of countering the crisis in general. While it is widely recognized and acknowledged that the severity of this particular crisis is of great range, the responses must not pose discrimination and democratic disruption. According to UN experts it was pointed out that “...emergency declarations based on the Covid-19 outbreak should not be used as a basis to target particular groups, minorities, or individuals. It should not function as



a cover for repressive action under the guise of protecting health nor should it be used to silence the work of human rights defenders” (United Nations, 2020).

States in which rule of law is trespassed, are states in which the citizens are suffering great violations of their rights. Equality and plurality in combination with media freedom, educational and judicial independence and the respect of human dignity, should be regarded as the primordial goal of international institutions that aim to safeguard democracy. For example, in the cases of Hungary and Poland, both EU member states, the EU must pose stronger and stricter inspections over the member-states’ constitutional operations. In cases of diversion from the fundamental rule of law precautions, stronger institutions to guarantee the separation of powers via checks and balances are essential.

Global emergencies, in general, shouldn’t actually be treated as a challenging factor to the rule of law and its human rights provisions. In fact it would be more efficient to be perceived as an opportunity to enhance and upgrade the dealing standards for these crises. During these times states have proved to develop their emergency defenses and therefore, institutions must grab this opportunity to further develop emergency laws and practices in order to counter current and future emergencies. However, as a health crisis is a global phenomenon, it suggests international cooperation mechanisms to ensure effectiveness. For example, as national health systems are not narrowed in national levels anymore, but are gradually becoming a matter of international interest, collaborations, common ratings and joint motives interwoven with the principles of international law should be encouraged. In the same pattern, as the legal sector is more nationally based, justice systems should consider the multilateral approach on an international level in order to renew and redefine the importance of rule of law’s importance.

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## Topic 2

### Public Administration and Governance

## E-Citizen at the Age of Covid-19. The Case of Opengov. Research and Results<sup>1</sup>

Vasileios Kalogiros<sup>2</sup> & Maria Tsourela<sup>3</sup>

### Abstract

This research, in the context of e-governance, addresses the issue of the e-citizen and e-democracy at the age of covid-19 in Greece. As it is well known, pandemic has positive effects on digitalization in government. E-gate, such as "GOV.GR", give at the citizens the possibility to gain time and download useful documents for their work, education, travel etc. Many people at Greece visit GOV.GR and more use smartphones for entertainment, information, to visit facebook, instagram and other social media. But is the e-citizen in Greece ready for e-democracy? The page opengov.gr give the change to everyone to write their opinion about the laws and express their agreement or disagreement. After 12 years, are the Greek citizens ready for the next step...? The results of this research show that most people have a positive opinion for opengov.gr but rather prefer to write comments at mainly social media.

**Keywords:** e-governance; democracy; e-citizen; opengov; e-democracy; public consultation

### Ο Ψηφιακός Πολίτης στην Εποχή της Covid-19. Η περίπτωση του Opengov. Έρευνα και Αποτελέσματα

Βασίλειος Καλόγηρος & Μαρία Τσουρέλα

### Περίληψη

Η παρούσα έρευνα εντάσσεται στο πεδίο της ανοικτής διακυβέρνησης και εξετάζει τις περιπτώσεις του ηλεκτρονικού πολίτη και της ηλεκτρονικής δημοκρατίας την εποχή της covid-19 στην Ελλάδα. Όπως είναι γνωστό η πανδημία έχει συμβάλλει θετικά στην ψηφιοποίηση του κράτους. Η ηλεκτρονική πύλη GOV.GR δίνει τη δυνατότητα στους πολίτες να κερδίσουν χρόνο αποθηκεύοντας στον υπολογιστή τους χρήσιμα έγγραφα για την εργασία τους, την εκπαίδευση κλπ. Πολλοί είναι οι επισκέπτες του GOV.GR και ακόμα περισσότεροι χρησιμοποιούν τα έξυπνα τηλέφωνα για διασκέδαση, ενημέρωση και για κοινωνική δικτύωση. Η πύλη OPENGOV της δημόσιας ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης δίνει τη δυνατότητα σε κάθε πολίτη να εκφράσει τις απόψεις του για σχέδια νόμου πριν οδηγηθούν στη Βουλή. Μετά από 12 χρόνια, είναι έτοιμοι οι πολίτες για το επόμενο βήμα...; Τα αποτελέσματα της παρούσας έρευνας δείχνουν ότι οι περισσότεροι είναι θετικοί για τη διαδικασία της δημόσιας διαβούλευσης και τη δυνατότητα που έχουν, όμως οι περισσότεροι προτιμούν να γράφουν σχόλια στα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης και όχι στους νόμους που επηρεάζουν τη ζωή τους, ενώ οι προτάσεις πολιτικής εστιάζουν στο πώς θα πρέπει να επικοινωνηθεί περισσότερο η εν λόγω πλατφόρμα.

**Λέξεις-Κλειδιά:** Ηλεκτρονική διακυβέρνηση; Δημοκρατία; ψηφιακός πολίτης; ηλεκτρονική δημοκρατία; δημόσια διαβούλευση

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Kalogiros, V. & Tsourela, M. (2021). E-Citizen at the Age of Covid-19. The Case of Opengov. Research and Results. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 51-64. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29492

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## Εισαγωγή

Ένα μεγάλο μέρος των θεμελίων του δημοκρατικού πολιτεύματος αποτελούν οι αρχές της διαφάνειας και της ενεργούς συμπερίληψης των πολιτών κατά τη λήψη πολιτικών αποφάσεων. Οι κοινωνίες καλούνται σήμερα να συγχρονισθούν και να ανταποκριθούν σε πολυσύνθετα προβλήματα, που μόνο με σοβαρή πολιτική πρόθεση και διάθεση συνεργασίας μπορούν να επιλυθούν, προκειμένου να μετασχηματισθεί το πολιτικό σύστημα και να προσαρμοσθεί στις νέες συνθήκες που θέτει η παγκοσμιοποίηση.

Αν επιθυμούμε, λοιπόν, να θέσουμε ένα πλαίσιο συζήτησης γύρω από την πολιτική μεταρρύθμιση, θα πρέπει να μιλήσουμε για διαφάνεια στην πολιτική δράση και ενεργή συμμετοχή του πολίτη που στηρίζεται στη γνώση και στην πληροφόρηση, καθώς η δημοσιότητα της πολιτικής δράσης του παρέχει τη δυνατότητα να «γνωρίζει» και να «ελέγχει».

## Η δημόσια διαβούλευση

Σήμερα ο πολίτης έχει το δικαίωμα της «δημόσιας διαβούλευσης» που συνενεργεί με το δικαίωμα στην πληροφόρηση και ειδικότερα, με το «νέο» συνταγματικό δικαίωμα της πρόσβασης «στην κοινωνία της πληροφορίας», καθώς μέσω αυτού, δημιουργείται καθήκον στο κράτος, να προβεί στις αναγκαίες παρεμβάσεις και ρυθμίσεις, ώστε να διαμορφώσει ένα πλαίσιο κατάλληλο για την πλήρη, ελεύθερη και ακώλυτη συμμετοχή στις θεσμοποιημένες διαδικασίες, οι οποίες διαμορφώνουν το πολιτικό και πολιτειακό «γίνεσθαι», με τη χρήση των τεχνολογιών των πληροφοριών και της επικοινωνίας (Information and Communication Technology- ICT), ώστε να μπορεί ο πολίτης να συμμετέχει ενεργά, σε έναν αυτοτελή, δημόσιο διάλογο (Vidalis et al., 2001).

Στο σύγχρονο ενωσιακό δίκαιο, το χαρακτηριστικό στοιχείο που διέπει τη δράση της Ένωσης, είναι η «εταιρικότητα», στην οποία εντάσσεται η «διαβούλευση» και η «συμμετοχή» των κρατών μελών της. Πριν ακόμη την προσχώρηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στις σχετικές Διεθνείς Συνθήκες, λχ Σύμβαση του Ώρχους (European Union: eur-lex.europa.eu, χ.χ.), σε επίπεδο Ευρωπαϊκής Κοινότητας είχαν θεσπισθεί κανόνες διαβούλευσης, στο πλαίσιο της πρωτόλειας απόπειρας δημιουργίας της, με στόχο την αποδοτικότερη διακυβέρνηση και τη διασφάλιση της νομιμότητας της δράσης της.

Σε κάθε περίπτωση όμως, με την επικύρωση της Σύμβασης του Ώρχους το 2005, καθώς και τις Οδηγίες που εκδόθηκαν προς ευθυγράμμιση με το κείμενο αυτής, οι διατάξεις της Σύμβασης για τη διαβούλευση δεσμεύουν πλέον και τα κράτη-μέλη, αλλά και τα θεσμικά όργανα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.



Με την εισαγωγή της Σύμβασης στο Ενωσιακό Δίκαιο θεσμοθετήθηκαν τα εξής: (α) διευρύνθηκε η έννοια του «κοινού», (β) κατοχυρώθηκε η αξίωση για παροχή αποτελεσματικής συμμετοχής του «κοινού» στη διαδικασία λήψης αποφάσεων, (γ) κατοχυρώθηκε η υποχρέωση των δημόσιων αρχών να λαμβάνουν υπ' όψιν τα πορίσματα της διαβούλευσης με το κοινό, πριν τη λήψη της σχετικής απόφασης, (δ) κατοχυρώθηκε η υποχρέωση για έγκαιρη και πλήρη ενημέρωση του «κοινού» για την έκβαση της διαδικασίας και τέλος (ε) κατοχυρώθηκε το δικαίωμα της πρόσβασης στη δικαιοσύνη για την προστασία των διαβουλευτικών δικαιωμάτων.

Ταυτόχρονα, σε επίπεδο θεσμών, θεσπίστηκε, ρητά, η υποχρέωση των θεσμικών οργάνων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης να παρέχουν με τρόπο ακώλυτο και αποτελεσματικό στους πολίτες και τους φορείς της κοινωνίας των πολιτών, πρόσβαση σε δημόσια ανταλλαγή απόψεων σε όλους τους τομείς δράσης της ΕΕ, κατά το στάδιο της προπαρασκευαστικής επεξεργασίας πρότασης σχεδίου ή προγράμματος (Μενουδάκος, 2007).

Στην Ελλάδα, από τα μέσα σχεδόν της δεκαετίας 2000, λόγω και της επιρροής του ταχέως εξελισσόμενου Ευρωπαϊκού «γίγνεσθαι» και την συντονισμένη, πια, διαδικασία ενσωμάτωσης του συνεχώς αναπτυσσόμενου διεθνούς δικαίου στην εθνική έννομη τάξη, άρχισε να δημιουργείται η ανάγκη για τη διαμόρφωση ενός ειδικού πλαισίου διατάξεων αφορουσών στην οργάνωση και διεξαγωγή «δημόσιας διαβούλευσης» σε επίπεδο νομοθετικής λειτουργίας και την εμβάθυνση των προδιαγραφών της διαβουλευτικής διαδικασίας, μέσα από την ενεργή και αποτελεσματική συμμετοχή του «κοινού».

Η πρωτοβουλία για «ανοικτή διακυβέρνηση» (o-governance), μέσω της απρόσκοπτης και αποτελεσματικής «δημόσιας διαβούλευσης» γεννήθηκε το έτος 2009 και στηρίζεται στις αρχές της συμμετοχής, της διαφάνειας, και της λογοδοσίας, καθώς προάγει τη «λαϊκή νομοθετική πρωτοβουλία» στη διαμόρφωση πολιτικής, μέσα από δημόσιο διάλογο σχεδίων νόμων και πολιτικών δράσεων. Στόχος της υπήρξε εξ αρχής, η ανατροπή της παγιωμένης δυσπιστίας του εκλογικού σώματος απέναντι στην διακυβέρνηση και τη δημόσια διοίκηση. Η επίσημη διαδικτυακή πύλη του Εθνικού Κέντρου Δημόσιας Διοίκησης και Αυτοδιοίκησης του Υπουργείου Εσωτερικών, «opengov.gr», αποτελεί τη μετουσίωση της «ανοικτής διακυβέρνησης» (o-governance) στη χώρα μας, καθώς θέτει στο επίκεντρο την ανάγκη του πολίτη για πρόσβαση στην πληροφορία και για αξιοκρατία, ενώ προάγει και την κοινωνική και πολιτική του συνείδηση, μέσα από την ενεργή συμπερίληψή του στις πολιτικές διαδικασίες λήψης αποφάσεων, ήτοι, μέσα από την δημόσια «διαβούλευση». Κατά πόσο όμως ο σύγχρονος ψηφιακός πολίτης αξιοποιεί τις δυνατότητες για συμμετοχή σε δημόσια διαβούλευση; Το ερώτημα αυτό και το συνακόλουθο ερευνητικό κενό οδήγησε στην αναζήτηση της στάσης του πολίτη απέναντι στο opengov.gr με την εκπόνηση έρευνας

με δείγμα 422 ατόμων με τη χρήση ερωτηματολογίων. Η μέθοδος και το ερευνητικό εργαλείο παρουσιάζονται στη συνέχεια.

### Η περίπτωση του **Opengov.gr**

Η «δημόσια διαβούλευση» αποτελεί την πιο σημαντική υπηρεσία που παρέχει ο ιστότοπος **opengov.gr**. Επομένως, όλα τα προγράμματα και όλες οι ειλημμένες πολιτειακές αποφάσεις δημοσιοποιούνται σε αυτόν, αποσκοπώντας στην έναρξη ενός ψηφιακού διαλόγου μεταξύ των ενδιαφερομένων πολιτών και των φορέων διακυβέρνησης.

Σύμφωνα με τις επιταγές της νομοθεσίας (Νόμος 4622/2019, άρθρο 61) την υποχρέωση για την έναρξη της διαδικασίας «δημόσιας διαβούλευσης» υπέχει η Προεδρία της Κυβέρνησης με την αρμόδια υπηρεσία του αντίστοιχου Υπουργείου που φέρει τη νομοθετική πρωτοβουλία.

Μέσα από την ψηφιακή πύλη, ο πολίτης μπορεί να δει, συγκεντρωτικά, ποια σχέδια νόμου είναι ανοικτά για διαβούλευση, ενώ ταυτόχρονα, έχει τη δυνατότητα να αναζητήσει και να έχει πρόσβαση και σε παλαιότερες διαβουλεύσεις. Εξ όλων των ανωτέρω, καθίσταται σαφές ότι, ο πολίτης έχει ουσιαστική πρόσβαση σε όλη την πορεία του σχεδίου νόμου από την κατάρτιση έως και την ψήφισή του, με δυνατότητα να παρακολουθεί όλες τις νομοπαρασκευαστικές ενέργειες, τις παρεμβάσεις και τις τροποποιήσεις των κειμένων, αλλά και να συμμετέχει ενεργά επηρεάζοντας τον 'ρου' της διαδικασίας, μέσα από τον διάλογο της υποβολής σχολίων και παρατηρήσεων.

Η συμμετοχή των πολιτών κυμαίνεται από την αποστολή των σχολίων τους δημοσίως εκφράζοντας τη γνώμη τους στον ηλεκτρονικό σύνδεσμο της κάθε συζήτησης, και σε ορισμένες περιπτώσεις, τη συμπλήρωση ενός σχετικού ερωτηματολογίου.

Όταν ο σύμβουλος εισάγει το σχέδιο νόμου, τότε κάνει είσοδο στο άρθρο που επιθυμεί να σχολιάσει και, στο κάτω μέρος της σελίδας, υπάρχει μια απλή φόρμα καταγραφής, η οποία περιέχει και ένα πλαίσιο για την υποβολή του σχολιασμού.

Το όνομα, το επώνυμο και η ηλεκτρονική του διεύθυνση, είναι τα μόνα στοιχεία προσωπικής ταυτότητας που ζητούνται. Όταν δημοσιεύει ένα σχόλιο, το ήδη δηλωμένο όνομα εμφανίζεται στο σχόλιο αυτό. Ωστόσο, η ανωνυμία υπάρχει ως επιλογή, με την εισαγωγή μίας συντομογραφίας αντί του πλήρους ονόματος, ή μέσω της χρήσης ψευδώνυμου. Δεν έχουν καταγραφεί περιπτώσεις που να αποδεικνύουν ότι τα προσωπικά στοιχεία του συμμετέχοντος πολίτη ελέγχονται προς διακρίβωση της αληθινής ταυτότητας. Από την άλλη πλευρά, ανάρμοστα σχόλια ή προσβλητικά σχόλια μπορούν να υποδειχθούν στον διαχειριστή της σελίδας από κάποιον άλλον πολίτη, μέσω της εφαρμογής επισήμανσης (redflag), που περιλαμβάνεται σε κάθε σχόλιο. Όλα τα σχετικά με τον κανονισμό

λειτουργίας και τους όρους χρήσης του ψηφιακού περιβάλλοντος της «διαβούλευσης» περιγράφονται αναλυτικά, στον σχετικό υπερσύνδεσμο της ψηφιακής πύλης. Σημειώνεται ότι κατά τη διαδικασία υποβολής του σχολίου ο εκάστοτε συμμετέχων πολίτης μπορεί να επιλέξει να ενημερωθεί με μήνυμα ηλεκτρονικού ταχυδρομείου όταν το σχόλιο εγκριθεί.

### **Το [opengov.gr](https://opengov.gr) σε αριθμούς**

Σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία που παρατίθενται στην ιστοσελίδα [opengov.gr](https://opengov.gr) έχουν αναρτηθεί έως και 9/8/2021 988 διαβουλεύσεις και τα σχόλια ανέρχονται σε 298.175. Το πρώτο κείμενο που τέθηκε σε δημόσια διαβούλευση ήταν κανονιστική πράξη καθώς αφορούσε την Υπουργική Απόφαση «Καθιέρωση ανώτατου ορίου κυβισμού κρατικών αυτοκινήτων και άλλες διατάξεις» του Υπουργού Εσωτερικών, Αποκέντρωσης & Ηλεκτρονικής Διακυβέρνησης. Η διαβούλευση ξεκίνησε στις 19/10/2009 και ολοκληρώθηκε στις 26/10/2009, συγκεντρώνοντας 1697 σχόλια.

Το πιο πολυσχολιασμένο σχέδιο νόμου είναι το «Νέο πλαίσιο για την ευζωία των ζώων συντροφιάς - Πρόγραμμα --ΑΡΓΟΣ--» του Υπουργείου Εσωτερικών. Η διαβούλευση ξεκίνησε στις 6/5/2021 και ολοκληρώθηκε στις 20/5/2021. Στη διαβούλευση τέθηκαν 42 άρθρα, κατατέθηκαν 28.535 σχόλια και εξ αυτών εγκρίθηκαν τα 28.322. Το άρθρο 5 «υποχρεώσεις ιδιοκτήτη δεσποζόμενου ζώου συντροφιάς συγκέντρωσε 10.633 σχόλια. Διαπιστώνουμε λοιπόν το σχέδια νόμου που αφορούν θέματα που άπτονται του ενδιαφέροντος μεγάλης ομάδας πολιτών συγκεντρώνουν μεγάλο αριθμό σχολίων.

### **Σκοπός της έρευνας**

Σκοπός της έρευνας είναι η διερεύνηση της στάσης των πολιτών απέναντι στη διαδικασία της δημόσιας ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης. Ειδικότερα, καταγράφονται οι δραστηριότητες των πολιτών στο διαδίκτυο, ο βαθμός της πολιτικοποίησής τους και οι απόψεις τους σχετικά με τη δημόσια διαβούλευση. Επιπλέον, γίνεται αναζήτηση του βαθμού συμμετοχής των πολιτών στη δημόσια διαβούλευση και των τρόπων αύξησής της. Τα παραπάνω, συνοψίζονται στα εξής ερευνητικά ερωτήματα:

- Ο βαθμός συμφωνίας των πολιτών για τις ηλεκτρονικές δημοκρατικές διαδικασίες επηρεάζουν το κατά πόσο σημαντική θεωρούν την αναγκαιότητα της δημόσιας διαβούλευσης σχεδίων νόμου;

- Ο βαθμός συμφωνίας των πολιτών για τις ηλεκτρονικές δημοκρατικές διαδικασίες επηρεάζει το κατά πόσο σημαντική θεωρούν την αναγκαιότητα συμμετοχής σε διαδικασίες δημόσιας διαβούλευσης σχεδίων νόμου;
- Το φύλο επηρεάζει τη συμμετοχή στη διαδικασία της ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης;
- Εισόδημα, οικογενειακή κατάσταση, μορφωτικό επίπεδο κα επάγγελμα αποτελούν διαφοροποιητικούς παράγοντες για τη συμμετοχή στη διαδικασία της ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης;

## Δείγμα

Το δείγμα αποτελείται από 422 πολίτες, στην πλειοψηφία τους γυναίκες, που ανήκουν στην ηλικιακή ομάδα 41 με 50 κυρίως, οι περισσότεροι εξ αυτών έγγαμοι με παιδιά. Επιπλέον, το μεγαλύτερο πλήθος των ερωτηθέντων είναι μισθωτοί του δημοσίου τομέα μόνιμοι ή αορίστου χρόνου, με μεταπτυχιακό ή διδακτορικό και μηνιαίο εισόδημα 1001 έως 1500 ευρώ.

## Ερευνητικό εργαλείο

Το ερωτηματολόγιο που χρησιμοποιήθηκε στην παρούσα έρευνα είναι χωρισμένο σε 8 υποενότητες. Η πρώτη περιλαμβάνει 7 ερωτήσεις κλειστού τύπου με τα δημογραφικά στοιχεία των ερωτηθέντων, ενώ δεύτερη περιέχει 3 ερωτήσεις κλειστού τύπου και 2 τύπου Likert σχετικά με την εξοικείωση των πολιτών με το διαδίκτυο και τα κοινωνικά μέσα δικτύωσης. Η τρίτη ενότητα, περικλείει 5 ερωτήσεις κλειστού τύπου και 1 τύπου Likert, που αφορούν τις απόψεις των συμμετεχόντων σχετικά με την πολιτική, με την τέταρτη να αποτελείται από 10 ερωτήσεις κλειστού τύπου και 2 τύπου Likert που σχετίζονται με τη χρήση του διαδικτύου για πολιτικούς λόγους. Η πέμπτη ενότητα περιλαμβάνει 5 ερωτήσεις κλειστού τύπου και 1 ερώτηση τύπου Likert με αναφορά στην προσωπική εμπειρία των ερωτηθέντων σε διαδικασία ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης. Η έκτη ενότητα εμπεριέχει 4 ερωτήσεις τύπου Likert σχετικά με τους λόγους μη συμμετοχής σε δημόσια διαβούλευση και μελλοντική πρόθεση συμμετοχής και αντίστοιχα, η έβδομη ενότητα αποτελείται από 1 ερώτηση κλειστού τύπου και 1 ερώτηση Likert που αναφέρεται στις απόψεις των πολιτών για την ηλεκτρονική διαβούλευση. Η όγδοη και τελευταία ενότητα περιέχει 3 ερωτήσεις κλειστού τύπου σχετικά με τις απόψεις των συμμετεχόντων για την έκθεση της δημόσιας διαβούλευσης.

## Διαδικασία συλλογής δεδομένων

Εξαιτίας της πανδημίας της Covid-19, τα ερωτηματολόγια προωθήθηκαν ηλεκτρονικά σε σελίδες των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης σε κατάλληλη μορφή με τη χρήση Google form. Επιπλέον, στο

Google form, εκτός από τις ερωτήσεις του ερωτηματολογίου, υπήρχε γραπτή ενημέρωση σχετικά με τους σκοπούς της έρευνας και η παράκληση ειλικρινών απαντήσεων, υπογραμμίζοντας ότι η συμμετοχή τους είναι καθοριστική για την έρευνα. Επιπροσθέτως, υπήρχε η διαβεβαίωση πως η συμμετοχή είναι εθελοντική και δεν συλλέγονται στοιχεία όπως η διεύθυνση του ηλεκτρονικού ταχυδρομείου, η διεύθυνση IP ή άλλες πληροφορίες αναγνώρισης της ταυτότητάς τους.

### **Εργαλεία ανάλυσης**

Για την ανάλυση των δεδομένων χρησιμοποιήθηκε το στατιστικό πρόγραμμα SPSSv.25 καθώς και το πρόγραμμα Microsoft Excel. Οι απόψεις των πολιτών αναλύθηκαν και παρουσιάστηκαν με ποσοστά, μέσες τιμές και τυπικές αποκλίσεις. Επιπλέον, τα αποτελέσματα της ανάλυσης παρουσιάστηκαν με τη μορφή πινάκων, πιτών και ραβδογραμμάτων, μέσω των δύο προαναφερθέντων προγραμμάτων. Ωστόσο, με σκοπό την απάντηση των ερευνητικών ερωτημάτων χρησιμοποιήθηκε ο συντελεστής γραμμικής συσχέτισης Pearson.

### **Περιγραφική στατιστική**

Στόχος της παρούσας έρευνας είναι η αύξηση της ενεργητικής συμμετοχής του πολίτη στα κοινά με τη διαδικασία της δημόσιας ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης και η ενδυνάμωση του αισθήματος ευθύνης του ατόμου απέναντι στο κοινωνικό σύνολο. Με την ηλεκτρονική διαβούλευση δημιουργούνται νέες δυνατότητες, ανάμεσα στον κόσμο των μηχανισμών της εξουσίας και στον απλό πολίτη. Το ερωτηματολόγιο που χρησιμοποιήθηκε αποτελείται από 8 ενότητες, όπου διερευνώνται τα δημογραφικά χαρακτηριστικά των πολιτών, οι απόψεις τους για τις δραστηριότητες τους στο διαδίκτυο, ο βαθμός της πολιτικοποίησής τους και οι απόψεις τους σχετικά με τη δημόσια διαβούλευση. Επιπλέον, ο βαθμός συμμετοχής τους στη δημόσια διαβούλευση και οι τρόποι αύξησης της συμμετοχής των πολιτών σε αυτήν.

### **Αξιοπιστία ερωτηματολογίου**

Στον παρακάτω Πίνακα 1, παρατίθενται οι δείκτες αξιοπιστίας Cronbach's Alpha για τις δηλώσεις όλων των ενοτήτων του ερωτηματολογίου (έχουν γίνει προσαρμογές ώστε να προκύπτουν ικανοποιητικοί δείκτες). Η ανάλυση της αξιοπιστίας του ερωτηματολογίου έγινε με σκοπό να διασφαλιστεί η συνέπεια του ερωτηματολογίου και κατ' επέκταση η σωστή διεξαγωγή της έρευνας. Προηγήθηκε της στατιστικής ανάλυσης των απαντήσεων των συμμετεχόντων, προκειμένου να μετρηθεί και να αναλυθεί το κατά πόσο τα στοιχεία αυτά είναι αξιόπιστα. Η αξιοπιστία εσωτερικής συνοχής τόσο σε μια υποκλίμακα, όσο και σε ολόκληρη κλίμακα εκτιμάται με το συντελεστή

Cronbach's alpha που δείχνει την ομοιογένεια μιας κλίμακας. Για να θεωρείται αποδεκτή, η τιμή του Cronbach's alpha πρέπει να είναι  $>0,7$ . Ωστόσο ο Nunally υποστηρίζει ότι ένας συντελεστής εσωτερικής συνάφειας μεταξύ 0,5 και 0,6 είναι αρκετός στα αρχικά στάδια της μελέτης. Όσο μεγαλύτερη είναι η τιμή του συντελεστή Cronbach's alpha τόσο μεγαλύτερη είναι η αξιοπιστία εσωτερικής συνοχής (Litwin, όπως αναφέρεται στους Ουζούνη, Νακάκη, 2011).

Τα αποτελέσματα του ελέγχου αξιοπιστίας για τις μεταβλητές του ερωτηματολογίου παρατίθενται στον παρακάτω πίνακα. Από τις τιμές του δείκτη  $\alpha$  γίνεται αντιληπτό ότι στην πλειονότητα των ενοτήτων – εξαίρεση η ενότητα χρήση μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης με τιμή 0,66 που κρίνεται όμως αποδεκτή – έχουμε τιμή μεγαλύτερη του 0,7, γεγονός που συνηγορεί στη χρήση των δεδομένων της έρευνας για ασφαλή εξαγωγή συμπερασμάτων. Επομένως το ερωτηματολόγιο χαρακτηρίζεται αξιόπιστο εργαλείο για την εξαγωγή συμπερασμάτων

**Πίνακας 1: Δείκτες αξιοπιστίας κλιμάκων**

Ενότητα	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Συμμετοχή σε δημόσια διαβούλευση	,778	15
Μη συμμετοχή σε δημόσια διαβούλευση	,872	21
Εκθέσεις	,714	3
Χρήση Μέσων Κοινωνικής Δικτύωσης	,660	13
Συμμετοχή σε εκλογές και σωματεία	,731	6
Απόψεις	,704	16
Ηλεκτρονικές διαδικασίες εκλογών	,709	4

### Επαγωγική στατιστική

Στην ενότητα που ακολουθεί, έγινε μια προσπάθεια ώστε να απαντηθούν τα ερευνητικά ερωτήματα, τα οποία είναι τα εξής:

- Οι απόψεις των πολιτών για τις ηλεκτρονικές δημοκρατικές διαδικασίες επηρεάζουν το κατά πόσο σημαντική θεωρούν την αναγκαιότητα της δημόσιας διαβούλευσης σχεδίων νόμου;
- Οι απόψεις των πολιτών για τις ηλεκτρονικές δημοκρατικές διαδικασίες επηρεάζουν το κατά πόσο σημαντική θεωρούν την αναγκαιότητα συμμετοχής σε διαδικασίες δημόσιας διαβούλευσης σχεδίων νόμου;



- Το φύλο του δείγματος επηρεάζει τη συμμετοχή στη διαδικασία της ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης;
- Το επάγγελμα, το μηνιαίο εισόδημα, η οικογενειακή κατάσταση, το μορφωτικό επίπεδο επηρεάζουν τη συμμετοχή σε διαδικασία ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης

Με σκοπό την απάντηση των δυο πρώτων ερευνητικών ερωτημάτων που παρουσιάζονται από κοινού, χρησιμοποιήθηκε ο γραμμικός συντελεστής συσχέτισης Pearson. Το συγκεκριμένο μαθηματικό εργαλείο λαμβάνει τιμές από το -1 έως το 1, ενώ όσο πλησιάζει την μονάδα (κατ' απόλυτη τιμή) τόσο πιο ισχυρή θεωρείται η εκάστοτε συσχέτιση μεταξύ των υπό μελέτη μεταβλητών. Για το τρίτο και τέταρτο ερευνητικό ερώτημα πραγματοποιήθηκε έλεγχος ανεξαρτησίας.

### 1<sup>ο</sup> και 2<sup>ο</sup> ερευνητικό ερώτημα

Στον Πίνακα που ακολουθεί, παρουσιάζονται οι τιμές των συντελεστών συσχέτισης ανάμεσα στη συμφωνία του δείγματος για διαδικασίες ηλεκτρονικής δημοκρατίας και την αναγκαιότητα συμμετοχής σε δημόσια διαβούλευση και την αναγκαιότητα της διαδικασίας δημόσιας διαβούλευσης. Συγκεκριμένα διαπιστώνουμε ότι υπάρχει χαμηλού βαθμού θετική συσχέτιση ανάμεσα στην άποψη του δείγματος για τη διαδικασία της ηλεκτρονικής ψηφοφορίας, των on line δημοψηφισμάτων και της ηλεκτρονικής συλλογής υπογραφών με τις διαδικασίες της αναγκαιότητας της διαβούλευσης. Οι συσχετίσεις αυτές δέχονται τιμές από το 0.183 έως το 0.236, επομένως είναι μικρής έντασης, ενώ είναι στατιστικά σημαντικές σε επίπεδο σημαντικότητας 0,01.

**Πίνακας 2: Τιμές συντελεστών συσχέτισης**

	Είναι απαραίτητη η δημόσια διαβούλευση νομοσχεδίων	Είναι απαραίτητη η συμμετοχή των πολιτών στη διαβούλευση
Ηλεκτρονική ψηφοφορία	0.191	0.183
On line Δημοψηφίσματα	0.181	0.186
Ηλεκτρονική συλλογή υπογραφών	0.236	0.233
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

### 3<sup>ο</sup> ερευνητικό ερώτημα

Στο πλαίσιο της έρευνας, πραγματοποιήθηκαν 2 επιπλέον έλεγχοι, οι οποίοι υπέδειξαν πως οι άντρες φάνηκαν πιο «πολιτικοποιημένοι» σε σύγκριση με τις γυναίκες. Συγκεκριμένα ο έλεγχος Chi-Square ανέδειξε πως το φύλο αλληλεπιδρά με στατιστικά σημαντικό τρόπο στη συμμετοχή σε διαδικασία ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης ( $p=0.003$ ). Όπως φάνηκε, οι άντρες συμμετέχουν σε ποσοστό 32.5%, ενώ οι γυναίκες σε ποσοστό 19.6%.

### 4<sup>ο</sup> ερευνητικό ερώτημα

Στο πλαίσιο της έρευνας, πραγματοποιήθηκε έλεγχος ανεξαρτησίας για να αν παράγοντες όπως το μορφωτικό επίπεδο, η οικογενειακή κατάσταση, το επάγγελμα, το εισόδημα αλληλεπιδρούν με τη συμμετοχή στη διαδικασία ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης. Τα αποτελέσματα ελέγχου Chi-Square, ανέδειξαν πως η μόρφωση, η οικογενειακή κατάσταση, το επάγγελμα και το εισόδημα αλληλεπιδρούν με στατιστικά σημαντικό τρόπο στη συμμετοχή σε διαδικασία ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης.

**Πίνακας 3: Έλεγχος ανεξαρτησίας**

Μηνιαίο εισόδια	$p=0.018$
Οικογενειακή κατάσταση	$p=0.003$
Επάγγελμα	$P=0.002$
Μορφωτικό επίπεδο	$p=0.003$

### Συμπεράσματα έρευνας

Με την παρούσα έρευνα αναλύθηκαν σε βάθος οι απόψεις 422 πολιτών για την ενεργητική τους συμμετοχή στα κοινά με τη διαδικασία της δημόσιας ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης, τις δραστηριότητές τους στο διαδίκτυο και το βαθμό της πολιτικοποίησής τους. Επιπλέον, αναλύθηκαν οι απόψεις τους για τη δημόσια διαβούλευση, τους τρόπους αύξησης της συμμετοχής των πολιτών προς αυτήν και την έκθεση της δημόσιας διαβούλευσης. Οι περισσότεροι ερωτηθέντες είναι έγγαμοι με παιδιά, ανήκουν στην ηλικιακή ομάδα 41-50 κυρίως, και στην πλειοψηφία τους γυναίκες. Επιπλέον, το πλήθος του δείγματος είναι μισθωτοί του δημοσίου τομέα ως μόνιμοι ή αορίστου χρόνου, με μεταπτυχιακό ή διδακτορικό και μηνιαίο εισόδημα 1001 έως 1500 ευρώ.

Από τις απαντήσεις του ερωτηματολογίου εξακριβώθηκε ότι οι πολίτες 1 με 3 ώρες τη μέρα επισκέπτονται το Facebook, ενώ 1 με 2 φορές το μήνα συμμετέχουν ενεργά σε μία ηλεκτρονική διαδικασία. Επιπλέον, ενημερώνονται μέσω διαδικτύου καθημερινά, 1 με 3 ώρες ημερησίως, ενώ 1 με 2 φορές την εβδομάδα χρησιμοποιούν το διαδίκτυο για άλλες εξυπηρετήσεις. Οι ερωτηθέντες δήλωσαν ότι συμφωνούν απόλυτα στην άσκηση του εκλογικού δικαιώματος στις δημοτικές εκλογές, ψηφίζουν σχεδόν πάντα και επιπλέον, είναι μέλη επαγγελματικών-επιστημονικών ενώσεων. Οι περισσότεροι έχουν γνώση περί σχεδίων νόμου τα οποία πριν οδηγηθούν στη Βουλή κατατίθενται σε δημόσια διαβούλευση, δεν διαβάζουν σχεδόν ποτέ στο διαδίκτυο πρωτοσέλιδα πολιτικών εφημερίδων και δεν επισκέπτονται σχεδόν ποτέ δικτυακούς τόπους πολιτικών παρατάξεων.

Συνεχίζοντας, μια δυο φορές το εξάμηνο επισκέπτονται δικτυακούς τόπους υπουργείων και τον δικτυακό τόπο Gov.gr και συμφωνούν ως προς την προσφορά των μέσων δικτύωσης στη διατύπωση πολιτικών απόψεων. Επιπλέον, δήλωσαν ότι στο διαδίκτυο δεν έχουν αναζητήσει τα πολιτικά προγράμματα Κομμάτων, δεν συμμετείχαν σε μεγάλο βαθμό σε ηλεκτρονικές πολιτικές δημοσκοπήσεις, σε ηλεκτρονικές ψηφοφορίες, ενώ είναι ουδέτεροι στην ηλεκτρονική συλλογή υπογραφών. Επιπροσθέτως, η πλειοψηφία αυτών δεν συμμετείχαν σε διαδικασία ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης. Όσοι δήλωσαν ότι έλαβαν μέρος αυτό το έκαναν 2 με 3 φορές και έκριναν πολύ φιλική τη διαδικασία της συμμετοχής. Ακολούθως, ενημερώθηκαν για την έναρξη της διαδικασίας της διαβούλευσης από ενημερωτική ιστοσελίδα και στη συνέχεια ενημέρωσαν φίλους ή συναδέλφους για να συμμετάσχουν σε διαδικασία διαβούλευσης νομοσχεδίων.

Συμφωνούν επίσης οι ερωτηθέντες ότι για την αύξηση της συμμετοχής των πολιτών στη δημόσια διαβούλευση σημαντικό ρόλο παίζει η προβολή διαβουλεύσεων σε ενημερωτικές σελίδες και ότι η έλλειψη ενημέρωσης για τη διαδικασία είναι ένας λόγος μη συμμετοχής τους σε δημόσια διαβούλευση. Ακόμη, δήλωσαν ότι θα συμμετείχαν στη διαβούλευση νομοσχεδίων που αφορούν το επάγγελμά τους και συμφωνούν πως για την αύξηση της συμμετοχής των πολιτών στη δημόσια διαβούλευση είναι απαραίτητη η προβολή σε μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης και η ενημέρωση των πολιτών από την πολιτεία για τη διαδικασία δημόσιας διαβούλευσης σχεδίων νόμου. Όσοι από τους συμμετέχοντες έχουν διαβάσει έκθεση δημόσιας διαβούλευσης θεωρούν πολύ σημαντικό να διαβάζουν οι πολίτες τις εκθέσεις αυτές. Επιπλέον, συμφωνούν απόλυτα ότι οι εκθέσεις δημόσιας διαβούλευσης πρέπει να αποστέλλονται σε όσους συμμετέχουν στη διαδικασία σχολιασμού ώστε διαβάζοντας τις, να κατανοήσουν τη σπουδαιότητα της συμμετοχής στη διαδικασία της διαβούλευσης.

Μέσω του πρώτου ερευνητικού ερωτήματος, αναδείχθηκε πως ο βαθμός συμφωνίας των πολιτών για ηλεκτρονικές δημοκρατικές διαδικασίες επηρεάζει την άποψη για την αναγκαιότητα της συμμετοχής

σε διαδικασίες δημόσιας διαβούλευσης και για την εισαγωγή των σχεδίων νόμου σε ηλεκτρονική διαβούλευση. Το ίδιο ισχύει και για το δεύτερο ερευνητικό ερώτημα αναδείχθηκε πως ο βαθμός συμφωνίας των πολιτών για ηλεκτρονικές δημοκρατικές διαδικασίες επηρεάζει την άποψη για την αναγκαιότητα του να τίθενται τα σχέδια νόμου σε διαδικασίες δημόσιας διαβούλευσης.

Ολοκληρώνοντας την έρευνα, υπήρχαν ευρήματα που ανέδειξαν πως οι άντρες είναι πιο «πολιτικοποιημένοι» σε σύγκριση με τις γυναίκες. Πιο αναλυτικά, φάνηκε πως οι άντρες συμμετέχουν σε περίπου αρκετά μεγαλύτερο ποσοστό σε διαδικασίες ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης σε σχέση με τις γυναίκες, ενώ κάτι αντίστοιχο προκύπτει και για την ανάγνωση πρωτοσέλιδων πολιτικών εφημερίδων στο διαδίκτυο, με τους άντρες να είναι επίσης αρκετά πιο ενεργοί. Επίσης μέσα από την έρευνα αναδείχθηκε ότι η οικογενειακή κατάσταση, το εισόδημα, το μορφωτικό επίπεδο και το επάγγελμα αποτελούν διαφοροποιητικούς παράγοντες για τη συμμετοχή στη διαδικασία δημόσιας διαβούλευσης.

## Προτάσεις πολιτικής

Από την παρούσα έρευνα διαπιστώνεται η σπουδαιότητα της συμμετοχής σε διαδικασίες δημόσιας διαβούλευσης και η έλλειψη συμμετοχής σε μια διαδικασία που δίνει στον πολίτη τη δυνατότητα να εκφράσει την γνώμη του ενεργά και να συνδιαμορφώσει τη νομοθεσία. Βασική κατεύθυνση της πολιτικής για την αναστροφή της παθητικοποίησης του πολίτη απέναντι σε διαδικασίες ενεργητικής διαβούλευσης, όπως προκύπτει από την έρευνα, θα πρέπει να είναι η δημιουργία ενημερωμένων πολιτών, ως προς τη διαδικασία αυτή μέσα από την παροχή ενημέρωσης της πολιτείας για τη διαδικασία της ηλεκτρονικής διαβούλευσης. Αυτό μπορεί να επιτευχθεί με ενημερωτικές δράσεις για το [opengov.gr](http://opengov.gr) σε δικτυακούς τόπους και μέσα ενημέρωσης, ενώ και στο πλαίσιο των μαθημάτων της πολιτικής παιδείας στις σχολικές τάξεις μπορεί να αφιερωθεί χρόνος για της ηλεκτρονικές διαβουλεύσεις σχεδίων νόμου.

Η κατανόηση της διαδικασίας και της σπουδαιότητάς της θεωρείται, στο πλαίσιο αυτό, το πρώτο βήμα για την υιοθέτηση από τους πολίτες πολιτικά υπεύθυνων συμπεριφορών που θα συνεπάγεται τη συμμετοχή τους σε διαδικασίες δημοσίων διαβουλεύσεων. Παράλληλα, δεν θα πρέπει να παραβλέπεται από την πολιτεία η παρουσίαση των αλλαγών που συντελούνται στα υπό διαβούλευση σχέδια νόμου μετά από τις παρεμβάσεις των πολιτών, οι οποίοι συμμετείχαν σε ηλεκτρονικές διαβουλεύσεις. Η παθητικοποίηση άλλωστε του πολίτη ως ένα βαθμό, όπως προκύπτει από την έρευνα, εδράζεται και στην πεποίθηση ότι η συμμετοχή δεν φέρνει αλλαγές στα σχέδια νόμου. Αναγκαία κρίνεται και η ανάρτηση των εκθέσεων δημόσιας διαβούλευσης στον ιστότοπο του [opengov.gr](http://opengov.gr) καθώς και συνακόλουθη αποστολή τους στις ηλεκτρονικές διευθύνσεις των

συμμετεχόντων. Η εμπλοκή του κοινού στη νομοθετική διαδικασία θα συντελέσει στη δημοκρατική ενδυνάμωση των πολιτών και στην απόκτηση συμμετοχικής συνείδησης αναγκαίας για την πλουραλιστικότερη διαδικασία λήψης αποφάσεων. Με αυτόν τον τρόπο αποφευχθεί και η παθητικοποίηση υπερδραστήριων διαδικτυακά πολιτών που αδιαφορούν όμως για τις δημοκρατικές διαδικτυακές διαδικασίες όπως το [opengov.gr](http://opengov.gr).

Τονίζουμε ότι στις διαδικασίες της βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης έχει αναγνωριστεί η σπουδαιότητα της συμμετοχής των πολιτών. Πολλοί είναι οι ερευνητές οι οποίοι ισχυρίζονται ότι η βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη χωρίς τη συμμετοχή του κοινού είναι διαδικασία άνευ ουσιαστικού περιεχομένου και υπόστασης επιχειρώντας έτσι να καταδείξουν τον κυρίαρχο ρόλο της συμμετοχής για τον σχεδιασμό και τη χάραξη πολιτικής για τη βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη. Οι συμμετοχικές προσεγγίσεις στον σχεδιασμό μπορούν να αποτελέσουν εργαλείο για την εμπλοκή των πολιτών και την ευαισθητοποίησή τους, αλλά και τη δημιουργία ευρύτερων συναινέσεων σε σχέση με εκείνες τις επιλογές πολιτικής οι οποίες μπορούν να υπηρετήσουν τον παραπάνω στόχο (Στρατηγέα, 2015).

Κλείνοντας αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι η μαζική συμμετοχή θα ενισχύσει το θεσμό της δημόσιας διαβούλευσης και ίσως να ανατρέψει και τις απόψεις όσων θεωρούν ότι η κατάθεση των σχολίων δεν θα επηρεάσει τη διαμόρφωση του σχεδίου νόμου. Η απόψη δεν είναι απάντηση. Δεν θα πρέπει η εν λόγω διαδικασία να αφήνεται στα χέρια μιας «ολιγαρχίας του πνεύματος» των πατρίκιων, καλό είναι να έχουμε στο νου μας την αθροιστική θεωρία του Αριστοτέλη όπως αυτή διατυπώνεται στο έργο του «Πολιτικά» (Αριστοτέλης, 400 π.Χ./ 1939). Ο Αριστοτέλης δίνει τα «σκήπτρα» στη γνώμη των πολλών, αναγνωρίζοντας την υπεροχή της άποψης των πολλών έναντι των λίγων, των ειδημόνων. Σήμερα μας δίνεται η δυνατότητα να δώσουμε στη θεωρία αυτή «σάρκα και οστά» μέσα από τη μαζική συμμετοχή. Σε πεδίο δόξης λαμπρό αναδεικνύεται το [opengov.gr](http://opengov.gr) για το Αριστοτελικό πλήθος.

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# Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs): Potential Impacts and Critical Success Factors<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

In recent years, PPPs have been increasingly used to implement projects and provide public services. The governments have made the necessary legislative and financial efforts in order to promote PPPs, given the need to acquire know-how from the private sector and the advantages they bring to the public sector and the citizens. However, the use of PPPs should be carefully planned as, in addition to the wider social and economic impacts, failures and negative results have been observed. This article attempts to present the main characteristics of PPPs, cite their possible impacts and quote their critical success factors in order to make PPPs more beneficial for the involved parties and the citizens.

**Keywords:** Public-Private Partnerships; governance; public authority

## Introduction

Over the last few years, especially in times of economic downturn and uncertainty, the question arises as to whether there should be "more state" or "more free market". That is to say, it concerns the degree of upgrade or limitation of the public and the private sector, which is not easy to specify, given the emergence of alternatives in the provision of public services and the constant shifting of the "border" of the two sectors (Kalogirou & Lymperaki, 1994). More and more people are arguing that the "border" is shifting to the private sector. The main arguments are the pursuit of government policies towards the increasing interaction of the public and private sectors in the provision of public services, the "fading" of the distinct character of the public services and the gradual evolution of the private sector as a model of organization and administration in the public sector (Academy of Athens, 2012; Corby & White, 1999).

Indeed, it seems that the public sector is gradually being reduced and the private and public sector employment models are converging towards the restriction of the public employment for the benefit of the private capital (Koinoniko Polykentro of ADEDY, 2012; Pritchett, 2013). Nevertheless, the public sector remains at the forefront, as is the case of tackling unemployment (Behar & Mok, 2013). Therefore, the answer to the question of what defines the "border" between the public and the private sector is still difficult to give and it actually depends on which sector actually exercises public power

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Nasios, G. & Foradoula, N. (2021). Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs): Potential Impacts and Critical Success Factors. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 65-73. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29519

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(Demmke & Moilanen, 2012). At the same time, there are still concerns, especially at the institutional level, about the search for a legal framework that balances between public and private law (Koutsouradis, 2002). One such typical case is PPPs, concerning the partnership of the public and private sectors with clearly defined responsibilities for the implementation of important projects and the provision of services for the benefit of the citizens, aimed at improving the quality of life, the healthy entrepreneurship and the public interest (Special Secretariat for Public-Private Partnerships, n.d.).

### **The conceptual approach and the main characteristics of PPPs**

PPPs are long-term contracts between public and private sector entities in order to implement projects and provide services with clearly distinct roles. The public sector maintains the ownership of the property and maintains a strong regulatory and supervisory role, utilizes the expertise and efficiency of the private sector, provides high quality services, stimulates economic growth and leverages private funds in development projects (Special Secretariat for Public-Private Partnerships, n.d.). Following the 2008 financial crisis, there has been a revival of interest in PPPs due to limited public resources, as an alternative funding source to fill the funding gap (The World Bank, 2020).

In addition, along with the implementation of PPPs the negative impacts observed in the exclusive government property or the full privatization are avoided, as it is achieved a balance between the private sector (with its resources, management skills and technology) and the public sector (through its regulatory actions and the protection of the public interest). There are different types of PPPs, reflecting the different needs for infrastructure and services, with emphasis on use of the conventional type, i.e. “the user pays”, as well as the Private Finance Initiative model where the “the public sector pays”. There are also PPP types that can be categorized based on the extent of the participation and the division of responsibilities and risks between the public and the private sector, such as: Buy-Build-Operate, Build-Own-Operate, Build-Own-Operate-Transfer, Build-Operate-Transfer, Build-Lease-Operate-Transfer, Design-Build-Finance-Operate, Finance Only, Operation & Maintenance Contract, Design-Build and Operation License.

PPPs should not be confused with privatizations, as the accountability for the provision of public service is maintained by the public sector and there is no transfer of ownership. Also, they should not be confused with public procurements, which concern the purchase, lease or rental of goods or services by the public sector. PPPs are more complex, with high and long-term funding requirements, where the contractor is provided with key responsibilities regarding design, financial and technical issues. PPPs have also emerged as an important tool for bridging the infrastructure gap, which can

offer benefits to the public, such as better value, access to capital, certainty of outcomes and innovation, and have offered new financing models and expertise in the public sector to administer projects (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 2008).

Furthermore, PPPs are of a more strategic nature and can expand into areas such as science, technology and innovation so that the public sector can meet global challenges, market failures and social challenges of the coming decades, such as climate change, green growth, sustainable development and energy efficiency (OECD, 2016). In any case, PPPs constitute a complex and politically sensitive interface between the public and the private sector that can offer very good value for money in the provision of public services, better public finance management and retention of control by the public sector. The common characteristics observed in the countries where PPPs have been implemented are the long period of cooperation, the assessment of different types of risk (e.g. economic, political), the increased certainty of the results (timely delivery of projects within the budget) and the strategic role and the assumption of significant risk from the private sector in the financing and provision of the projects or services (Bovis, 2011). It should be mentioned that the EU strongly urges its Member States to use PPPs as a means of providing public services, as they are considered important for the implementation of its policies (Burnett, 2007).

### **The potential impacts of PPPs**

There can be observed a growing interest in international organizations and academic researchers as to whether PPPs can contribute to the achievement of development goals. Many argue that PPPs have basically positive impacts, such as contributing to the economic recovery, tackling the financial and economic crisis and sustaining economic activity and economic growth (Commission of the European Communities, 2009). They can contribute to the mobilization of additional sources of funding for infrastructure, to attract foreign direct investments, to save public resources and to increase the efficiency of the provision of public services, while at the same time not increasing budget space for infrastructure. This increase of this efficiency results from the added value created by the private sector, the improvement of the production at a lower cost, the production of more output at the same cost and the improvement of labor productivity. Nevertheless, the degree of the impact depends on the sector and the size of PPPs (World Bank Group, 2016). Improved labor productivity also results from the use of technology and innovation of the private sector and the capacity building through joint ventures of large companies, which are motivated for the timely delivery of projects (The World Bank, 2020).

Also, major positive impacts arise for the users of the services. The users benefit from the faster construction of high quality and innovative infrastructure, as well as from the access to services that would be impossible to have without PPPs (Fabre & Straub, 2021). Besides, PPPs in science, technology and innovation help governments meet global challenges, for the benefit of the citizens (OECD, 2016), while the cost of providing public services becomes lower compared to the involvement of solely the public or the private sector (Moszoro, 2010). However, it is estimated that profits of PPPs do not imply lower tariffs for consumers, as the private sector retains most of the profits, although there are views that in the long run this negative impact can be largely offset (World Bank Group, 2016). Especially in services of general interest, studies have shown that there is no significant difference between the different forms of public service that exist, in terms of efficiency and quality of services provided to end users (AlKhuzam et al., 2018).

Additionally, PPPs ensure the transfer of skills and competencies from the private sector to the public sector so that it can increase its productivity in the future (The World Bank, 2020). They also provide additional leverage to important projects such as combating climate change, green growth, energy efficiency, promoting alternative energy sources, supporting sustainable transport, providing high quality affordable healthcare and implementing important research projects (Commission of the European Communities, 2009; OECD, 2016). Another impact of PPPs is about employment. It is generally argued that PPPs come with an increase in direct and indirect jobs, however, in some cases there have been observed negative short-term impacts on employment (due to increased employment efficiency), which can be offset in the medium term by the creation of indirect jobs (World Bank Group, 2016).

On the other hand, it is argued that PPPs have also negative impacts. These include the higher cost of PPP projects compared to other procedures, the transfer of labor from the public sector to the private sector, tariff increases for users to make projects sustainable, the avoidance of high risk by the private sector and the effort to transfer it to the public sector. There is also an imbalance in the possession of know-how as the public sector does not have sufficient expertise to adequately understand and monitor PPPs terms and has difficulty identifying potential risks due to the long-term nature of the projects, disruptions caused by force majeure or omissions by the private sector (The World Bank, 2020).

Moreover, European Court of Auditors (2018) argues that project management in PPPs is not always sufficiently cost-effective and often exist delays in construction, cost overruns and underutilization of projects, resulting in inefficient costs. Preliminary analyzes in PPPs are also based on overly optimistic scenarios about the future demand and use of infrastructure, while the PPP method is often

chosen without prior comparative analysis of alternatives, that is it is not always the option that ensures greatest economic efficiency, adequate competition and protection of the public interest. Lastly, during PPPs there is a possibility of interruption of the construction processes with consequential legal proceedings and the renegotiation of the contracts with additional costs for the State, whilst the construction schedules are often overturned due to archeological findings, environmental permits and expropriations resulting in problems regarding the resolution of accounting issues and the provision of state guarantees (Lienert, 2009).

### **The critical success factors of PPPs**

The critical success factors of PPPs have attracted researchers' interest worldwide. It has been noticed that the optimal risk-sharing between the public and the private sector, the involvement of large private and well-structured joint ventures, the political and social support and the transparent processes are the main keys to success (Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2015). According to The World Bank (2020), PPPs have to be well designed within a clear legal and regulatory framework foreseeing the possibility of renegotiating the contracts to cover unforeseen contingencies in order to achieve a viable solution. In addition, according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (2008), good governance is required in order for a PPP to function efficiently, i.e. good functioning of the responsible parties, transparent and efficient rules and procedures and responsible and accountable public and private sector. In particular, PPPs require policies that set clear principles, goals and means to achieve them, have the support of the citizens, incorporate the principles of sustainable development, involve trained civil servants with expertise, have a clear legal framework and mutual support of public and private sector.

Furthermore, OECD (2012; 2016) recommends the creation of a clear and predictable legal framework, supported by authorities with enough resources, in-depth research on PPP method (in terms of value for money) and a transparent budget to minimize fiscal risks and ensure integrity. It also considers as success factors the optimization of the allocation of costs and risks between partners, the exploitation of the advantages of the partners, the overcoming of the obstacles regarding information flow and interactions between public and private sector, the viability of the project and the creation of value, the budget flexibility, a transparent accounting system, long-term commitment from the governments, the careful selection of the participants, the enactment of user service standards, a clear management structure, tax incentives and performance-based financing.

The European Commission (2003) has issued guidelines for successful PPPs, focusing on four issues: ensure open market access and fair competition, protect the public interest and maximize added value, determine the optimal level of grant funding for the implementation of a sustainable project and avoiding any opportunity for unexpected grant profits and evaluate the most effective type of PPP for a project. It is also emphasized the obligation of the contracting authorities to respect Community law, to follow a fair, transparent and competitive procedure in the selection of the partners and to apply the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination. Equally important is the adaptation of PPPs to the changes in the economic, legal and technological environment (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). The European Court of Auditors (2018) argues that a successful implementation of PPPs presupposes administrative capacity, which is ensured by the existence of a proper institutional and legal framework, as well as long experience in the implementation of PPPs. It also recommends that the intensive use of PPPs should not be encouraged until the identified problems have been resolved, the financial impact of delays and renegotiations on PPPs costs borne by the public sector partner should be mitigated, the choice of PPP method should be based on comparative analytics and clear PPP policies and strategies should be established in order to enhance the effectiveness of PPP project. Furthermore, the European Institute of Public Administration points out the need for legal certainty, transparent and competitive procedures, case-by-case assessment of the need to use PPPs, clear risk allocation, active PPP management and attracting and retaining private sector interest, fiscal sustainability and clear roles in the design, procurement, management and control of PPPs (Burnett, 2007).

Other critical success factors of PPPs also mentioned are the creation of a central PPP unit and a compatible regulatory framework, the development of national PPP policies and strategies and the standardization and transparency of the processes (Amović et al., 2020). However, it is argued that critical success factors are differentiated and depend on the type, location and time of the project (Muhammad et al., 2016) and better results are achieved in PPPs as long as the public sector bears the financial costs and the private sector retains the project management (Moszoro, 2010). It should not be overlooked that state institutions, the leadership skills of the parties, the clarity of technical specifications and contracts and the possibility of contractual amendments play an essential role (Landow & Ebdon, 2012).

## Conclusions

During the last decades, governments have increasingly used PPPs to achieve economic growth and competitiveness and to improve their infrastructure. PPPs have emerged as an important tool in the

“quiver” of the public sector, which has wider implications for the society and the economy. However, governments face a number of challenges to the successful implementation of PPPs, as they can have both positive and negative impacts, which relate in particular to the management of PPPs and to addressing technical, financial, legal and other challenges. Also, in some sectors there is no broad consensus on the optimal type of public and private sector involvement in the provision of public services and in particular if PPPs consist a viable solution in terms of financial performance and service delivery and quality (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 2008). The boundaries between the public and the private sector have also become more blurred, raising questions about the adequacy of the law in matters of control, ownership and accountability (Lienert, 2009). It is also necessary to study the success factors identified from the use of PPPs to date and to design a relevant regulatory framework so that PPPs can function properly and increase production towards the socially optimal in a sustainable way, limit monopoly profit and keep the private sector motivated to be more effective. In any case, legal certainty, transparency, equal treatment and conditions of competition, close cooperation between the public and the private sector and long-term decision-making play an important role in the success of PPPs and in avoiding subsequent adverse consequences.

Proposals have been made in this direction, such as the establishment of a European PPP agency and the enhanced role of external auditors in order to ensure value for money (Bovis, 2011; Burnett, 2007). It is necessary to adjust the institutional and legal framework of PPPs, especially in the EU, in order to adapt to the needs of the co-financed projects and the rapid technological development, to develop a clear strategy by the states about the use of PPPs and not to encourage the wider use of PPPs until the problems are resolved and the expected benefits are achieved according to documented comparative analytics (European Court of Auditors, 2018). In any case, good governance and public leadership are considered essential success factors and more specifically the establishment of clear objectives and responsibilities for each participant, clear rules of operation, regular implementation, monitoring and evaluation, transparency, stakeholder consultation and settlement and exit strategies (OECD, 2016).

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## Topic 3

### Sustainable Development and Environmental Policies

# Just Transition Mechanism and Lignite Phase-Out in Greece: Challenges and Prospects<sup>1</sup>

Danai Lypiridi<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

The guidelines for the future of the energy sector in Greece are largely determined by the relevant strategic decisions of the European Union. A key role in this context is played by the EU's Energy Union Strategy, which seeks to ensure secure, sustainable, competitive and affordable energy for EU citizens and businesses. Therefore, the radical transformation of the energy sector in Greece, as part of the European Union's strategy to achieve the long-term goal of climate neutrality by 2050, will require in the next few years significant investments for the just transition of the lignite-dependent regions, which will be disproportionately affected. In this paper, Greece's energy deficit is examined, as well as Just Transition Mechanism and its contribution to the ongoing green transition of the Greek energy sector. By attempting to identify the systemic inexpediencies of the energy sector in Greece, the aim of this paper is to paint a realistic picture of the country's lignite phase-out plan and the challenges it faces during the ongoing energy crisis. It is concluded that the green and just transition is a long process, which requires strategic planning and a policy framework with clear implementation objectives and timetables.

**Keywords:** Just Transition Mechanism; Lignite Phase-Out; Energy Sector; Energy Crisis; Multiannual Financial Framework; SDAM; Green and Just Transition; Energy Deficit; GHG Emissions; Lignite-Dependent Regions

## Introduction

The European Union (EU) is committed to achieve the elimination of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050 and has incorporated this target into the European Green Deal adopted in 2020. In this context, in January 2020, the European Commission proposed the Just Transition Mechanism; a key tool to help European regions whose economies are most dependent on fossil fuels to alleviate the socio-economic impact of the transition to a sustainable economy. Concerning Greece, lignite-fired power plants will have ceased to operate by 2028 and this commitment will, inevitably, have significant consequences. This paper aims to examine the lignite phase-out in Greece in order to identify the systemic inexpediencies of the energy sector in Greece and the policy orientation required in order to increase the country's energy security and reduce dependence from energy imports. In the first section, systemic deficiencies in the Greek energy sector and the implications of the ongoing global energy crisis are analyzed. In the second section, EU's Just Transition Mechanism is presented.

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Lypiridi, D. (2021). Just Transition Mechanism and Lignite Phase-Out in Greece: Challenges and Prospects. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 75-84. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29493

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Finally, the challenges of Greece's decarbonization plan are discussed for the design of a resilient energy policy.

### **Systemic inexpediencies of the energy sector in Greece and the energy crisis of 2021**

According to Squalli (2007), an economy, constrained by mismanagement of resources, could bring forward inefficiencies and the diminution in the demand for goods and services, including energy consumption. Energy is an input in the production process because it is used for commercial and non-commercial activities. Therefore, (secondary effects on inflation notwithstanding) energy has a direct link to a country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and, due to this positive correlation between energy and economic growth, any negative impact on energy, such as rising energy prices (imbalances in the supply – demand chain) or the impact of “damaging” energy policies, will have a negative impact on GDP (Sharma, 2010). Regarding Greece, one of the most basic elements of its energy sector concerns is the reliance of the Greek economy on fossil fuels (namely coal, oil and natural gas), as well as its high dependency on primary energy imports. According to U.S. Energy Information Administration, energy consumption in Greece reached 1.17 quadrillion British Thermal Unit (Btu) in 2019, while its energy conversion reached 0.3 quad. Btu., indicating an overall energy deficit of 87%, directly burdening the current account balance (which posted at a deficit of 6.7% in 2020) (diaNEOsis, 2021). Furthermore, the energy deficit in question seems to contribute negatively to the country's GDP and public debt (which exceeded €388.49 billion in July 2021). Thus, Greece's gross debt as a percentage of GDP stood at 236% of GDP in July, compared to 233% of Japan, which has the next worst indicator (OECD iLibrary, 2021).

The Greek energy deficit is mainly covered by primary energy imports (470 million barrels per day (Mb/d) and 184 billion cubic feet (bcf) of oil and natural gas respectively), and -to a lesser extent- by domestic energy conversion of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) (0.159 Btu) and coal (0.133 Btu). Meanwhile, the share of domestic crude oil and natural gas extraction is still very small (17 Mb/d and 0.4 bcf respectively) (EIA, 2019a; 2019b). As far as electricity is concerned, Greece's total electricity generation reached 47 billion kWh in 2019, whereas net electricity consumption was at 54 billion kWh, marking another deficit of 7% (EIA, 2019c; 2019d). More specifically, fossil fuels generated 30 billion kWh, while Renewables or RES produced the remaining 17 billion kWh (EIA, 2019c).

In the context of energy security, Greece's energy dependency is an issue that is directly affected by hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation. Overall, the dependence rate on energy imports in Greece was 70.5% in 2018, compared to 58.2% in the European Union (EU), indicating its inextricable energy reliance compared to most of the other EU Member States (Vettas et al., 2021). The energy

dependency is due to the particularly high use of petroleum products and natural gas, which cumulatively cover more than 65% of gross energy consumption and are almost entirely imported from countries outside the European Economic Area (Lypiridi, 2021a). Greece, in particular, seems to be energy dependent on Turkey, because currently about 70% of natural gas imports pass through a pipeline system located on Turkish territory (Stampolis, 2021); the rest is imported in the form of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) through the Hellenic Gas Transmission System Operator (DESFA) terminal in Revithoussa (DESFA, 2021). It is also worth mentioning that natural gas currently occupies the largest percentage of Greek energy balance (RAE, 2020).

Moreover, despite the discovery of potentially commercially exploitable oil and gas deposits in various parts of Greek territory (e.g. “Epanomi” natural gas field) and the estimates for an underwater natural gas field in the Eastern Mediterranean (e.g. “Talos” natural gas field in South Crete), Greece has not proceeded with their exploitation, resulting in importing almost 100% of its present hydrocarbon needs<sup>3</sup> (Lypiridi, 2021a). It is also noteworthy that Greece already imports 11 billion kWh of electrical energy via undersea and underground electricity interconnections with Italy and Bulgaria (EIA, 2019e), while recently signed a new memorandum of energy cooperation with Egypt regarding the electrical interconnection of the two countries through an undersea cable that will transmit power produced by renewables (EuroAfrica Interconnector, 2021). These figures highlight the country's significant energy dependence on energy imports and, consequently, the intensification of its energy reliance on external energy suppliers, undermining its energy security and autonomy as well as its public debt and economic output.

An energy crisis seems to be underway comparable with the early 1970s oil crisis. Energy prices are soaring, as demand from the economies that are recovering from the COVID-19 shutdown is not covered by supply. This record increase in global energy prices can be attributed to a number of factors. Firstly, it is theorized that the energy price increase is mainly due to the increased demand, as economic activity returns to pre-pandemic levels, as well as due to the still on-going supply chain disruptions caused by the pandemic (Toyrkchoritis, 2021). Secondly, it is considered that the increasing restrictions placed on traditional energy sources have resulted in the so-called “green inflation” price spike (Rees, 2021). Government regulators have been increasingly working in recent years to encourage the use of renewable energy in order to meet the 2050 net zero targets. Consequently, this aggressive push towards RES adoption, the expanded use of “green” technologies that are not cost-effective yet and the underinvestment in the development of European and American

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<sup>3</sup> excluding the only domestically productive off-shore oil field in the region of Kavala-Thassos (Prinos oil field) (Lypiridi, 2021a).

oil and gas fields during the 2015-2021 period (Toyrkochoritis, 2021), have led to energy supplies insufficient to meet growing demand. Furthermore, as rising energy prices influence economic decisions throughout the supply chain, they have had a significant impact on commodity markets. Plans to intensify “green” investments after the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in “clean” energy, and the adoption of “green” energy policies (e.g., carbon taxes imposed by EU Emissions Trading System - EU ETS) have resulted in increasingly high prices for certain raw materials such as rare earths that are crucial components for RES technologies.

### **Just Transition Mechanism: for a transition to a sustainable economy**

As the European Union moves toward climate neutrality, it became evident that not all its Member States or regions have the same starting point, due to disparities regarding their development potential. The EU regions most at risk of socio-economic disruption from this drastic process of reducing pollutant emissions are those where jobs depend on the extraction and production of fossil fuels, especially coal. In January 2020, the European Commission proposed the Just Transition Mechanism to help regions whose economies are most dependent on fossil fuels in order to cope with the socio-economic consequences of the transition to a sustainable economy. EU Member States have to identify the regions that are eligible, focusing on those that should phase-out the production and use of coal, lignite, peat and oil shale or transform GHG-intensive industrial processes without using natural gas as a “transition fuel” (Lypiridi, 2021b).

The JTM consists of three pillars; the Just Transition Fund (JTF), a dedicated just transition scheme under InvestEU and a public sector loan facility with the European Investment Bank (EIB) Group backed by the MFF (European Commission, 2020). In accordance with Regulation 2020/0006 (COD) of the European Parliament and of the Council of the EU establishing the Just Transition Fund, the JTF will be used to provide grants, the InvestEU scheme will attract private investment and the partnership with the EIB will leverage public funding.

The JTF will focus on the economic diversification of the territories most affected by the climate transition, the acquisition of new skills of the workforce and the active inclusion of workers and jobseekers in these territories. The JTF has a budget of €17.5 billion in public spending. Funding will be available to all Member States, while focusing on regions with the greatest transition challenges. JTF funds will be complemented by additional resources under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) through a transfer mechanism (European Commission, 2020). Finally, Member States will provide national resources in addition to the EU

funds while the level of EU funding will be determined according to the category of the region in which the identified territories are located (European Commission, 2020).

The dedicated transition scheme under InvestEU will provide a further €1.8 billion (in 2018 prices), supporting a wider range of private investments, including investments in energy and transport infrastructure, digitalization and digital connectivity, as well as in the circular economy (European Commission, 2020). Moreover, the public sector loan facility from the EIB Group will combine a grant of €1.5 billion in public expenditure from the MFF and a loan of up to €10 billion from the EIB, which is expected to mobilize €25-30 billion of public investments in energy and transport infrastructure, district heating networks, energy efficiency measures; including buildings renovation and social infrastructure (COM/2020/22 final).

Particularly, the activities financed by the JTF will include micro-enterprises, sustainable tourism, social infrastructure, universities and public research centers, energy storage technologies, low-emission district heating, smart and sustainable transport, digital innovation (including digital and precision farming), actions to combat energy poverty; as well as culture, education and community building (COM/2020/22 final). A prerequisite for the start of the whole funding process is the preparation and implementation of the Territorial Plans on the basis of which the spatial picture of the economic interventions and activities in the affected areas will be depicted (COM/2020/22 final).

### **Lignite phase-out in Greece: the challenge of the green and just transition**

Currently in Greece there are five municipalities which have based their economic activity on energy conversion by lignite<sup>4</sup>. The investment in electricity conversion using domestic lignite was an important step in the electrification of Greece and in the development of areas with significant reserves of this energy resource, thus creating significant externalities (SDAM Steering Committee, 2020). However, the need to comply with EU's commitments under the Paris Agreement concerning the reach of zero GHG emissions by 2050 leads to a gradual cessation of this activity, with major socioeconomic consequences in the respective areas. In this context, a comprehensive Just Development Transition Plan (supported mainly by the aforementioned JTM) has been conceived for the developmental transformation of these regions, in order to offset the economic impact and secure jobs in the affected areas (SDAM Steering Committee, 2020).

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<sup>4</sup> They are the municipalities of Eordea and Kozani in the regional unit of Kozani, the municipalities of Amyntaio and Florina in the regional unit of Florina, and the municipality of Megalopolis in Arcadia.



SDAM is divided into two parts based on the sources of funding: the national and the co-financed by the EU. For the co-financed part, a political agreement has been reached with the EU institutions on the terms and conditions that will apply during the 2021-2027 period, especially on the operation of JTM, such as the preparation of Territorial Just Transition Plans for each carbon-dependent region (SDAM Steering Committee, 2020). The consultation with the European Commission is at an advanced level and the relative Plans are expected to be approved under the conditions that they adequately describe, *inter alia*, each Member State's commitment to the green transition process in accordance with their “National Energy and Climate Plan” (NECP) (SDAM Steering Committee, 2020). Given that the main source of funding of SDAM is the JTM, the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) for the 2021-2027 period and the new Recovery Fund, SDAM will be regularly updated by the Steering Committee, following the progress of the NSRF planning and the new distinct Just Transition Development Program 2021-2027 in which the three Territorial Just Transition Plans are to be incorporated: two for the Greek lignite regions (Kozani-Florina and Megalopoli) as well as one for Crete and the North and South Aegean Islands (SDAM Steering Committee, 2020).

By 2028, all existing lignite-fired power plants are expected to end all operations in Greece. This commitment, part of the need to achieve the pan-European goal of “climate neutrality” by 2050, will, inevitably, have significant consequences. Greek energy deficit is expected to exacerbate, a significant number of jobs are likely to be lost and entire regions, which until now have been dependent on the economic activity of PPC factories and mines, are about to face serious economic problems (Dousi et al., 2020). However, the current energy crisis (with the soaring fuel prices and the resulting increases in a plethora of consumer products) puts the undertaken ambitious decarbonization time targets in a new perspective.

Regarding Greece's lignite phase-out plan, the rapid implementation of its demanding commitments entails drastic changes not only in the production of goods and the provision of services, but also in the economy of local communities, which have been dependent on lignite for decades. Western Macedonia and Arcadia are two territories that have played a leading role in Greece's electricity supply for many years and which are expected to be mostly affected by these developments. Both face serious socioeconomic challenges, such as a lack of employment opportunities and the absence of alternative economic activities for the absorption of the workforce following the shutting-down of lignite-fired power plants (Dousi, 2020).

The transition from carbon-intensive to carbon-neutral technologies presupposes a large-scale transformation with new investments and specialized human resources that will undertake their implementation. While the said transition has not been completed, the Greek economy still has to

produce low GHG emissions, otherwise it needs to obtain more emission allowances. As a result, transport and production prices are on the rise, and combined with increased demand that arose after the pandemic, they have a particular effect on energy bills and on retail tariffs for other products and services. Since “green” technologies are not cost-effective yet in order to be widely implemented and with the current upward trend on energy prices (causing inflation and fall in the purchasing power of consumers), it seems only logical that lignite phase-out time targets should be aligned with the current economic situation in Greece.

There will likely be a need to draw up and implement more realistic timetables which will enable the domestic construction potential to regroup and contribute to the new “green” investments, thus avoiding a rapid deterioration of the trade and energy balance that would be caused by the massive imports of RES. The implementation of JTM assists in overcoming the problem of mass financing RES technologies due to the funds allocated for their purchase and installation. Nevertheless, it does not answer the problem of participation of Greek companies in their construction and installation nor to the ways in which the national fuel, lignite, could be exploited. Therefore, Greece's balance of payments seems to be in danger of further deficit due to the fast pace “green” transition (Christodoulakis, 2021). Furthermore, it is doubtful whether “green” investments will be able to replace lignite as the new and efficient electricity providers in such a short notice, taking also into account their average short period of life. Consequently, it would be preferable for the decarbonisation targets to be reviewed in order for the green and just transition to be done comprehensively and with national participation. According to Orfanoudakis, extending Greece’s “green” transition deadline would be entirely appropriate in order to achieve the long-term goal of climate neutrality by 2050. It would be in the country’s best economic interests to operate the units that have not been depreciated yet; such as Agios Dimitrios Thermal Power Plant (TPP) 5, Megalopoli TPP 4, Florina TPP and Ptolemais TPP 5, since an immediate and abrupt shut-down is estimated to cost increase (Orfanoudakis, 2021).

It is also worth considering operating the potentially commercially exploitable oil and gas deposits in various parts of Greek territory and maritime Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ), in order to strengthen Greece’s energy autonomy and minimize its energy deficit and energy dependency from LNG and natural gas imports. A cooperation between Hellenic Petroleum S.A. and major oil companies, that have the proper expertise and financial capacity, could contribute, according to an estimate by Foskolos, to the Greek State at least \$20 billion per year from energy fuel exports over 50 years, upgrading exponentially its geopolitical position (Foskolos, 2021). Finally, it could be argued that nuclear energy could contribute to the objective of a zero-emission economy. Taking advantage of

the continuing energy crisis in Europe, nuclear energy is advocated as an affordable, stable and independent energy source that can protect European consumers from price fluctuations (Euronews, 2021). Unlike RES, nuclear energy is a constant and reliable energy source as it does not depend on weather conditions. As a result, in times of high demand, nuclear power plants are able to fully meet the needs of a country's electrical grid, at all times. Greece should look further into it as nuclear energy could dramatically reduce electricity costs for businesses and households, while contributing to the country's green transition and reducing its energy dependency on third countries.

## Conclusions

Greece is called upon to continue the difficult task of just and green transition of the lignite-dependent regions during an energy crisis that directly affects economic growth and does not create a favorable environment for the expanded use of “green” technologies that are not cost-effective yet. A just transition is necessary for the lignite phase-out process, but also a key condition for its successful implementation. The effectiveness of the transition process depends on the specific conditions prevailing in each region, the initial degree of dependence of the local economy on lignite and hard coal extraction as well as combustion activities, the adaptability of businesses, the workforce and the local community. Each case should therefore be dealt separately through a transition plan that takes into account the specific characteristics and conditions of each territory. However, the green and just transition is a long process, which requires first and foremost strategic planning and a policy framework with clear implementation objectives and timetables. So far, it seems that unilateral dependence on intermittent RES is not enough, not only for the stability of a country's electrical grid but also in order to resolve issues such as combating energy poverty, minimizing the state's energy deficit and maximizing its energy autonomy. Therefore, it would make sense to prioritize the strengthening of Greece's energy security (especially in the face of the current and possible future energy crises), taking into consideration the aforementioned options.

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# Gender and Climate Change: Challenges and Opportunities<sup>1</sup>

Oksana Senja<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Women are more vulnerable than men to climate change. According to the literature, this vulnerability is the result of pre-existing gender inequalities, social marginalization, less access to education and knowledge, poverty, insecure land rights, heavy reliance on agriculture and lack of mobility. This paper focuses on rural women's vulnerability to climate change, through three case studies, and also on the empowerment and the involvement of them in the policy-making processes in order to combat the climate crisis. Women should participate and contribute with their knowledge and their life experience, which is a result of particular strengths, perspectives and priorities. The empowerment of these women is vital for successfully combating the impacts of climate change and for the mitigation and adaptation efforts to thrive.

**Keywords:** Climate change; gender equality; women's vulnerability; climate vulnerability; eco feminism

## Introduction

Existing literature shows that climate change is a serious threat to humanity. Nonetheless, this threat is gendered disproportionately and very few studies have dealt with women's vulnerability due to the changing climate and the factors responsible for this vulnerability. Women experience and/or respond to climate change differently than men, according to the Nigerian Environmental Study Team (2011), are the ones most severely affected; however, this vulnerability is not innate. In many cases, social customs and discriminatory legal institutions exacerbate women's vulnerability by increasing exposure and reducing coping capacity.

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate, through three case studies, women's vulnerability to climate change. Within the context of this study, women's vulnerability finds expression in the way patriarchy has shaped societal behaviours regarding gender relations (Gaard, 2015). In order to support this argument, the paper adopts the eco feminist theory as a framework so as to further explain how patriarchy impacts on women's lives. This theory emphasizes on the fact that both women and nature are treated with disadvantage by patriarchal society (Holy et al., 2021). Besides, the term itself indicates a connection between the degradation of nature and the oppression and subordination of women (Mellor, 2018).

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Senja, O. (2021). Gender and Climate Change: Challenges and Opportunities. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 85-93. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29494

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The first section of this paper explores the ways in which women's vulnerability to climate change is aggravated by patriarchy. The second section examines three case studies (in the Arctic, in the South Asia and the sub-Saharan region) so as to prove the above argument, and lastly the third section concludes with an underexplored solution to tackle climate change, which involves more women in developing and enhancing innovation.

### **Women's vulnerability to climate change**

Women's vulnerability due to climate-related issues (sensitivity and exposure to environmental threats and the ability to respond to environmental crises) finds expression in the patriarchal structured social behaviours regarding the division of roles based on gender (Onwutuebe, 2019). This paper argues that power differentials and gender disparities are based on patriarchy, which increases this gender imbalance against women. Building on these insights, women's vulnerability to climate change does not only reflect pre-existing gender discrimination, it is also being amplified by it. Thus, women's marginalization is reinforced by the adversely changing climate, which acts more as a threat multiplier, than the cause of the marginalisation itself.

According to Appadorai (2006), male supremacy is strengthened by patriarchy, since it does not acknowledge any form of equality among women and men, and as a result, women are thought to be made in order to be submissive to male supremacy. Therefore, due to patriarchal beliefs, which are transmitted and sustained through culture and religion, violence against women becomes imperceptible (Ogbuagu, 1997). This kind of violence, direct and indirect, exposes women to more dangers and minimises their adaptive capacity to the changing climate. Consequently, women are more vulnerable to climate change, due to earlier deprivations and exclusions because of the patriarchy.

As a consequence, countries which depend heavily on agriculture will have the most adverse impacts of climate change, as they rely dramatically on climatic conditions in order to survive and make a living. Impoverished populations face greater risks, as they live in more environmentally exposed locations (such as a flood plain or a degraded hill slope) and own fewer adapting resources in order to recover from disasters (Mubila, Nabalamba & Alexander, 2011). A large percentage of women in those countries are poor farmers who depend highly on rain-fed agriculture. This makes them more vulnerable to climate change and implies a higher level of livelihood risks and exposure to climate-related disasters (Tanny & Rahman, 2016). Communities dependent on agriculture have no guarantee of the right amount of rainfall and/or sunshine in the appropriate period, and as a result, climate alterations could have devastating effects on the crops (Tyndall, 2008). Hence, these challenges might



add more difficulties to the already vulnerable and marginalised groups, such as women, like reducing the availability of land and water (Fasona et al., 2015). Women's low adaptive capacities, on account of the unequal distribution of power, along with their dependence on men, undermine the livelihood of female farmers and increase their insecurity. Men possess higher adaptive capability to face the negative effects of climate change due to patriarchal privileges. In other words, men enjoy greater levels of flexibility than women, considering their capacity to alter their occupation or even migrate, in order to cope with the aggravating consequences of the changing climate. This is mainly on account of the fact that women and men are unequally equipped to adapt in hostile conditions (Meza, 2010). Such inequalities include lack of land ownership, reduced water and food access and increased disaster exposure.

A serious cause of women's inability to adapt in such conditions is land deprivation. The traditional discrimination against women's land ownership, according to Ajala (2017), in most rural areas deprives women of the prospect to effectively engage with agriculture and cope with the impacts of climate change. Across the developing world, men own land overwhelmingly. Moreover, land grabbing (lands which belong to women whose husbands have died and are taken away from them by force), is a major issue in several communities (Meza, 2020). Communities in which women are denied the opportunity, privilege and right to take part in every public or economic activity like the men, or are deprived of the right to possess land which legally belonged to their late husbands, are tackling with much greater risk in facing the growing threats of climate change. This lack of autonomy places women at disadvantage and increases their vulnerability. In addition to that, women are also charged with the responsibility to secure food, water and fuel for cooking, prepare the meals, nurture the children and work on the farm in order to provide food. As a consequence, women are confronted with greater challenges than men, and are extremely reliant on the climatic conditions in order to secure their survival, as a climate shock may disrupt income flows, food cultivation, changes to water supplies or crop distribution (UN Women Watch, 2009).

Building on these insights, female headed households are, commonly, more impoverished and food insecure, more probable to have a bigger number of non-working dependents, as well as more likely to face greater limitations in matter of mobility and earnings, since women are responsible for both performing domestic duties and acting as main breadwinners, as claimed by Flato et al. (2017). Patriarchal social and legal institutions, discriminatory practices and violence against women exacerbate gendered disparities, amplify domestic burdens, undermine women's health and well-being and in many cases jeopardize their life. This is especially prevalent in refugee camps, conflict

zones or other insecure spaces, or when women are forced to move farther in order to collect water or fuel-wood and so the risk of a sexual assault is increased (Brody, Demetriades, & Esplen, 2008).

## Case Studies

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate the argument that women belong to a marginalised group and are disproportionately affected by climate change due to historical inequalities and their dependence on resources and sectors which will experience intense shifts and acute consequences. The case studies which will be analysed are the indigenous women of the Arctic, the rural women in South Asia, and most notably India and, lastly, the sub-Saharan women of Africa.

To begin with, since the Arctic is warming up at twice the global pace, indigenous women are severely impacted and extremely vulnerable to climate change impacts (Cameron, 2011; Arctic Council, 2016). This marginalized group is seriously affected by the accelerating and unequivocal impacts of the changing climate. Despite the fact that women's rights are officially codified under the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979), and indigenous people's rights are recognised in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, 2007), little focus has been given to the rights of the indigenous women in particular. Thus, their rights are usually neglected at both the local and international level, they experience deepened discriminatory and exclusionary practices and face systemic violation of their rights. The Inuit, in particular, are being severely tested, as their nature-based way of life is changed, and the community's identity might as well be destroyed (Miranda, 2013). Indigenous women are especially vulnerable due to limited access in education and information, geography, increased exposure, land ownership and rights, underrepresentation in (high-level) political positions and patriarchal structures, among others (Prior and Heinämäki, 2017).

In South Asia, on the other hand, women's vulnerability is a product of interacting and diverse social processes. In India, in particular, but also in most cases, women in rural areas are responsible for household work, harvesting and carrying fodder cattle and farming. Consequently, extreme climatic events exacerbate women's workload, especially in fuel wood collection and water fetching, affecting them socially, physically and economically (Waris & Antahal, 2014). More specifically, India's arid regions are prone to chronic water shortages, thus climate change decreases the clean water's availability and so women and young girls need to walk longer, rough and unsafe distances, in search of clean and sufficient water (Mitchell et al., 2007). This also impacts the rise of women's and girls' illiteracy, as they are forced to miss school, for example in rural Rajasthan and Gujrat (Kookana et al., 2016). Additionally, climate change indirectly affects women's health, as it disrupts their natural

systems, causes infectious diseases (as a result of the degradation of water supplies) and malnutrition (WHO, 2010). All in all, women who live in arid and rural regions of South Asia are disproportionately more at risk because of the climate change due to poverty (limited access to resources), the fact that they constitute 70% of the informal workforce (Ghosh, 2015) and the fact that they rely heavily on meagre natural resources not only for their livelihood but also as a substance income.

Lastly, women living in sub-Saharan Africa face the most challenging threats to their sustainable development due to climate change, owing to their high dependence on environment-based livelihoods. According to Hellmuth et al. (2007) 70% of them rely substantially on agriculture. In Africa, therefore, the population is already at much greater risk of livelihood and food insecurity. In South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Uganda women are engaged in agricultural exports, where production is characterized by seasonal, short-term and casual work (FAO, 2010). In the sub-Saharan region, also, it is estimated that women are responsible for 80% of food production (Mubila, Nabalamba & Alexander, 2011). As a consequence, their high dependence on the agricultural sector, which itself relies deeply on the climatic conditions, puts women in the most disadvantaged position. Moreover, another obstacle women need to face is land deprivation. In Africa, despite women being responsible for approximately 50 to 80% of the agricultural production, they hold title only to less than 20% of all agricultural land (FAO, 2016). Extreme climatic conditions in Africa have demonstrated these gender inequalities. For example, severe droughts between 2013 and 2019 were experienced in Sahel, the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa, and on 14th of March 2019 Cyclone Idai hit parts of Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Women and girls carried the brunt of those events' impacts, according to the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (2016). Among those affected, they paid the biggest price. As claimed by the UN News (2019), nearly 82 000 pregnant women were left vulnerable due to lack of reproductive health services, clean water and sanitation or experiencing the risk of life threatening complications.

### **Women's Empowerment and Contribution to Climate Change Mitigation**

An underexplored solution to tackle climate change is involving more women in developing and enhancing innovation. There are a lot of benefits of having women on board, as they are praised for their positive role in accomplishing the right societal impact (Kraus et al., 2018), and moreover being the initiators of many climate change movements, like ecofeminism (Gaard, 2015).

To begin with, the topic of gender issues in innovation has concerned the scientific community since 1975, based on a sociological analysis of whether women belong or not in science (Le Loarne-

Lemaire, 2020). This debate has strongly evolved and has grown a lot of interest nowadays. Paul-Hus et al. (2015) note that gender disparities and the gender gap persist in many areas of the society, and the scientific research makes no exception. Scholars state that many countries aim at growing women's participation in science, since they are more efficient in managing scientific research activities, while men are more efficient in conducting technology development activities (Kou et al., 2020). As Le Loarne-Lemaire (2020) states, getting more women involved in innovations contributes to an ameliorated development and diffusion of them.

Paswan and Singh (2020) support greater female participation in research. This paper argues for more female participation in climate change research, as according to literature review conducted by Le Loarne-Lemaire (2020), public policies aimed at countering climate change do not at most times succeed in developing patents which serve this cause. Therefore, owing to the fact that women mean to help others and the society first (Croson & Gneezy, 2009), rather than focusing mostly on gaining profit such as their male counterparts, it is unquestionable that more women should take on leadership positions, leading to more disruptive innovations, greater research diversity and more inclusive teams in this male-dominated context (Galia & Zenou, 2012).

This paper strongly supports that women, especially those in poor countries, suffer the most from climate change, nonetheless lack equal representation in the decision-making. As noted by Robinson and Verveer (2015), the world should not neglect the needs of its half population, nor disregard their potential and talents in innovating solutions. Women are critical factors of change, and therefore can contribute to both mitigation and adaptation efforts through creative and localized solutions. An example which proves the above statement is Grameen Shakti, a Bangladeshi renewable energy social enterprise, which since 2005 has been training women as solar technicians, aiming at empowering rural women through job creation and ensuring their involvement in the renewable energy sector. Women's lives are totally transformed by programs like this, since they provide them access to sustainable livelihoods, training, technology and financial resources. Thus, women's crucial role in contributing to solutions and serving to minimize the global threat of climate change is enhanced. On that account, women's participation in the decision-making is a strategic necessity, and moreover, they need to be included as leaders in such processes, in order to successfully combat climate change.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Women are indeed the ones who are mostly affected by natural disasters and climate change, though their vulnerability is not inherent; it is rather a result of poverty, gendered social roles and discrimination, which heighten exposure and undermine women's coping capacity. As a

consequence, women are more impoverished than men, less able to adapt to adverse climate change impacts, and moreover, less likely to take part in the policy-making process which facilitates mitigation efforts or gender-specific adaptation (Van Aelst and Holvoet, 2016).

As shown by the case studies, and according to the eco feminism theory, around the globe, discrimination against women obstruct them from participating in the political arena and in the decision-making process about climate change and, in addition, due to being marginalized, they are particularly vulnerable in times of political instability. Furthermore, gender roles limit women's mobility and impose tasks which are associated with food production. Hence, women are cultivators and the main users of land and natural resources, despite not owning the land or not controlling the allocation of the resources.

Consequently, this paper concludes with the fact that women (especially those who live in rural areas and are mostly affected by climate change) should participate in the decision-making process and contribute with their knowledge and their life experience, which is a result of particular strengths, perspectives and priorities. The empowerment of these women is vital for successfully combating the impacts of climate change and for the mitigation and adaptation efforts to thrive. Thus, this paper advocates the elimination of social, cultural and institutional barriers to women's full civic, political and legal equality with men, as well as the improvement of schooling for all youth and especially the increase in educational attainment of girls.

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## Topic 4

### Political Economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

# Effects of Greenwashing on the Markets of the Western World<sup>1</sup>

Thessalia Mysirli<sup>2</sup> & Dimitra Axarli<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

With the beginning of the new century, more and more consumers from the western world have taken a step further towards sustainable decisions. This leads them to be conscious of the company they support and buy from. In order to keep up with consumers' expectations, some companies have decided to promote a positive image of environmental performance, yet their real environmental performance has not changed. This practice is called greenwashing. This paper aims to take a closer look at this issue by using some case studies, and to inform the reader for some of the effects the act of greenwashing has brought into the surface in the western world.

**Keywords:** Greenwashing; corporate social responsibility; competition.

## Introduction

In the past few decades, an increase in demand for green and sustainable products and services has been observed. Companies often use claims that sound environmentally friendly, but are actually vague, and at times may be false, in order to attract those upcoming green audiences. As a result, “greenwashing” has become commonplace in our market (Furlow, 2010). A “people-planet-profit” performance evaluation has become a necessity for corporations in order to survive and thrive in their industry (de Jong et al, 2018). Greenwashing gives companies an opportunity to access the benefits of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and chase a competitive advantage, while avoiding the additional costs of implementing the policy (ter Beest, 2020). This kind of strategy does not have the same positive relationship with financial performance that a true environmental commitment has and thus, it does not seem to contribute to consumers' buying interests. That is the reason why greenwashing is not an advised strategy for big corporations to follow (de Jong et al, 2018).

Additionally, after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, western consumers have started showing a preference towards more sustainable and purpose-driven choices, in fashion or energy for example. As Roberts-Islam (2020) notes, in a survey conducted by Mckisney & Company, in several western countries, the percentage of consumers who are more mindful on what they are buying - and from where - is progressively rising, and will continue to do so. But even before COVID-19, pressure for environmentally-friendly products from consumers to companies had already begun to increase and

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Mysirli, T. & Axarli, D. (2021). Effects of Greenwashing on the Markets of the Western World. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 95-101. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29496

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more than 50% of buyers are willing to give more money than usual in order to buy products from companies that do not harm the environment (de Freitas Netto et al., 2020). This will naturally create a window of opportunity for companies, where they will have to choose between a holistic and real yet slow and costly eco-friendly transition, or a pretty wrapping with an empty package.

This Policy Brief aims to raise awareness of this issue and provide the reader with several proposals to tackle it. In the first part, the explanation of two very distinct cases of greenwashing will take place. After conceiving a better understanding through those case studies, the effects of greenwashing to almost any economic and environmental sector are going to be highlighted. Lastly, there will be a small discussion on several measures each affected sector could take, in order to deal with the consequences of greenwashing – and greenwashing itself.

## 1. Case Studies

In order to follow a more in-depth approach to greenwashing and to really understand the effects of this issue, first of all it is only natural to take a closer look at some memorable case studies of this phenomenon over the years. Therefore, in this part of the Policy Brief, the focus will be on two main levels where greenwashing engagement can be found; the “claim” and “executional” level. According to de Freitas Netto et al. (2020), the “claim” level is where the companies are implementing greenwashing in a product level, whereas the “executional” level is about the images, words, sounds and colours a company uses in its products and advertisements. In the claim level, the focus will be on INDITEX company (ZARA, H&M etc.) and on the executional one, there will be the example of FIJI Natural Artesian Water (FIJI Water) company. By doing so, the goal is to achieve a deeper understanding of how greenwashing works in action.

Before starting, it is interesting to look at the first example of greenwashing –when the name of this phenomenon was given. According to Gallicano (2011), the concept of greenwashing was first introduced to dictionaries as a word, after Jay Westerveld -an environmental activist- realised that a policy of a certain hotel was for the residents to reuse the towels, for the sake of the environment. This caught the eye of Westerveld, since this hotel did not have a holistic approach on the protection of the environment (recycling for instance), yet in order to save some money for its own profit it called on environmental awareness. After this incident, more and more people started to take notice of this practice either to be more cautious of their decisions or to copy this hotel’s approach for their own profit - and implement greenwashing policies.

The following examples will show us exactly how that phenomenon can be seen in vivo. In each case study, the focus will be on examples of greenwashing (since they followed one - or more - of the

“sins” of greenwashing) and on what level the practice of greenwashing took place (claim or executional).

### *Claim level*

The first example is the INDITEX company, which includes fast-fashion companies like ZARA and H&M. In those cases, some specific sectors named for example “Join Life” or “Conscious” have been created, where clothes are fabricated with a percentage of organic cotton, or recycled fabrics etc. There are several critiques on this approach, mainly that those companies use greenwashing techniques to appeal and deceive the customers and simultaneously have as little economic damage as possible (Cwienk, 2020).

The first two sins that can be seen, are the sin of vagueness and the sin of no proof; both H&M and ZARA, use their own labels that are recognizable from an everyday consumer (“Join Life” and “Conscious”), to indicate that the clothes from those sectors are made with a great percentage (the least 50%) of organic cotton or recycled textiles. That being said, there is a luring vagueness in those statements, since firstly each year the percentage of those materials varies and also it may drop way less than 50% (for instance, in 2020 the percentage was 16%) (Cwienk, 2020). So, the sin of vagueness is taking place and creates a great deal of confusion to the customers who are willing to support those brands even if the percentages are not precise.

Besides, the claim for organic cotton is truly very vague. Even if some percentage of the clothes from this particular collection is from organically harvested cotton, there is a great deal of other stages (dyeing, printing, sweeing) from cotton to become a piece of clothing. In the process of all these stages, much environmental damage is still taking place, without having the respective “advertisement”. For example, a great percentage of global wastewater (around 20%), is caused during those in-between stages, according to the UN Environment Programme (Cwienk, 2020).

Another issue is the fact that those labels are created by the company itself. This means that it is on the company’s willingness and decision whether to inform the customers about the stages that follow the harvesting of the organic cotton or not. In any case, it is much more reliable to use independent certifications rather than a company’s one (Cwienk, 2020).

Another sin that can be observed in those companies, is the sin of the hidden trade-off; the only way for a fast-fashion brand to be called sustainable for real, is by taking drastic measures and not just tiny steps without any other effort. The clothing industry is highly polluting, as long as tons of clothes are found in waste every year (Müller, 2020). The production of clothing and other fast-fashion

materials requires huge amounts of energy and water, a fact that cannot go hand in hand with claims of sustainability. Thus, even if organic cotton or recycled materials are used in some products, that should not overlap the truth about fast-fashion production and its levels of pollution in general (Cwienk, 2020).

It is important to understand that the effort towards an eco-friendlier approach is not an easy one. It goes without saying that the companies who are willing to do so, have to take smaller steps during this transition. Thus, it is only natural that those companies at some point of their transition may have a contradiction - a sin. But there is a difference; in that case, those companies would be more open to communicate their place of transition (for example, using a small percentage of recycling materials, but the end goal is to use 100% recycling materials, and how they are working towards that). They would be more transparent with their actions and would have nothing to hide or exaggerate. For instance, even though ZARA has made announcements for several steps towards more eco-friendly products, it seems that all of them are just statements, enough to soothe the stakeholders but not enough to really make the company eco-friendly. In other words, it is following the steps of greenwashing (Frost, 2019).

### ***Executional level***

An example of greenwashing on an executional level, is the FIJI Water TV Commercial: Nature's Gift. By using a soothing voice of a child and with sticking visual effects from nature (with crystal clear waters, sunlight and trees), Fiji water advertisement creates a contrast between the grey imagery of a big city and the exotic beauty of Fiji Islands. The purpose of this advertisement is to inform the viewers that Fiji water is untouched by men and is pure and healthy.

Even though this seems like the epitome of nature, it is not; it is served in plastic bottles that take years to decompose and the carbon dioxide produced for the manufacturing and the transportation is not by any means sustainable (Blue, 2018).

Many other examples could be provided to support this idea, such as General Electric and LG (de Freitas Netto et al., 2020) or Starbucks (Gallicano, 2011). This shows us just how widespread and simultaneously almost undetectable the act of greenwashing is, that affects many sectors of our lives.

## **2. Effects of greenwashing**

Greenwashing is a “disease” that negatively affects, not only those who are incorporating this kind of strategies, but also those who revolve around their supply chains such as the customers, the

competitors, the global sustainable development and even the investing capital market. The effects of the practice of greenwashing are nowadays present more than ever. Nonetheless, the empirical research on the subject (effects of greenwashing) is still primitive (de Jong et al, 2018).

From the point of view of the corporations, it is beneficial to work on a CSR portfolio (de Jong et al, 2018). This creates skepticism from the consumer's side. The public usually regards big companies as polluters that are focused on profit-maximization and not as environmentalists (De Vries et al, 2015). The multitude of vague and misleading environmental claims has caused consumers to question corporate honesty, and cry greenwashing at every turn. In addition, overuse and misuse of the "green" claims can saturate the market to the point that the greenness of the product may become meaningless to the consumer (Furlow, 2010). Moreover, if the consumer finds the claim to be unreliable, they are likely to disregard all environmental claims, thereby avoiding any product that may in fact be better for the environment (Furlow, 2010). Consumers deem a company's positive action (e.g. a cigarette production company supporting cancer research) as insincere when it conflicts with the consequences of the company's core business (producing cigarettes) (De Vries et al, 2015).

Besides the fact that greenwashing might mislead and break the trust of the consumers, a significant effect it has is that companies that bona fide have included environmental CSR policies in their strategy might lose their competitive edge (Furlow, 2010). Because of increased consumer skepticism and misleading environmental claims, companies that are trying to become more environmentally friendly might lose their competitive edge, lose the rewards and the motive to transition to their greener function. (Furlow, 2010). Competition in some industries is a significant factor that might lead a firm to greenwashing (ter Beest, 2020).

A third effect of Greenwashing is the obstacle it creates to the global sustainable transition of the markets. Most big corporations in the energy, fashion, transport, agriculture and many other sectors that are great polluters, are trying to protect their interests with the least cost. This practice, however, puts walls in front of the great issue of the past two decades for green transition towards a more sustainable way of life (de Jong et al, 2018). The European Green Deal is an effort that is left behind in action due to companies protecting their interests, as the German automotive industry does.

Last but not least, Greenwashing may negatively affect the investing capital market towards the greenwashing and dirty companies, but it might also have a negative effect towards green firms' investing (ter Beest, 2020).

### 3. Discussion

Greenwashing is a fact in the 21st century and some measures should be taken. The following are a few recommendations as to what the consumers, companies themselves and enforcement bodies could do to reduce the phenomenon of Greenwashing.

Consumers should look out for words like pure, natural, earth-friendly, eco-friendly, organic, green, reduced emissions, sustainable etc. as they may be deceptive. For supporting evidence, they should search on the corporate websites and sustainability reports in order to verify the green claims (Aggarwal & Kadyan, 2014).

For Companies, it is important that they be transparent and ethical, as it does pay in the long term and to communicate only significant and material environmental achievements (Aggarwal & Kadyan, 2014). To disclose not just their positive environmental impacts, but also the negative ones and to back-up all your claims with relevant data and true eco-labels and certifications as well as go for independent verification of environmental claims from credible third parties. Suspicions of corporate greenwashing are reduced by acknowledging economic motives instead of communicating environmental motives for such investments (De Vries et al, 2015).

For Regulatory and Enforcement Bodies, it is recommended that the government and private sectors cooperate to set strict regulations (Aggarwal & Kadyan, 2014). Another helpful step would be to ensure strict enforcement and compliance of regulations. The most important step enforcement bodies could take is the environment protection and consumer protection bodies to increase awareness about greenwashing among consumers, companies and marketers. Prevention is the best medicine for a 'disease' like the Greenwashing of the 21st century.

### Conclusions

Summarizing, greenwashing by big corporations in the 21st century might hurt companies that are willing to make the transition, mislead consumers and break their trust and end up hurting the environment due to the fact that consumers and corporations might abandon green products and services because of a lack of trust and motives (Furlow, 2010). Since the demand has changed, it is only natural for the production to evolve as well. But even if companies decide to evolve verbally and not practically (by using the tools of greenwashing), there are still ways to spot the problem, spread the knowledge and take action.



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# A Brief Analysis of the Ordoliberal Impact on the Debt Crisis in Greece<sup>1</sup>

Stylianos Ioannis Tzagkarakis<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract<sup>3</sup>

The last decade Greece has experienced a multidimensional crisis and its consequences are still evident. Several scholars have already analyzed the effects of the crisis and have provided useful outcomes, assessing its causes, policies and consequences. This study emphasizes on some factors that have not been thoroughly analyzed. Therefore, aspects of the impact of ordoliberal directions on the formulation of the debt crisis management policies in Greece as well as the social and economic implications are studied. The main objective is to examine the role of ordoliberalism at policy making and the economic and social implications through the brief analysis of quantitative (secondary) and qualitative (primary) data in order to produce empirically grounded policy proposals in order to effectively advance the goals set for Social Europe through the convergence of the European periphery.

**Keywords:** ordoliberalism; crisis; socio-economic consequences, Social Europe.

## Introduction

Ordoliberalism is a fundamental concept on which the German political system is based and its roots can be traced back to the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The leading role played by Germany in the Eurozone has given the opportunity to apply ordoliberal policies at the European level. These directions posed pressures to the peripheral countries and therefore Greece, as well as the other heavily indebted countries of the European periphery, was forced to implement, through the fiscal adjustment memoranda, a specific ordoliberal strategy pursued by Germany, which were largely technocratic in nature, with many questions to be addressed towards their democratic legitimacy. Based on the above, the main objective of this study includes the analysis of the social, political and economic dimensions and consequences of the ordoliberal doctrine in Greece.

Ordoliberalism was originally a theory that proposed a functional way of constructing a national economy and did not refer to a single monetary zone while its roots can be traced back to the 1930s (Bonefeld, 2012; Berghahn & Young 2012; Sally, 1996; Young, 2013). If ordoliberalism is an indication of how Germany really perceives a united Europe, we could support that it places more emphasis on rules. As Stark (2015) reported, ordoliberalism is based on the idea that markets need

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Tzagkarakis, S. I. (2021). A Brief Analysis of the Ordoliberal Impact on the Debt Crisis in Greece. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 102-110. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29497

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<sup>3</sup> This paper is an output of a post-doctoral research which was co-financed by Greece and the European Union (European Social Fund-ESF) through the Operational Programme «Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning» in the context of the project “Reinforcement of Postdoctoral Researchers - 2nd Cycle” (MIS-5033021), implemented by the State Scholarships Foundation (IKY).

rules set and imposed by government. However, the problem is that the Eurozone is very different from a single democratic nation-state. In particular, since the crisis occurred, Germany has used its power as the strongest creditor country of the Eurozone to change the rules, for instance by introducing the debt limit, which was included in the 2011 Financing Agreement (Kundnani, 2015).

But if we focus on ordoliberalism as the only reason for the implementation of austerity policies during the crisis, then the analysis will largely suffer from significant shortcomings as the important particular national factors which have contributed in this direction will not have been considered. The austerity measures implemented from 2010 onwards, together with the large-scale immediate reforms that were imposed, created a completely different economic and social context compared to the pre-crisis period. Based on all the above, the main objective is to focus on the extent of the social impact of the debt crisis and to examine the role of ordoliberalism on the implementation of these policies. At the same time, a key component of the study is the focus on the level at which these policies have led to convergence or deviation from European social objectives, as set by the official institutions of the European Union.

### **An ordoliberal Eurozone?**

The construction of the European Union was mainly based on the principles of economic liberalism, but accompanied by market “repair” tools in order to create a model of “embedded liberalism” (Crespy & Menz, 2015: 1), in which it is clear that the principles of ordoliberalism and optimal economic zones played a key role as long as they support the creation of stable rules in order to avoid the rise of inflation and the creation of an economic zone that its members have positive economic growth rates at the same time (Patomäki, 2013). The Social Europe pillar, although there is not a commonly accepted definition of the “Social Europe” concept, is still one of the key parameters that stabilizes the negative social effects of the free market and focuses on creating the conditions for a sustainable and prosperous society. Both European policies, which Falkner (2010: 299) categorizes as policies of “distribution, regulation, cooperation and liberalization”, and national policies, have created a framework that combines the principles of social and economic liberalism. Although several measures have been taken by the EU to promote the social pillar (see: European Council's, Commission's and Parliament's European Pillar of Social Rights and European Commission's Reflection Paper on the Social Dimension of Europe, 2017), the gap between the social and political pillar with the economic is still particularly large, while the convergence towards the goals of the former by the Southern European countries and mainly by Greece, is widely questioned (Bartlett & Prica, 2016).

In addition, criticism of the legitimacy and ways in which specific measures are imposed by the institutions (Troika-IMF, EU, ECB) focuses on the fact that the European Union develops and enforces policies in a way that are not legitimized and serves several interests of specific countries such as Germany and less the common European interest. Ordoliberalism was therefore seen as an explanation for Germany's insistence that austerity should be implemented even if it takes decades for Greece to repay its debt (Atkins, 2011; Kundnani, 2012). The focus on competitiveness, individual responsibility and discipline in the rules were considered key components of the policy promoted by Germany in the countries of the Eurozone periphery and especially in Greece. It is a fact that all the measures implemented aimed at increasing the competitiveness of the economy, but because they focused on the existence of individual responsibility and the avoidance of the moral hazard danger, they forced the countries of the Eurozone periphery to accept their fiscal obligations. For these reasons, debt relief and the adoption of Eurobonds have not been viable options for austerity advocates. The only option was fiscal discipline on the basis of spending cuts (Bofinger, 2016; Dullien & Guérot, 2012; Moszynski, 2015), which are also linked to the ordoliberal tradition of strict adherence to the rules. After all, the adoption of rules and sanctions has been the basic development strategy of the European Economic and Monetary Union, which is characterized by the ordoliberal view of economic organization. Furthermore, the technocratic form of the reforms is related to the ordoliberal belief in the importance of science (ie technocracy) for the promotion of truth, that is, the “proper” solution and responsibility to policy makers. This belief is reinforced by the structure of the European institutions that formed the Troika, which handled debt and fiscal discipline. However, the actors that made up the Troika have been criticized for lack of democratic legitimacy, both before and during the Eurozone debt crisis (Howarth & Loedel, 2003; Majone, 2014).

## **The socio-economic impact of the crisis in Greece and the role of ordoliberalism**

### ***Brief outline of secondary quantitative data analysis outcomes***

Greece is a typical example of a troubled welfare state, underdeveloped and dependent on a national economy which, being in the periphery of the EU and the Eurozone, has lost its competitive advantages, relied on borrowing and with a lack of political consensus. On the contrary, the development of the Single Market relied heavily on the perceptions of state intervention reduction and did not accordingly strengthened actions for common social policy directions but instead pushed Member States to further reduce their welfare state intervention.

At the societal level, it seems that the problems created by this policy direction during the crisis continue to persist without being able to converge with the core countries, despite the improvement

in unemployment and poverty rates in recent years. However, the road to a real convergence of all the qualitative characteristics of social indicators (in-job poverty, NEETs, youth unemployment, etc.) is a long way off for the Eurozone countries.

Unfortunately, in the conditions of prolonged crisis, the achievement of the Social Europe goals becomes quite difficult, especially for Greece, as long as, while some indicators seem to have improved compared to 2012-2013, they are far from European averages. Specifically, in terms of the goals set by the European Commission for Social Europe (European Pillar of Social Rights) and based on the above analysis, Greece seems to be far behind most, as can be seen in the below figure.

**Figure 1: European Social Rights Pillar Objectives (left) and level of implementation in Greece (right)**

Participation in education and training?	• Poorly connected with labour market
Gender Equality?	• Lower levels in Greece
Active support to employment?	• To which employment? Mainly precarious!
Wages which provide a decent standard of living and prevent in-work poverty?	• The highest levels of in-work poverty
Social dialogue and involvement of workers?	• Memoranda! Top-down measures
Work-life balance?	• Most working hours among EU M-S
Childcare, support to children and social protection?	• Lower levels among EU M-S
Old age income and benefits which ensure living in dignity?	• The highest levels in old-age poverty
Access to affordable, preventive and curative health care of good quality?	• Decreasing access for middle and lower socio-economic groups
Protection and integration of migrants and refugees?	• Hot-Spots-Trapped refugees
Access of vulnerable groups and young people to social rights?	• Higher NEET levels among EU M-S
Promotion of social and health protection, in particular combating poverty and exclusion?	• The highest levels in poverty and social exclusion

Sources: Compiled data from Eurostat, OECD, ELSTAT

***Brief outline of primary qualitative data analysis outcomes***

In order to analyze the impact of ordoliberalism on the implemented policies during the ten-year multidimensional crisis in Greece in the last decade, qualitative research with policy makers was conducted. Qualitative research was chosen because it presupposes a normal flow in the methods it uses, as the qualitative methods are natural (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, an introspection can be made on the personality of the interviewees in order to understand not only the beliefs but also the causes-influences that determine the individual characteristics, which is extremely important in examining policy makers and technocrats.

In addition, the semi-structured interview with 20 policy makers and technocrats from both lending institutions and the Greek authorities during the crisis, was chosen because it is a widely used qualitative research tool of data collection with flexibility in terms of questions layout as well as their format-content, as the researcher can modify them when he deems it necessary to achieve the best possible collection of qualitative data (Robson, 2010).

Analyzing the findings of the qualitative research and focusing initially on the lending institutions, it should be noted that these confirm the fact that the institutions persisted in pressures for the implementation of austerity measures in Greece in order to achieve the fiscal targets as quickly as possible. In particular, persistence in achieving the goals is in some cases described as one of the reasons that reforms were not implemented towards the functional improvement of the public sector, but focused on reducing spending to the point where deficiencies were created, affecting public institutions' functioning as well as citizens' accessibility. This persistence is described by the frequent phrases "*compliance*" and "*achieving fiscal targets*", which were combined with "*structural reforms*" to "*improve the functioning of the market and competition*". These phrases are decisive, as they are key elements of the ordoliberal approach, which prevailed in shaping austerity policies in Greece. At the same time, it should be noted that the lender institutions in many cases did not agree on the appropriate policies to be implemented, with the IMF being more rigid, as it supported the implementation of stricter austerity measures.

In general, it should be mentioned that the qualitative data highlight two dimensions in terms of austerity policies during the crisis in Greece. The first is related to reforms that all policy makers knew should have been implemented many years ago but no one undertook the political cost that was necessary and the second is related to the fact that in addition to these necessary reforms, strict adherence to commitments, led the representatives of the lending institutions to pressures in order to

implement policies that on the one hand, affected negatively the lower socio-economic groups and on the other hand, did not lead to the expected results in terms of public savings.

Policy makers of the lending institutions seem to have had to maintain a balance between the different views of the institutions and, on the other hand, to achieve the goals that had been set. They mainly emphasize on the structural reforms, such as the one for the sustainability of the social insurance system. However, the majority of respondents from lender institutions support the necessity of implementing austerity measures in Greece, as long as for years the country was not in line with the commitments of the Stability Pact, while they do not claim that this was also a result of the institutional imbalances of the Eurozone, although they highlight differences in the intensity of austerity - the extent of restrictions - with the IMF focusing mainly on internal devaluation policies and with the Commission pushing more for promoting structural reforms that would increase the effectiveness of public institutions in Greece.

## Conclusions

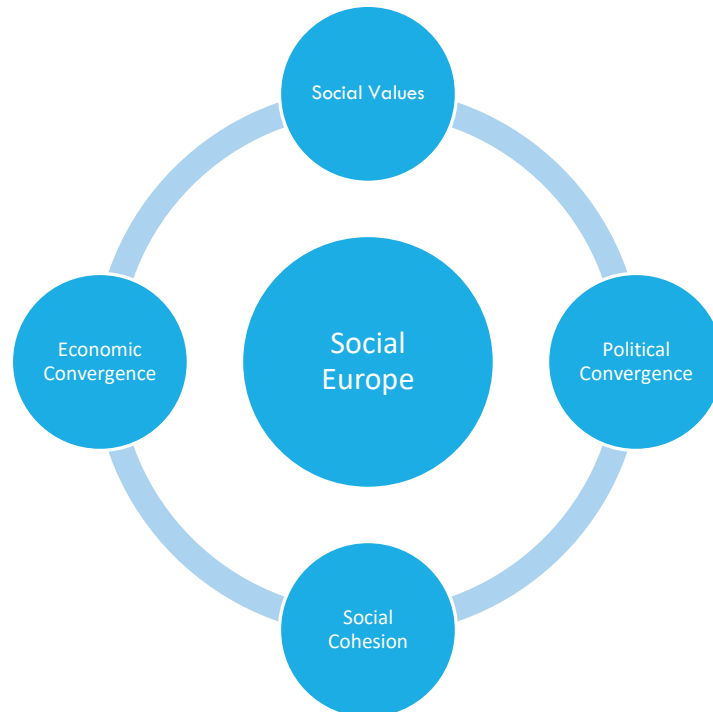
The one-dimensional emphasis on maintaining an imperfect single currency system, with a strictly institutionalized and market-imposed fiscal framework, dependent on external lending and on the respective constant need to maintain competitiveness (a key ordoliberal strategy) will constantly create pressure on the most vulnerable economies - and societies, in terms of social prosperity - of the Eurozone region, one of which - perhaps the most vulnerable - is Greece.

In the face of all the above-mentioned problems, during the crisis, the technocrats most of the time seemed not to show the necessary attention and instead of citizens-people, they saw only numbers, as reported by some interviewees of the qualitative research. Empirically based policy-making is the one that can provide solutions, but it should also focus on qualitative indicators beyond quantitative ones so that the proposed policies meet the challenges and really promote social well-being. Of course, no Member State can operate on its own and within the Eurozone. Coordination based on the Social Europe goals should therefore be much more at the forefront in order to combine both economic sustainability and social cohesion. Without sharing the responsibility in the Member States - and therefore the burdens - and without understanding that not only burdens but also gains in a crisis are collective, a tendency to converge between the core and the periphery cannot be created. If the obstacle of German ordoliberalism is not replaced by policies of balancing economic viability and social cohesion, guided by Social Europe (Figure 2), then the next crisis, which has already hit the world (pandemic COVID-19), will create even more negative macro-level social effects, in terms of



social cohesion and prosperity, especially in the vulnerable societies and economies of the Eurozone periphery.

**Figure 2: Social Europe context**



The current EMU structure essentially undermines the Social Europe goal and creates or perpetuates significant disparities between Member States. Despite its relatively expansionary course in recent years, the monetary policy of the European Central Bank (ECB) is primarily oriented, on the basis of statutes, towards monetary stability and not towards the promotion of growth and employment. In addition, EMU fiscal rules provide for fiscal discipline that may be detrimental to spending on social policies, employment support policies and public investments, in particular for the peripheral Member States which are facing the greatest budgetary problems. Due to the loss of the capacity to make exchange rate adjustments, wages and social policy can very easily be put under pressure to bear the brunt of the economic adjustment, ie an internal devaluation, such as the one in Greece. For example, during the debt crisis in the Eurozone, social spending cuts, privatizations, public sector wage cuts and minimum wage cuts, were demanded and imposed through fiscal adjustment memoranda in exchange for financial assistance.

The reform of European fiscal rules should include three priorities in order to overcome the harsh restrictive ordoliberal conditions and enable the countries of the Eurozone periphery to escape austerity. Initially, the debt ceiling of 60% of GDP needs to be adjusted to the new data and

significantly increased as part of a process of reciprocity and relaxation of rules. Such a reform is necessary due to the serious and continuing increases in the public debt of the Member States, especially in the Eurozone periphery. In addition, the strict 3% of GDP deficit per year rule should be replaced by a smart spending rule that responds to economic developments and does not force states to pursue pre-cyclical austerity in times of crisis. At the same time, public investments should be excluded from the spending rule, as well as spending to support unemployment and welfare, which are important for macroeconomic stabilization (Dullien et al., 2020; Seikel & Truger, 2019).

European internal market legislation also needs to be revised to break the ordoliberal interplay and create the conditions for social welfare. The basic components of internal market law (competition law and the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons) establish a market that is essentially out of political control (Höpner, 2014), creating a framework of "supremacy" by strengthening the role of technocracy, especially in times of crisis. Resolving this problem requires either the creation of a European constitution that addresses key general issues (general constitutional objectives, institutions, powers, procedures and fundamental rights of citizens) and the rest, such as competition, will be the result of secondary law that can be transformed and is not rigid, such as the law of treaties. This will restore the supremacy of democratic politics over the internal ordoliberal market. Obviously, the implementation of such a change requires a revision of the treaties, but, as utopian as it may seem to some, it is the only direction towards a sustainable future that can reduce the gap between core and periphery and increase democratic legitimacy over technocracy.

Therefore, in order this crisis to become an opportunity towards a prosperous Eurozone - in social terms - a next step is necessary, which will enable further integration, through processes of reciprocity of obligations, within a framework of democratic legitimacy. The answer to this can only be given through a Social Europe, as discussed above. Such a strategy can reduce the distance between the core and the periphery and create the conditions for cohesion and sustainable development - economic, social and ecological - in the Member States, depending on their competitive advantages and the peculiarities that characterize them.

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## The Economic Crisis in Greece and Cyprus. A Comparative Study<sup>1</sup>

Georgios Maris<sup>2</sup> & Stamatia Maloina<sup>3</sup>

### Abstract

This article presents and compares economic data of Greece and Cyprus during the last decade. An analysis and evaluation is made not only of the economic negotiations but also of the financial statements that took place and affected the national economies of the two countries. The main conclusion of this study is that the economic crisis that hit the two countries during decade has different causes but similar effects in key political and economic sectors of each country.

**Key words:** Economy; Greece; Cyprus; European Union; GDP; Unemployment; Revenue; Expenses; Interest Rate; Balance

## Η Οικονομική Κρίση στην Ελλάδα και στην Κύπρο. Μια Συγκριτική Μελέτη

Γεώργιος Μαρής & Σταματία Μαλωίνα

### Περίληψη

Το συγκεκριμένο άρθρο παρουσιάζει και συγκρίνει οικονομικά στοιχεία της Ελλάδας και της Κύπρου κατά την διάρκεια της τελευταίας δεκαετίας. Γίνεται μια ανάλυση και αξιολόγηση, όχι μόνο των οικονομικών διαπραγματεύσεων αλλά και των οικονομικών καταστάσεων που διαδραματίστηκαν και επηρέασαν τις εθνικές οικονομίες των δύο χωρών. Κύριο συμπέρασμα αυτής της μελέτης είναι ότι η οικονομική κρίση που έπληξε τις δύο χώρες, κατά την διάρκεια μιας δεκαετίας, έχει διαφορετικά αίτια αλλά παρόμοιες επιπτώσεις σε βασικούς πολιτικοοικονομικούς τομείς της εκάστοτε χώρας.

**Λέξεις- κλειδιά:** Οικονομία; Ελλάδα; Κύπρος; Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση; ΑΕΠ; Ανεργία; Έσοδα; Έξοδα; Επιτόκιο; Ισοζύγιο

### Εισαγωγή

Κατά την διάρκεια μιας δεκαετίας οι οικονομίες της Ελλάδας και Κύπρου δοκιμάστηκαν στο μέγιστο βαθμό. Σκοπός αυτού του άρθρου είναι να φέρει στην επιφάνεια οικονομικά στοιχεία των δυο κρατών, να τα συγκρίνει με την βοήθεια διαγραμματικών απεικονίσεων και τέλος να αξιολογήσει αν οι δύο χώρες επηρεάστηκαν από την οικονομική κρίση παρόμοια. Για να μπορέσουμε να διατυπώσουμε με σαφήνεια την υφιστάμενη κατάσταση την τελευταία δεκαετία εμφάνισης της

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Maris, G. & Maloina, S. (2021). The Economic Crisis in Greece and Cyprus. A Comparative Study. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 111-119. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29498

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οικονομικής κρίσης θα φέρουμε στην επιφάνεια τους κύριους παράγοντες που επηρέασαν τις πολιτικοοικονομικές συνθήκες στις δύο χώρες.

### **Πολιτικοοικονομικοί παράγοντες που επηρέασαν την οικονομία των χωρών Ελλάδας-Κύπρου**

Η Ελλάδα και η Κύπρος είναι δύο χώρες οι οποίες έχουν πληγεί σοβαρά από την διεθνή οικονομική κρίση. Αυτό είχε ως αποτέλεσμα οι δύο χώρες να διαφύγουν σε μηχανισμούς στήριξης και πακέτα διάσωσης. Η Ελλάδα από το 2010 έως το 2016 υπέγραψε τρία μνημόνια συνεργασίας με την Τρόικα που στόχευαν την βελτίωση της οικονομικής διαχείρισης της Ελληνικής κυβέρνησης (Cohen&Karatzimas, 2017). Η Κύπρος το 2013 υιοθετεί ένα αυστηρό πρόγραμμα δημοσιονομικής και νομισματικής λιτότητας και παράλληλα λαμβάνει οικονομική βοήθεια από την Τρόικα (Hadjixenophontos&Cristodoulou, 2018). Ουσιαστικά και οι δύο χώρες διαθέτουν έναν «ευπαθή» χρηματοπιστωτικό τομέα παράλληλα ο οποίος χαρακτηρίζεται από υψηλό δανεισμό.

Η Ελλάδα διένυσε μια περίοδο βαθιάς κρίσης και αβεβαιότητας, αλλά και πολύ κακής φήμης προς τα υπόλοιπα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (ΕΕ). Η ΕΕ στην προσπάθεια της να στηρίξει την Ελλάδα δημιούργησε έναν μηχανισμό ενίσχυσης της οικονομίας σε συνεργασία με το Διεθνές Νομισματικό Ταμείο (ΔΝΤ). Επιβλήθηκαν μέτρα δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης, προγράμματα στήριξης και λιτότητας που πρότεινε το ΔΝΤ και αυτό είχε ως αποτέλεσμα να δανειστεί 110 δισ. ευρώ και να εφαρμοστεί το Μνημόνιο Ι.

Το 2010 η Ελλάδα υπέγραψε μια σειρά διμερών συμφωνιών με άλλες χώρες της ΟΝΕ για δανεισμό 80 δισ. ευρώ συν ακόμη άλλα 30 δισ. ευρώ με τον ΔΝΤ (Βαρουφάκης, Πατώκος, Τσερκέζης, κ.ά., 2011). Το 2011 η μεγάλη ύφεση ώθησε το χρέος σε μη βιώσιμα επίπεδα. Πραγματοποιήθηκε κούρεμα χρέους το 2012 με ανταλλαγή κρατικών ομολόγων και δανείων σε νέα ομόλογα. Την ίδια χρονιά υπογράφηκε από την Ελληνική κυβέρνηση το δεύτερο πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής μαζί με την συμφωνία για το PSI. Η Ελλάδα απέσπασε νέα ευρωπαϊκά δάνεια από το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας (EFSF). Οι νέοι όροι δανεισμού ήταν περισσότερο λεπτομερείς από το πρώτο πρόγραμμα δανεισμού.

Η Ελλάδα το 2011 διένυε μια περίοδο εκτεταμένης ύφεσης με ελάχιστες θέσεις εργασίας να προσφέρονται στους πολίτες της χώρας (Βενιέρης, 2011). Έως και τις αρχές του 2013 έγιναν βελτιώσεις στην περισυλλογή των κρατικών φόρων και αυτό είχε ως αποτέλεσμα να επανέλθει έως ένα βαθμό δημοσιονομική σταθερότητα. Επί πρόσθετα, έχουν παρθεί όλα εκείνα τα μέτρα έτσι ώστε να υπάρχει διαφάνεια περισσότερη στις δαπάνες του κράτους (OECD, 2013).

Το 2014 η οικονομία της Ελλάδας έδειξε σημαντική βελτίωση και έτσι η χώρα μπόρεσε να έχει πρόσβαση στις αγορές δύο φορές και να εκδώσει 5ετή ομόλογα. Όμως το 2015 ήρθε στην εξουσία η κυβέρνηση συνασπισμού αριστερών και δεξιών λαϊκιστών. Η νέα κυβέρνηση είχε υποσχεθεί ότι θα έστρεφε σε θετική πορεία την οικονομία προς το καλύτερο και της χώρας και ότι θα διέγραφε όλα τα χρέη. Αυτό είχε ως αποτέλεσμα η οικονομία της Ελλάδας μέχρι το 2016 να παραμένει σε ύφεση και τα μη εξυπηρετούμενα δάνεια που υπήρχαν να αυξάνονται (Hardouvelis&Gkionis, 2016). Στην προσπάθεια ανάλυσης των παραγόντων που οδήγησαν στην Ελληνική οικονομική κρίση διατυπώνετε ότι μια σειρά από πολιτικούς παράγοντες όπως: η ανάπτυξη του κρατισμού, ο αποτυχημένος εξευρωπαϊσμός, το υψηλό επίπεδο διαφθοράς, ο αντίκτυπος των ομάδων συμφερόντων στη διαμόρφωση των οικονομικών πολιτικών, το λοξό μοντέλο διακυβέρνησης, το ασταθές πολιτικό καθεστώς, είναι όλοι αυτοί που καθόρισαν σε υψηλό βαθμό την εξέλιξη της οικονομίας της Ελλάδας (Maris & Sklias, 2013; Maris et al., 2021).

Το 2015, ήταν μια κρίσιμη χρονιά για την Ελλάδα διότι τα δύο κόμματα της αντιπολίτευσης (ΣΥΡΙΖΑ και Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες) έρχονται στην εξουσία. Εκείνη την περίοδο, οι οικονομικοί θεσμοί και οι υλικοί περιορισμοί είχαν σημαντικό ρόλο στην σταθεροποίηση των λαϊκιστικών παραγόντων, στην κοινωνικοποίηση και στους τυπικούς κανόνες του φιλελευθέρου δημοκρατικού καθεστώτος (Aslanidis, 2016). Στις 5 Ιουλίου το 2015 διεξήχθη δημοψήφισμα σχετικά με την απόρριψη των όρων για νέο δάνειο που επιδιώκουν η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα και το Διεθνές Νομισματικό Ταμείο. Το δημοψήφισμα αυτό μετατράπηκε σε εκδήλωση μεγάλης συμβολικής σημασίας με υψηλή συμμετοχή, 62,5% του εκλογικού σώματος (Rontos et al., 2016). Η απόφαση που πάρθηκε ήταν να μην απορριφθούν οι όροι των δανειστών που αυτοί ουσιαστικά αντιβαίνουν στο αποτέλεσμα του δημοψηφίσματος (Xezonakis & Hartmann, 2020).

Από την άλλη πλευρά, η οικονομία της Κύπρου δεν μπορούσε να μην επηρεαστεί από την κρίση στην Ευρώπη. Οι τράπεζες στην Κύπρο εμφάνιζαν πολλά ελλείμματα. Το κράτος αδυνατούσε να διασώσει δύο συστημικές τράπεζες έτσι η οικονομία του κράτους εμφάνιζε αρνητικούς δείκτες με αποτέλεσμα αυτή να υποβαθμίζεται στις αξιολογήσεις και να αποκλείεται από τις διεθνείς χρηματοπιστωτικές αγορές μέχρι το 2011. Η τότε κυβέρνηση έπρεπε να λάβει μέτρα δημοσιονομικού περιορισμού και περικοπή μισθών. Επίσης, το κράτος υποστήριζε τις επιχειρήσεις και με διάφορα μέτρα, παρότρυνε τους επιχειρηματίες να προσλαμβάνουν ανέργους, να επενδύουν σε νέα έργα και νέες υποδομές. Τα μέτρα αυτά υιοθετήθηκαν και συμφωνήθηκαν από όλα κοινοβουλευτικά κόμματα (Ioannou & Charalambous, 2017).

Το 2013 γίνεται συμφωνία με την ΕΕ για ένα πλάνο διάσωσης που θα περιλάμβανε εγγυήσεις από όλα τους καταθέτες. Η Τρόικα ήταν πρόθυμη να δανείσει 10 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ (Castaneda et al.,



2016).Βέβαια αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι το πακέτο χρηματοδότησης ήταν τέτοιο που έβρισκε την Κύπρο με λιγότερη ρευστότητα και περισσότερη αβεβαιότητα (Theophanous, 2013). Μετά τα μέτρα, η Κύπρος παρουσίαζε μια θετική πορεία στον οικονομικό τομέα αλλά και σε άλλους σημαντικούς τομείς όπως η απασχόληση.

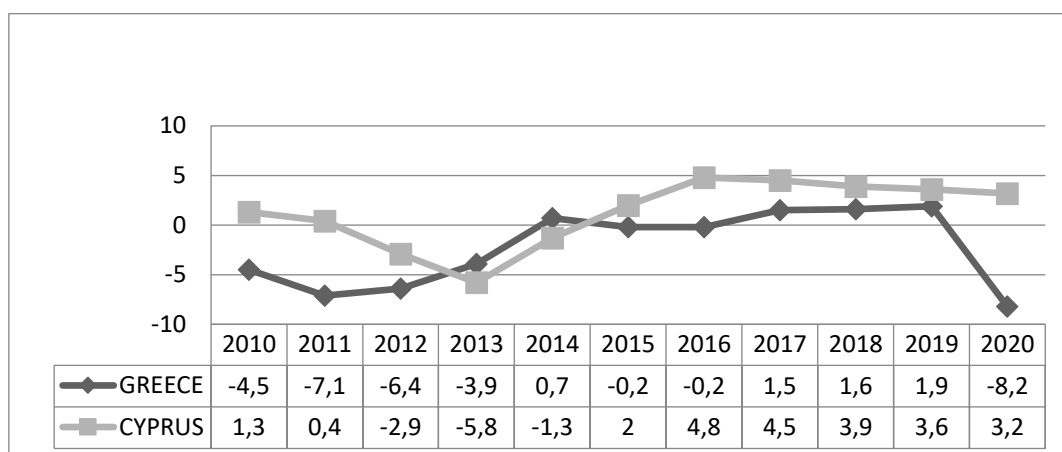
Η Κύπρος μπήκε στην κρίση με λιγότερο δυσβάσταχτες μακροοικονομικές ανισορροπίες αλλά ήταν ικανές να προκαλέσουν αναστάτωση. Η κρίση ξεκίνησε το 2013 με δημοσιονομικά ελλείμματα και μείωση ανταγωνιστικότητας. Το Μάρτιο του 2013 πραγματοποιήθηκε το τραπεζικό bail-inόπου η Κύπρος κατάφερε να ανακάμψει. Η πρώτη αίτηση για διάσωση της οικονομίας της Κύπρου πραγματοποιήθηκε το 2012 και ολοκληρώθηκε το 2013. Παράλληλα οι Κυπριακές αρχές αποφάσισαν να περιορίσουν τη δημοσιονομική πολιτική, αλλά και να εφαρμόσουν μέτρα έτσι ώστε να επιτευχθεί μια εσωτερική αποτίμηση με στόχο πάντα την βελτίωση της οικονομίας. Το 2013 η Κύπρος ολοκλήρωσε με επιτυχία 9 αναθεωρήσεις σύμφωνα με το πρόγραμμα του ΔΝΤ και 7 αναθεωρήσεις σύμφωνα με τον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Σταθερότητας.

Στο επόμενο κεφάλαιο θα παρουσιάσουμε βασικά στοιχεία της οικονομίας της Ελλάδας και της Κύπρου, να τα συγκρίνουμε αλλά και να αποτυπωθούν διαπιστώσεις. Τα στοιχεία που αναλύουμε είναι: το ΑΕΠ των δύο χωρών ανά έτος, τα έσοδα και τα έξοδα των δύο χωρών ανά έτος, το ισοζύγιο πληρωμών, τα επιτόκια δανεισμού της Ελλάδας και την Κύπρου και η ανεργία που υπήρχε ανά έτος και στις δύο χώρες. Σκοπός αυτής της εργασίας είναι να παρουσιάσει και να εξετάσει όλα τα παραπάνω χαρακτηριστικά της κρίσης στην Ελλάδα και στην Κύπρο. Στην επόμενη ενότητα θα γίνει εκτενής αναφορά αυτών.

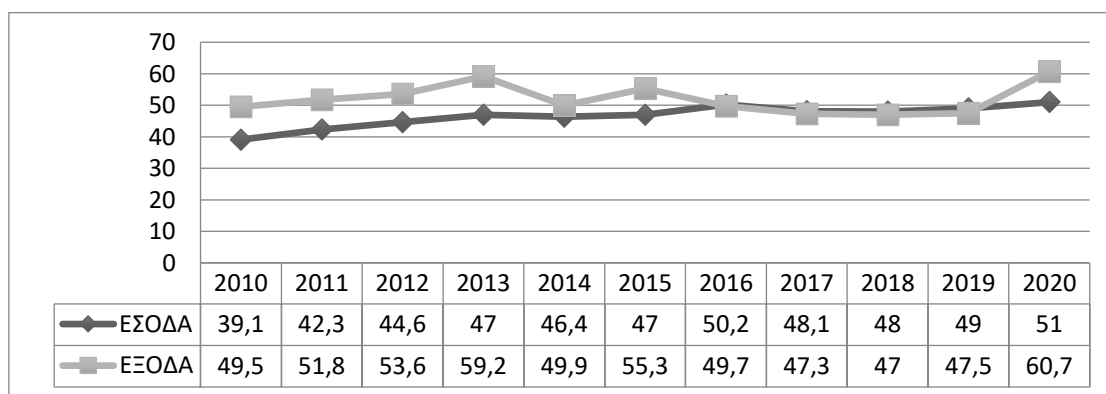
### **Παρουσίαση βασικών δεικτών της οικονομίας της Ελλάδας και της Κύπρου αλλά και των μεταβολών τους κατά την διάρκεια μιας δεκαετίας**

Την περίοδο 2010 έως το 2020 οι δύο χώρες εμφάνισαν μακροοικονομικές ανισορροπίες. Αρχικά η Ελλάδα δεν κατάφερε να μειώσει το δημόσιο χρέος, παράλληλα η ένταξη της στην ευρωζώνη μείωσε την ανταγωνιστικότητα της (Maris et al., 2021). Η Κύπρος παρουσίαζε προβλήματα στον ιδιωτικό τομέα με την τεράστια επέκταση του τραπεζικού τομέα (Rapanos & Kaplanoglou, 2014). Ενδιαφέρον παρουσιάζουν τα οικονομικά στοιχεία των δύο χωρών ανά έτος. Παρακάτω θα ακολουθήσει παρουσίαση και σύγκριση βασικών δεικτών της οικονομίας για την Ελλάδα και την Κύπρο.

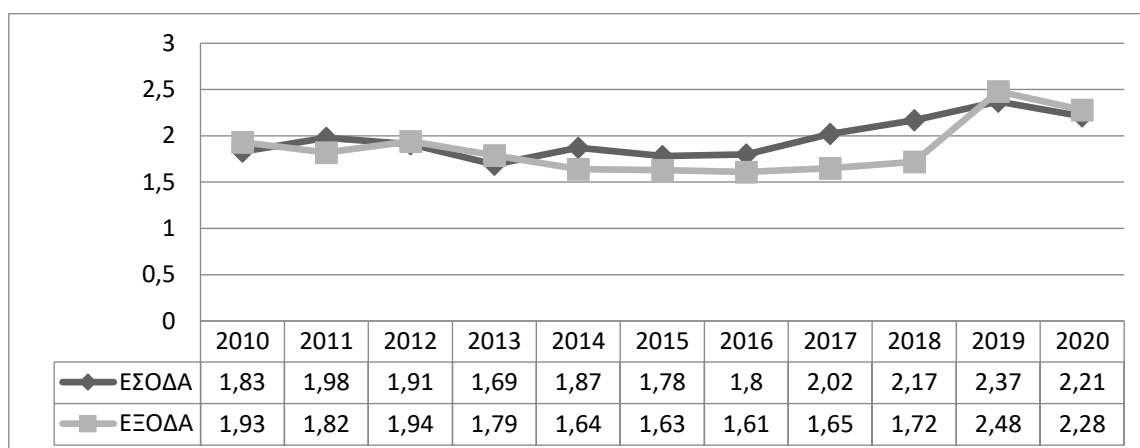


**Διάγραμμα 1: Ρυθμός ανάπτυξης του ΑΕΠ**

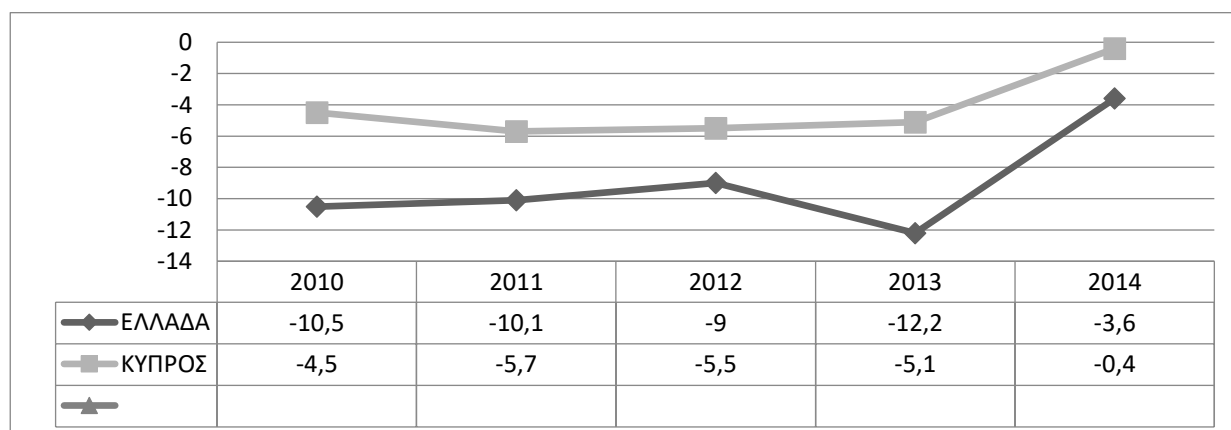
Αξίζει να τονισθεί ότι και οι δύο χώρες παρουσιάζουν αρνητικές τιμές στο ΑΕΠ από το 2011 έως το 2014. Έπειτα η Κύπρος παρουσιάζει μια αυξανόμενη πορεία στο ΑΕΠ έως το 2016 και έπειτα σταθεροποιείται. Αντίθετα η Ελλάδα εμφανίζει σταθερές τιμές μέχρι το 2016. Ακολουθεί μια ανοδική πορεία και στο τέλος της δεκαετίας παρουσιάζει ξανά αρνητικά πρόσημο. Αξίζει να τονισθεί ότι στην Ελλάδα μέχρι το 2014, η αύξηση του ΑΕΠ δεν σηματοδοτούσε και την μείωση του δημόσιου χρέους. Αντιθέτως το δημόσιο χρέος αυξανόταν. Στην Κύπρο έως το 2014, η μείωση του ΑΕΠ σηματοδοτούσε και την αύξηση του δημόσιου χρέους (Bobrov, 2019).

**Διάγραμμα 2: Έσοδα και Έξοδα της Ελλάδας ανά έτος**

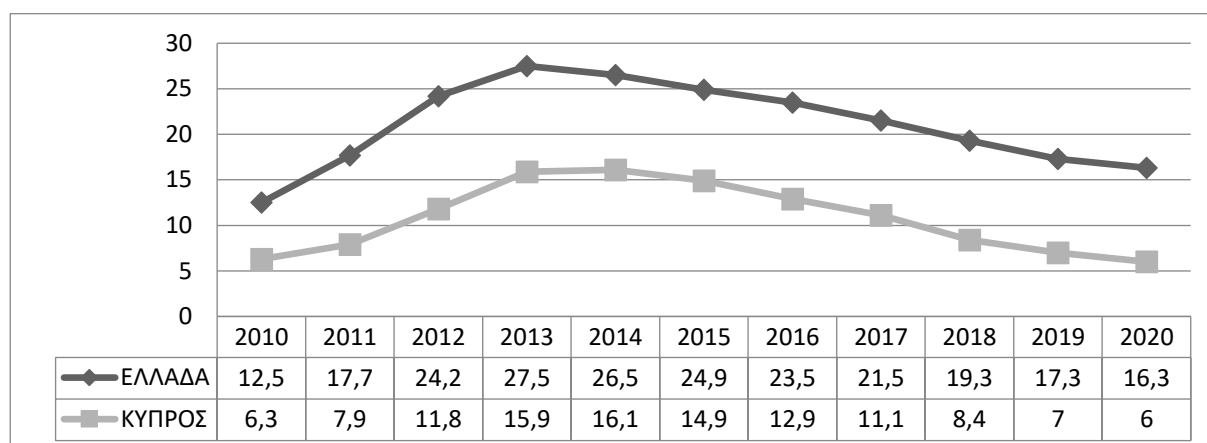
Παρατηρώντας το παραπάνω διάγραμμα διαπιστώνεται ότι η Ελλάδα για πολλά χρόνια έχει αυξημένα έξοδα σε σχέση με τα έσοδα της. Αυτό έρχεται σε συμφωνία με τις οικονομικές δυσκολίες που εμφάνιζε η χώρα και με την ανάγκη της για δανεισμό. Το 2016 αρχίζει να βελτιώνεται η σχέση εσόδων-εξόδων, όπου είναι αποτέλεσμα και της κοινωνικοπολιτικής σταθερότητας που επικρατούσε στην χώρα, μέχρι το 2019 όπου τα έξοδα εκτοξεύονται (ΕΛΣΤΑΤ, 2020).

**Εικόνα 3: Έσοδα και Έξοδα της Κύπρου ανά έτος**

Σε αντίθεση με την Ελλάδα η Κύπρος εμφάνιζε ισορροπία στην σχέση εσόδων-εξόδων. Από το 2010 έως το 2013, όπου η Κύπρος εμφάνιζε προβλήματα στον ιδιωτικό τομέα της, παρουσίαζε έλλειμμα χρημάτων. Από το 2014 και ύστερα από την σταθεροποίηση της οικονομίας της εμφάνισε πλεόνασμα μέχρι το 2019 όπου άρχισε να επηρεάζεται από την πανδημία (CYSTAT, 2020).

**Διάγραμμα 4: Ισοζύγιο πληρωμών ανά έτος, Ελλάδα & Κύπρος**

Με βάση την τιμή που διαθέτει το ισοζύγιο πληρωμών μπορούμε να διακρίνουμε την εξελικτική πορεία όλων των συναλλαγών που διατηρεί η εκάστοτε χώρα, στην περίπτωση μας η Ελλάδα και η Κύπρος. Παρατηρούμε ότι η Ελλάδα, επί σειρά ετών, διατηρούσε αρνητικό πρόσημο και στο ισοζύγιο συναλλαγών. Αυτό επιβεβαιώνεται και από το γεγονός ότι δεν διέθετε την ικανότητα να μπορεί να διεκδικήσει εισροές από την παγκόσμια αγορά. Το 2016 η χώρα απέκτησε θετικό πρόσημο συναλλαγών και αυτό είναι και αποτέλεσμα των μέτρων που πάρθηκαν σε όλους τους τομείς. Βέβαια, το 2020 επανήλθε με αρνητικό πρόσημο ως αποτέλεσμα της πανδημίας. Επιπλέον, η Κύπρος διέθετε αρνητικό πρόσημο συναλλαγών επί σειρά ετών. Η διαφορά με την Ελλάδα είναι ότι το ποσοστό είναι μικρότερο. Από το 2017 και έπειτα άρχισε να αποκτά θετικό πρόσημο ισοζυγίου συναλλαγών.

**Διάγραμμα 5: Τιμές ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα και στη Κύπρο**

Οι τιμές της ανεργίας και στις δύο χώρες να είναι πολύ υψηλές. Στην Ελλάδα εκτοξεύονται σε επίπεδα πρωτοφανή για την χώρα, κυρίως την περίοδο 2012 έως 2017. Έπειτα αρχίζει μια καθοδική πορεία η οποία δεν επαρκεί για να καλύψει όλους τους άνεργους που υπάρχουν. Αποτέλεσμα όλων των διακυμάνσεων είναι οι τιμές της ανεργίας να είναι πολύ υψηλές καθώς στην χώρα την περίοδο εκείνη δεν υπήρχαν επενδύσεις και νέες επιχειρήσεις για να απορροφηθεί όλο το δυναμικό που υπήρξε. Στην Κύπρο διαπιστώνουμε ότι τα ποσοστά της ανεργίας είναι πολύ υψηλά για το νησί διότι δεν είναι μεγάλο σε μέγεθος με πληθυσμό όπως στην Ελλάδα. Και στην Κύπρο η περίοδος 2012 έως 2017 ήταν μη παραγωγική όπου θα μπορούσαμε να αναφέρουμε ότι τα ποσοστά ανεργίας διαμορφώθηκαν με βάση την επικρατούσα κατάσταση στην Ελλάδα. Επί πρόσθετα, πρέπει να ειπωθεί το γεγονός ότι οι οικονομικές μεταβλητές της ανεργίας είναι εξαρτημένες από τον ρυθμό ανάπτυξης της εκάστοτε χώρας. Ο αργός ρυθμός ανάπτυξης ενέχει τον κίνδυνο της αύξησης της ανεργίας (Dritsakis&Stamatiou, 2016). Το γεγονός αυτό παρατηρείται και στην Εικόνα 5 όπου η ανεργία έχει ανοδική πορεία, και για τις δυο χώρες, και αυτό είναι αποτέλεσμα του μειωμένου ρυθμού ανάπτυξης που επικρατεί.

## Συμπεράσματα

Εν κατακλείδι όσον αφορά την οικονομική κρίση που εμφανίστηκε κατά την πάροδο των δέκα τελευταίων χρόνων, μπορούμε να ισχυριστούμε ότι η κρίση στην Ελλάδα διέφερε από την κρίση στην Κύπρο. Η Ελλάδα αντιμετώπιζε πολύ σοβαρά δομικά και διαρθρωτικά οικονομικά προβλήματα για πολλά χρόνια όπως η ανεργία, ο ρυθμός ανάπτυξης του ΑΕΠ, η αρνητική αναλογία των εσόδων-εξόδων και το δημοσιονομικό ισοζύγιο. Η Κύπρος συγκριτικά με την Ελλάδα, επηρεάστηκε σε μεγάλο βαθμό από την οικονομική κρίση στην Ευρώπη όσο αφορά την ρευστότητα και την αβεβαιότητα που επικρατούσε. Η Κύπρος αντιμετώπιζε κυρίως τραπεζικά ελλείμματα ενώ η Ελλάδα

αντιμετώπιζε τραπεζικά και δημοσιονομικά ελλείμματα. Η διαφορετικότητα της κρίσης και της σημασίας της ήταν ο λόγος που η Κύπρος κατάφερε να εμφανίσει βελτίωση στην οικονομία της γρηγορότερα από ότι η Ελλάδα. Πέραν όμως όλων των παραπάνω πρέπει να ειπωθεί και το γεγονός ότι η Ελλάδα αντιμετώπισε και κοινωνική κρίση η οποία ήταν αποτέλεσμα της κακής οικονομικής κατάστασης που υπήρχε. Η Κύπρος αντιμετώπισε εξίσου μια κοινωνική κρίση, η οποία ήταν αποτέλεσμα των κακών οικονομικών στοιχείων που υπήρχαν, όμως οι επιπτώσεις της στην κοινωνία της Κύπρου δεν φαίνονται να είναι τόσο στεντόρειες όπως της Ελλάδας.

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## Topic 5

### International Relations and International Security

# Revolution in Military Affairs: The United States and Its Big Competitors<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

The term “Revolution in Military Affairs” (RMA) has been one of the most significant areas of study for international relations scholars during the last seventy years. Its interpretation is debatable. This paper, after approaching the matter theoretically, seeks to underline the main weaknesses of the American RMA along with their implications against the efforts of its main competitors, Russia, and China. The two, in the age of information technology, try to undermine their competitor’s advantages and manage to accomplish their own breakthrough in the field, with each displaying its own unique approach to the matter. Going full circle, some recommendations are suggested for the United States at the end.

**Keywords:** Revolution in Military Affairs; Military Revolution; USA; Russia; China; Technology; Technological Innovation; Military Doctrines

## Introduction

The term revolution in military affairs has attracted many scholars to formulate their own views on the matter (Neuneck & Alwardt, 2008). First, soviet scholars, mainly in the 70s and 80s, saw through the new circumstances in the general environment of cold war competition. They reported that the so-called military-technical revolution was a discontinuity from traditional ways of warfare and changes were visible through technological innovation and doctrinal alterations (Adamsky, 2008).

In today's world of constant technological innovation, after the cold war and a period of unipolarity where the United States used to lead in every sector, the major powers are being involved in a constant antagonistic environment on the matter of who is going to gain or keep the technological and military edge. More specifically, Russia and China try to undermine the RMA that was established by the US at the end of the previous century and under the realist approach, in an anarchic world order, and via the mechanism of balance of power, hope to emerge themselves as revolutionaries in the field (Work, 2016). This happens through reinterpreting the phenomenon of war using new technologies, doctrines, and paradigms.

This paper tries to point out the weaknesses of the US and the distortions observed while exploring those efforts of its adversaries referred previously. It also dives into the matter of how they impact the position of the US and tries to point out what the US can do in order to adapt to the new state of affairs.

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA Style: Chatziilias, A. (2021). Revolution in Military Affairs: The United States and Its Big Competitors. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 121-130. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29500

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## Methodological Approaches Concerning RMA

Krepinevich (2002) noted that military revolution consists of technical changes, systems developments, operational innovation, and organizational adaptations. Toffler (1993) added to the previous the changes in tactics, doctrines, rules, and equipment. Hundley (1999: 9) perceives the RMA as “a paradigm shift in the nature and conduct of military operations which either renders obsolete or irrelevant one or more core competencies of a dominant player, or creates one or more new core competencies, in some new dimension of warfare, or both”.

A common thing among scholars which should be noted was the appearance and use of different terms such as Military-Technical Revolution, Military Revolution and Revolution in Military Affairs when everyone virtually was referring to the same thing. Knox and Murray (2001), whose theoretical approaches will be widely used in this paper, set out to clarify the field. They made a distinction between Military Revolution and Revolution in Military Affairs, perceiving the Military Revolution as a much rarer and more general phenomenon consisting of fundamental changes in the way a war is fought but also in the fabric of the society itself. On the other hand, an RMA usually follows a Military revolution and its revolutionary changes in society, tactics, organization, and technology. These changes usually lead to perfections of the previous changes made during the Military Revolution and a new conceptualization of war (Knox & Murray, 2001). Rogers (2000) also makes that distinction, but he argues that an RMA precedes a Military revolution.

Besides the above, on a more practical note it should be indicated that technological innovation certainly serves as a prerequisite for an RMA, but as history confirms is not enough. As Kak (2000) points out, organizational, tactical as well as doctrinal changes need to occur as well for an RMA to be considered successful.

Secondly, the aspect of time needs to be taken into account. Time seems to determine or to limit the range of the revolution as well as the immediate reaction of the adversary which will cancel out the temporary advantage of the enemy. Distinguished individuals also view time as an important variable, pointing out that RMA is not instant, but it is a process or an ongoing endeavor (Owens, 1998; Sloan, 2002; Rumsfeld, 2002).

Finally, there is another debate among scholars regarding the level of capabilities of the adversary. According to Knox and Murray (2001), for an RMA to manifest, there needs to be an enemy, not only technologically inferior but generally more incapable. On the contrary, Watts (2011) supports that a state's level of progress, in his case the USA, needs to be evaluated against a capable enemy having similar capabilities. If we accept Watts' view, the value of the so-called American RMA of the 90s

and 2000s with the Gulf war and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is severely degraded. Therefore, our analysis is based on a wider frame closer to Knox's and Murray's proposal.

### **The “American” RMA**

As Shimko (2010) indicates, the American RMA started to manifest itself after the 90s with “Operation Desert Storm” during the Gulf war and continued unraveling with the war in Kosovo, reaching its peak with the second war in Iraq and Afghanistan at the beginning of the century. During these events, despite the abolishment of Soviet Union's threat, there were a lot of new but unclear threats. Therefore, the United States shifted towards a capabilities-based model of defense. This is when new technologies like stealth and precision guided munitions thrived, and new operational concepts were developed. It was the beginning of the so-called, network centric warfare, information operations and wider developments of the C4ISR (Pretorius, 2011). A new RMA emerged against weaker enemies. The US followed principles like Sun Tzu's, “disarming the adversary before battle” (Platias & Koliopoulos, 2015), “decapitation”, “shock and awe”, “rapid dominance”, and “overwhelming force” (Ullman & Wade, 2017). These only made the RMA seem more “revolutionary” against a weaker enemy like Knox and Murray predicted.

The US actions were based on the ‘third offset strategy’, and the joint vision 2010 and 2020, which describe how a war should be fought. They center around principles like dominant maneuver, precision engagement, full dimensional protection, focused logistics, dominant battlespace awareness, improving information systems, precision, stealth, and information superiority. Many things seem to be changing but a continuity compared to the Cold War past, and at the same time, the central characteristic of these strategies, is the concentration around the qualitative technological advantage of the US in an effort to computerize war (Shalikashvili, 1996; Shelton, 2000; Work, 2016).

All these seem functional on paper and in fact have served the United States well for the part they were considered the only major power in the international arena but here is where problems start to arise.

There are those such as Gholz and Sapolsky (2021) who believe that the US is way ahead of any potential competitors. They claim that due to a special mix of factors the US technological edge will stay intact.

Posing a more conservative and worrying view though, there are those such as Borse (2018) who suggest that the US way of warfare needs altering. Furthermore, avid proponents of the RMA dream of the war fog elimination through technological advancements, whereas critics, suggest that the

nature of warfare will never change, while sophisticated and complex systems are sensitive and make room for failure (Neuneck & Alwardt, 2008; Borse, 2018).

Explaining the matter further, the main distortions that we referred to at the beginning, are related with the extensive use of tech in warfare. Technology itself though, does not make up the RMA alone, and likewise, here is not itself the problem. The issue lies in the way the US uses technological innovation and on the lack of imagination or stimuli to compete on the same level with its enemies. According to Freedman (2017), weapons focusing on brute force, size, and high technology, are proven impractical and are expensive to maintain, develop and manufacture. On the other hand, smaller, more maneuverable weapon systems are cheaper and at the same time more efficient and replaceable. The US seems to be focused on the first ones. Washington, as Borse (2018) points out, concentrates in the wrong areas. It spends an immense number of resources modernizing old platforms, otherwise known as legacy systems, instead of creating new kill chains. The US therefore needs to concentrate less on with what or who is fighting and more on how it is fighting.

An excellent example is stealth technology which provides low observable signature on aircrafts or even in the navy. The Joint strike fighter program, an immensely expensive one, and its main advantages, could possibly be rendered obsolete by advancements in satellite technology or in sensors and surface-to-air missile systems (Watts, 2011; Borse, 2018).

Additionally, the US fails to follow the progress of other powers like China and Russia in other sectors. As general Joseph Dunford puts it, “In just a few years, if we don't change the trajectory, we'll lose our qualitative and quantitative competitive advantage” (Garamone, 2017). Borse (2018) also notes that due to the advances of other states, the uniqueness of the US technological advantage will fail. As Prabhakar has also noted, the US is not yet comfortable operating in the cyber and information domain (Pellerin, 2016).

Going back to the third offset strategy, which is central for US thinking, it is seen as a way to maintain conventional deterrence through technological superiority. It goes beyond precision guided systems and stealth but focuses on the incorporation of artificial intelligence into an already computerized battle logic (Work, 2016). Basically, it is a plan to account for US weaknesses in a traditional level of warfare (Bitzinger, 2017). As Martinage (2014) and Dombrowsky (2015) underline, besides the advancements mentioned, as the US is losing its monopoly on C4ISR, it is becoming increasingly vulnerable to long range strikes, space, cyber, and modern air defense systems. From the above we conclude that time is accounting for the ongoing loss of the American edge. Its adversaries have

realized the changes occurring in the field and have gone as far as to develop their own systems capable of diminishing the US advantages.

Besides the Third offset strategy, power projection remains a problem despite US RMA accomplishments. Limitations of army use are observed due to advances in sensor technologies. Aircraft carriers are becoming increasingly vulnerable to Anti Access Area Denial systems developed by China and Russia. Also, as Watts (2011) observes, drone technologies are increasingly dependent on the space and cyber domains. The former might not have posed any problems when fighting against terrorists, but according to Wortzel (2008), an adversary such as China could easily disrupt these domains. Moreover, aside from the fact that space enables the current US RMA, it is at the same time seen as an element that increases vulnerability (Pretorius, 2011). Besides, US capabilities have not been yet tested in an all-out war and under no circumstances could it be suggested that the US would easily win a potential war with China and/or Russia due to its technological advantages or its ongoing RMA (Bitzinger, 2017).

### **Competition ramping up**

At the same time, as US Deputy Secretary of Defense, Bob Work points out, two main competitors of the US, Russia and China, continue to evolve their own systems, their own doctrines, and make their own organizational changes, contributing to the ongoing weakening of the US advantage and making their own technological and conceptual breakthroughs.

As Deni (2018) points out, Russia continues to advance alarmingly in both conventional and nuclear capabilities. Russia's modernization of the armed forces has been slow but nonetheless successful (Deni, 2018). The springboard for those developments occurred after the realization of the US advances during the Gulf War and its own shortcomings after the Chechen War and the war in Georgia. At the time, having limited capabilities, advances in information operations, the so-called sixth generation warfare, and no-contact warfare, reflected the uncertainty of Russia against NATO forces. As Palmer (2015) explains, these advances could possibly be characterized as a Russian RMA.

A combination of factors makes the former a possibility. Firstly Russia, since the 90s has been concentrating on diminishing the strategic advantages of its opponent (Fitzgerald, 1994). According to Cheung (2021), Russia has invested heavily in deploying advanced systems. Emphasis has been given on A2/AD systems and on long range precision munitions. Furthermore, there is a large gap concerning thinking. Russia has focused traditionally, and focuses today, on shaping the strategic environment and not so much on the tactical level. Therefore, it doesn't come as a surprise that Russians see the importance of AI under a unique prism. Unlike the West, they don't only incorporate

AI and new technologies on existing systems as a supportive feature. They see it as an independent tool of war waging (Thornton & Miron, 2020).

This is where revolutionary thinking comes in. Russia has recently adopted new military doctrines focused on non-kinetic measures for ensuring victory. In that framework of defense preemption, revolutionary thinking appears in the way Russia uses information as a weapon. Using information to disrupt and spread misinformation is nothing new, but under the Gerasimov doctrine, Russia has proceeded one step further, elevating those asymmetric means to a tool of destruction. Russia virtually plans to use hard power in conjunction with information warfare, Cyber-attacks, and AI to such an extent as a way of delegitimizing every information coming out of enemy official bodies, creating mass events of confusion and mistrust. The result of such an attack could render the state and its institutions completely dysfunctional in the events of a war (Rumer, 2019; Thornton & Miron, 2020).

Even though there are no signs that a pure Chinese RMA is taking place, China is rapidly modernizing its armed forces and investing in new technologies. In its effort to undermine US presence, China's priority is to catch up with the US and the rest technologically advanced powers. As General Zang Zen notes, "If the PLA could not foresee the development trends, it would lack behind" (Ji, 1999).

As stated by Liao (2020), China's realization for the need of conducting its own RMA appeared after the Gulf war, the war of Kosovo and the Taiwan strait crisis, where the advantages of its future competitors and its own weaknesses were made clearer. Therefore, after 1991, Chinese officials were making references to the future of war with high technology, the multidimensional war, electronic war, and precision missile wars. Concurrently, the PLA was learning RMA from the US and buying equipment from Russia (Ji, 1999; Defense Intelligence Agency, 2019). After all, militaries learn from each other, emulate each other and a significant degree of convergence on weapons systems is observed between great powers (Goldman & Mahnken, 2004; Resende-Santos, 1996; Waltz, 1979).

New concepts of war have been adopted since 1993, and some aspects of incorporating the existing RMA were visible since 1999 (Ji, 1999; Liao, 2020). More recently, China has concentrated on the need of winning local informationized wars, via investing massively on quantum technologies, and taking advantage of other new tech such as big data, cloud computing and AI (Kania, 2021). China is already on the path of modernization, via the adoption of new structures and doctrines, the changes observed on the command-and-control levels, and the restructuring of its defense industry. A satisfying C4ISR system has been created under the doctrine of Yitihua which endorses the already existing western idea of Joint operations and C4ISR integration (Ding, 2008).

China is fueling these changes with its substantial economic growth. Its capabilities have already surpassed those of its close neighbors and according to Bonds et al. (2017), will, in the near future, probably reach, qualitatively and quantitatively, the top powers worldwide.

China has not yet finalized any significant doctrine and is in the process of innovation but there are some interesting specific aspects and changes that undermine the American superiority, worth mentioning. China has integrated all new defense systems and is constantly perfecting its C4ISR capabilities, establishing A2/AD regimes in its near abroad. The concept of A2/AD is used to make sense of China's capacity to challenge US preeminence. It's a strategy widely used by both China and Russia that can defeat or deter a technologically superior adversary and undermine its capabilities in its area of action (Bitzinger, 2017; Loo, 2017; Raska; 2017). China is also keen on making, such as the United States, a system of systems with plans to integrate every big new technology to make something unique (Kania, 2021).

Given the existence of some internal limitations, Ding (2008) highlights that China's effort has been focused on asymmetry. According to Guangrong (in Kania, 2021) there is a focus around cyber warfare and on how establishing algorithmic superiority could determine the outcome of a war. Also, on the matter, a new AI development plan which hopes to fuse civil and military capabilities has been created (Webster, et al, 2017)

Besides everything else though, the most important aspect of China's progress is the fact that China has the advantage of having fewer legacy weapons to invest upon, unlike the US, and focuses primarily on the development of new technologies and next generation systems (Kania, 2021).

## **Conclusion and recommendations**

Considering everything mentioned above, the American RMA has in a large degree, from its adoption, been undermined by some of its most powerful competitors by the sheer fact that they are gradually catching up and that the US sees the aspect of technology in a paradoxical way. Russia and China, two states that have the means and resources to do so, have, for practical reasons or the rift in imagination, gained some edge that gives the clearance to doubt the US supremacy. Undoubtedly, the US influence and power is in fact strong, but those developments make for some compelling arguments in favor of a most uncertain outcome in the possible event of a major conflict.

Focusing on the US, the technologically advanced systems may not have matured enough and even if they have, they pose the danger of being fragile and unreliable while being prone to the enemy "putting sand in their gears".



Expectations from new technologies should be lowered, and their deification should be decreased. The United States should continue the research for making their RMA efficient against all adversaries but at the same time it should be given attention to the fact that the enemy can still give an adequate battle with both old and new means, especially if it is a state, and in the prospect of the enemy fighting new technologies, with better integrated new technologies.

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# Have We Found the New “Artillery”?<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

In our day new conflicts erupt in the so called “hot zones” around the world. What can be clearly seen in those conflicts is the extensive use of certain strategies aimed at giving specific advantages to the adversaries. This phenomenon is due to certain factors of modern way of decision making and way of thinking in general. The current paper's purpose is to examine the reasons that constitute the utilization of such strategies almost a necessity and to analyze a number of them. To be more exact, four strategies are under examination, including their advantages, disadvantages and a number of instances where they have been utilized in the past. The aforementioned strategies are: 1. proxy warfare, 2. pre-emptive strikes, 3. deterrence and 4. strikes from a distance, with speed and precision. To conclude, an effort will be made to make a general assumption about the future of the aforementioned strategies and if their presence will be something of a formality in the near future or if it they will inevitably fade away in due time.

**Keywords:** new strategies of warfare; proxy warfare; pre-emptive strikes; deterrence; strikes from a distance; precision strikes; hypersonic missiles; modern battlefields

## Introduction

On September 16, 1793, a young Corsican artillery captain of the French Republican Army, named Napoléon Bonaparte, receives his first command post during the Siege of Toulon. The rest is a well-known history. The reason “Le Petit Corporal” is mentioned here, is neither due to his undeniable military prowess nor accomplishments. What is important for this paper, is the transformation of warfare this military genius brought to his era and beyond. Among other things, this included the extensive importance he gave to artillery. “*God is on the side with the best artillery*” he is believed to have said, as he utilized it better than anyone else while redrawing the borders in Europe. Napoléon’s gravity on artillery was imparted to next generations, hundreds of years later.

However, “*everything flows*” as Heraclitus had said. The conduct of warfare could not be left untouched. Back then, the use of artillery was a strategy of its own, nowadays usually a part of one, if not merely a tactical component in some cases. Technology advances, new capabilities and mentalities emerge. Human lives, for example, matter a lot more nowadays. So, what remains when the dust settles? Well, two things remain unfazed by the general tendency for change: the first, is the desire of actors to pursue their interests and the second, is their unwillingness to bear an unnecessary

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Moustakakis, G. (2021). Have We Found the New “Artillery”? *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 131-138. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29520

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big cost, be it lives, money, bad publicity or time. All in all, "do more with less" is always the first and highest strategy, upon which all the rest are based.

But where do all those general points culminate in? The current situation is as complex as ever. Multipolarity is at its peak, state and non-state actors are included, technology advances rapidly, there are always interests to be pursued and the mentality is set in keeping conventional forces as far out of the battlefield as it is possible. Thus, new strategies have naturally made their appearance and others, already known from the past, have been upgraded, updated and used more extensively than ever before. Due to length constraints, this paper will focus just on four of them: the warfare via proxies, the strikes aimed at pre-emption, the deterrence way and the capabilities of striking from a long distance, with great speed and with near-perfect precision. Apart from this analysis and the examples that will be given for each specific strategy, this paper will end with a general evaluation and a hypothesis about what the future may hold for them.

### **Proxy warfare**

Despite it is a known phenomenon since ancient times, as we learn from Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War, proxy warfare's definition, nature, forms and participants were thoroughly examined during the Cold War, when USA and the Soviet Union embarked on a plethora of conflicts and grudges via the utilization of proxy groups all over the world. The cases include, among others, the Suez Crisis, the Arab-Israeli War and the Six-Day War (Rondeaux & Sterman, 2019).

After the end of the Cold War, proxy wars remained important. Undoubtedly, the biggest change in the nature of modern warfare is the appearance of a new mentality which has decreased public and political will for large-scale military adventures. What is more, the cost of large armies, innovative military technologies, lost lives and protracted wars such as in Iraq and Afghanistan is nowadays rising high. Yet the deep desire of states not to cede their strategic interest is still here (Mumford, 2013). Thus, a different, lighter and cheaper form of warfare, such as proxy warfare, could not be more welcome.

In this age, as pointed out by Mumford (2013), new tactics are also being used extensively such as the deployment of Private Military Security Contractors. The use of PMCs allows governments to evade negative effects that may hurt the general cause and effort. PMSCs are used in activities such as weapons procurement, police training, intelligence gathering and the close personal protection of civilian leaders. Finally, the changing dynamics of proxy wars are also shown clearly by its extensive use by regional powers and by the newly-emerged phenomenon of coalition proxy warfare.

But why is this strategy so broadly used? It is all due to the advantages it holds, both for the sponsoring and the sponsored side. The former includes locals fighting and dying. Moreover, some states do not possess large power-projection capabilities and use proxies as a way of influence outside their territory. As far as operational advantages are concerned, the proxies, being locals and, therefore, often accepted by the affected communities, can gather intelligence more easily and are less likely to cause turmoil. Furthermore, they often know the terrain better and can blend more easily with the population (Byman, 2018a).

For a proxy, third states provide weapons, money and training, among other forms of support. Some also provide safe routes or hideouts. Outside support means de facto foreign recognition, thus cementing a group's legitimacy. Small factions without many resources may also avoid being devoured by larger and more powerful groups. Last but not least, the outside support also offers gravity over possible rivals.

However, proxy warfare should at no point be considered a panacea. Proxies act according to their own interests. A stronger proxy is more effective but is also more able to start acting independently. Moreover, there is often the risk of dragging the sponsor into an unwanted conflict on behalf of its proxy. It should be also underlined that support for a proxy often leads other states to sponsor their own, eventually deteriorating and prolonging the overall conflict (Byman, 2018a). Last but not least, there is always difficulty in ensuring both the state monopoly on violence, thus its stability, and the tracking of given weapons after the end of the conflict (Benowitz & Ross, 2020).

According to Byman (2018b), however, negative effects for a proxy are also looming both on the inside and outside. Outside support may help the group at the expense of the general movement, allowing possible divisions to grow and multiply. Furthermore, some groups may gradually lose touch with the native population because they do not rely on them to raise funds or recruit fighters. What is more, third states' governments tend to sacrifice proxies when necessary to advance their own interests. Thus, sponsors may abandon their proxies or back rival ones if their goals change.

### **Pre-emptive strikes**

George Washington's phrase "*offensive operations, oftentimes, is the surest, if not the only means of defense*", is the base of the next strategy to be analyzed. A pre-emptive strike can be a greatly effective arrow in an actor's quiver, as it can either cause grave damage or even completely decapitate an enemy.

The USA chose to follow this strategy with its intervention in Iraq. The campaign was based on factors such as the enormous threat due to both Iraq's military capabilities and destabilizing behavior and its continuous failure to comply with the resolutions of the UN Security Council. Therefore, the possibility of the posed threat to transform into reality was considered high, also considering its augmenting capabilities in the use of WMDs and Saddam Hussein's aggressive and unstable personality. Despite the UN Security Council not giving direct permission for the use of force, Iraq's aforementioned status and actions provided enough moral grounds for an intervention (Sofaer, 2003).

An interesting approach to pre-emption, according to Popescu & Secieru (2018), is that of Russia, which chose to make the most out of its advanced cyber capabilities. Those have been made apparent after its campaigns in Estonia, Ukraine and Georgia. The latter two were the opening act of the military campaigns that followed. This strategy has both advantages, such as low cost, low risk and the projection of Russia as a still capable player in the international power chess game, and disadvantages, such as the other states bolstering their own cyber capabilities, thus augmenting the competition.

Recently, Japan contemplated buying air-launched cruise missiles that would allow a strike from a distance at North Korea and China's launch sites. That was officially stated to be an act of self-defense, despite the attacking nature of the weapon (Kelly, 2020).

All in all, and in line with Sofaer (2003), there is a diachronic debate concerning pre-emption's reasonability, from which some factors that should be taken into consideration have emerged, such as the nature and possible impact of the threat, the possibility of the threat being realized, the existence and exhaustion of alternatives and the consistency with international laws. However, it is clear that artificial rules cannot usually cope with the pressure of the real world, so it really depends on the willingness of each state to adopt a positive or negative stance. Basically, an actor that wants to break the rules, will eventually do it.

## **Deterrence**

When an actor wants to stop an adversary before any harm is made but without the use of violence that a pre-emptive strike demands, deterrence gets into the frame. Deterrence is basically a threat posed by an actor towards another actor in order for the second one not to realize an action he had beforehand considered taking. Deterrence's credibility is based on factors such as the deterrer's capability to realize the threat, the probability of realizing it and the clear communication of the threat by the deterrer (Osoba et al., 2020).



As stated by Cohen et al. (2014), the most famous case of deterrence is of course the nuclear capabilities of the USA and the Soviet Union during the Cold War that prohibited each other from taking too aggressive actions, let alone engaging in a direct conflict. Despite the present availability of nuclear weapons as deterrence tools, there is still a need for conventional capabilities, as it is in many cases more compatible with the threat encountered. A terrorist group, for example, is not going to cease its actions due to fear of being obliterated by a nuclear strike.

In the modern era, technology provides a large variety of means to promote deterrence. Specifically, the extensive use of autonomous and unmanned vehicles has various implications regarding deterrence. First of all, it considerably augments the capability of the user to strike from a distance, thus making its threat stronger. Furthermore, it increases the credibility of the user's deterrence, as it considerably reduces the risk for the state's personnel. Last but not least, the use of such systems may be a solution that allows both the promotion of a state's interests and the reduction of risk concerning a full-scale counterattack. However, there is always the possibility that the use of this type of military equipment by an actor, may lead to its adversaries to develop similar capabilities (Osoba et al., 2020).

In agreement with Mälksoo (2020), deterrence, except for its evident strategic value, also holds an important symbolic aspect. NATO, especially the USA as the natural leader of the alliance, has small forces based in East Europe as a deterrent against Russian aggression. Such moves promote the internal coherence of the alliance, thus projecting a strong stance against possible enemies. What is more, for allied troops stationed in "hot zones", maintaining a neutral stance that shows restraint may also achieve another symbolic victory, as such a public image can gather support for the cause of the alliance.

### **Distance, precision and speed**

As reported by McKay (2021), technology plays a nonnegotiable role in the conduct of conflicts all around the world. Someone could say that there is currently an arms race, concerning platforms and weapons that permit strikes from afar, combining high precision and speed. The aforementioned weapons are usually deployed in "grey zones" and are often disclosed to the public eye.

The 2020 drone strikes against Saudi Arabia's oil-processing facilities exhibit this new form of warfare that could potentially be a normality from now on. Behind the attack were Yemen's Houthi rebels who have possibly been provided with the necessary expertise and equipment from Iran. They adopted this strategy due to the unsuccessfulness of their previous attacks using ballistic missiles of low-precision. This strategy provides them with a cheap, better-guided and rather destructive means



that can be used in numbers and from afar, against which there are currently not very effective countermeasures (Cordesman, 2019; Hubbard, Karasz & Reed, 2019).

Another example of such capabilities occurred in January 2020 when a US drone strike killed the leader of the Quds Force of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, Qasem Soleimani. The strike was justified by the government of Donald Trump as a pre-emptive, self-defense action aimed at achieving deterrence, as it was claimed there were sufficient clues that Soleimani had ordered hostile actions against USA military personnel in the past (Crowley, Hassan & Schmitt, 2020).

During the last confrontation between Israel and Hamas, it was apparent that the IDF is far technologically superior to Hamas fighters. Thus, it is normal that the two sides used different weapons, however their tactics were similar: attack from a distance. Hamas used basically low-cost, home-crafted, mainly short-range missiles in big numbers that hit nearby Israeli cities. They also used a variety of more capable rockets, alongside with suicide drones, a far vaster and more sophisticated weaponry than it would be in the past due to technological advances. On the other side, Israel's strikes at Gaza included targets varying from particular buildings and underground facilities housing Hamas' leaders or military and economic activities to precision assassinations. Those precision strikes came mainly from aircrafts armed with high altitude, guided bombs that could hit specific targets, UCAVs, with smaller but more versatile capabilities, and UAVs, used extensively for surveillance and acquiring targets (Maher, 2021; Roblin, 2021).

According to Rajagopalan (2021), the USA is considered to be behind China and Russia in the hypersonic arms' race and is currently trying to catch up. Apart from extraordinary speed, the aforementioned missiles ought to be also as precise and maneuverable as possible, so that they cannot be easily detected and destroyed.

When talking about possible drawbacks of the aforementioned weapons, we can distinguish a wide variety. On a tactical level, those strikes' success depends heavily on accurate targeting provided by C4ISR capabilities. In environments where these are diminished, the collateral damage may be bigger. On a strategic level, precision strikes are not at all a panacea and relying solely on them to achieve a strategic goal should be avoided. On the contrary, it should always be the higher strategy that determines their use. On the political end of the spectrum, the precision provided by new technological achievements has influenced decision makers in making decisions to attack more easily. This, however, may lead to higher damage than anticipated (Universiteit Utrecht, 2020).

## Conclusions

What is it that constitutes those strategies desirable and so extensively utilized in modern battlefields? It is undoubtedly the capabilities they offer: plausible deniability, hits from safe distance, single-hit availability, avoidance of a wider conflict, reduction of high costs and human losses, the ability to save face, leverage against enemies and much more already mentioned advantages. Bearing in mind that there is not a single actor, both state and non-state, that is willing to back down from its interests, any strategy giving the above positives is and will remain attractive. Thus, we will most probably continue seeing more and more actors adopting them at least for the foreseeable future.

However, it must be highlighted again that the aforementioned strategies can often bear important drawbacks: big collateral damage, spill-off effects, possible retaliation by enemies, enlargement of small conflicts, utilization by aggressive actors with less resources, new arms races, just to name a few. This reality, combined with the natural tendency of humanity to evolve its capabilities and rid them from as many wrongdoings as possible, sets the tone for future endeavors. Since these strategies are more and more of a normality as a means in confronting modern era's threats, there will almost certainly be efforts to further advance and clear them from probable drawbacks.

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# China's Efforts to Control the Arctic Rimland: A New Cold War<sup>1</sup>

Marina Fragkouli<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

In 2018, China released the much-expected White Paper and its Arctic policy in the region. China foresees the economic opportunities and realizes the territorial challenges as it seeks an active role in the Arctic opening. The White Paper outlines China's aspirations and strategies to develop the Polar Silk Road across the Arctic Ocean. As a non-Arctic state and without a claim of territory, China will likely have to rely on cooperation and invitation of Arctic states so as to advance its interests in that area. This policy brief outlines China's interests in the region as well as the socio-economic and environmental challenges that will be called to manage. Moreover, it examines the probability to be declared a greater Arctic player through the emergence of the Polar Silk Road and possible shifts in the current status quo and the balance of power in the region. Thus, taking all these into account it briefly suggests four possible measures.

**Keywords:** China; environment; Arctic; Polar Silk Road; natural resources; strategy; EU

## Introduction

China's rise and the world's shift to a multipolar system have contributed to China's growth as a major player in the Arctic, becoming an important "Arctic stakeholder" and playing a significant part, as a polar power, among global giants. It's an indisputable fact that China's strong interest and the opportunities offered in the region stem from the urgent need for traditional and non-traditional security, technological and science research, as well as natural and economic resources. The intensification of energy cooperation with Russia and the creation of economic partnerships in the Arctic region reveal Beijing's ambitions and its strategic presence there (Pelaudeix, 2018). By using Polar Silk Road (PSR), China can secure free transportation through the Arctic route and avoid passing through the sea-lanes of Malacca Strait, the Panama Canal, or the Somalian Coast, which may have a negative effect on either security or economic issues. Not to mention that the abundance of economic and natural resources in polar regions enables China to alleviate its energy security problems and utilize its "near arctic state" position to stake out the exploration and exploitation of natural resources, such as Arctic's natural gas and oil reserves (Eiterjord, 2019). Furthermore, it is evident that China's intention is to expand its influence and interest in polar affairs. Notwithstanding the paramountcy of the political goals at the present, it's an inescapable fact that Beijing's economic interests will increase soon (Brady, 2019). Nonetheless, the Polar Silk Road (PSR) may also generate

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Fragkouli, M. (2021). China's Efforts to Control the Arctic Rimland: A New Cold War. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 139-149. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29501

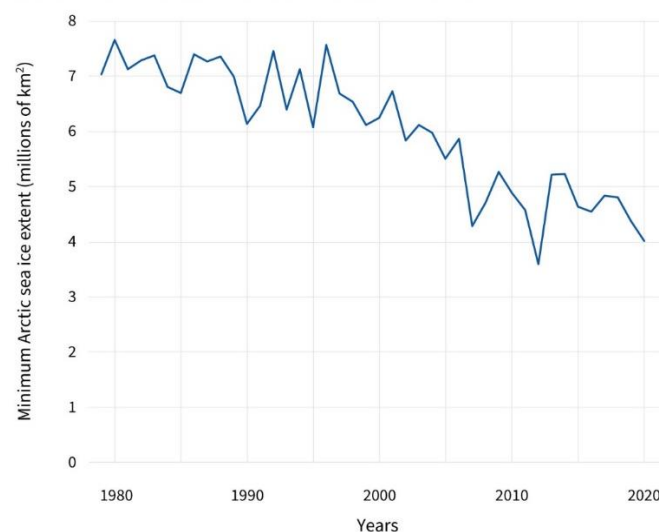
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numerous environmental and social negative effects on the PSR countries and regions. Consequently, the emerging challenges from the developing infrastructure require strong political unity and will by the Member States of the EU and their partners, in order to address environmental, social, political and security issues and finally achieve a win-win outcome.

As the average global temperature on Earth continues to increase, the inevitable result is the rapid ice melting in the Arctic region with the climate impacts having already hit the surrounding countries. Provided that the Arctic Ocean may no longer be covered by sea-ice but water, the Northeast Passage will be accessible by 2050, considering also the annual near-surface air temperature change (Havnes, 2020; Stroeve & Notz, 2015). Despite all economic benefits which may result in a significant economic growth, environmental and social effects pose a threat to the Arctic ecosystem and the residents of the nearby regions. Organochlorine and microplastic pollution, ship discharge, air pollution and ocean dumping are just a few examples of the general ecological disaster (Dietz et al., 2019; Obbard, 2018). The absence of comprehensive governance structure in the Arctic has continually been drawing the attention of academics, non-governmental organizations, and policy makers alike. We should also pay close attention to the fact that there is not a treaty to supervise the Arctic affairs and much of the region constitutes international waters (Assef, 2018).

As temperature in the Arctic region has risen by 3 to 4°C and Arctic ice keeps melting, commercial enhancement of new trade routes and the exploitation of natural resources become increasingly viable. At the same time, economic opportunities hasten the international jostling for control in the Arctic region.

**Figure 1: Arctic Sea Ice Extent**



Source: Satellite observations. Credit: [NSIDC/NASA](#), 2021

The emerging governance challenges that take place in the Arctic region could provoke conflicts. Thus, increased military presence and Arctic region's military buildup have inevitably become essential tools for the security of the region. Territorial conflicts and the maritime disputes that arise from diverging interpretations of UNCLOS, require particular attention too. The commercial development through PSR also accelerates the development of non-security policies in order to confront environmental and social risks, such as rescue operations and oil spills, that may hazard human health, security and safety. Notwithstanding, a direct conflict over the Arctic is very unlikely, according to academics and experts who have studied the plausibility of conflict in the region (Osthagen, 2019).

### **The Blue Economic Passage**

The concept of "Silk Road on Ice", as originally proposed by Sergey Shoygu, the Russian Minister of Emergency Management, did not attract much attention at "the Arctic: Territory of Dialogue" Conference, which took part in 2011. However, in 2012, Beijing took the initiative to employ the icebreaker "Snow Dragon" in order to pass through the Arctic Sea Passage from Qingdao to the Arctic Circle and conduct research activities. Since 2013, China - together with five other states (Japan, Italy, India, South Korea, and Singapore)- has obtained observer status in the Arctic Council, with Chinese stakeholders having a great interest in the development of PSR and both an effective and active participation in Arctic affairs (Tillman et. al., 2018). In 2016, the construction of Russia's Arkhangelsk port began with China's financial contribution, which is to be completed by 2035, and a year after China's president Xi Jinping included in the agenda the collaboration with Russia and the construction of the Blue Economic Passage through Arctic navigation routes. On the basis of Sino Russian policy coordination, in 2018, Polar Silk Road was involved in China's Arctic Policy as an extension of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), in view of closer international coordination in commercial strategy issues, relating to a sustainable energy supply system offering economic viability, ecotourism, greenhouse gas abatement, through lower carbon emissions, and aquacultural food trade (Havnes, 2020). The main purpose of BRI and its following infrastructure projects is to better link China to the foreign market and particularly Europe through marine and rail trade and telecommunication facilities (Lin et al., 2019). This project, which presently engages over 150 countries, gave prominence to China's investments and concomitant to the strategic and political importance of many regions worldwide, including the Arctic. China therefore is examining the potential of shipping through the Polar Silk Road, taking the Northern Sea Route in the Russian Arctic (Bernett, 2015). China's Arctic Policy was officially established in the 2018 Arctic White Paper,



declaring itself a “near-Arctic state”, despite its lack of an Arctic border (Eiterjord, 2019). This rationale began to gain ground when Beijing attempted to obtain formal observer status within the Arctic Council - an intergovernmental forum established in 1996 in order to deal with environmental and soft-policy issues - with the purposes of coordination and regional cooperation, multilateral and bilateral affairs, climate change, ecological environment, economic development, global governance and interaction. It includes the eight Arctic States (Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, and the United States), as well as six Permanent Participants who represent the indigenous, such as the Inuit who originate from the Thule culture, and local communities, such as Nunavut (Lanteigne, 2014). Finland currently holds the Chair. A growing number of actors have also requested to have the observer status by the Council. Among the actors are China, India, EU, and Germany. However, the reasons why EU’s request to be an Arctic member is still pending acceptance, given, on the one hand EU’s diplomatic dispute with Canada occasioned by EU’s ban on Canada’s seal hunting and, on the other hand EU-Russia conflict over Ukraine and Crimea (Osthagen, 2019). Furthermore, except for China, South Korea and Japan are also involved in Arctic development. Through this multilateral forum with its East Asian neighbors, Beijing aims at the coordination of their interests and policies and the increase of Asia’s status in Arctic governance. All of them also have a keen interest in LNG imports from Russia (Biedermann, 2020). Projects like the Yamal LNG project in Siberia will lessen China’s vulnerability to the “Malacca Dilemma, the “choke point” trade route (Assef, 2018).

China has also declared its respect towards sovereignty and territorial rights of the states around the Arctic, on the basis of 1982 UNCLOS Agreement, and its unwillingness to dispute norms and rules in the region (Lim, 2018). Inferentially, China aims to achieve international cooperation rather than competition (Heininen et. al., 2020).

As regards the environmental challenges, the current state of the Arctic is undoubtedly more susceptible to climate crisis than most other regions of the world if we especially consider how sparsely populated and the concomitant deficient human action in the arctic ecosystem, which is exposed constantly to fragilities and vulnerabilities. Not to mention the major industrialized economies of the EU that also have a great impact. Hence, the current changes are the outcome of the direct climate impacts, as well as the indirect socio-economic and political effects, which may have multiple impacts on the whole planet and also affect people in numerous ways (Tillman et. al, 2018).



## **Why is strategically important China's involvement in the Arctic?**

Despite the Arctic's isolation, China can gain strategically important benefits from its active involvement in Arctic affairs and the opening of the region.

### ***Economic Rationale and Distance to Europe***

It is anticipated that PSR can lessen the distance and current sea routes to Europe from China up to 15 days in comparison with the Malacca/Suez Route. For instance, the distance from Shanghai to Hamburg will be reduced by 2,700 nautical miles through the Arctic (Oxford Analytica). Given that, not only the cost is lower through lower fuel consumption, but also cuts down greenhouse emissions and reduces the environmental footprint. China also can export goods to Europe and beyond, through faster and less expensive routes (Chater, 2016)

### ***Geopolitical Rationale***

China's reliance on the Straits of Malacca and the potential vulnerability of China to a US navy blockade led Chinese policymakers to search for alternative sea routes. Any such action would threaten China's energy security and its energy supplies, especially if we consider that nearly three-quarters of its oil imports stem from the Strait.

### ***Partnership***

The partnership between China and Russia and the mutual benefits from the PSR make impossible the "close" of the Northern seaway compared to the United States of America. Russia is more experienced in Arctic shipping and foreign ships will be under Russia's escort and its icebreakers. More specifically, Russia holds more than 40 icebreakers, while China and the US have only two. Considering the average cost of building an icebreaker at about 700 million dollars and the time needed, it's not in China's best interest to invest in this at this time. Russia, through PSR, aims at the collection of transit fees and the hydrocarbon extraction in its northern regions. Generally, China wishes to play a greater and more active role within the Arctic Council (Peng & Wegge, 2015).

### ***Energy security***

The Arctic Ocean is believed to have huge amounts of mineral deposits such as copper, nickel, gold, coal, uranium, diamonds, and tungsten and produces 25% of the world's natural gas and 10% of its oil. China's economic development and industrialization as well as its demand for hydrocarbons complete Russia's demands for non-western trade routes and attracting foreign investments for the exploitation of resources in the Yamal Peninsula (Oxford Analytica, 2018).

## ***Science and Technology***

Access to the Arctic regions is vital for the roll out of the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS), its space science program and the accurate forecasting of weather in China (Brady, 2019). In general, the pursuit of growing activities in the Arctic makes obvious China's intentions. The shortened trade routes linking East Asia to Europe and North America as well as the access and exploitation of physical resources, which are plenty of untapped mineral reserves, from the world's largest energy consumer consist only of a few purposes (Lim, 2018). What's more, China will be more conscious of being exposed to emerging challenges resulting from the environment and the rising sea levels. What can be assured is that China and Russia are having the same field of vision. Specifically, the alliance between China and Russia aims to deploy capital in cooperation with other nations, particularly in the West (Assef, 2018). As the two countries are economically aligned in the development of the region, on the one hand, China contributes through the export of technology and skills in order to secure its energy safety and on the other hand, Russia anticipates partners and external capital to develop vast energy reserves which may enhance its economic output.

## **The Arctic Paradox**

From the standpoint of global climate change mitigation, increased exploitation of new hydrocarbon sources affects the environment through their combustion and the release of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) or other greenhouse gases. At the same time, new and shorter sea routes through the Arctic region offer both economic benefits and emission savings, but the severe environmental effects of increasing transportation introduce an "Arctic Paradox" and diminish societal security. The multidimensional challenges and risks that Arctic states should encounter through the adoption of proper national policies and strategies on the Arctic, drive also non-arctic states to take national policies on the Arctic in order to prevent the exacerbation of climate change (Heininen et al., 2020).

Concerning the local populations and the indigenous people, in particular the Inuit, of the Circumpolar North, growing economic expansion and economic activities prevail over the environmental challenges according to neoliberal and neorealistic approach. Therefore, a dilemma has spawned from the Arctic chessboard: Expanded economic activities and the attendant need for advanced environmental technologies in order to achieve climate and economic sustainability, may give rise to economic prosperity and more diversified employment opportunities. Nonetheless, having influence over Arctic resources, should be put a lid on powerful international players and enforce the development of severe environmental regulations, so as to curtail not only the degradation of traditional means of life, culture and values, but also the environmental, health and social issues.

Accordingly, Arctic populations could develop more easily self-determination and certainty about the sustainability of the local communities (Heininen et al., 2020).

### **Arctic environment in jeopardy**

Although climate change poses a threat to Arctic Circle's security, nuclear safety, radiation protection, radioactive waste management and the state of emergency are defined as the main environmental problems that should be rigorously adhered to by all Arctic States to lessen the likelihood and repercussions of accidents (e.g., AMAP Report 1997). As Heininen emphasizes, the hectic race of arms in the Cold War without considering the following repercussions, such as the environmental degradation using land and sea areas for military purposes, nuclear accidents and leakages, nuclear weapons testing and deployment and the abandoned garbage, toxic and radioactive waste, led to a greater concern about environmental issues. The environmental awareness due to 1980s and 1990s contributed to the transformation of "militarized" Arctic into "environmentalized" and jeopardies were "reconceptualize", making environmental challenges visible. Moreover, long range transboundary pollutants apply more pressure to the vulnerable Arctic ecosystem. In principle, pollutant elimination is pertained to environmental policy and the responsibilities are distributed among EU and its member states. Both have competence and can join international environmental agreements (Koivurova et. al., 2011).

The Arctic region not only is warming at twice of the rest of the world's rate, but also receiving simultaneously a growing amount of air pollution. The accelerated Arctic warming has caused vegetation's response and wide-ranging greening at high latitudes (Smith et. al., 2020). This Arctic "greening" phenomenon, which affects productivity, vegetation composition and biomass, denotes the terrestrial impacts of climate change across the circumpolar Arctic. Nevertheless, it has been reported an overall decline in greenness in recent years and a reversal of greening drivers into a widespread extent of browning, because of extreme events and winter warming (Phoenix & Bjerke, 2016).

### **The "Cold" views of the EU**

The European Union has become closely and actively involved in the Arctic since 1990 with the Barents Euro-Arctic Council as well as with Sweden and Finland's inclusion to the EU. The main reason that Arctic caught the EU's attention was the geopolitical implications of climate change (Offerdal, 2011). Consequently, it managed to have a regulatory and research impact on Arctic

regimes besides its Arctic engagement through trade and fishing agreements (Miller & Hildenbrand, 2019).

The EU, as a major economic and geopolitical power, has a fundamental interest in promoting multilateral collaboration in the Arctic and assumes its responsibilities in the struggle against climate and biodiversity crises. The EU's environmental footprint and its urgent need for physical resources from the region necessitated its engagement in the Arctic, with the European Green Deal becoming the flagship of its action plan (European Commission, 2021).

However, the EU's engagement in the Arctic is characterized by ambiguity. On the one side of the coin is the fact that the EU can secure commercial opportunities and regulation. On the other side, Union's involvement is due to its lack of direct access to the Arctic Ocean, its paternalistic perception towards Arctic challenges and its "solution provider" role and at last lobbyists, who try to influence and put pressure on climate, animal, or economic affairs (Offerdal, 2011). Generally, the EU has an overriding interest in contributing and taking part in the international debate on the region, adjusting its Global Strategy to the Arctic area of interest and promoting especially its relations with Russia. Notwithstanding, the EU's Arctic Policy has recently taken a more moderate approach, taking into consideration the current regional regimes. The EU's role in security issues is restricted to providing consultative support through forums like the Arctic Security Forces Roundtable and through its participation in relevant conferences in the north, organized, for instance, by the Barents Regional Council. What's more, the relatively amicable and neighborly relationships that prevail in the region, do not require any security operations and Union's presence (Kuus, 2020).

Even though its role is bound to security issues and engagements to regional level, the EU and its member states shall play a profound part in setting the Arctic's trajectory. EU-China, EU-US, and EU-Russia relations, all have the Arctic region as the interface between them, comprising an arena for good-will and relations while making a positive spill-over effect feasible. Due to EU's systematic components its involvement in the Arctic is becoming more achievable, although this may meet with Arctic actors' negative reactions (Peng & Wegge, 2015).

The long-term strategic landscape for the northern affairs should be of prime concern for the Members of the European Parliament, the EU, and its member-states. In addition, considering, in many cases, the unawareness of Arctic actors about the EU's potential contribution, EU policymakers should be duly informed of the Arctic region and its challenges. Taking also into account that the north comprises, for the EU, one of three fundamental regional neighborhoods of great importance from a geopolitical perspective, finding out the complexities shall be a priority (Osthagen, 2019).

## Policy Recommendations

On the basis of what has been discussed, four policy recommendations on China's role in the Arctic can be formulated:

- China's Arctic strategy needs to have sustainable development at the top, not only for the promotion of environmental protection, but also for climate change mitigation. Ensuring the sustainable use of the Arctic resources is a milestone for every Arctic-state in the region.
- China also needs to recognize indigenous peoples' rights, who often must struggle for the management of their land's natural resources and the recognition to use them according to their way of life in order to secure their existence in the future.
- Beijing should also consider the hard law enforcement and an efficient compliance regime to preserve high environmental standards in the Arctic and prevent Chinese companies' overharvesting. Strict environmental criteria shall also be integrated into China's domestic law as a prerequisite for authorizing overseas investments, strengthening the Arctic's green image.
- Finally, a new international regime for the Arctic governance and generally governance mechanisms is recommended, which will promote peace and stability, address security issues, and supervise international waters, as the Arctic Council is restricted from moderating such issues. The EU's wide involvement may also contribute to the address of important Arctic challenges (Ostahagen, 2019).

## Concluding Remarks

China's emerging role in the Arctic has been characterized as mildly revisionist, reflecting its respect to regional norms and rules. At the same time, China's development to a great power has led to its growing Arctic presence and its hegemonic role on the path, also having a larger role in Arctic's policy making despite its lack of arctic borders. While China's strategic visibility and core concerns have been increased in regions of great importance, the Arctic has sought to preserve the identity of "partner" and act as a responsible global power (Amatulli, 2017). However, in order for China to succeed in the Arctic, it is crucial to ensure sustainability and protect the fragile Arctic environment. To sum up, according to what has been analyzed in this article, China is expected to acquire a prominent role through the years in addressing Arctic issues, due to the fact that the Arctic region will attract global attention and accordingly global actors will be included in handling Arctic challenges. Historically, new transport routes have been connected with radical shifts in the balance of political and economic power (Blunden, 2012). Will the emergence of PSR affect the international balance of power and the current status quo?

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## Chinese Cultural Diplomacy towards Africa<sup>1</sup>

Mariam Papachristou<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

Within the international system, states focus on the realization of their national interests, evaluating their diplomacy, and regularly their cultural diplomacy. For instance, China exercises its cultural diplomacy, in order to promote its foreign policy's goals. The present paper initially attempts to define the complex notion of cultural diplomacy, which is a multifactor way of promoting intercultural dialogue and augmenting states' soft power. In particular, China's cultural diplomacy was the most suitable case study since the Chinese state, following the Beijing's Olympic Games, has been reintroduced in the international audience. Its reintroduction was achieved by practicing its cultural diplomacy successfully, mostly with Confucius Institutes' function, while being dominant in the international financial system. In the case of China's foreign policy towards Africa, Chinese cultural diplomacy was accompanied by financial diplomacy and led to a Sino-African rapprochement and to the creation of the Forum on China-Africa cooperation. It is vital though to consider if Chinese foreign policy towards the African continent is successful.

**Keywords:** soft power; intercultural dialogue; cultural diplomacy; financial diplomacy; Chinese cultural diplomacy; Chinese foreign policy; Sino-African rapprochement; Confucius Institutes; Beijing Olympic Games; Forum on China-Africa cooperation

### Introduction

Cultural diplomacy as an instrument of a state's foreign policy that can take many forms and at the same time used to different audiences. These ideal cultural diplomacy's characteristics make it hard to define this kind of diplomacy. However, a successful exercise of cultural diplomacy could augment a state's soft power and reinforce its foreign policy. China is a notable case of a state which exercises its cultural diplomacy multilaterally, having in the past few decades successfully attempted to reintroduce itself to the international audience. Specifically, the Chinese state achieved to be one of the dominant states in the international system by evaluating its notable cultural past as well as its financial development. At the peripheral level, the Sino-African rapprochement the past few decades is based on Chinese financial external policy. Adding to the financial sector, the Chinese state has orchestrated a promotion of its national culture and values and a Sino-African intercultural connection. Consequently, Chinese presence in Africa could broadly be characterized as successful since its foreign policy's acts are accompanied by a multilateral exercise of state's cultural diplomacy.

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Papachristou, M. (2021). Chinese Cultural Diplomacy towards Africa. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 150-156. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29502

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## Cultural Diplomacy concept

One of the major international relations' theories, constructivism, highlights the importance of the "narrative". Forming a narrative could probably influence the international actors' notions and resolutions. Accordingly, a narrative could be shaped by a certain state for itself and determine its bilateral relations and its role within the international system. Therefore, if the narrative created for itself improves the state's image to the international audience, its foreign policy would be extensively supported. This condition can be described as a successful exercise of the state's soft power. Nye was among the firsts to analyze soft power and its contribution to the achievement of international policy's goals. Particularly, soft power is described as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than international coercion or payment." (Nye, 2004: 10). Certainly, hard power has a vital role in international relations, however soft power may also have a considerable role. This is because soft power would strengthen a state's negotiating place, while the majority of international public opinion would support its external policy's choices. Hence, in case of combining them, a state would be successful in its foreign policy. Parallely, a state's soft power could be enhanced through its public diplomacy. This kind of diplomacy as defined by Pasmatzoglou (2016) indicates, to international public opinion in order to gain support for a state's foreign policy.

Public diplomacy's section is cultural diplomacy (Pasmatzoglou, 2016; Simon, 2009). However, there is not a widely accepted definition of "Cultural Diplomacy". Certainly, a wide range of notions connects this type of diplomacy with any kind of cultural exchange aiming to a certain purpose (Ang et al., 2015). As Cummings (2003) extensively described, this kind of diplomacy,, consists of cultural exchange, including exchange of art or ideas among states' peoples aiming to foster mutual understanding. "But "cultural diplomacy" can also be more of a one-way street than a two-way exchange, as when one nation concentrates its efforts on promoting the national language, explaining its policies and point of view, or "telling its story" to the rest of the world." (Cummings, 2003: 1). Taking the second aspect into consideration, we can mention that cultural diplomacy, as part of public diplomacy, aims to attract foreign audience while presenting the uniqueness of a nation's cultural heritage, modern art or its cultural values and beliefs.

According to Arndt (2006: 18) and it's more inclusive definition "cultural diplomacy takes place when formal diplomats, serving national governments, try to shape and channel this natural flow to advance national interests. In general, states could evaluate their cultural characteristics, in order to promote their national interests. Each state forms a coherent policy in order to acquaint its culture abroad. For example, there are states' public institutions abroad, promoting the national language or making

foreign people aware of the state's history and its modern culture. In addition, many states finance private initiatives aiming to the same cause. Concurrently, cultural diplomacy could be also exercised by non-state actors and addressed to a wide range of audiences (Clarke, 2020). Zamorano (2015) highlights also the role of globalization. Undoubtedly, we cannot put aside globalization which facilitates international communication, and as a result, of intercultural dialogue.

A state's exercise of cultural diplomacy is often supplementary to its foreign policy. For instance, China has had vital financial cooperation with many African states for the last decades. This development has been accompanied by Chinese state's foreign policy leading to a broader connection with African states.

### **China's cultural reintroduction to the world**

China has a long running cultural history, its past was characterized by notable dynasties and great discoveries such as gunpowder and printing. It was also the country that took the lead on the silk road during ancient times. Following the second world war, China's communistic leader Mao Zedong's subversive reforms regarded mostly institutions of social life. These reforms were promoted during the decade of 1960 and led to cultural revolution. As a result, the cultural background of Chinese was forced to change, neglecting their connection with the past, although honor of the past is vital for Chinese culture overtime (Furtado, 2019). Simultaneously, any kind of western influence was forcibly diminished. In this way, the modern Chinese cultural identity was formed. In the past few decades, following political developments and its surprisingly financial growth, China has broadened its intergovernmental dialogue and cooperation. Notably, China's thriving economy frequently seems to threaten the United States' financial supremacy, while attempts to reintroduce its national culture to international public opinion. As Lioumpas (2005) described, within the Chinese ministry of culture a plan for cultural reformation and development was set about two decades ago.

In general, Chinese cultural diplomacy is organized mostly by the state itself. For instance, the "Chinese People's Association for friendship with foreign countries", is the most important state factor promoting cultural exchange (D'hooghe, 2007). Additionally, the function of thousands of Confucius Institutes, and teaching of Chinese in many educational institutions outside China aim to promote Chinese language and Chinese cultural beliefs and values. The Chinese press in English could also introduce foreign audiences to Chinese everyday life and get to know its mentality. Furthermore, the international broadcasting of China Radio International and Chinese state television's broadcast in several countries (Zhang, 2014) emphasize on the fact that China has a considerable role in the international system's developments, hence the Chinese view on them has to

be mentioned. In the same field, D' Hooghe noted that (2007) the foundation of the International Press Center by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, contributed to the state's communication with international public opinion. Moreover, as Caruso (2019) mentions, a certain plan aiming to the expansion of media's cultural content abroad has been approved by the National People's Congress. At the same time, intercultural dialogue deriving from interpersonal communication is also important for Chinese cultural diplomacy's exercise. For instance, think tanks' significant contribution in cultural diplomacy is noted by Caruso (2019). That is to say, Chinese scientists who operate abroad and interact with foreign scientists could promote Chinese culture abroad. Also, Chinese communities abroad, whose population is estimated by D' Hooghe (2007) to be 40 million in 130 different countries, could contribute to the foreign peoples' familiarization with the unique Chinese cultural characteristics.

While Chinese foreign policy was transforming, cultural diplomacy and communication with international audiences were significant for the achievement of national interests. The Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008 offered China an opportunity to present its cultural identity to the world. Actually, the Olympic Games' opening ceremony depicted the Chinese glorious past and its symbols such as Confucius and the Great Wall, accompanied with a musical synthesis referring to traditional music. In this way, China's culture was once again set up to the world and as Hurn (2016) observed, its image towards the world was improved. However, Nye (2011) mentioned that social issues in China such as the free access in the Internet, were observable by foreign broadcasters and China's image abroad was damaged.

As for Chinese cultural diplomacy's narrative, the present state wishes to promote a concordant world, while supporting equal prosperity (D' Hooghe, 2007). Consequently, Bates and Yanzhong (2006), considered that this section of its cultural diplomacy address developing states, aiming to attract them with its successful financial model. The opinion mentioned before is in accordance with the notion: "Asian confirmation". With this notion, Huntington (1996) characterized the East Asian state's intention to promote the global application of their successful financial model.

### **Chinese cultural diplomacy towards Africa**

Contrarily, Sino-African relations were formed prior to the application of the successful Chinese financial model, as Yunhee (2018) extensively describes. As for financial issues, China has strengthened its financial presence in the African continent certainly during the decade of 1990 and the declaration of five-point proposal, during Jiang Zemin's presidency. This declaration led to the creation of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation aiming for extensive cooperation in many fields.

Particularly, many Chinese investments in oil as well as in infrastructure fields have been made, contributing to Africa's development. Meanwhile, there is a significant amount of trade exchanges (Fijalkowski, 2011; Taylor 2006; Yunhee, 2018). Adding to this cooperation, China frequently offers financial assistance to the continent's states by offering loans or by relieving their debts. The most notable example is the loan's cancellation which was declared by the Chinese state during the first Sino-Africa Forum summit (Chaponnière, 2009). The lending is also remarkable, as Fijalkowski highlighted 80% of loans offered by state's Exim Ban were offered to African states (Fijalkowski, 2011). In accordance with Fijalkowski, Caruso (2019) notes that these loans are estimated at 130 billion dollars since 2000.

The Chinese presence in Africa is certainly enforced by cultural diplomacy policy. For example, Confucius institutes add to the Sino-African connection, by offering locals a chance to learn the Chinese language and by promoting Chinese culture. Another state's initiative is the thematic years' festivals, each one of them dedicated to a foreign state. In 2004, the festival was dedicated to the African continent and took place in many states, enhancing intercultural dialogue (Haifaing, 2008). In accordance, the institution of sister cities among China and several African countries has been established. As for the diachronic Sino-African communication, in circumstances where western media are few, as Zhang examined (2014), Chinese media have an intense presence in the African continent. The "China Daily Africa Weekly" and the China Radio International's broadcast in Nairobi, are remarkable cases of Chinese media's presence in Africa. In these conditions, "passage to Africa", a documentary depicting Africa, introduced the continent to Chinese, resulted in the augmentation of tourism in the region in 2006 (Haifaing 2008; Yunhee 2018). In interpersonal level, a year previous to the first conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, pieces of art coming from the African continent were part of an exhibition in the Chinese National Art Gallery. This initiative was considerable for Sino-African connection since, as Grincheva (2010) mentions, art is considered as national heritage. More recently, Caruso (2019) notes that during the COVID- 19 pandemic Chinese state has offered to the continent a great number of medical equipment.

Sino-African financial partnership is beneficial for Africa which as a region has to deal historically with financial problems. Certainly, this partnership also benefits Chinese politics, since China augments its foreign investments, and at the same could import the necessary natural resources and especially increase its oil storage (Taylor, 2006; Yunhee, 2018). Moreover, it has to be mentioned that by creating these diplomatic relations with African states, China's place within the United Nations is enforced. In particular, as Alden notices, African states' votes during the UN's General Assembly, could support Chinese foreign policy (Alden, 2005). Notably, African states tend to share

similar votes, and as a result, their votes are crucial. Typical examples of votes in the United Nations that favored Chinese policy are African states' support in the matter of Taiwan (Bodomo, 2009) and as Wenping (2009) noted, these states also supported China in the matter of violation of human rights. As a result, it is estimated that Chinese cultural diplomacy's narrative aiming to equal prosperity has proven real. Finally, the evaluation of Chinese cultural diplomacy was really useful for this rapprochement. This is because African and Chinese societies are really different, and a successful cultural diplomacy would bridge these differences and led to a productive cooperation.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, it seems that Schneider's (2006) unique article's title: "Cultural Diplomacy: hard to define but you'd know it when you saw it", was credible. Certainly, international public opinion could be attracted by a state's or an institution's choices, even if these choices are not defined as part of the state's strategy for cultural diplomacy. In any case, cultural diplomacy affects international relations intensely, even more in present-day when interconnectivity between state and non-state actors is wide-ranging. In these conditions, China the past few decades has been successful in augmenting its soft power while conquering global financial achievements. Accordingly, the Chinese state managed to shape stable diplomatic relations with the African continent and accomplish its national goals. The last two decades enforced the exercise of its foreign policy, making it successful. At a more general level, since the exercise of cultural diplomacy enhanced Chinese foreign policy, all states should evaluate their cultural characteristics and exercise their cultural diplomacy in order to achieve their national interests.

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# Diplomatic Tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean: Developments in 2021 and Prospects<sup>1</sup>

Olga Tsoukala<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Is the Eastern Mediterranean emerging as a new geopolitical region? During 2021, the region of the Eastern Mediterranean occupied the international news and its scholars. This policy brief attempts to provide a concise and comprehensive analysis of the main events, which took place and marked with particular energy the diplomatic route for the defense, security and cooperation of the states in the region. The present analysis draw conclusions about the future of the region, especially in regard to Turkey's difficult position, culminating in the apparent imperative for the completion of the E.U.'s EEZ.

**Keywords:** Eastern Mediterranean; defense; trilateral summits; diplomacy

## Διπλωματικές Εντάσεις στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο: Εξελίξεις το 2021 και Προοπτικές

Όλγα Τσουκαλά

## Περίληψη

Αποτελεί η περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου μία νέα αναδυόμενη περιφέρεια; Κατά τη διάρκεια του έτους 2021, η περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου απασχόλησε διαρκώς την διεθνή επικαιρότητα και τους μελετητές αυτής. Στο παρόν θα επιχειρηθεί μία ευσύννοπη και περιεκτική ανάλυση των κυριότερων γεγονότων, τα οποία διαδραματίστηκαν και χάραξαν με ιδιαίτερη ενάργεια την διπλωματική οδό για την άμυνα, την ασφάλεια και τη συνεργασία των κρατών στην περιοχή. Η παρούσα ανάλυση ολοκληρώνεται με μία σκέψη και ορισμένα συμπεράσματα για το μέλλον της περιοχής, ιδιαιτέρως αναφορικά με την δυσχερή θέση της Τουρκίας, καταλήγοντας στην εμφανή επιταγή και την πορεία για την ολοκλήρωση της Α.Ο.Ζ. της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

**Λέξεις-Κλειδιά:** Ανατολική Μεσόγειος; Άμυνα; τριμερείς σύνοδοι; διπλωματία

## Εισαγωγή

Κατά τη διάρκεια του έτους 2021, η περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου πρωταγωνίστησε στη διεθνή επικαιρότητα τόσο για τις εξελίξεις σε αμυντικό επίπεδο, όσο και για την διπλωματική κούρσα των δρώντων κρατών σε διμερή, τριμερή και πολυμερή σχήματα, τα οποία πλαισιώθηκαν από τις αντίστοιχες συνόδους κορυφής των κρατών. Η Ανατολική Μεσόγειος αποτελεί τμήμα της ευρύτερης

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Tsoukala, O. (2021). Diplomatic Tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean: Developments in 2021 and Prospects. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 157-171. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29503

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Μεσογείου θαλάσσης, το οποίο βρέχει τις ακτές νοτιοανατολικά της Ελλάδος (νοτιοανατολικά στην Κρήτη, και το σύμπλεγμα Καστελόριζου), την Κύπρο, την Αίγυπτο, τη Λιβύη, το Λίβανο, τη Συρία και το Ισραήλ (βλ. Χάρτη 1). Έχει αναφερθεί ότι η περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου αποτελεί σημαίνουσα και αναδυόμενη (υπο)περιφέρεια, ιδίως δε μετά την ανακάλυψη των κοιτασμάτων υδρογονάνθρακα και φυσικού αερίου, τα οποία καθιστούν την περιοχή όχι μόνο πλούσια αλλά και σημείο γεωπολιτικών, αμυντικών και διπλωματικών εξελίξεων (Τζιάρρας, 2020).

### Χάρτης 1: Η περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου



Πηγή: Google Earth, 2022

### Διπλωματία και άμυνα στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο

Εντός του ανωτέρω περιγραφόμενου πλαισίου κρίνεται αναγκαίο να επισημανθούν ορισμένα γεγονότα και εξελίξεις, τα οποία ήδη από τέλος του έτους 2020 κατά την είσοδο στο έτος 2021 αποτέλεσαν το έναυσμα για την παρούσα συγγραφική προσπάθεια. Αρχής γενομένης από το Νοέμβριο του έτους 2020, η Ελλάδα υπέγραψε αμυντική συμφωνία με τα Ηνωμένα Αραβικά Εμιράτα (εφεξής Η.Α.Ε.). Η εν λόγω συμφωνία αποτελεί για τις διμερείς σχέσεις των δύο συμβαλλομένων κρατών μια ιδιαζούσης σημασίας ευκαιρία για την ενδυνάμωση της αμυντικής συνεργασίας των κρατών δίνοντας ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στα οφέλη, τα οποία θα αποκτήσει η ελληνική πολεμική αεροπορία επί τη ευκαιρία της συνεργασίας με την πολεμική αεροπορία των Η.Α.Ε.. Είναι γνωστό ότι οι δύο πολεμικές αεροπορίες εμφανίζουν πληθώρα ομοιοτήτων στα εξοπλιστικά τους και την εκπαίδευσή τους (Iddon, 2020a).

Με την ανωτέρω συμφωνία εισήχθη η πρωτοποριακή, για τα δεδομένα των αμυντικών συμφωνιών της Ελλάδος, ρήτρα αμοιβαίας αμυντικής συνδρομής (κοινό αμυντικό δόγμα), σε στρατιωτικό επίπεδο. Με την ρήτρα στρατιωτικής συνδρομής επιδιώκεται η συνεργασία των κρατών στην άμυνα και τη διατήρηση της ασφάλειας, της κυριαρχίας, της ενότητας, της προστασίας και της εδαφικής ανεξαρτησίας των Ηνωμένων Αραβικών Εμιράτων και της Ελλάδας, στο μέτρο του εφικτού για τα κράτη, εκατέρωθεν. Σημειώνεται, δε, ότι ήδη από το 2019, τα Η.Α.Ε., καθώς και η Σαουδική Αραβία διατηρούν ισχυρές διπλωματικές σχέσεις με την Ελλάδα και την Κύπρο (Bianco & Rocha, 2021). Η στρατηγική συνεργασία των κρατών όπως διατυπώθηκε και δια στόματος του Πρίγκιπα Διαδόχου, Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan, ενισχύει την διμερή σχέση των κρατών σε πολιτικό, οικονομικό και πολιτιστικό επίπεδο. Λαμβάνοντας υπ' όψιν την κοινή παραδοχή ότι τα δύο κράτη φέρουν κοινά γνωρίσματα στην εξωτερική πολιτική τους, η συγκεκριμένη συμφωνία εύλογα κρίθηκε ότι θα είχε αντίκτυπο στις σχέσεις των κρατών με την γείτονα Τουρκία (Iddon, 2020b).

Συνεκδοχικά, ιδιαζούσης σημασίας εξέλιξη στην περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου αποτέλεσε η συνάντηση σε επίπεδο υπουργών εξωτερικών του Φόρουμ Φιλίας (Philia Forum) τον Φεβρουάριο τ.ε.. Οικοδεσπότης του Φόρουμ ήταν η Αθήνα, η οποία υποδέχτηκε τους Υπουργούς Εξωτερικών της Σαουδικής Αραβίας, των Ηνωμένων Αραβικών Εμιράτων, του Ισραήλ, της Κύπρου, του Μπαχρέιν και της Αιγύπτου. Κατά γενική ομολογία, σκοπός του Φόρουμ, ο οποίος αποτυπώθηκε στην κοινή διακήρυξη (MFA, 2021), ήταν η ενίσχυση της ασφάλειας, της κυριαρχίας και της τήρησης των διεθνών κανόνων δικαίου, όπως λ.χ. η Σύμβαση του Ο.Η.Ε. για το Δίκαιο της Θάλασσας (UNCLOS 1982) (Tziampiris, 2021).

Συνακόλουθα, ήδη από την αρχή του έτους 2021, η Ανατολική Μεσόγειος έμελλε να διαδραματίσει αποχρώντα ρόλο στην αμυντική διπλωματία. Εν συνεχεία του κοινού αμυντικού δόγματος με τα Η.Α.Ε., η Ελλάδα προέβη σε μία πολύ σημαντική κίνηση για την αεράμυνα στο Αιγαίο και την Ανατολική Μεσόγειο. Πρόκειται για την υπογραφή της ελληνογαλλικής αμυντικής συμφωνίας σύμφωνα με την οποία ενισχύεται η ελληνική πολεμική αεροπορία και η ελληνογαλλική συνεργασία στην άμυνα και την ασφάλεια της περιοχής. Η εν λόγω συμφωνία μεταξύ Ελλάδος και Γαλλίας, η οποία υπεγράφη την 25.1.2021, αφορούσε στην παράδοση 12 μαχητικών Rafale F3-O4T αναβαθμισμένων, πριν την παράδοση τους, στο μοντέλο F3-R, τα οποία ήδη είναι σε λειτουργία και χρήση από τη γαλλική πολεμική αεροπορία, και 6 νέων Rafale F3-R γενιάς 4.5 (Mackenzie, 2021). Πρόκειται για 14 μονοθέσια Rafale EG και 4 διθέσια Rafale DG.

Προχωρώντας στο 2021, στο προσκήνιο της διπλωματικής κούρσας στην περιοχή εμφανίστηκε ένας ισχυρός κρατικός δρών, το Βασίλειο της Ιορδανίας, όταν τον Ιούλιο τ.ε. (28.7.2021) έλαβε χώρα η Τριμερής Σύνοδος Κορυφής σε επίπεδο αρχηγών κρατών μεταξύ του Βασιλείου με την Ελλάδα και

την Κύπρο. Στο επίκεντρο των συζητήσεων τέθηκε η συνεργασία στον γεωργικό τομέα, τις επενδύσεις, το νερό, το εμπόριο, τον τουρισμό και το περιβάλλον. Παράλληλα, οι σχέσεις του Βασιλείου με την Ε.Ε., η προσφυγική-μεταναστευτική κρίση και οι κρίσεις στην ευρύτερη περιοχή πλαισίωσαν την Agenda της Συνόδου (JT, 2021).

Εκτός από σημαντικό ρόλο στην Μέση Ανατολή, η Ιορδανία τείνει δια των τριμερών σχηματισμών, στα οποία συμμετέχει, να αποκτήσει εμφανώς δυναμική θέση στα τεκταινόμενα στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο. Τοιουτοτρόπως, η Ελλάδα τοποθέτησε το Βασίλειο της Ιορδανίας στους επιθυμητούς διπλωματικούς εταίρους (Tsardanidis, 2019). Κατά γενική ομολογία, το Βασίλειο της Ιορδανίας έχει αποκτήσει δυναμική θέση στη διπλωματία της Μέσης Ανατολής γεγονός που επισφραγίζεται και από τις ομαλά εξελισσόμενες σχέσεις του Βασιλείου με το Ισραήλ και τις Η.Π.Α. Σημειώνεται ότι, ο Βασιλιάς της Ιορδανίας, Abdullah II, ήταν πρώτος ηγέτης της Μέσης Ανατολής, ο οποίος έγινε δεκτός στον Λευκό Οίκο από τον Πρόεδρο των Η.Π.Α., Joe Biden, μόλις τον Ιούλιο του 2021 (Krasna, 2021).

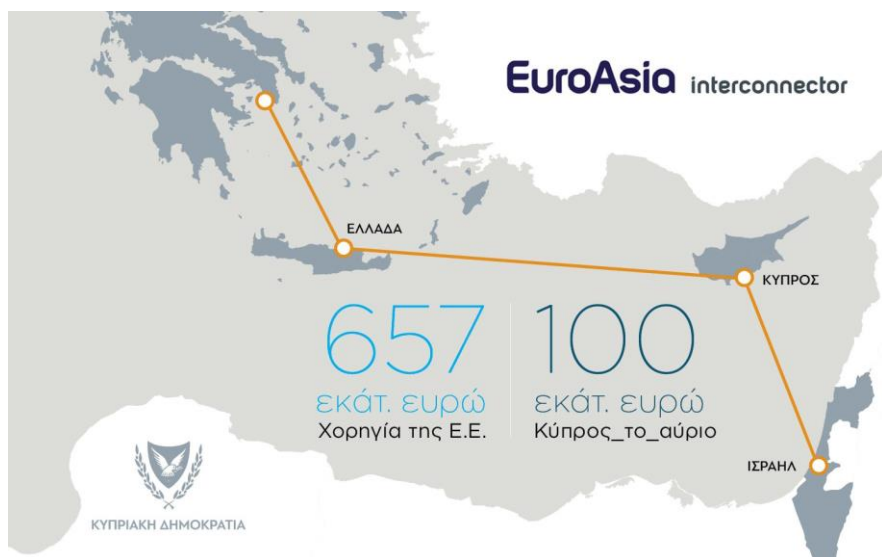
Προς το τέλος του θέρους και δη την 22<sup>α</sup> Αυγούστου 2021, έλαβε χώρα η καθιερωμένη συνάντηση των Υπουργών Εξωτερικών των κρατών της Ελλάδος, της Κύπρου και του Ισραήλ στην Ιερουσαλήμ. Ο Υπουργός Εξωτερικών του Ισραήλ, Yair Lapid, υποδέχθηκε τους ομολόγους του, Νίκο Δένδια (Ελλάδα) και Νίκο Χριστοδουλίδη (Κύπρος), ώστε να συζητηθεί η εμβάθυνση μίας πραγματικής συμμαχίας για την αντιμετώπιση των τεκταινόμενων προκλήσεων και των εξελίξεων στις περιοχές της Μέσης Ανατολής και της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου (Berman, 2021). Αξίζει να επισημανθεί στο σημείο αυτό ότι, η Ελλάδα ήδη από τον Απρίλιο (18.4.2021) υπέγραψε αμυντική συμφωνία με το Ισραήλ ύψους 1,65 δις δολαρίων ΗΠΑ, σύμφωνα με την οποία θα δημιουργείται και θα συντηρείτο εκπαιδευτικό κέντρο για την ελληνική πολεμική αεροπορία από την κατασκευάστρια Elbit Systems, ενώ παράλληλα μέρος της συμφωνίας αποτελεί η παράδοση 10 εκπαιδευτικών αεροσκαφών M-346 (Ong, 2021).

Σε παρόμοιο κλίμα συζητείται η αμυντική συνεργασία της Κύπρου με το Ισραήλ με την προοπτική απόκτησης του ισχυρού αμυντικού συστήματος, Σιδηρούν Θόλος (Iron Dome), παρόμοιο με το ισραηλινό (J, 2021). Θα μπορούσε να χαρακτηριστεί ως αντιστάθμισμα στις εξαγγελίες του τούρκου προέδρου, Ρετζέπ Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, αναφορικά με τη δημιουργία βάσεων για μη επανδρωμένα αεροσκάφη (UAV drones) στα κατεχόμενα εδάφη<sup>3</sup> (Rubin, 2021). Μεταξύ των πλέον πρόσφατων εξελίξεων στην ως άνω τριμερή συνεργασία αποτέλεσε η έγκριση χορηγίας 657 εκ. Ευρώ από την Ε.Ε. υπερ του αγωγού ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης EuroAsia Interconnector (βλ. Χάρτη 2), ο οποίος θα

<sup>3</sup> Πρόκειται για τα μη επανδρωμένα αεροσκάφη (drone) τύπου Bayraktar-TB2, κατασκευασμένα από την Baykar Makina για τις τουρκικές ένοπλες δυνάμεις (Army Technology, 2021)

συνδέει τα εθνικά δίκτυα των τριών κρατών με τελικό παραλήπτη ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας της Ε.Ε., αναβαθμίζοντας την γεωπολιτική και ενεργειακή θέση της Κύπρου, η οποία τελούσε σε καθεστώς ενεργειακής απομόνωσης (European Commission, 2022).

## Χάρτης 2: Ο αγωγός ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης EuroAsia Interconnector



Πηγή: Anastasiades, 2022

Στο διάστημα Σεπτεμβρίου-Οκτωβρίου του έτους 2021 έλαβαν χώρα ορισμένα ακόμη γεγονότα, τα οποία χάραζαν περαιτέρω την διαδρομή της εκπεφρασμένης διπλωματικής κούρσας στην περιοχή σε αμυντικό και πολιτικό επίπεδο. Πρωτίστως, το Σεπτέμβριο 2021 (28.9.2021) υπεγράφη μεταξύ της Ελλάδος και της Γαλλίας η αμυντική συμφωνία στρατηγικής εταιρικής συνεργασίας, στο Μέγαρο των Ηλυσίων. Δια της εν λόγω συμφωνίας προστέθηκαν τα 6 επιπλέον, σε σύνολο 24, καινούρια Rafale τύπου F3-R, καθώς επίσης συμφωνήθηκε η παράδοση στο ελληνικό πολεμικό ναυτικό 3 φρεγατών FDI (Frégate de Taille Intermédiaire) Belharra<sup>4</sup>, με δυνατότητα παράδοσης ακόμα μίας (Tual, 2021).

Σε όμοιο υπόβαθρο με την αμυντική συμφωνία με τα Η.Α.Ε., η εν λόγω συμφωνία περιλαμβάνει ρήτρα αμοιβαίας αμυντικής συνδρομής (άρθρο 2) σύμφωνα με τις επιταγές του Καταστατικού Χάρτη του Ο.Η.Ε. (άρθρο 51), η οποία επικυρώθηκε από τη Βουλή των Ελλήνων την 7<sup>η</sup> Οκτωβρίου 2021 (ν. 4841/2021). Εκμεταλλευόμενη το διάλογο, ο οποίος ήδη είχε αρχίσει από το 2018 για την προμήθεια των φρεγατών, η Γαλλία έδραξε την ευκαιρία δια της παρούσης για να αποκτήσει

<sup>4</sup> Οι νέες φρεγάτες διαθέτουν το ισχυρό Thales Sea Fire AESA Radar (έως 200 χλμ. κάλυψη), σύστημα το οποίο αποτέλεσε μεταξύ άλλων κριτήριο επιλογής του εν λόγω τύπου φρεγατών (Tual, 2021)

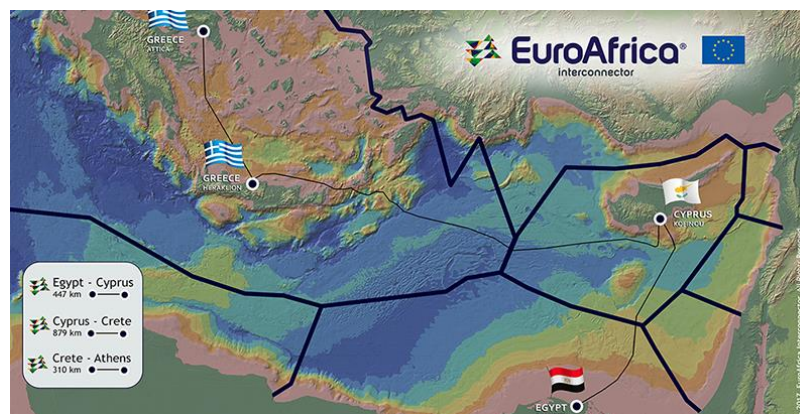


κυρίαρχη θέση στην ευρωπαϊκή αμυντική πολιτική στη Μεσόγειο, ιδίως μετά την στρατηγική συμφωνία AUKUS<sup>5</sup>, η οποία διατάραξε τις σχέσεις της με τις Η.Π.Α. και την Αυστραλία.

Την ανωτέρω αμυντική κούρσα ήρθε να ενισχύσει περαιτέρω η υπογραφή του δεύτερου τροποποιητικού πρωτοκόλλου της Συμφωνίας Αμοιβαίας Αμυντικής Συνεργασίας (MDCA) μεταξύ των Η.Π.Α. και της Ελλάδος, την 14<sup>η</sup> Οκτωβρίου 2021 (U.S. State Department, 2021a). Σημαντικό σημείο στην ανωτέρω συμφωνία αποτελεί το γεγονός ότι η Ελλάδα μέσω των διαπραγματεύσεων, οι οποίες οδήγησαν στην υπογραφή της, εκδήλωσε το ενδιαφέρον της για την ένταξη της στο πρόγραμμα εξοπλισμού των μαχητικών αεροσκαφών F-35<sup>6</sup> (U.S. State Department, 2021b).

Τέλος, στο διπλωματικό προσκήνιο έχει ιδιαίτερη θέση η τριμερής σχέση των κρατών της Ελλάδος και της Κύπρου με την Αραβική Δημοκρατία της Αιγύπτου. Μόλις τον Οκτώβριο 2021, έλαβε χώρα η τριμερής σύνοδος κορυφής των τριών κρατών στην Αθήνα. Έργο της συνόδου αποτέλεσε η υπογραφή μνημονίων για την ηλεκτρική διασύνδεση και την συνεργασία των κρατών στην ηλεκτροδότηση της Ευρώπης καθώς και για τα δικαιώματα των αποδήμων (Kandil, 2021). Σημειώνεται ότι μόλις προ ολίγων ημερών της συνόδου υπεγράφη το μνημόνιο συνεργασίας μεταξύ Ελλάδος Αιγυπτου και Κύπρου για τον αγωγό EuroAfrica Interconnector (βλ. Χάρτη 2). Πρόκειται για ένα υποβρύχιο σύστημα αγωγού ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης υψηλής τάσης ύψους 2,5 δις δολαρίων Η.Π.Α., με τον οποίο θα διοχετεύεται ηλεκτρική ενέργεια από την Αφρική (Αίγυπτος) στην Ευρώπη (Ελλάδα, Κύπρος), το οποίο εκτιμάται ότι θα έχει αποπερατωθεί έως τον Δεκέμβριο του έτους 2023 (Szymczak, 2021).

### Χάρτης 3: Ο αγωγός ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης EuroAfrica Interconnector



Πηγή: Spasić, 2019

<sup>5</sup> Την 16.9.2021 οι ΗΠΑ, Αυστραλία και Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο υπέγραψαν την στρατηγική συμφωνία, γνωστή ως συμφωνία AUKUS, προκειμένου να συνεργαστούν για την στρατηγική αποτροπής κατά της Κίνας ενώ παράλληλα η Αυστραλία θα εξοπλιστεί με νέα σύγχρονα πυρηνικά υποβρύχια (Atlantic Council, 2021)

<sup>6</sup> “The United States welcomes Greece’s expression of interest to join the F-35 fighter program” (US State Department, 2021b)

## Η θέση της Τουρκίας

Ασφαλώς όπως μπορεί να γίνει εύληπτα κατανοητό, τα ως άνω καταγεγραμμένα περιστατικά δεν μπορούσαν να μείνουν εκτός της θεματολογίας της εξωτερικής πολιτικής της Τουρκίας. Αναφορικά με την ελληνογαλλική αμυντική συμφωνία, η ίδια η τουρκική ηγεσία έκανε λόγο για παραβίαση του Διεθνούς Δικαίου, καθώς και για αλλαγή ισορροπιών από την έντονη και ευμεγέθη εξοπλιστική κούρσα της Ελλάδος (Carassava, 2021).

Παράλληλα, η τουρκική ηγεσία διέτεινε ότι θα υπερασπιστεί τα δικαιώματα τόσο της Τουρκίας, όσο και της -παράνομως αναγνωρισμένης από την ίδια- Τουρκικής Δημοκρατίας της Βορείου Κύπρου (ΤΔΒΚ), όπως προκύπτει από δημοσιεύματα στα τουρκικά ΜΜΕ (Hurriyet Daily News, 2021a). Προς επίρρωση τούτου, ήδη από το σταθμό της Αττάλειας εξεδόθη με ημερομηνία την 8.10.2021, NAVTEX για παράνομες σεισμογραφικές έρευνες, το διάστημα από 8.10 έως 16.12.2021, από το γνωστό πλέον τουρκικό σεισμογραφικό, Oğuz Reis, στην περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου στην ΑΟΖ Ελλάδος-Κύπρου, το οποίο θα συνοδεύεται από τα υποστηρικτικά πλοία Ataman και Cengiz Han (SHOD, 2021). Σκοπός της έκδοσης της εν λόγω NAVTEX ήταν να υπογραμμίσει την ανωτέρω δηλωθείσα πρόθεση της Τουρκίας αναφορικά με την υπεράσπιση των κυριαρχικών δικαιωμάτων της στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο. Τη δεδομένη χρονική περίοδο και δη την 11<sup>η</sup> Νοεμβρίου 2021, στα Πριγκηπόννησα της Κωνσταντινούπολης, συνεκλήθη το Συμβούλιο Τουρκικών Κρατών<sup>7</sup>, το οποίο κατά την 8<sup>η</sup> Σύνοδό του και υπό τη σκέπη του Ερντογάν αποφάσισε τη μετονομασία του σε Οργανισμό Τουρκικών Κρατών (Hurriyet Daily News, 2021b). Μεταξύ άλλων ιδιαίτερη ανησυχία προκαλεί η εξαγγελία δια στόματος του Τούρκου Προέδρου ότι φιλοδοξεί την ένταξη στον Οργανισμό, του ψευδοκράτους των κατεχομένων, ήτοι την -παράνομως αναγνωρισμένη- ΤΔΒΚ θεωρώντας αυτήν ως «αναπόσπαστο μέρος του τουρκικού κόσμου» (Hurriyet Daily News, 2021c).

Στο ίδιο κλίμα λαμβάνοντας υπόψιν την διπλωματική απομόνωση της Τουρκίας, ο Τούρκος Πρόεδρος, Ρετζέπ Ταγίπ Ερντογάν, προέβη σε μία παραβατική προς το Διεθνές Δίκαιο επίσκεψη. Ο λόγος γίνεται για την επίσκεψη του στα κατεχόμενα εδάφη των Βαρωσίων το διάστημα από 19 έως 21 Ιουλίου του παρόντος έτους. Επιδιώκοντας να ανακοινώσει στους Τουρκοκυπρίους «χαρμόσυνα νέα» αναφορικά με την δημιουργία Προεδρικού Μεγάρου και Βουλής στα κατεχόμενα εδάφη στο βόρειο τμήμα της Κύπρου, ο Τούρκος Πρόεδρος επέλεξε την παρούσα χρονική συγκυρία της ημέρας μνήμης από την εισβολή στο νησί με την επιχείρηση «Αττίλας Ι», το έτος 1974 (Κωστίδης, 2021).

<sup>7</sup> Το Συμβούλιο Τουρκικών κρατών ιδρύθηκε το 2009 με σκοπό τη συνεργασία των τουρκόφωνων κρατών, τα οποία είναι το Αζερμπαϊτζάν, το Καζακστάν, η Κιργιζία, το Ουζμπεκιστάν και η Ουγγαρία ως κρατος παρατηρητής. Στην φετινή 8<sup>η</sup> Σύνοδο συμμετέχει το πρώτον το Τουρκμενιστάν (Hurriyet Daily News, 2021b).



Με την επίσκεψη του παραβίασε συλλήβδην τα ψηφίσματα S/ RES/ 550 (1984) και S/ RES/ 789 (1992), σύμφωνα με τα οποία τα Βαρώσια τίθενται σε καθεστώς μη εποικισμού και εντάσσονται στη νεκρά ζώνη, η οποία ελέγχεται από την ειρηνευτική αποστολή του Ο.Η.Ε.. Ηχηρή απάντηση στο γεγονός αυτό αποτέλεσε η ομόφωνη υιοθέτηση του ψηφίσματος του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας των Η.Ε., S/ RES/ 2618 (2022), την 27 Ιανουαρίου 2022, σύμφωνα με την οποία παρατείνεται η αποστολή του ειρηνευτικού σώματος των Η.Ε. στην Κύπρο έως την 31 Ιουλίου 2022<sup>8</sup>. Ασφαλώς, το εν λόγω ψήφισμα δέχτηκε δριμεία κριτική από το τουρκικό Υπουργείο Εξωτερικών, το οποίο επεσήμανε ότι η διατήρηση του ισχύοντος καθεστώτος φαλκιδεύει την εύρεση λύσης στο Κυπριακό, ενώ έκανε λόγο για απόφαση δύο μέτρων και δύο σταθμών (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022).

### Προτάσεις Πολιτικής

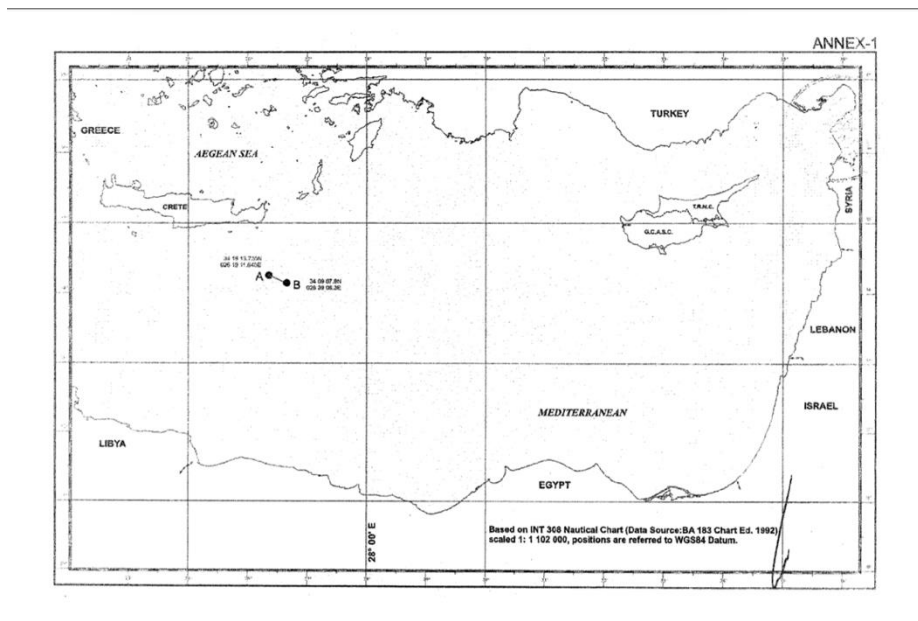
Σταχυολογώντας τα όσα εκτέθηκαν ανωτέρω, εξάγονται ορισμένα συμπεράσματα, τα οποία δύναται να οδηγήσουν σε ορισμένες πολιτικές επιλογές και λύσεις. Ως μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, η Ελλάδα και η Κύπρος, κρίνεται αναγκαίο και επιτακτικό, να επισπεύσουν την διμερή οριοθέτηση της Α.Ο.Ζ. τους, ώστε να λάβει πλήρη υπόσταση και να ολοκληρωθεί η Α.Ο.Ζ. της Ε.Ε. στη Μεσόγειο Θάλασσα.

Στο σημείο αυτό χρήζει να γίνει μία συνοπτική αναδρομική αναφορά σε δύο γεγονότα, τα οποία συνεπικουρούν στην δημιουργία πρόσφορου υποβάθρου για την πολιτική βούληση και την διπλωματία, ώστε να τεθεί ο άξονας επί του οποίου δύναται να επιτευχθεί η ανωτέρω οριοθέτηση. Μόλις τον Νοέμβριο του έτους 2019, η Τουρκία επιχείρησε να αναθερμάνει τις διπλωματικές σχέσεις της με τη Λιβύη υπογράφοντας διμερή συμφωνία οριοθέτησης της Α.Ο.Ζ. της με την Κυβέρνηση Εθνικής Συμφωνίας, του Φαγιέζ Αλ-Σάρατζ, του κράτους της Λιβύης (βλ. Χάρτη 3, σημείο ΑΒ). Το εν λόγω μνημόνιο κρίθηκε ομοφώνως από τη λιβυκή Βουλή, της οποίας ηγέτης είναι ο Khalifa Haftar, και το Εφετείο Al Bayda της Λιβύης άκυρο (Sharaf, 2020), ενώ η Τουρκία το Δεκέμβριο του ίδιου έτους κύρωσε μονομερώς τη συμφωνία και έσπευσε να την πρωτοκολλήσει στην Γραμματεία του Ο.Η.Ε. σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 102 του Καταστατικού Χάρτη των Η.Ε.. Επί της ουσίας, το εν λόγω μνημόνιο δεν υφίσταται και καθίσταται νομικά ανυπόστατο.

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<sup>8</sup> «10. Expresses its full support for UNFICYP, and decides to extend its mandate for a further period ending on 31 July 2022»

#### Χάρτης 4 (Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης μεταξύ της Κυβέρνησης της Δημοκρατίας της Τουρκίας και της Κυβέρνησης Εθνικής Συμφωνίας της Λιβύης για την οριοθέτηση της θαλάσσιας δικαιοδοσίας στη Μεσόγειο



Πηγή: εγ. υπ' αριθμ. 1815/2019 - ANNEX-1

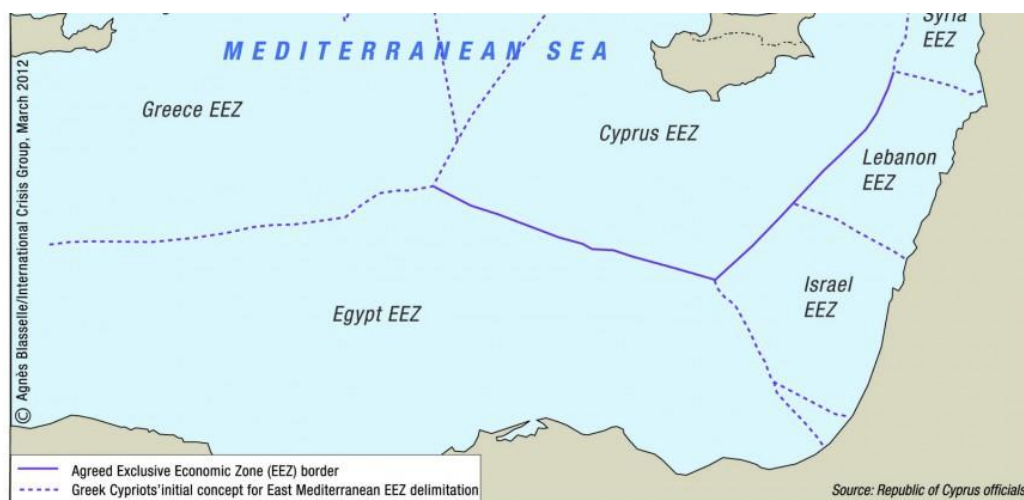
Συνακόλουθα, ως απάντηση στην υπογραφή του τουρκολιβυκού μνημονίου, η Ελλάδα υπογράφει, την 6<sup>η</sup> Αυγούστου 2020, διμερή συμφωνία μερικής οριοθέτησης Α.Ο.Ζ. με την Αίγυπτο (βλ. Χάρτη 4). Η επονομαζόμενη Συμφωνία του Καΐρου έχει μείζονα σημασία καθώς είναι η πρώτη συμφωνία διμερούς οριοθέτησης Α.Ο.Ζ. της Ελλάδος. Επιπροσθέτως, διαμέσου της εν λόγω συμφωνίας εισάγεται το καθεστώς μερικής οριοθέτησης Α.Ο.Ζ. αφήνοντας μεγάλη πιθανότητα για την πλήρη αποπεράτωσή της στο διηνεκές. Πρόκειται για μερική οριοθέτηση, διότι δεν περιλαμβάνει το Καστελόριζο και ένα τμήμα νοτιοανατολικά της Ρόδου (Yiallourides, 2020). Τέλος, αξίζει να σημειωθεί πως έλαβε χώρα η ανταλλαγή των οργάνων της επικύρωσης της συμφωνίας διμερούς οριοθέτησης της Αποκλειστικής Οικονομικής Ζώνης (Α.Ο.Ζ.) μεταξύ Ελλάδος και Ιταλίας, την 8<sup>η</sup> Νοεμβρίου 2021 (Euronews, 2021).

**Χάρτης 5: Η μερική οριοθέτηση Α.Ο.Ζ. Ελλάδος-Αιγύπτου**

Πηγή: Kouparanis, 2020

Προκειμένου να καταστεί εφικτή η διμερής οριοθέτηση Α.Ο.Ζ. Ελλάδος-Κύπρου (βλ. Χάρτη 5) χρειάζεται να γίνουν ορισμένα βήματα. Αρχικά, η ελληνική εξωτερική πολιτική θα πρέπει να στραφεί στην ολοκλήρωση της οριοθέτησης της ελληνοαιγυπτιακής Α.Ο.Ζ., ώστε να κλειδώσει υπερ των ελληνικών συμφερόντων η περιοχή, την οποία επιχειρήσε η Τουρκία να δεσμεύσει με το τουρκολιβυκό μνημόνιο. Έτι περαιτέρω, η Ελλάδα θα πρέπει να εκμεταλλευτεί τα πλεονεκτήματα, τα οποία υπάρχουν στην διάθεσή της για να επιτύχει το στόχο της. Αφενός, η ελληνική αμυντική παρουσία αυξάνεται ήδη με την άφιξη των πρώτων 6 Rafale F3-R, την 19 Ιανουαρίου 2022. Στρεφόμενη προς το 2027-2029, η ηγεσία της ελληνικής εξωτερικής πολιτικής και άμυνας θα έχει ήδη στην κυριότητά της τα σύγχρονα όπλα, ήτοι τα 24 Rafale και τις 4 φρεγάτες FDI Belharra, τα οποία προβλέπονται στις διμερείς ελληνογαλλικές συμφωνίες για την πολεμική αεροπορία και το πολεμικό ναυτικό. Με ισχυρή στρατιωτική παρουσία στο Αιγαίο και την Ανατολική Μεσόγειο, η Ελλάδα θα έχει ηγετικό ρόλο στο διάλογο για την εκπλήρωση του σχεδίου για την διμερή οριοθέτηση της ελληνοκυπριακής Α.Ο.Ζ. Αφετέρου, η Τουρκία έχει υποστεί πολλαπλά πλήγματα στην εξωτερική της πολιτική, εξαιτίας της διπλωματικής απομόνωσής της από ορισμένα κράτη, τα οποία διατηρούν ισχυρές διπλωματικές σχέσεις με την Ελλάδα (βλ. Λιβύη, Αίγυπτο, Ισραήλ).

### Χάρτης 6: Τα σύνορα της Α.Ο.Ζ. Ελλάδος-Κύπρου



Πηγή: Antonopoulos, 2020

Αφουγκραζόμενοι τις επικείμενες προεδρικές εκλογές στην Τουρκία και την Κύπρο, το έτος 2023, γίνεται εύληπτο το γεγονός ότι η συγκεκριμένη χρονική συγκυρία θα καθορίσει το μέλλον του εν λόγω εγχειρήματος, αναφορικά με την ηγεσία του τουρκικού Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών και του Υπουργείου Αμύνης. Κατά γενική ομολογία, ο νεο-οθωμανισμός, ο οποίος διέπει την τουρκική εξωτερική πολιτική δημιουργεί εντάσεις στην περιοχή, η οποία μπορεί και πρέπει να προστατευθεί μέσω της διμερούς οριοθέτησης της Α.Ο.Ζ. της Ελλάδας με την Κύπρο, άποψη η οποία έχει ήδη υποστηριχθεί από τον τέως Πρόεδρο της Ελληνικής Δημοκρατίας, Προκόπιο Παυλόπουλο (Παυλόπουλος, 2020). Ακόμη ως πιθανή λύση για την σταθερότητα και την ασφάλεια στην περιοχή θα μπορούσε να θεωρηθεί η δημιουργία ενός πλαισίου, όπου η Ελλάδα, η Κύπρος και η Αίγυπτος θα επιδιώξουν μία συμφωνία στην οποία θα κληθεί να συμμετάσχει η Λιβύη και έπειτα η Τουρκία, σύμφωνα με τους κανόνες του διεθνούς δικαίου (Zareba, 2020).

Υπό την ιδιότητά τους ως κράτη-μέλη της Ε.Ε., η Ελλάδα και η Κύπρος μπορούν να εκμεταλλευτούν τον διάλογο καθώς και την εν γένει στάση της Ε.Ε. απέναντι στην Τουρκία, η οποία χαρακτηρίζεται από αρκετά σημεία με αρνητικό πρόσημο, ώστε να επιδιώξουν την επανεκκίνηση των διαπραγματεύσεων για την οριοθέτηση της Α.Ο.Ζ. τους. Προς επίρρωση τούτου, η Ε.Ε. υπογράμμισε εκ νέου την προβληματική γειτνίαση των κρατών-μελών της με την Τουρκία, ιδίως της Ελλάδας και της Κύπρου, επιστώντας στην Τουρκία να διατηρεί καλές σχέσεις με τα γειτονικά κράτη, όπως η Ελλάδα και η Κύπρος, και να μην παραβιάζει του κανόνες του Διεθνούς Δικαίου σχετικά με τα κυριαρχικά δικαιώματα στον αέρα και τη θάλασσα (European Commission, 2021). Εξάλλου, η εν λόγω πολιτική επιλογή δεν αφορά μόνο τα δύο ενδιαφερόμενα μέρη, αλλά στο σύνολο της την Ε.Ε., η οποία θα αποκτήσει ισχύ και μεγαλύτερη παρουσία στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο. Με την διμερή

οριοθέτηση της Α.Ο.Ζ. Ελλάδος-Κύπρου, η Ε.Ε. θα αποκτήσει τη δυνατότητα και το πλεονέκτημα να ασκεί πιο αποφασιστικά την κοινή εξωτερική πολιτική και πολιτική ασφάλειας (ΚΕΠΠΑ) και να υπερασπίζεται τα κυριαρχικά δικαιώματά της στην θαλάσσια περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου, η οποία θα της προσδώσει σαφέστατα αξιοσημείωτο πλεονέκτημα και αποχρώντα ρόλο στις εξελίξεις. Εν κατακλείδι, βαδίζοντας στον ανωτέρω άξονα με χρονικά σημεία αναφοράς τα έτη 2023 και 2027-2029, η Ελλάδα και η Κύπρος θα έχουν ισχυρή διαπραγματευτική θέση στην θαλάσσια περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου δίδοντας της την ευκαιρία να ενισχύσει την γεωπολιτική και διπλωματική υπεροχή, όπως της αρμόζει.

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# Greece and Nuclear Weapons: An Assessment<sup>1</sup>

Panagiotis Kollaros <sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

This paper tries to answer the question on whether the acquisition of nuclear capabilities will serve the interest of the Greek state. The issue is approached by the exploration of Greek strategic constraints in correlation with the properties of nuclear weapons and the indexing and examination of the most important incentives and disincentives that influence a state's decision to develop nuclear capabilities. Then, the Greek case is analyzed through the theoretical framework that was presented by Nuno P. Monteiro & Alexandre Debs in 2014, in order to examine if the process of developing weapons is a worthwhile endeavor based on its effects on Greek security. It is concluded that the development of nuclear weapons would serve the Greek interests, but there are practical reasons that render it nearly impossible for the foreseeable future.

**Keywords:** Greek Security; Greek Strategy; Nuclear Weapons; Turkish Nuclear program

## Introduction

Turkish aggression since 1973 constitutes a constantly present challenge for Greek strategic thinkers. However, Turkey's great nuclear program coupled with the development of limited accuracy medium range missiles, only suitable for delivering WMD, create the fear of nuclear blackmail to Greece and thus advance the threat to an even higher level. This development of a Turkey with nuclear capabilities generates a great opportunity to discuss a possible Greek development of nuclear weapons as a reaction to Turkey or even as a remedy for the recurring Greek strategic problems.

The following paper tries to answer the question on whether the acquisition of nuclear capabilities will serve the interest of the Greek state.<sup>3</sup> In the first section some general observations on Greek strategic constraints are formulated; then, in the second section, the subject is approached based on the literature of international relations, by the examination of the most important incentives and disincentives that influence a state's decision to develop nuclear capabilities. In the final section the Greek case is researched through the method that was presented by Monteiro & Debs (2014).

## 1. General observations on Greek strategy and its constraints in correlation with the Greco-Turkish balance of power

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA Style: Kollaros, P. (2021). Greece and Nuclear Weapons: An Assessment. *HAPSc Policy Brief Series*, 2(2), 172-185. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29504

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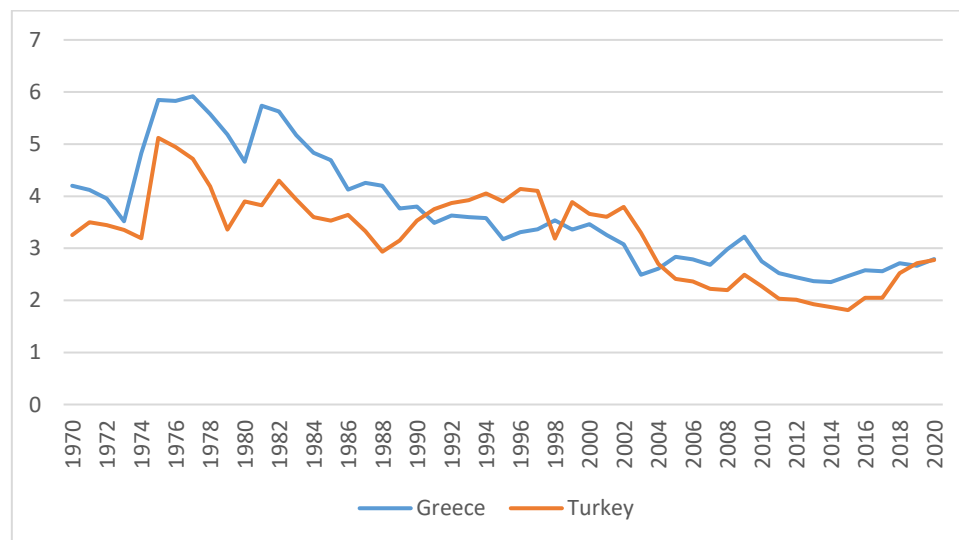
<sup>3</sup> The only plausible way of acquiring nuclear weapons is the development of nuclear warheads based on fusion (Tsipis 1986).

With Turkish revisionism constantly unravelling for decades, the Turkish aims to advance in a global power status through a strategy which contains the use of coercive diplomacy to challenge the status quo in land, air and sea, the Greek state is facing two options of grand strategy: appeasement and balancing. The option of appeasement is rejected, since Turkey does not have limited aims and will interpret any concessions as weakness. When these concessions finally stop, war will follow. As a result, balancing is a one-way street (Platias, 1995). The basic component of this strategy is, as Platias (1995: 49) highlights, the “*adoption of credible deterrence, that makes the cost of possible extension of Turkey against Greece higher than the expected benefit*”. The Turkish aspirations will not be bent overnight and success lies on the credible demonstration that Greece is capable of surviving a protracted exhaustive competition until Turkey realizes that the cost of its strategy surpasses the benefit and then cooperation will follow.

The balance of power between the two states is worrying for Greek strategic thinkers since they face important constraints. Some of these constraints concern the population, the geography and the economic resources.

### *Economic resources*

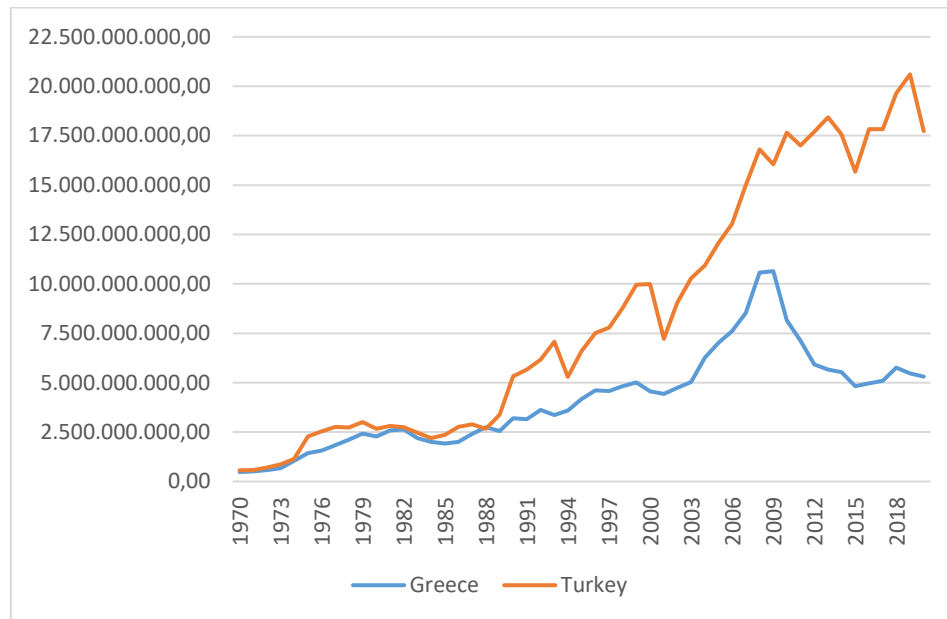
**Figure 1: Military Expenditure of Greece and Turkey as a percentage of GDP, 1970 - 2020**



Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2021)

The Turkish economy is one of the biggest 20 of the globe with 1.28 trillion dollars GDP while Greece has 231.21 billion dollars GDP (World Bank, 2021; OECD, 2021). As a by-product of the Greek economic crisis the balance of power has worsened against Greece, thus reducing its deterrence capability since it refrained from armaments for almost a decade. The growing power gap between the two states is evident in the figures 1 and 2.

**Figure 2: Military Expenditure of Greece and Turkey in constant (2019) million US \$, 1970-2020**



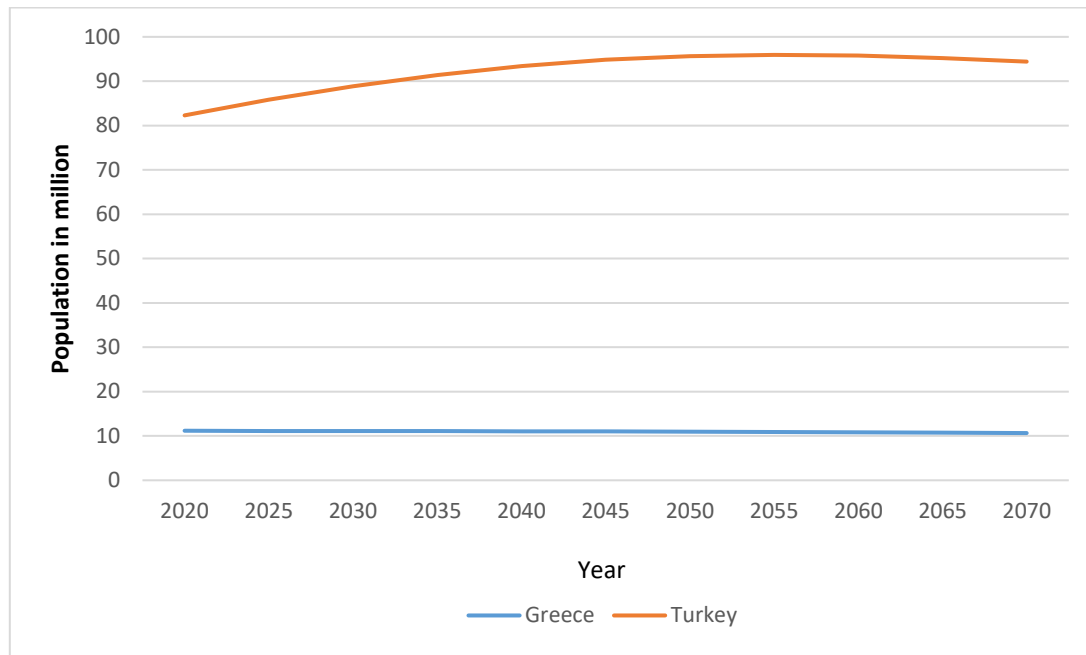
Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2021)

### *Population*

In addition, in the distribution of power one should take into consideration the demographic data where Turkey prevails over Greece with a 1:8 ratio which is projected to deteriorate even more, considering the ageing Greek population, the low birth rate in Greece in contrast to the younger Turkish population and its rising birth rate.

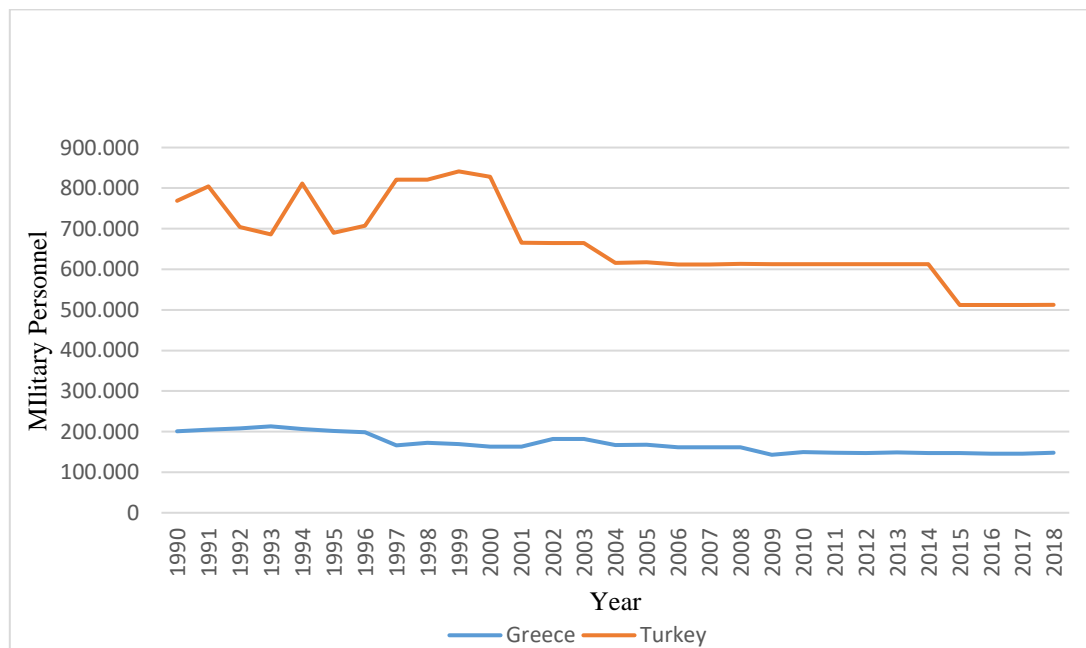
The above picture is reflected clearly in the armed forces. The almost 1:5 ratio in armed forces personnel (excluding the Turkish paramilitary forces) makes Greece vulnerable to surprise attacks and extended strategies of attrition (Platias, 1991).

**Figure 3: Future population projections of Greece and Turkey, 2020-2070 (Projections are based on the SSP2 (medium) scenario)**



Source: Lutz et al. (2018)

**Figure 4: Military Personnel of Greece and Turkey in total, 1990-2018**



Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies (in World Bank)

## Geography

The Hellenic space (Greece and Cyprus) is a hard one to defend and creates a problem in all theaters of war with Turkey (Platias, 1991: 96). The Aegean islands are located very close to Turkey. As

Platias (1991:96) clearly states “*in short, the geography of the Greek-Turkish land and sea borders does not give Greece the advantage of interior lines, that does not provide it with the capacity to rapidly concentrate forces in one front and then to shift them to another.*” As a result, dissuasion only by defense is clearly a strategy incompatible to the Greek objective conditions. The absence of strategic depth leaves dissuasion by deterrence as the dominant strategy.

Let us imagine what would happen if tomorrow Greece had reached nuclear capabilities. First, the demographic and the geographical parameters would have been solved since the success of deterrence strategy is based neither on conventional capabilities nor the territorial extent with defense in depth becoming irrelevant (Waltz, 2002). Now as far as the economic resources are concerned, from the point that the enemy state cannot successfully launch a relative disarming attack, economic strength and the respective military power that it provides become irrelevant. In the nuclear framework, strategic and conventional arm races become meaningless. Strategic arm races lose their point because after a minimum destructive ability is obtained extra warheads make no difference. Conventional arm races also, become pointless because a conventional victory is irrelevant when nuclear forces are in play (Waltz 2002).

The Greek state would have solved its greatest security problem, since it would have achieved to cancel the Turkish strategy whether this is war against Greece or as Ifestos (1992: 122) puts it “*the fulfillment of interim aims, the total cumulative result of which will be equivalent to Greece losing the war.*” In the first case, war is out of the picture since any benefit obtained from a Turkish attack would not be enough to outweigh the cost of the nuclear destruction. In the second case one might argue that the low-level threats cannot be countered with nuclear weapons and a conventional and more flexible response is needed and as result high conventional expenditure should be maintained. Such a policy is harmful because it shifts the reliance from deterrence to conventional forces making war more possible. On the contrary, the more credible a picture of annihilation is, the more the attacker gets deterred from executing its plans. This includes also the low-level threats because the opposing side will be convinced that after such action, escalation will follow, which of course leads us to the first case mechanism (Ifestos, 1992).

As Waltz (1981: 4-5) puts it “*dissuasion by deterrence operates by frightening a state out of attacking, not because of the difficulty of launching an attack and carrying it home, but because the expected reaction of the attacked will result in one's own severe punishment*”. In this way the whole Turkish strategy would be canceled and all differences would be solved on the basis of international law and not by bilateral political negotiations with Ankara finding itself in a beneficial power position. In this event the Greek interest would have been served. However, returning to reality, one



can observe that Greece does not have the capability to proceed in the most favorable for its interests, since Turkey knows that time is on its side, is convinced that it will not act (Ifestos, 1992) and feels comfortable with its superiority in the conventional setting. In other words, the cost that Greek threats bear is not dissuasive enough. The process of developing nuclear weapons is a difficult one and in the next two sections the existence or absence of the incentives and disincentives that influence a decision of nuclearization will be examined.

## **2. Incentives and Disincentives for Nuclearization**

### **2.1 Encouraging Factors – Incentives**

The literature of International Relations contains a series of incentives that positively affect the decision of a state to proceed in the development of nuclear weapons.<sup>4</sup> The most significant are the following:

#### **1. Nuclear Threat from rival country**

Theoretically, Greece - like every other member of NATO - finds itself facing the possibility of involvement in a nuclear war between the alliance and Russia. The above does not constitute an excuse for the creation of independent nuclear deterrence since Greece finds itself under the American “nuclear umbrella”.

#### **2. Developing nuclear threat**

There is a consensus that Turkey holds a medium nuclear predisposition and that it creates an option for the future in case of a change in the security environment (Dokos, 2001; Platias, 1986; Kibaroglu, 2014). Although Kibaroglu (2014) claims that unless Iran proliferates nuclearization could come in the next generation, the Turkish nuclear program worries the United States, with clauses in the agreements signed by Turkey enabling Uranium enrichment and Plutonium production through reprocessing coupled with the development of medium range missiles of low accuracy only suitable for WMD (Oikonomou, 2017). Such a development would make Greece hostage to Turkish nuclear blackmail.

#### **3. Enduring rivalry and militarized dispute.**

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<sup>4</sup> See for example Chan (1980); Betts (1977); Bloomfeld (1977); Betts (1975); Dowty (1976); Beaton & Maddox (1982); Potter (1982); Rosecrance (1964); Scheinman (1973); Quester (1973); Dunn & Kahn (1976); Waltz (1981); Dokos (2001); Platias (1986); Mearsheimer (1990); Frankel (1993); Frankel & Davis (1993); Thayer (1995); Paul (2000); Hecker (2010); Singh & Way (2004); Bleek (2010).

The Greco-Turkish rivalry is a historic one with a highly militarized dimension. We can observe this in the recurrent crises about sovereignty and sovereign rights which brought the two states into the brink of war (e.g., Sismik incident, Imia Crisis)

#### 4. Overwhelming conventional superiority of rival country

Since 1985, Turkey has maintained a conventional superiority against Greece (Platias, 1986). As mentioned in the first section of this paper there is a dynamic that broadens this chasm in the long term.

#### 5. Important regional power status aspirations

It is estimated that there is no such aspiration from the Greek side. The aims of Greece are only limited to protection from Turkish revisionism and the protection of the security of the Hellenic population.

#### 6. Pursuit of military superiority and 7. Blackmail of (non-nuclear) rival country

The military superiority deriving from nuclear weapons would armor Greece and allow for the exercise of all rights deriving from international law leaving only the dispute regarding the delimitation of EEZ and continental shelf to be pending. Probably a blackmail for military solution of the Cyprus issue could be feasible but we do not think that Greece would opt for it.

#### 8. Geographical proximity with a region characterized by nuclear proliferation tendencies

Greece is neighboring with the Middle East where nuclear proliferation is present (Israel, Pakistan, Iran intention). It constitutes an incentive because alliances are not stable in the international system and the proliferation may affect the structure of the regional strategic environment (Platias, 1986).

#### 9. Improvement of bargaining position in a defensive alliance

The Greek state does not aspire to affect the grand strategy of NATO since it only wishes to protect the security of the Greek nation.

#### 10. Pursuit of independence

A state that relies upon its own power (internal balancing) rather than that of its allies (external balancing) (Waltz, 1981) becomes politically and militarily more independent. The limitation of dependence is a constant aim for Greek foreign policy (Platias, 1991). The self-help principle is desired since it provides security from a possible shift to alliance architecture or to the interest of the allies during which Greece might be left alone and helpless and thus vulnerable. Being self-reliant Greece becomes more resilient against allied pressure that concerns the handling of issues related to national security and sovereignty.

## 11. Pursuit of international recognition

Greece already possesses enough due to its contribution to global civilization. Nuclearization would not offer anything more.

## 12. and 13. Morale boosting and modernization demonstration

Nuclearization could boost Greeks' morale but this does not constitute a serious reason for entanglement in such a demanding endeavor.

## 14. Reduction of (conventional) defense expenditures

Given the condition of the Greek economy a reduction in the defense budget would be desirable. However, until nuclear weapons become operationally ready not only the conventional expenditure should remain in the current levels, but they must rise because when the Greek nuclear aspiration would be revealed the threat of possible sudden preventive strike must be deterred (Platias, 1986). In essence it is about an investment that dictates a large short-term expenditure over a future drastic reduction. Regardless of the economic feasibility there is a great desirability.

**Table 1: Greek nuclearization incentives**

No.	INCENTIVE	IMPORTANCE	EXISTENCE	NON EXISTENCE
1	NUCLEAR DANGER	H		*
2	DEVELOPING NUCLEAR DANGER	H	*	
3	ENDURING RIVALRY AND MILITARIZED DISPUTE	H	*	
4	CONVENTIONAL SUPERIORITY OF RIVAL	H	*	
5	REGIONAL POWER ASPIRATIONS	H		*
6	PURSUIT OF MILITARY SUPERIORITY	M	*	
7	BLACKMAIL OF NON-NUCLEAR RIVAL	M		*
8	GEOGRAPHICAL PROXIMITY WITH NUCLEAR STATES	M	*	
9	IMPROVEMENT OF BARGAINING POSITION	M		*
10	PURSUIT OF INDEPENDENCE	M	*	
11	INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION	L		*
12	DEMONSTRATION OF MODERNIZATION	L		*
13	MORAL BOOSTING	L		*
14	CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE EXPENDITURE REDUCTION	L	*	

H = The literature of international relations attributes *high* importance to this nuclearization incentive

M = The literature of international relations attributes *medium* importance to this nuclearization incentive

L = The literature of international relations attributes *low* importance to this nuclearization incentive

In table 1 it is observed that the Greek state has the second, third and fourth - in order of importance - nuclearization incentives in addition to three of medium importance and one of low. Based on the above it can be said that Greece has a high nuclearization predisposition.

## 2.2 Discouraging Factors – Disincentives

There are, of course, important disincentives that have to also be considered. Theoretical and empirical studies have referred to the following deterring factors:<sup>5</sup>

### 1. Alliance with a nuclear power

The Greek state is allied to the USA and France. This alliance operates as a deterrent for two reasons. Given the intention of the nuclear club members to prevent horizontal proliferation, the obstacle that Greece (as well as Turkey) should overcome is important. There are two possibilities: increase of the political, military and economic cost of nuclearization (Platias, 1986) and withdrawal of the nuclear and any conventional coverage from Greece (Platias, 1986; Monteiro & Debs, 2014).

### 2. Possible nuclearization of the opponent

It is almost certain that if Greece manages to nuclearize first, Turkey will follow. This does not constitute a problem since the present situation finds Turkey in a position of power with a prospect of that deviation broadening in the long term. With the nuclearization of the two states, war will bring about mutually unacceptable costs and the need for a *modus operandi* will arise with international law becoming the primary tool since balance of power will be present.

### 3. International legal obligations

Greece is a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. On the one hand, each member state can legally withdraw from the treaty, under the "supreme national interest" clause, if it gives three months' notice (Sagan, 1996). On the other hand, this does not stop other nuclear states from delivering an embargo on goods, arms and on nuclear fuel and technology. The arms embargo will deteriorate the Greek conventional capabilities. This embargo could also be paralyzingly costly for the nuclear program unless Greece possesses uranium under its soil (Tsipis, 1986). The economic cost of sanctions shall also be taken into consideration since Greece is fairly integrated into the global economy (Singh & Way, 2004; Bleek 2010) with imports reaching 41.74% and exports 40.08% of GDP (World Integrated Trade Solution, 2019). The largest amount of this trade takes place in the European Single Market. The EU states are committed to the NPT (Council of the EU 13243/21). Although the EU

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<sup>5</sup> As above.

shares no sovereignty with the member states regarding Nuclear Weapons Greece will be infringing Article 3 of TEU if the Security Council deems its nuclear program threatening to international peace. As a result, Greece should at least face financial fines under the processes described in Articles 258 and 260 of TFEU regarding the infringement of the treaty. Nevertheless, due the importance of the issue, and the sanctions imposed against North Korea and Iran from the EU, the member states will probably move to further action. However, Greece can temporarily avoid being affected by simply developing ‘a latent nuclear capability’ that brings the state closer to nuclear weapons without having to bear the cost of full nuclearization (Platias, 1986). In case of change in the security environment (Turkey’s nuclearization), Greece might be more willing to bear that cost. It must be also noted that sanctions rarely have a deterring importance and usually do not restore the status quo ante (Platias, 1986; Doxey, 1971; Galtung, 1967; Wallensteen, 1968; Adler-Karlsson, 1968).

#### 4. Possibility of sudden preemptive strike

The possibility of such an attack on Greek nuclear facilities from Turkey is of course very high, since Greek nuclearization eliminates Turkey’s conventional superiority and cancels its revisionist strategy. As a result, the decision must be taken considering the capabilities of the country to deter or even withstand such an attack. Due to the growing imbalance of power between the two states this factor has crucial influence.

#### 5. Reputation of peaceful country

Greece seeks such a reputation and the possession of nuclear weapons is incompatible with this reputation. (Platias, 1986).

#### 6. Internal opposition

In Greece opposition by some parties and actors shall be expected. If those come from pressure groups with strong reach on the government they might lead to a negative decision (Platias, 1986). However public discussion about nuclear weapons and not energy could cause dangerous international reactions. (Tsipis, 1986). It must be considered that in Greece albeit the political divisions, parties tend to formulate a consensus over issues regarding national security.

#### 7. Economic and technological incapability

Tsipis (1986) claims that if Greece decided to create a nuclear arsenal would be in a position to do so. The economic cost would indeed be high with the direct cost for human resources, infrastructure and development of weapons nearing 1 billion dollars and the opportunity cost for the Greek conventional capabilities will be much higher. Greece is a country in large debt and under fiscal

scrutiny. The ideal scenario would be to spend enough on conventional forces to deter a Turkish preventive war while devoting the required resources to the nuclear program. However, resources are limited and conventional deterrence capability is a prerequisite. The opportunity cost corresponds to the deprivation of resources from the defense industry which is needed to limit the dependence on foreign suppliers (Platias, 1992) and thus preserving the conventional deterrence capability by providing resilience to an arms embargo. The defense industry will also enhance the conventional deterrence capability by mobilising all the available war material, by producing armaments based on the Greek operational needs and by saving generous amounts that would otherwise go to imports of expired spare parts (Platias, 1992).

**Table 2: Deterring factors of a possible Greek nuclearization**

NUMBER	DETECTING FACTOR	IMPORTANCE	EXISTENCE	NON-EXISTENCE
1	ALLIANCE WITH NUCLEAR POWER	H	*	
2	POSSIBLE NUCLEARIZATION OF OPPONENT	H		*
3	INTERNATIONAL LEGAL OBLIGATIONS	M	*	
4	POSSIBILITY OF PREEMPTIVE STRIKE	M	*	
5	PEACEFUL COUNTRY REPUTATION	L	*	
6	INTERNAL OPPOSITION	L	*	
7	ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL INCAPABILITY	L		*

H = The literature of international relations attributes *high* importance to this factor's deterring capability

M = The literature of international relations attributes *medium* importance to this factor's deterring capability

L = The literature of international relations attributes *low* importance to this factor's deterring capability

As shown by table 2 and the above analysis, a factor of high and two factors of medium importance exist. The problem is that the sanctions of the allies, apart from the restriction in the access of goods, will most importantly destroy the network of external balancing that Greece has built. They will stop the supply of nuclear fuel (Tsipis 1986) and the access to armaments of which Greece is almost totally dependent since it has a weak defense industry. As a result, the Greek state would be vulnerable to a preemptive strike or even war which Turkey does not hesitate to declare that will wage for the issue of the territorial waters which is of a relatively less importance. Albeit the great nuclear predisposition that Greece presents, the current balance of incentives and disincentives shows that the development of nuclear weapons would not benefit Greece. For the endeavor to be fruitful the cost of factor 1,3 and 4 should be mitigated.

### 3. Research of the Greek nuclear tendency through the theoretical framework of Monteiro and Debs

**Table 3: The variables of the theoretical framework of Monteiro & Debs (2014)**

NUMBERS	INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	INTERVENING VARIABLES	DEPENDENT VARIABLE
1	<b>Level of security threat:</b> is the likelihood of future conflict between a country and its adversaries, as evaluated by a country’s decision makers.	<b>Security benefit of proliferation:</b> refers to the magnitude of the shift in the distribution of capabilities that nuclear acquisition would produce vis-à-vis the state’s adversaries.	<b>Nuclear status</b>
2	<b>Proliferator’s relative power</b> reflects the balance of military power vis-à-vis its adversaries.	<b>Cost of preventive war</b> corresponds to the value of the total resources destroyed by both sides in a preventive war.	
3	<b>Cost of a nuclear program</b> corresponds to the value of the material resources necessary to develop nuclear weapons		
4	<b>Level of an ally’s commitment to the state’s defense:</b> first measures whether a powerful state is allied to the potential proliferator (either formally or informally) and, if such an alliance exists, tries. to capture the reliability of its commitment to the defense of the proliferator.		

Starting with the independent variables (1) the level of security threat is extremely high taking into consideration that (2) Greece has relatively less power than Turkey. (3) The economic cost, as presented in the previous section, is very heavy but not unaffordable in comparison with the expected benefit for Greece's security through the acquisition of nuclear weapons. (4) As mentioned above and also claimed by the writers of the theory indicating that when the protected ally, Greece in particular, is less powerful than its adversaries then it will suffer the threat of the withdrawal of any support for its nuclearization to be prevented (Monteiro & Debs, 2014). Moving to the intervening variables, for nuclearization to be achieved the security benefits of proliferation must exceed the cost of preventive war. At the moment this does not happen as it was foretold. The larger the imbalance of power the larger the threat to the security and consequently the benefit of nuclearization. However, a greater imbalance of power reduces the cost of preventive war for the adversary. As Monteiro & Debs (2014: 26) state "*Nuclear weapons are the weapons of the weak but the weak cannot get them*". Through this theoretical framework the results of our first analysis are confirmed. Greece cannot develop nuclear weapons unless it first makes the cost of preventive war unbearable and thus dissuasive for Turkey.



## Conclusions

Based on the above analysis it can be concluded that the acquisition of nuclear weapons would serve the Greek interests, since it would provide the undisputed and utmost deterrence capability thus resolving the security problems that Turkish revisionism with its coercive strategy creates. Despite this fact, Greek nuclearization is hindered by the opposition of its allies and the cost of a Turkish preventive war. To overcome this obstacle the cost of preventive war must be made unacceptable for Turkey using only conventional means and after their development, nuclear weapons will seal the Greek deterrence capability. This poses a great challenge since an enormous investment is needed in advance both for conventional armaments and the nuclear program before one can enjoy the fruits of nuclearization. The Greek state operates in a context of limited resources and a nuclear program corresponds to a great opportunity cost for the Greek defense industry. The path towards nuclearization runs through the Greek defense industry which, when developed, will enhance the conventional deterrence by making it independent of allied support, providing systems based on Greek operational needs and save resources that allow the secure nuclearization. In conclusion, Turkey seems to be developing a latent nuclear capability. Greece should follow suit in order to avoid becoming hostage to the Turkish nuclear threat, in case of a change in the environment regarding the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. The creation of latent nuclear capability would make the benefits more tangible without the consequences of full nuclearization (Platias, 1986).

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# Financial Sanctions Effectiveness as a Foreign Policy Tool on Crises Management<sup>1</sup>

Katerina Psomopoulou<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Post-Cold War financial sanctions utilization reached its peak as policymakers employed used them in order to face address major international crises. Their prominence among foreign policy instruments sparked the interest of many scholars and enriched the existing literature. However, their attractiveness raises several interesting research questions, such as "Do targeted sanctions suffice to achieve the defined objectives?", "Which variables affect their effectiveness?", "What shortcomings can be overcome to make them more productive?" To probe these queries, in this paper different aspects of both comprehensive and financial/smart/ targeted sanctions are examined. It is concluded that political will and better understanding of their effects is needed to improve sanctions design and overcome legal and administrative obstacles, since the current flaws are not incurable.

**Keywords:** Smart sanctions; coercive diplomacy; sanctions effectiveness; international institutions; human rights

## Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War era, sanctions have emerged as one of the most important and widely used tools of economic statecraft in international politics (Neuenkirch & Neumeier, 2015). As Weiss (1999) claims, the explosion of post – Cold War sanctions cases is affiliated with three main reasons. First, the international community is more willing to interfere in states' domestic issues. In terms of internal affairs, countries are no longer beyond reproach as the new international challenges have undermined the nonintervention principle and reformed the concept of sovereignty. States are accountable for their actions and if they deviate from the internationally acceptable rules, they will face the consequences. Second, security nowadays does not necessarily concern military threats, but ranges from socio – economic to environmental and humanitarian affairs, as it is formally depicted in Boutros – Ghali's 1992 'An Agenda for Peace'. Last but not least, the deployment of military power is costly and not appealing, especially if states have no perceived vital interest in the "target – state". Therefore, sanctions seem to be an inexpensive and more humane alternative (Weiss, 1999).

Sanctions fall within the scope of coercive economic measures that are employed by an international actor (state, group of states, international organization) against another international actor (state, group of states, terrorist group etc). They can be used either as a preventative action or as an answer

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Psomopoulou, K. (2021). Financial Sanctions Effectiveness as a Foreign Policy Tool on Crises Management. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 186-195. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29505

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to a breach of international law and generally aim at a change of the target state's undesirable foreign policy (Heine – Ellison, 2001). The main theory behind sanctions is that economic pain induces political gain, meaning that the inflicted economic distress will cause political reforms. In the words of former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, sanctions “represent more than just verbal condemnation and less than the use of armed force” (Neuenkirch & Neumeier, 2015: 111). Indeed, there is evidence that policymakers have employed sanctions as a complement, substitute or even precursor to the use of military force, since sometimes diplomatic means are not adequate to reach the desired outcome (Early & Jadoon, 2016).

Generally, the core of sanction's theory is that the restrictive measures use economic means to achieve a political objective and by no means do they have an economic motivation, as the EU's “Guidelines on implementation and evaluation of restrictive measures (sanctions) in the framework of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy” declares (Giumelli, 2010: 88). This view has been shared by Write (1955: 239), who notes “Politics may be an instrument of economics and economics may be an instrument of politics”.

## Objectives

Sanctions' imposition is a process that serves multiple foreign policy objectives. Generally, restrictive measures are, at least, driven by three main purposes. First, sanctions can coerce and alter target's behavior by imposing unbearable costs upon their economy, and subsequently acquiesce to sender's demands in order to have the sanctions lifted. Second, there are constraining sanctions that aim at limiting a target's economic capabilities in order to prevent it from achieving its goals. Finally, the third category is the one of signaling sanctions, which are designed to evoke an ostracizing effect on the target – state and, thus, isolate the target within the international community (Weiss, 1999; Giumelli, 2010; Early & Jadoon, 2016). The stigma upon the targeted political regimes may be used as a signaling mechanism for donors that internal conflicts in the target state have the potential to escalate. Sanctions thus symbolize a serious threat to its political stability and this uncertainty ought to have a detrimental impact on the target state's trade and financial relations as well as on its domestic and foreign direct investment (Neuenkirch & Neumeier, 2015).

The literature related to sanctions objectives is rich. Barber (1979), for instance, identifies three main categories of policy goals: primary objectives related to targeted policies; secondary objectives concerning international status of sanctioning countries; and tertiary objectives pertain to the structure and modus operandi of the international system (Peksen, 2019). Doxey, an expert of sanctions scholars, maintains that since sanctions regimes often have multiple intertwined goals, the categories

of political objectives may overlap. Furthermore, during the sanctions regime as the conditions of the target state change, the objectives will follow suit (Heine – Ellison, 2001).

## **Legal Framework**

The legal framework for the utilization and imposition of sanctions is provided by the United Nations Charter. The United Nations is the leading universal institution which has the right and duty to use “effective and collective measures” in order to face any threats to international peace (Heine – Ellison, 2001). Given its universal membership and prestige, the United Nations can confer a significant amount of legitimacy upon a sanctioning effort. The Security Council has the authority to take action to maintain or restore international peace and security whether that involves military action or military alternatives. Meanwhile, member states are obligated to comply with the Security Council’s resolutions even if that involves complete interruption of economic relations with a target state (Early & Jadoon, 2016).

## **Multilateral vs Unilateral**

Contrary to the Cold War period, when most sanction cases were unilateral due to the need for consensus in the decision making process of the Security Council, in the past few decades all of the major cases have been multilateral (Heine – Ellison, 2001). However, the practice of sanctions is still appealing to singular economic powers (Lopez & Cortright, 1997). The most prominent example is the United States of America. No other country in the world has imposed economic sanctions more often, earning the ridicule of many prominent policymakers. Washington’s “sanctioning madness” nonetheless remains evident hitherto. As the world’s leading superpower and an undisputed financial hegemon, the United States of America has deployed sanctions against several adversary countries and numerous non-state entities such as terrorist groups and drug traffickers since the turn of the 21st century (Peksen, 2019; Weiss, 1999). Although unilateral, the US preeminence in global monetary and financial matters has contributed in leveraging its capacity to utilize financial sanctions as a foreign policy tool. Zarate (2013: xi) argues that “the United States can call upon these techniques to confront its most critical national security threats”. The White House (2015: 23) accords with this prospect in the US National Security Strategy, noting that the “use of targeted sanctions and other coercive measures are meant not only to uphold international norms, but to deter severe threats to stability and order at the regional level”.

The European Union has also embraced financial sanctions as they have been part of its diplomatic toolkit for decades now. Since the entry into force of the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993, the EU has

employed sanctions in plenty of international crises, such as in the Syrian crises, on Iran and North Korea for non-proliferation and Russia during the Ukraine crises. Due to the shortcomings in creating its own functioning military force, sanctions arise as a means to strengthen its role and status as an autonomous international actor. They are utilized to safeguard EU's values and, subsequently, consolidate its coherence (Giumelli & Hoffmann & Książczaková, 2020). For the most part, restrictive measures have been developed in response to human rights violations or to counter attempts at sabotaging democratization processes (Giumelli, 2010).

### **Smart sanctions**

In the 20th century, conventional sanctions were the preferred means of economic coercion. However, by the end of the Cold War and after the publicity surrounding the humanitarian crisis caused by comprehensive sanctions against Iraq in the 1990s, policymakers grew into the employment of smart sanctions (Peksen, 2019). Financial sanctions have arisen as a particularly attractive alternative to conventional comprehensive sanctions, which affect the entire economy of the target state. The main difference is that targeted sanctions put direct pressure on the target regime and its support coalitions to change some undesirable policy by imposing economic (asset freezes, travel restrictions, financial restrictions on international banking activity, sectoral sanctions e.g., arm embargoes and restrictions on dual-use technology) and subsequently political costs on decision makers. Thereby the general population is spared of the economic hardships and the political goals are achieved with less civilian pain (Weiss, 1999; Lektzian & Patterson, 2015).

Traditionally, financial sanctions have been a part of comprehensive or such as general trade sanctions. Nevertheless, the past decades smart sanctions are applied as an added measure after the imposition of a trade embargo, as a tightening of pressure or a 'knock-out' punch (Lopez & Cortright, 1997). The evolution of smart sanctions as a diplomatic tool is driven by the negative policy externalities that come with more comprehensive sanctions. Namely, the devastating humanitarian effects and the increase of corruption through the expansion of black markets and transnational illicit channels to access scarce goods led to the conviction that financial sanctions are more fruitful and involve less collateral damage than traditional trade sanctions (Drezner, 2015). The consequences of trade embargoes for the civilian population are usually insufferable as they decrease the availability of food and clean water and access to medicine and health care services. Hence, the life expectancy is significantly lowered, while the infant mortality rate experiences an upturn. (Neuenkirch & Neumeier, 2015).



Advocates of smart sanctions claim that comprehensive sanctions are nondiscriminatory and so fail to affect the “true target”. Therefore, targeted sanctions minimize the humanitarian costs and have several related advantages. When directed to an authoritative state, they are more moral and fair since they target only the “wrongdoers” and not civilians. In addition, the fundamental principles concerning protection of human rights are not violated. Thus, leaders cannot gain international and domestic support and have limited access to foreign aid related resources. Furthermore, by minimizing destruction in the social and economic sphere, the long term effects on fields such as education and health care are decreased (Heine – Ellison, 2001).

Yet, studies reveal that the theoretical attractiveness of financial sanctions is downsized by practical difficulties (Weiss, 1999). There is no robust evidence that they are more successful than conventional sanctions probably because they do not impose significant costs on the target economy. Smart sanctions not only have a relatively low success rate in accomplishing discrete policy goals, but also might generate major negative effects on civilians, particularly increases in political repression, deterioration of humanitarian conditions, corruption in the government, and poor governance (Drezner, 2015; Peksen, 2019).

## **Obstacles**

Concerning the weak history of smart sanction’s success, there are many obstacles associated with further utilization. For example, it has been claimed that targeted sanctions cost as much to enforce as broad trade embargoes, while in fact they have lower levels of effectiveness (Heine – Ellison, 2001). Furthermore, a key factor for sanctions success is speed and secrecy, meaning that freezing one’s assets has to be prompt and with no warning in advance. Stalling in order to ensure consensus from the international community or bureaucratic hurdles gives the target government the time needed to shelter assets abroad. Achieving international consensus has proven to be quite difficult, especially when it is about human rights violations and not high politics issues such as an overt military aggression, as the case of Iraq’s invasion in Kuwait reveals. The placement of targeted regime’s funds in tax havens also makes it difficult for senders to trace them. Banking centers do not have political interests and are usually indifferent to the state’s foreign policy goals. They are under no legal or moral obligation to the international community so their profit – seeking behavior leads them to operate as havens in the interests of political despots escaping national or international retribution (Lopez & Cortright, 1997).

Impediment to research of sanction’s effectiveness is the absence of detailed time-varying sanctions data. Not only are data sparse, but they are also inaccessible to international organizations or



manipulated for political purposes, so changes in target's behavior are not easily detected. In addition, multiple factors are involved in worsening a population's condition, which complicates disaggregating the consequences resulting from sanctions, war, political repression, military spending, social policies, and poverty (Weiss, 1999; Peksen, 2019).

## **Effectiveness**

In order to evaluate the success of a sanction regime, one has to count, along with the policy result, the international and domestic costs derived from sanctions imposition. For example, sanctions against Iraq did end up in political concession from the targeted government, but with unacceptably high human costs (Weiss, 1999; Heine – Ellison, 2001). Although smart sanctions are the most preferred tool of economic coercion, scholars are quite doubtful about their effectiveness in achieving their stated goals. Morga et al. (2009) demonstrate that only 34 percent of all sanction episodes successfully achieve their set political goals (Shin, Choi & Luo, 2016).

Galtung (1967) formulated the “naïve theory of sanctions”, in which he made clear that ‘rally-round-the-flag’ is a possible civilian reaction. Policymakers sometimes do not bear in mind that targeted states will attempt to counterbalance the effects of sanctions and suppose that under the burden of sanctions, the population will turn against the authoritative government and compel a regime change. However, that is not always the case, since political leaders will try to rally patriotic sentiment to broaden political support and shift the burden of economic hardship onto vulnerable groups and regime opponents (Lopez & Cortright, 1997).

Research concerning sanction's effectiveness has made considerable progress in the course of time, as scholars have focused on different aspects of sanctions use and efficacy. There are multiple factors that play a part in determining the outcome of a sanction's imposition. For example, previous studies support that the severity of economic sanctions has a detrimental contribution to whether target governments change their foreign policy behavior (Neuenkirch & Neumeier, 2015). Other studies find that sanctions are more effective in achieving their policy objectives if they are directed at allies rather than rivals and when the target highly depends on the trade with the sender. It has also been established that goals related to high salient issues such as regime change have not only limited success, but might also become counterproductive by further deteriorating the target's situation. On the contrary, less ambitious policy objectives such as releasing a political prisoner are more attainable (Bapat, Heinrich, Kobayashi & Morgan, 2013; Peksen, 2019).

However, as Giumelli (2010) notes, the findings of these studies are not standards that guarantee effectiveness. Effectiveness can be assessed in relation to the policy objectives and is differentiated

from the concept of impact. The former entails the consequential results of employing restrictive measures against a state. The latter has a wider concept, as it includes not only direct effects of sanctions but also the general potential contribution to the overall strategy objectives that sanctions can have, including possible humanitarian effects. This distinction indicates that the desired impact does not guarantee effectiveness (Heine-Ellison, 2001). That is why policymakers should run a pre-assessment analysis before using sanctions for an accurate projection of what contexts are likely to emerge and decide whether sanctions will strengthen or weaken both themselves and their targets (Giumelli, 2010).

Many scholars claim that multilateral sanctions led by international institutions are more effective than those imposed by a single country or an ad hoc coalition of a few countries (Martin, 1992; Miers and Morgan, 2002; Bapat and Morgan, 2009). International institutions are competent to create mechanisms to supervise the enforcement of sanctions regimes and penalize those who are caught breaching them. In addition, broad international cooperation reduces the target's ability to redirect its economic transactions to other suppliers and markets (Peksen, 2019). Sanctions effectiveness is highly dependent on the sender state's ability to impose economic isolation on its adversary. As previously stated, third-party governments and private actors are interested in profit, so should their interests with sanctioning countries not coincide, it is unlikely they will be affected by sanctions rules. Such was the behavior of many American firms during the American sanctions on Iran, because of their enormous profits from operating in Iran's oil infrastructure. The so – called black knights may exploit the economic disruption in order to strengthen their economic links with the sanctioned country (Peksen, 2019; Shin, Choi & Luo, 2016). Consequently, the target's costs from economic sanctions are counterbalanced and even well-coordinated economic sanctions can fail. Elliot (1998) also emphasizes that globalization of economic exchanges significantly impedes the negative impact of sanctions on target economies. Alternative markets and suppliers of goods and services are easily acquired, for example via tax incentives, and can be utilized to make up for the lost value of trade (McLean & Whang, 2010). Political organizations are also crucial in sanction politics, since the majority of all world trade is currently conducted within regional trade arrangements. Therefore, political leaders are likely to turn to their trade bloc members when they are sanctioned by nonmember countries to minimize economic hardships (Shin, Choi & Luo, 2016).

Other research highlights the impact of targets' regime characteristics on sanctions success (Brooks, 2002; Kaempfer, Lowenberg, and Mertens 2004; Major, 2012). In particular, coercive economic measures are more likely to elicit concessions against democracies than dictatorships. Autocratic leaders evade sanctions by intervening in the economy to divert existing wealth and resources made

scarce by sanctions towards their support base and away from their rivals and average citizens. Democratic governments, however, are more restricted in their ability to endure the costs of the coercion through the selective delivery of goods and resources. They have more incentives to agree to the demands for reform by the senders in order to remain in charge. Studies show that sanctions can also be effective against autocratic regimes, particularly when applied against personalist regimes, due to the lack of established institutions such as a strong party network or a military apparatus-. (Escribà-Folch & Wright 2010; 2015). Thus, leaders' ability to collect taxes and generate other government revenues is undermined, and subsequently makes them heavily dependent on external foreign aid. Single-party and military regimes, on the other hand, are unlikely to yield to sanctions, as such dictatorships possess a high degree of institutionalization and strong coercive capacity to effectively use repressive tools and positive incentives to remain defiant (Peksen, 2019).

## **Recommendations**

Despite the broad utilization of financial sanctions as a foreign policy tool in the past decades, there has yet to be made a breakthrough in their design and implementation. Because of that, many claim that smart sanctions remain an underdeveloped, ineffective and sometimes counterproductive means of economic coercion. There is no silver bullet to increase their effectiveness as each case is different and, thus, the planning of a sanction's regime should be customized to the target's specifications. Sanctions require effective design, political cooperation and flexibility.

Policymakers should direct economic measures at those responsible for the crisis and not as a punishment to the entire population. Taking into consideration the vulnerabilities and interests of targeted governments they can accurately pre-assess the expected impact of sanctions since each kind of restrictive measure has different effects. After the imposition of sanctions there should be monitoring of the target's behavior and, if needed, modification of the sanctions regime accordingly. For instance, it has been suggested that rewarding the rebel government through partial lifting of sanctions when it complies with the sender's demands, the "stick and carrots approach", is an incentive to generate further concessions (Lopez & Cortright, 1997; Heine – Ellison, 2001). Furthermore, should negative humanitarian effects be noted, sanctioning countries can grant exemptions to the measures in order to minimize humanitarian suffering with the provision of food or medicine under specific regulations. Such was the case in Iraq, where the devastating consequences of sanctions on Iraqi society led to the establishment of the oil-for-food program, as a compassionate twist to the initial plan (Weiss, 1999). Besides the issues concerning design, there are legal and administrative obstacles to be surpassed. The procedure for adopting a UN sanctions regime is

particularly time consuming due to the massive bureaucracy and, thus, the element of surprise is compromised. A new model of legislation needs to be developed, that would enable countries to enforce sanctions and cooperate with multinational institutions in their imposition (Lopez & Cortright, 1997).

In general, the limits to sanctions effectiveness concern more flaws in their design and implementation than inherent shortcomings in the instrument itself. When properly designed, sanctions can coerce policy change, because the benefits of compliance outweigh the costs (Lektzian & Patterson, 2015).

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# Wildlife Trafficking: An Emerging Threat to European Security?<sup>1</sup>

Vasileia Kakarouka<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Illegal wildlife trade is a multidimensional phenomenon that is present in every state. Although, the repercussions of this criminal activity are mainly linked with biodiversity and the survival of rare species, many dangers occur regarding national and supranational security. Given the fact that wildlife trafficking currently thrives in European states, this paper intends to explain the ways that wildlife trafficking has affected the EU and examine its connection with security strategies. Therefore, the essay proposes specific measures that need to be adopted at European level to bridge the differences among national policies. In the end, concrete assumptions are provided concerning the efficiency of the European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in relation with the topic.

**Keywords:** Wildlife Trafficking; European Union; Environmental Crime; Security; European Defense Fund; EU Action Plan; CITES

## Introduction

Wildlife trafficking is a serious transnational crime that poses a threat not only to the environment but also to national and supranational security (Biegus & Bueger, 2017). Albeit that it is primarily linked with African states (UNODC, 2019), incidents of this criminal activity have taken place in EU countries as well, with Belgium and the Netherlands being on top of the list (TRAFFIC, 2020). The EU maintains a neutral position without adopting efficient measures. Given the fact that during the current Multiannual Financial Framework (2021-2027), 8 billion euros have been attributed to the European Defense Fund (EDF) (European Commission, 2021), it is time for the Union to revise its security priorities. Bearing in mind this information, this essay aims to respond to the following research question: In which ways wildlife trafficking represents a security threat and how the EU could contribute to the resolution of the problem?

Bearing in mind the importance of this issue, the paper tends to present all the aspects of wildlife trafficking and examine the ineffective European approach towards the problem. The analysis begins with the definition of two crucial terms regarding the issue while a theoretical framework is outlined. In the meantime, certain key figures regarding the issue are cited. In order to understand the importance of the topic area, the repercussions of the issue are thoroughly analyzed, giving great emphasis on the security aspect. Therefore, an important mention of the EU's involvement is

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Kakarouka, V. (2021). Wildlife Trafficking: An Emerging Threat to European Security?. *HAPSc Policy Brief Series*, 2(2), 196-205. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29506

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highlighted, focusing on what has been done so far. The analysis concludes with the provision of specific recommendations to the issue while some final remarks are included.

## Definitions and Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this analysis, it is important to define two terms that are of paramount importance in order to better approach the topic area under discussion:

- **Environmental Crime:** According to EUROPOL (n.d.) an environmental crime «covers a wide range of activities that transgress environmental laws and cause significant harm or risk to the environment, human health or both». These activities refer to the improper collection, transport, recovery and disposal of waste, the killing or trade of protected flora and fauna, the illicit operation of a plant in which a dangerous activity is carried out and the importation or exportation of ozone depleting substances.
- **Wildlife Trafficking:** Wildlife trafficking is defined as a «criminal activity that includes the illegal trade, smuggling, capture or poaching of endangered species or products thereof» (UNODC, 2019). In particular, the exchangeable goods encompass animal derivatives such as corals, reptile skins, timber and fisheries products and live animals as parrots, raptors and primates for the pet trade (Pires & Moreto, 2016).

Bearing in mind that this analysis centralizes its interest on the security repercussions of wildlife trafficking, this essay tries to interpret the EU actions through the theory of Neofunctionalism. More specifically, it focuses on the connection between Neofunctionalism and high politics, regarding security and defense issues, trying to identify the gaps of the European policy making in this area and to propose specific guidelines so as to ameliorate the EU's approach.

As it is well known, Neofunctionalism supports the progressive transfer of state functions at supranational level to achieve the unification of European states (Ifaistos, 2016). This procedure, commonly known as the spill-over effect, prioritizes the enhancement of cooperation, the establishment of international institutions and the ultimate restriction of state sovereignty (Dunn, 2012). According to this theory, integration is firstly carried out in low politics and after in high politics (Ifaistos, 2016). Although the EU has proven its capabilities to unify low politics by reaching bilateral trade agreements with third countries or by the creation of the Customs Union and the Free Trade Association, its efficiency in the discipline of high politics is under discussion.

The reality has proven that wildlife trafficking is a potential threat to national and supranational security. Although it is difficult to conceive how the illegal trade of endangered species and the



conservation of security are linked, this analysis aims to prove their connection and to highlight the necessity of further integration in this security domain. According to the second pillar of the EU that was firstly defined by the “Maastricht Treaty” the promotion of CFSP must be a top priority. By reading this paper it will be clarified if the EU has adopted adequate measures to protect itself from this international threat or if further elaboration in the security field is required.

### **Key figures of illicit wildlife trafficking**

First and foremost, it is important to identify the different parameters that wildlife trafficking consists of. As it is clear from the above definition, wildlife trafficking refers to the sale and exchange of plants and animals (Pires & Moreto, 2016). In order for this business to be as profitable as possible, the traders mistreat and sell at exorbitant prices large quantities of plants, animals and animal derivatives, leaving them at the verge of extinction. According to research made by the European Commission (2015):

- The number of elephants illegally killed has doubled over the past decade and the quantity of ivory seized has tripled.
- The illegal poaching of rhinoceros has escalated in South Africa leading to a serious decline in their population since 2016.
- The total population of tigers has decreased from 100.000 a century ago to less than 3.500 today.
- The average value of rhino horn is approximately 40.000 € per kilo, while the price of 1 kilo of gold is estimated at 31.000 €.
- The value of raw ivory is 620 € per kilo and the value of tiger bones is on average 900 €.
- The global value of illicit trade is estimated at between 10 € and 20 € billion per year.

All these findings prove that wildlife trafficking is a multibillion euros industry driven by an ongoing demand for wildlife products all over the world (European Commission, 2015). The worst feature of this crime is the modus operandi of the traders that is similar to the methods used by drug dealers. The smugglers tend to hide animals or products in concealed compartments in luggage or in their body (Van Uhm, 2016). For example, many smugglers are found in airports with reptiles or birds strapped around their legs or with turtles squeezed in their luggage (Van Uhm, 2016). As a result, these animals are kept for hours captured without access to water or food and with their survival being at stake.

## The impact of Illicit Wildlife Trade

Illegal wildlife trade might lead to severe repercussions from the deterioration of biodiversity to security and public health risks. Although many things could be said about the impact of wildlife trafficking, this research analyzes the security aspect of the problem, as an example to illustrate the inefficiency of the EU to achieve an immediate integration in the domain of high politics. Also, given the fact that the world is currently plagued by the COVID 19 pandemic, the connection between wildlife trade and human illnesses will be presented.

To begin with, illicit wildlife trade represents a clear threat to national and thus, supranational security. According to a recent Interpol report (2016), 80% of governments worldwide stated that this environmental crime is a top security priority. The main reason behind this belief is that wildlife trade functions as a method of funding for criminal groups such as Boko Haram and Al Shabaab (Royce, 2018). In particular, this industry attracts the interest of international crime networks since the risk of detection and the sanctions provided for are different from state to state and insignificant in comparison with the potential revenue (Felbab & Brown, 2018). It is no coincidence that illegal wildlife trade is among top three illicit enterprises along with drug trafficking and firearms smuggling with an estimated annual value between 10 to 20 billion € (Barber-Meyer, 2010).

In reality, this technique mainly appears in failed states where official governments and national sovereignty are absent. Nonetheless, we must bear in mind that we live in a world without borders in which the circulation of goods, people and capital is unlimited and uncontrollable. Recent history has proven that Western world has often been the center of attention for criminal groups which spread the terror by killing thousands of innocent people. To eradicate this threat and prevent any future massacre, the responsible decision-making bodies need to focus on tackling the problem from its roots. As a result, in the European context, member-states need to prioritize the fight against wildlife trafficking since it constitutes a form of organized crime, the elimination of which could promote further integration.

Apart from the security threats, wildlife trafficking is considered as the prime source of the coronavirus outbreak. It is a matter of fact that the  $\frac{3}{4}$  of emerging diseases are transmitted directly from animals to humans (Bauer-Babef, 2021). Moreover, in February 2021, China's Standing Committee of the National People's Congress recognized that the source of coronavirus is possibly linked with the consumption of wild animals' meat (Izquierdo, 2020). All this information generates the following question: If wildlife trafficking was regulated and prevented by international actors as the EU, could the pandemic have been averted?

## The illicit wildlife trade in the EU region

It is no surprise that this type of illegal trade thrives in developing states either in Asia or Africa. However, wildlife trafficking is also an emerging criminal activity in developed countries. To make things worse, the EU is currently the third largest importer of wildlife trafficking (Bauer-Babef, 2021), while it is also a major transit hub and a final destination for these products (Banos-Ruiz, 2017). The incentives for the spread of this trade in European developed states vary. First of all, in the context of globalization, the extensive use of the internet functions as a channel which facilitates the conduct of illegal activities without being detectable. On the other hand, the establishment of a common market has resulted in fewer controls on wildlife trade within the EU region (UNODC, 2016), meaning that it is de facto difficult to separate the legal from the illegal trade. In the meantime, for the vast majority of European states, wildlife trafficking is a low political priority (UNODC, 2016). For this reason, the risk of detection stays low, while the predicted penalties are light in relation with the enormous value of animal and plant derivatives.

Given the fact that illegal trade is a hidden activity, the access to reliable data about the scale and the total value of the market is a difficult procedure. Nonetheless, according to a recent report of the European Commission (2016) approximately 2000 live reptiles, corals and ivory quantities were seized in EU borders within a period of only a year. In addition, the known proportion of the exchanged fauna and flora represents around 10% to 15% of the total wildlife products in illicit trade (Banos-Ruis, 2017), meaning that the unknown dimensions of the problem are even greater with their repercussions being unpredictable. In order to have a spherical view of the EU's wildlife trafficking, the following graph presents the main trade routes and partners of the Union.

**Figure 1: Routes of wildlife trafficking across Europe**



Source: Europa (in Banos-Ruiz, 2017)

Albeit that various endangered species are either imported or exported from the EU, the main concern is the trafficking of the glass eel (*Anguilla-Anguilla*) – a “catadromous” fish that is born and raised in European wetlands (European Commission, n.d.a). The production of eel-meat is a multi-billion euros industry in Europe, since its demand is extremely high in Asian food markets (UNODC, 2016). Due to the huge exploitation of this industry, the EU, in 2010, was obliged to prohibit every export of this kind from its borders. However, this form of illegal trade has taken great dimensions today while its annual value is estimated close to 50 million € (European Parliament, 2019).

It is pivotal to clarify that this trade and in general these illicit transactions are taking place in European states that are the de jure inspirators of the creation of the EU. On the one hand, in Belgium, live animals such as reptiles and birds are traded illegally online. Only in 2020, 106 suspicious posts from 65 different sellers were recorded in Belgium (TRAFFIC, 2020). These posts were mainly found on social media (25%) and wildlife specialist websites (50%) in which the access was feasible to every internet user (TRAFFIC, 2020). On the other hand, the Netherlands is a crucial final market and a transit hub for illegal trade. Between 2001 and 2015, 14% of the total seizures in the EU took place in the Netherlands (European Parliament, 2016). At the same time, 250 traders and 640 private individuals are involved in the Dutch illegal industry.

The EU is confronted with a serious impediment to the achievement of its supranational integration. Bearing in mind that the final target of the EU is the establishment of a fully integrated union – both in low and high politics, the responsible authority organs should not neglect the security aspect of the issue and thus, focus on adopting feasible and efficient measures in this domain.

### **Actions of the EU to combat illicit wildlife trade**

Throughout the years, the EU has launched a series of initiatives to address the issue of illicit wildlife trade. The most important legal action is the adoption of the “EU Action Plan Against Wildlife Trade” which entered into force in 2016 and lasted until 2020. The Action Plan has three main points of interest: the more effective prevention of wildlife trafficking and the concentration on its roots, the better enforcement of existing rules referring to this type of trade and the enhanced cooperation among source, transit and consumer countries against wildlife trade (European Commission, 2016). By recognizing all the dimensions of the issue – including the security one, the Action Plan contains in total, 12 aims and 32 actions that need to be fulfilled until the Plan is in force (European Commission, 2016).

As it highlighted by the recent Progress Review of the European Commission (2018) the Action Plan proposes innovative guidelines to the member states but simultaneously, several points that need further enhancement exist. In particular, the EU Plan does not include indicators or quantified data and targets. As a result, the monitoring and the evaluation remains a difficult procedure (Lemaître & Hervé-Fournereau, 2020). Moreover, the proposed commitments are generic and broad, meaning that concrete actions to combat wildlife trafficking are not guaranteed (Lemaître & Hervé-Fournereau, 2020). Albeit that the EU Action Plan is an important legal framework for the definition of the problem, future improvement is necessary.

On the other hand, since 2015, the EU is a party of the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES). The CITES is the most well-known Convention at international level that protects 5.000 rare animals and 29.000 plants (CITES, n.d.). It was signed in 1973 among 80 states and entered into force in 1975 (European Commission, n.d.b). The basic aim of this Convention is to guarantee that international trade of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival (European Commission, n.d.b). To achieve this, the CITES subjects international trade of selected species to certain controls, based on a categorization of species in three Appendices. In particular, the Appendix A is the most strictly controlled list that contains species threatened with extinction while the Appendix C is the least strict category (CITES, n.d.). At the EU level, the CITES is implemented via the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations which contain EC No. 338/97, EC No. 865/2006 and EC No. 338/97. These provisions define how wildlife trade should be conducted at European level and which restrictions can be applied by the EU Commission (European Commission, n.d.b).

Although the CITES is an essential agreement for the protection of wild species at international level, several concerns regarding its efficiency arise. At this point, it is important to clarify that the Convention cannot substitute national laws. Albeit that CITES is a legally binding treaty to the Parties, it does not predict sanctions in case of non-compliance with its obligations. As a result, plenty of states have not tightened their legal framework and thus, illegal transactions of wildlife trade are multiplied. In the meantime, the CITES' main concern is to protect biodiversity by guaranteeing the survival of the endangered species (CITES, n.d.). In this way, it is evident that this Convention does not encompass measures for other areas of the issue apart from safeguarding sustainability. Hence, the security aspect of wildlife trafficking is neglected.

It is evident that the EU focuses more on promoting soft power measures rather than adopting strict to guarantee its safety. Given the fact that the EU has not the exclusive competence neither in the security nor in the environmental domain, this approach is completely reasonable. Nonetheless, political commitments must turn into actions. To achieve this, the EU shall radically modify its

actions by providing a concrete common policy which must be embodied and respected by national authorities.

## **Recommendations**

Since Environmental Policy is a shared competence of the EU, constructive cooperation between European legislative bodies and member states is imperative in the fight against wildlife trafficking. Today, the expiration of the EU Action Plan Against Wildlife Trafficking is a great opportunity for the adoption of new concrete orientations and the expansion of the already existing ones in order to eradicate this environmental threat. Bearing in mind the aforementioned gaps in EU policies, the researcher proposes the creation of special scoreboards and indicators included in EU annual reports concerning the progress made in this field. In particular, these scoreboards will analyze which states consider wildlife trafficking as a “serious environmental crime” – term defined by the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, what type of sanctions are predicted by each country and how many animals, animal derivatives or plants are seized by each member state annually. This method could be a useful tool for the decision-making organs to propose new policies or changes to existing programs.

Furthermore, during the European Semester, specific guidelines should be provided for the proper distribution of the national budget in the fight against environmental crimes based on the aforementioned reports. For the time being, the majority of states still consider illicit wildlife trade as a low political priority. As a result, a small part of the provided European funds are devoted towards this orientation. In contrast, the guidelines, defined during the European Semester, should underline the potential security risks to national sovereignty and the amount of money that needs to be invested in this field, as well. Only in this way it will be possible to guarantee a common European political direction and thus, contribute to the elimination of the problem. Lastly, given the fact that the issue of wildlife trafficking has a clear security aspect, adequate funds should be provided via the EDF to the member states for the period 2021-2027. More specifically, approximately 5.3 billion euros have been allocated to the EDF in order to invest them in collaborative capability development projects (European Commission, 2021). These funds could ameliorate the quality and increase the quantity of the controls in the European borders so as to facilitate the detection of suspicious transactions and thus, limit the illicit trade.

## **Conclusions**

All in all, these solutions could be part of a long-term strategy that combines the elimination of environmental crimes with the strengthening of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).



Although the CFSP remains a European policy, it has specific terms that restricts its supranational nature. The states remain a key-component to the CFSP since the intergovernmental bodies of the EU (Council of the EU and the European Council) are the basic tools for the policy making process in this field. In addition, according to article 17 of the TEU, in order to complete its operational tasks, the EU shall use “capabilities provided by the member states”, implying the lack of a European army that clearly undermines an effective integration in issues of high politics. For all these reasons, Europe will continue to evolve at different speeds with the adoption of a uniform approach towards security topics being an idealistic concept for the near future.

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# Climate Change: A Newly Established Contributor to Terrorist Actions<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Although climate change and terrorism are two terms that are mostly analyzed separately, they tend to be two global threats in a feedback loop relationship. Climate change causes fragility and instability because of the lack of natural resources and the vulnerability of human security. Considering this situation, NSAGs (Non-State Armed Groups) take advantage of this fragility and proliferate. In order to be established, they even attempt to earn the support of the local population. Food insecurity, water/land scarcities caused by climate change lead to intense poverty of the local population. As a result, they are more vulnerable to the recruitment of NSAGs, which promise them economic incentives. Various case studies demonstrate that NSAGs, such as Boko Haram in Lake Chad, exploit and manipulate the local population to impose their regime. For this purpose, NSAGs use strategically natural resources such as water, by using them as weapons or by forbidding access to these vital resources. Governments have attempted to control this exacerbation of terrorist actions in the environmental framework but the solution of the problem demands the collaboration of multiple actors. Policy makers will be able to address these challenges by building resilient societies that engage people with their problems.

**Keywords:** Climate change; terrorism; human security; NSAGs; natural resources; national security; environment; eco-terrorism; violent attacks; humanitarian aid

## Introduction

Climate change and its consequences pose international security at serious risks. Climate change differentiates from global warming and it is defined as any significant change in the measures of climate lasting for an extended period of time (Lytle, 2021). It is heavily connected with national security, which is exceptionally vital in this study. The conditions prevailing in certain areas where there is lack of water, land and other natural resources, lead to a general instability. In the last years, there has been a worrying increase of the instability caused by those scarcities, leading to an inextricable link between environmental and national security. The effects of climate change and environmental collapse are already visible in several conflict areas around the world, but the main question that arises is to what extent climate change affects the operation of terrorist organizations.

This research starts by a brief presentation of the extent of climate change in our times and its impact on human security. The second chapter illustrates how climate change can pose as a contributor to

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Kechagia, I., Makariou, E. & Spiliotopoulou, M. (2021). Climate Change: A Newly Established Contributor to Terrorist Actions. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 206-215. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29507

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terrorist actions in a fragile and unstable environment. Subsequently, it is worth mentioning the definition of the NSAGs (Non-State Armed Groups) and the examination of their main categories, including the examination of the terrorist group Boko Haram in the Lake Chad region. The third chapter indicates that NSAGs attempt to establish their regime by managing natural resources and even using them as strategic weapons. The last chapter analyzes the measurements taken by governments and suggests policies in different sectors that can lead to improvement.

### **1. The lack of natural resources causes fragility.**

Climate change is considered as a low start threat. The most common threats against natural security are reported as direct attacks and events, which oppose the slow action of climate change. An example of an immediate threat to national security is the terrorist attacks of 11<sup>th</sup> of September in 2001, which stamped the pages of modern history. However, slow-start threats, such as climate change, are having more and more impact on national security (Asaka, 2021).

According to Telford (2020), climate change acts as a multiplier of threats to instability. It can worsen the already existing social vulnerability, if there are no measures taken on time. Social vulnerability has been linked with the spread of terrorism, as the terrorist groups are known for recruiting members from poverty-stricken youth. For example, Pakistan is a great area for NSAGs (Non-State Armed Groups) to be constituted and established. The fact that it is located in an area of great political importance, creates constant tensions and political conflicts. In addition, climate change often causes high flood risks and severe water scarcity. The continuous political and climate changes pose a great danger to the national and environmental security of the area. In many areas, it is a common tactic for the NSAGs to use the scarcity of natural resources and pollute even the small quantities of drinking water that has been left, in order to push the locals to join them (Rüttinger, et al, 2015). To sum up, climate insecurity is defined as the conditions under which the effect of climate change threatens a group of various actors. There is a feedback loop relationship between climate change and terrorism, in which climate change enables and multiplies terrorist actions, which in turn drives to climate change.

Within the past, Non-State Armed Groups were defined as organized groups that were part of an international or beyond the state armed conflict. As Nett and Rüttinger analyze (2016), they were perceived as actors who are trying to get political power and initiate political change. They all share a fundamental organizational structure that continues over a certain period of time, the status to utilize force to attain political, financial or ideological targets, out of the state control (UNSSC, 2015).

NSAGs usually don't have formal obligations and they don't participate in state structures. Consequently, NSAGs are not committed to international humanitarian law (DCAF, 2015).

It is extremely important to be prepared for extreme weather phenomena. As the climate is continuously changing, more hurricanes, cyclones, fires, earthquakes tend to happen. These events put national security at great risk, as they cause the loss of human lives, material disasters and more. This highlights the importance of being prepared for all those extreme events. Homeland security has evolved around protection from a terrorist threat, but it is evolving to include responses to natural disasters (Goodman, 2021).

Finally, natural security issues are one of the most critical issues of our time and must be integrated into national security planning (European Commission, 2008; UN Security Council, 2011). Although the different effects of climate change are still being examined, there are two pillars to approach this phenomenon: the mitigation, which is the attempt to reduce all human activities that may lead and contribute to climate change and adaptation, in order to adapt in the new environmental data. Mitigation and adaptation should be considered as part of national security planning in order to efficiently address multiple risks (Nett & Rüttinger, 2016).

## **2. NSAGs and the support of the local population.**

According to Nett and Rüttinger (2016), the instability that has been caused by climate change in the international arena, has been used by many non-state actors in order for them to be established, using new patterns of violence. Climate change acts as a risk multiplier regarding NSAGs. There are two main ways that climate change helps the rise and growth of the NSAGs. Firstly, due to high levels of fragility that have been located in many areas, NSAGs often try to fill the gaps by providing basic services in places. In this way, they gain legitimacy and the support of the locals. Secondly, in many nations climate change is having an increasingly negative influence on livelihoods, such as food poverty and water scarcity. As a result, the affected population groups are more prone to both negative climatic impacts and NSAGs recruitment. It is intensively worrying how NSAGs take advantage of the fragile conditions created by compound climate-fragility risks.

Nowadays NSAGs tend to operate in an environment without conflict, using the unconventional armed violence, which means that they do not use violence in a way of armed conflict. Usually, they cause conflicts with financial motivations which are funded by illegal profitable activities. NSAGs involve a wide range of participants in short range, such as youth and street gangs, organized crime and in a wider range, such as professional terrorist groups (Schneckener 2010).

In order to comprehend the influence of climate change to the NSAGs' activities, one of the most known NSAGs that is located on Lake Chad and it is known as Boko Haram, is illustrated. Lake Chad's region, which includes Niger, Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon, has been suffering from financial difficulties, decreasing resources and conflicts (Freedom House, 2015). Climate change adds up even more pressure, since severe droughts have caused a huge shrinking of the Lake, which is the main sector of employment in the area. Lack of water and fertile land causes competition which might lead to social tensions. Also, the huge growth of population, which is calculated to 38 million people, in combination with the severe lack of economic opportunities (Department of State, 2015), leaves a perfect spot for NSAGs to establish.

Boko Haram is an islamist extremist group that was founded in 2002 by Myhammed Yusuf and it launched a conflict against the Nigerian government in 2009. From 2015 it is also called Islamic State in West Africa or Islamic State's West African Province. Its initial purpose was to fight the injustice and the corruption against the lower classes, caused by the Western presence. (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2021). It gained control of 18 local government areas in Nigeria (Abubakar, 2015). It started as a non-violent Islamic movement, but it turned into an extremist group, whose cause is the establishment of an Islamic state under Sharia law (Campbell, 2014). As the resources in Chad Basin, such as quality fresh water, fishes, the capability of vegetable cultivation and livestock are decreasing, violent conflicts and social tensions have appeared. This situation provides a fertile ground for NSAGs. Boko Haram recruits young men by offering payments in order to carry out violent attacks (Olojo, 2013), or by using other brutal methods such as kidnapping, forced marriages etc. (Amnesty International, 2015). In addition, Boko Haram uses natural resources as a weapon, in order to exert even more pressure. Nonetheless, Boko Haram seems to understand the importance of this strategy and keeps using it, since, as Nett and Rüttinger (2016: 27) indicate, '*the scarcer resources become, the more power it gives to those who control them*'.

### **3. NSAGs use natural resources as weapons.**

As the reservoirs continue to dry up, severe droughts caused by climate change have spread the vulnerability of the water system. As the world's fresh water supply becomes increasingly scarce, NSAGs are multiplying their attacks and manipulating the supply as a coercion strategy. Extremist groups, including Al Qaeda, have expressed interest in contaminating drinking water in the United States. A report by the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness identified 26 specific threats of water contamination in the United States between 1968 and 2008 to recent reports from the Nigerian military, Boko Haram has implemented new weapons which are based on natural

resources. (Somers, 2019). In places dislodged by the army, they poisoned water sources, making water usage unsafe for both humans and wildlife. Although it remains an open question if this activity is against the local population, it is evident that natural resources are a crucial strategic tool. As a result, the potential damage is extremely high and this strategy becomes increasingly menacing in the face of a changing climate. Furthermore, when governments are incapable of managing natural resources, competition for scarce resources is intense and likely to cause violence and instability (Nett & Rüttinger, 2016).

Water can be strategically used to apply political and military pressure (Shamout, 2018). Terrorist groups control the water barriers and hence, in order to cause damage in water-scarce areas and increase their territorial control. In 2015, ISIS attacked regime forces further downstream by blocking the gates of the Ramadi (Shamout, 2018). In addition, water can be used as a weapon by taxing it and as a result, be an important source of funding (Nett & Rüttinger, 2016).

#### **4. Recommendations**

Foreign policy makers should play an active role in order to prevent climate change, violence, conflict and fragility, but first they must understand the complex nature of NSAGs. Their goal is to create resilient states that can face the risks of NSAGs. Three sectors can help the policy makers face the problem of NSAGs: climate change adaptation, development and humanitarian aid, peacebuilding and conflict prevention (Nett & Rüttinger, 2016).

Strategies that are against violent extremism do not take climate change into consideration and as a result the interventions can lead to failure (UNDP, 2016). In areas with a lot of conflicts, peacebuilding strategies that are linked to climate change can bring about external support and development (Crawford et al., 2015).

The quality of public services and goods affects the ability of local communities to cope with climate risks that are related to NSAGs. Weak infrastructure could increase the conflicts for local resources (Detges, 2016). The solution of the livelihood insecurity problem and the recommendation of alternative sources is more likely to cause resistance to the integration in extremist groups and to climate risks. As Nett and Rüttinger (2016) illustrate, changes to sectors such as agriculture, livestock, forestry and fisheries can reduce the possibilities of joining NSAGs. More specifically, in order to adapt to changing climatic conditions, agricultural practices can be shifted towards less water-intensive and more drought-resilient crops. Governments need to reassure that food adequacy will remain sustainable and crops will be easily estimated. Prudent management of irrigation systems will reduce climate risks and the impacts of drought (Nett & Rüttinger, 2016).



In addition, climate changes such as cyclones, floods, sea-level rise, droughts, temperature and rainfall fluctuations have a negative impact on the economic returns from fishing. Those who are more likely to be affected by these climate risks are mostly the small-scale fishers or day laborers (Vivekananda et al., 2014). A decrease in fishing revenue will increase illegal fishing and piracy (Hyde, 2016). Policy makers must take initiatives in order to face the risks that are linked to livelihoods.

Forests are used for commercial and cultural reasons and as a result they can cause a lot of conflicts. A lot of NSAGs (especially from East, Central and West Africa) sell and tax forest resources such as tropical timber and charcoal because of the lack of supervision of forest land and resources. Local mafia, Islamist extremists and rebel movements, including al-Shabaab (a terrorist group linked to Somalia's Al-Qaeda) are funded from the annual trade in illegal logging (Nellemann et al., 2014). At a global level, governments should make efforts in order to face the problem of illegal timber trade and protect forests by creating programs such as REDD+ and the EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT).

In some areas, young people have low employment opportunities and as a result they are attracted by armed groups or other illegal activities such as drug trafficking, piracy or poaching. Government policies have to take into consideration demographics and gender when considering climate resilient livelihood strategies (Nett & Rüttinger, 2016).

Furthermore, policies must improve the host-migrant relations by helping them have equitable access to resources, lines of communication and information. In this way, hosts and migrant communities will build trust and consequently, conflicts and risks of illegal activities and criminality will be reduced (Nett & Rüttinger, 2016).

Governments should reassure that the resources are distributed immediately and fairly and prevent NSAGs from providing services such as access to clean water, food aid and medical care in order to replace state services (Ruttinger et al., 2015).

According to Shreve and Kelman (2014), foreign policy should also spend enough money to reinforce early warning systems so as to predict the risks. Countries that are prone to disasters need to take emergency decisions in order to avoid the domination of criminal groups. Governments and civil society should collaborate and warn specific groups about the threats of exploitation and human trafficking in times of disasters. The more efficient the collaboration becomes, the more difficult is the appearance of smuggling and human trafficking.



Weak governance, poverty, inequality and marginalization are often the reasons why rapid urbanization happens. The increase of NSAGs depends on the way cities face these threats. Humanitarian aid, peacebuilding and conflict prevention should focus on cities that are affected by fragility and conflicts. A collaboration between the poor urban and the periphery population with governance systems and services will solve the problem of livelihood insecurity and contribute to economic development (Mosel et al., 2016; Nett & Rüttinger, 2016).

It is worth mentioning that the National Homeland Security Strategy should include sustainable principles and practices in order to prevent NSAGs from the exploitation of the environment. The implementation of a strategy regarding national infrastructure protection will lead to sustainability. For instance, the U.S. military has realized that sustainability is an important strategic security element. Moreover, large and complex distribution systems are more likely to fail and that's the reason why governments must fund investments on a smaller scale, especially in distributed infrastructure systems. Ultimately, it is important to improve sustainable water technologies in order to enhance the EPA Water Security Initiative (Somers, 2019).

Despite these attempts, the government was unable to manage climate change and as a result, citizens created a movement of civil activism. The actions of this movement are known as eco-terrorism which are associated with organizations as the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and the Animal Liberation Front (ALF). The actions of such organizations could be considered similar to those of Al-Qaeda and ISIS, by using violent tactics against western societies (Spadaro, 2020).

ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) cooperates with armed groups in order to provide humanitarian assistance to persons who are affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence. The goal of ICRC is to collaborate with all parties (including NSAGs) in order to gain access to civilian populations and persons located in territories, in which armed groups operate. To sum up, this humanitarian organization can offer its services to the parties to a non-international armed conflict, including non-state ones (Pejic, Herbet & Rodenhäuser, 2021).

As Vosniak (2021) highlights, for a successful collaboration, NSAGs must respect existing humanitarian norms under international humanitarian law (IHL). However, there must be a better engagement with NSAGs, because they are usually breaking the law. The United Nations could play a crucial role and stimulate NSAGs to implement IHL. The UN Security Council has already found ways in order to encourage NSAGs to comply with the law.

## Conclusion

Climate change is a major threat to international peace and security. The effects of climate change heighten competition for resources such as land, food and water, fueling socioeconomic tensions and, increasingly often, leading to mass displacement. Consequently, climate change and violent attacks are inextricably connected. The escalating scarcity of basic resources such as water, the increased desertification of agricultural regions and the overall rise in temperatures have caused a severe fragility and sociopolitical vulnerability. Thus, climate change can undoubtedly become a contributor to terrorist attacks to an extended dimension, as the use of environmental stress is a strategic tool for NSAGs in order to recruit citizens and proceed to more violent actions. If governments, businesses, civil society, youth and academia collaborate, it is possible to create a green future where suffering is diminished, justice is upheld and harmony is restored between people and planet. “Terrosism and deception are weapons not of the strong, but of the weak” - Mahatma Gandhi.

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## Topic 6

### Internal and External Affairs of the European Union

# The Awakening of the Sleepy European Union: The Enigmatic Role of the EU Sanctioning System Against China<sup>1</sup>

Francesca Brunelli<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

This paper aims at giving useful hints to understand the European hesitation to deliberately take a side in the debated *odi et amo*<sup>3</sup> relationship between the Western countries (in particular the US) and the People's Republic of China, including the special administrative region of Hong Kong. It is a matter of fact that the EU has always been excellent with its dialectic showing pure resentment towards the autonomy dismantlement in Hong Kong, but it ended to be a mere "spectator". However, for the first time in 30 years, the EU seems to have acknowledged its "responsibilities" with the adoption of the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (GHRSR), a bell that, in metaphorical terms, seems to have woken up the Union. A Union now more willing to adopt restrictive measures in the promotion of human rights also against its economic partners.

**Key words:** Sanctions; passive role of the EU; China; Hong Kong; GHRSR.

## Introduction

What happens if a certain country is misbehaving geopolitically or economically making weaker or non-aligned nations insecure or unstable by valuing the own currency aggressively, boosting exports, stealing intellectual property, or at least tolerating the theft? Just few centuries ago other countries would have been more eager to simply go to war, but in our mutually assured destruction age there are more than enough reasons to think twice. For this reason, it took place the idea of punishment as a set of financial strategies<sup>4</sup> that work as a middle ground between war and words. In other terms, sanctions are used when "*diplomacy alone is insufficient, but military force is not the right response*" (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2016). Furthermore, regardless of whether one likes it or not, one must accept the reality that the conflicting relation among the world powers has become a financial warfare, a "*hidden war*" borrowing the words of Juan C. Zarate (2013). The United States are second to none in using economic and financial sanctions<sup>5</sup>. Next to the US, also the EU has issued sanctions

<sup>1</sup> To cite this in APA style: Brunelli, F. (2021). The Awakening of the Sleepy European Union: The Enigmatic Role of the EU Sanctioning System Against China. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 217-222. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29508

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<sup>3</sup> Please remember that it has been the US to turn China into a great power offering the best possible trade terms.

<sup>4</sup> Sanctions can include travel bans, asset freezes, arms embargoes, capital restraints, foreign aid reductions, trade restrictions. They are considered as an essential foreign policy tool, one of the most advocated tools for governments to respond to foreign policy challenges.

<sup>5</sup> Sometimes hiding the real aim to punish its archenemies under the light of being the beacon of the free world responsible to maintain a strong posture towards issues that concern US fundamental values and national security.

against individuals and countries gaining popularity as one of the main standard-setters in the field of business and human rights. However, someone could argue that this tendency is proudly perpetrated against some states such as Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Burundi, Guinea and Iran. Similarly, EU appears quite cautious when we are talking about superpowers, like China, against whom the more recent geographical restrictive measure dates back to the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989. Why this apparently enigmatic difference appears in treatment? It should be highlighted that only after 7 December 2020 the EU adopted a prominent sanctioning system in the field of protection of human rights trying to get over its partially “passive” tendency. This is to say that, even though over the last two decades there has been a quite impressive number of European restrictive measures, the Union has never adopted thematic regimes addressed specifically to human rights abuses worldwide. The “passive” tendency comes from having always favoured a geographically targeted strategy that brought about a diffidence in adopting measures against those countries, like China, with which an economic partnership has been consolidated. Therefore, the risk to subordinate the efficiency of sanctions to the maintenance of economic bilateral relations is quite high. We are not saying that the own<sup>6</sup> EU GHRSR is the panacea, economic interests will remain the leverage of foreign policy and international relations for a while longer. However, this sanctioning regime takes a step forward enabling the EU to list individuals or entities responsible for violations and abuses of human rights, irrespective of where these violations have occurred.

### **The EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime**

On 22 March 2021, the EU for the first time in more than 30 years imposed restrictive measures on four Chinese officials, including top security directors, and one entity for the large-scale arbitrary detention of Uyghurs in the province of the Xinjiang. This historical event was part of a broader package of sanctions for serious human rights violations that targeted in total eleven individuals and four entities around the world<sup>7</sup>. So, they are not only restrictive measures related to China, but the sanctioning regime is also addressed to the repression in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances in Libya, torture and repression against LGBTI persons and political opponents in Chechnya in Russia, and torture, extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and killings in South Sudan and Eritrea (Council of the EU, 2021). This was the

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<sup>6</sup> It is a regime part of the European autonomous sanctioning measures, distinguished from sanctions deriving from the UN Security Council regime and also from the national one of individual countries.

<sup>7</sup> EU Sanctions Map, available at

[https://www.sanctionsmap.eu/#/main/details/50/?search=%7B%22value%22:%22%20128296%22,%22searchType%22:%22%7B%22id%22:1,%22title%22:%22regimes,%20persons,%20entities%22%7D%7D&checked=.](https://www.sanctionsmap.eu/#/main/details/50/?search=%7B%22value%22:%22%20128296%22,%22searchType%22:%22%7B%22id%22:1,%22title%22:%22regimes,%20persons,%20entities%22%7D%7D&checked=)



result of the new EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime<sup>8</sup>, arose on 7 December 2020 following the adoption of the US Global Magnitsky Act in 2016. In fact, it is not a case that the new regime is also called “*European Magnitsky law*”<sup>9</sup>. Until that time, the EU has mostly adopted targeted sanctions against private natural and legal persons and geographically targeted sanctions focused on individual countries rather than on a particular type of problem (Russell, 2020). Interesting enough, many geographically targeted sanctions adopted by the EU respond to: undermining democracy or the rule of law; violent crackdown by security forces on political demonstrators, peaceful protesters, democratic opposition, and journalists; serious human rights violations. This seems to depict similar situations, not to say identical, to the repressions of the pro-democracy protests at Hong Kong. The objective of the GHRSR is properly trying to solve issues like that, avoiding turning a blind eye to human rights abuses beyond the European borders. However, for now the list of the GHRSR does not include any natural or legal person involved in Hong Kong’s democracy and autonomy dismantlement leaving to the US the “dirty work” on this regard. Under this sanctioning mechanism individuals and entities – believed to be responsible for: (a) genocide; (b) crimes against humanity; (c) a limited set of “*serious human rights violations or abuses*” (including torture, slavery, enforced disappearance of persons, arbitrary detention); and (d) other human rights violations<sup>10</sup> – are subject to asset freeze in the EU and they are prohibited from making funds or economic resources available, either directly or indirectly, to those listed (Ruys, 2021). The new sanctioning regime also allows the High Representative (HR), in addition to the Council, to propose restrictive measure, as well as to prepare amendments to the Annex where natural and legal persons are listed. This creates a positive consequence shifting the political responsibility to the EU institutions and it may help to reduce potential national bias. However, to impose sanctions at European level is necessary a unanimity vote of ministers and state representatives at the Council. But a unanimous agreement among the Member States is often difficult to achieve. Still now the attempts of Ursula von der Leyen and her predecessor Jean-Claude Juncker to move from unanimity to qualified majority voting through the “*passarelle*” clause<sup>11</sup> to reduce the risk of deadlock have been unsuccessful (Latici, 2021).

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<sup>8</sup> In line with the “two-steps procedure” enshrined in article 215 TFEU and 29 TEU, the GHRSR has been adopted on the basis of two legal instruments: the Council Decision 2020/1999 and the Council Regulation 2020/1998.

<sup>9</sup> Although some EU Member States already have Magnitsky-style sanctions at national level, such measures are more effective when adopted at European level.

<sup>10</sup> Insofar as they are widespread, systematic, or of serious concern in light of the objectives of the Common Foreign and Security Policy set out in Article 21 of the TEU.

<sup>11</sup> Article 31(3) of the Treaty on European Union, under which the European Council can decide to apply qualified-majority voting of the Council to common foreign and security policy matters that do not have military or defence implications.

At the end of the day, we cannot ignore the incredible advantage brought to thematic human rights sanctions programs<sup>12</sup>. The possibility to add new names to the list, rather than create a completely new program for each country, allows greater flexibility, rapidity, efficiency, and justice<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore, blaming a specific natural or legal person for violations of human rights avoids affecting bilateral relations with allies and economic partners. In any way, it is at least less damaging than the creation of a separate sanctions program targeting the state of nationality of that person.

We should admit that, prior to the application of the GHRSR, the EU condemned China's actions in Xinjiang only through words being accused by the international community to prioritize its economic ties and strategic relationships with that country. In fact, even though human rights have become the dominant theme in EU autonomous measures, for many years, dealing with US-China relations, the Union played the role of a "referee", rather than an active competitor. Even after the adoption of the GHRSR, the HR of the Union Josep Borell has immediately clarified that neither the EU nor the United Kingdom were currently intended to adopt individual restrictive measures against those involved in the abuses in Hong Kong and Xinjiang. This, plus the maintenance of the unanimity voting of the Council, suggests that at that moment the EU was not ready to face one of its trading partners and that the necessary agreement between the MSs was not yet there. In this way, the entire credibility of the EU as a global actor able to support its position and protect their values has been undermined (Meacci, 2020).

## Conclusions

In this regard, the adoption and the effective implementation of the GHRSR could be seen as a transnational response to a fundamental security-related challenge (Eckes, 2021), a sort of watershed in the history of the European sanctioning regime. This instrument in the hands of the Union is an opportunity to become a swifter decision-maker and a more effective actor when addressing human rights perpetrators (Finelli, 2020). But, is it what the Union really wants?

The US has always showed a straightforward approach motivated by the logical choice to slow China's rise looking at its ambitious as a direct threat. Dreams, however, are hard to kill. The enthusiasm coming from the facility through which Xi Jinping has been able to dismantle the Hong

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<sup>12</sup> The thematic restrictions do not cover only the field of human rights, but now we can also find measures against the proliferation and use of chemical weapons, cyber-attacks and terrorism.

<sup>13</sup> Alexei Navalny is a recent and virtuous example (even if not perfect) of the use of the new European sanctioning system. In this occasion, the EU reacted to the poisoning and arbitrary jailing of Mr. Navalny sanctioning five natural and one legal person considered responsible under the EU's chemical weapon regime. Then the list has been expanded by the European ministers.

Kong's autonomy without almost any interference from the rest of the world<sup>14</sup>, plus the recent US withdrawal from Afghanistan, gave him the right amount of confidence to broaden his horizons abandoning the idea of a peaceful coexistence and reiterating its original plan to subordinate Taiwan to the mainland<sup>15</sup>. Here again, if the US promptly and publicly reacted to this Chinese increasingly aggressive foreign policy using marked tones<sup>16</sup>, we cannot say the same for the EU that seems to distractedly look at rising Chinese aggressiveness<sup>17</sup>. Sometimes the EU gives the impression to struggle to give a common answer (Archick, 2021) and it ends up "going with the flow", rather than dictating guidelines. Therefore, a wide range of actions and non-actions at state level respond to economic interests<sup>18</sup>, so that most countries do not wish to stand up for one specific side in the US-China trade war favouring the WTO as the authority to solve multilaterally the issue (Wu, 2020). The EU GHRSR gives an argument in favour of this point, it imposes only financial sanctions and travel restrictions excluding arms embargoes or sectoral/economic sanctions, such as imports/export bans. In this way, the EU may be able to transcend national, political, and economic interests serving the CFSP objectives set out in article 21 TEU. In the same way, the Regime ends to be a weapon that could be strategically used by the EU to adopt a more incisive and sharp choice of foreign policy. It could be considered to some extent as the intention to finally take a stand towards China. It is important to remember that when there is no consensus at the international level because the UN Security Council is blocked by the veto right of the five permanent members, the EU's autonomous measures play a central role in the field of protection of human rights<sup>19</sup> and the adoption of the GHRSR seems to acknowledge this.

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<sup>14</sup> We should remember that the EU only condemned China through words. The only superpower that adopted real sanctions has been the US with the Hong Kong Autonomy Act reacting to the further eroding Hong Kong's autonomy and the EO 13936 on "*Hong Kong Normalization*" ending the preferential treatment towards the island. The Biden's EO 14032 also gave its contribution in this regard – even though it addresses the "Threat from Security Investments that Finance Certain Companies of the People's Republic of China" – enlisting one company registered in Hong Kong.

<sup>15</sup> Some weeks ago, dozens of Chinese planes (no less than 150) have started to violate Taiwanese airspace.

<sup>16</sup> Even taking into consideration an armed intervention.

<sup>17</sup> Please just consider that for now the only step has been the Glucksmann expression of interest in building a stronger EU-Taiwan partnership. Not to mention that no European nations, exception done for the small Vatican City, have formal diplomatic ties.

<sup>18</sup> We must accept the reality that the economic and technological competition with China is something in which every state has an interest.

<sup>19</sup> We also should remember that it is part of the European Policy itself the adoption of measures in both of the two main streams of human rights policy and action. One is to protect the fundamental human rights for EU citizens, and the other is to promote human rights worldwide. In this regard, the GHRSR targets first of all a security threat in the places where violations occur. But the Regime also deals with criminal activity and with violations that threaten international security more broadly.

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# The Missing Link Between Investments and General Foreign Policy: European Discourse Towards China - The Cases of Germany and Hungary<sup>1</sup>

Foivos Voulgaris<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

The aim of the present effort is to connect investment with general foreign policy. That is achieved through a qualitative analysis of the perceptions of Germany and Hungary towards China with special emphasis on the case studies of the Merger and Acquisition of Kuka and the announcement of Huawei's expansion of activities respectively. The findings show that there does indeed exist a link but continuity is too strong to greatly change general foreign policy. What does change however is the mixture of the aspects that lead to the same result. This brief closes by attempting to learn from the reactions of Germany and Hungary towards China and to make some suggestions on how Greece should act vis-à-vis China so as to become more important as an actor in the international system.

**Keywords:** Foreign Investments; Foreign Policy; Discourse Analysis; Germany; Hungary; China

## Introduction

In an interconnected international system investments are a vital economic stimulus for states. Nevertheless, what is difficult to consider is at which point they become instrument of general foreign policy (encompassing all aspects of external policy and not only economic ones). This paper seeks to address that exact question by exploring the response of Germany and Hungary to Chinese foreign investments so as to discover whether investments impact their perceptions of China and how that in turn influences their own foreign policy towards it.

This subject is highly interesting as it studies investments with general foreign policy and seeks to establish a link between them. The literature traditionally seems to consider those two fields individually (Bian and Emons, 2017; Emons, 2015; Erber, 2013; Löchel & Sächting, 2019; Szunomár, Völgyi & Matura, 2014; Mcaleb & Szunomár, 2017), with few analyses pondering a connection between them- and even in those cases this link is usually seen as a matter of secondary importance (Donges et al. 2008; Löchel & Sächting, 2019; Bickenbach & Liu 2018). Nevertheless, the distinct images that many researchers (Löchel & Sächting, 2019; Hanemann & Huotari, 2018; Vaccarini, Nippa & Spigarelli, 2021; Bollhorn, 2015) portray are important as when they are synthesized, they

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Voulgaris, F. (2021). The Missing Link Between Investments and General Foreign Policy: European Discourse Towards China - The Cases of Germany and Hungary. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 223-229. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29509

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provide a solid understanding of the logic behind investments and of the decision-making process related to the formation economic foreign policy.

The first section includes a description of the methodology and a presentation of the compiled and utilised data on the respective states' position on China. In the second section an analysis of the data reinforced by the literature is provided. Finally, the third section includes a set of conclusions as well as an attempt to present some policy proposals adapted to the realities of Greece.

## **Methodology**

The present effort will make use of constructivism, as it attempts to understand the perception of states regarding investments and the way it shapes foreign policy as a whole. For that purpose, Discourse Theory and more specifically, the theoretical conception of signifier (multiple ideas attached to a concept) and signified (a concept on which multiple perspectives may be attached) as described by Laclau and Mouffe (1985) is utilized.

Apart from that analytical tool, it is also pertinent to describe the methods that were used. Firstly, a multiple case study including two contrasting cases was chosen so as to discover how different circumstances produce different responses to external stimuli. Germany was chosen for its economic strength, a factor which was initially considered as relevant in the considerations of foreign policy. Moreover, 2016 was chosen as it was a year in which the international environment was fairly stable, so as to eliminate white noise and also as it is the year with the most significant Chinese investments (Hanemann & Huotari 2018). On that matter, the acquisition of German Tech giant Kuka by the Chinese company called Midea deserves special attention as a key event that greatly shaped the perceptions of Germany towards Chinese investments. At the same time, Hungary was picked with the assumption that since it does not have sufficient economic power, it seems to prioritise amassing wealth over capital restrictions. In addition to that, 2011 was chosen as it was the year when Huawei announced the expansion of its activities in the country that would make it the second largest supply centre of the company worldwide (Herd & Adamowicz, 2020).

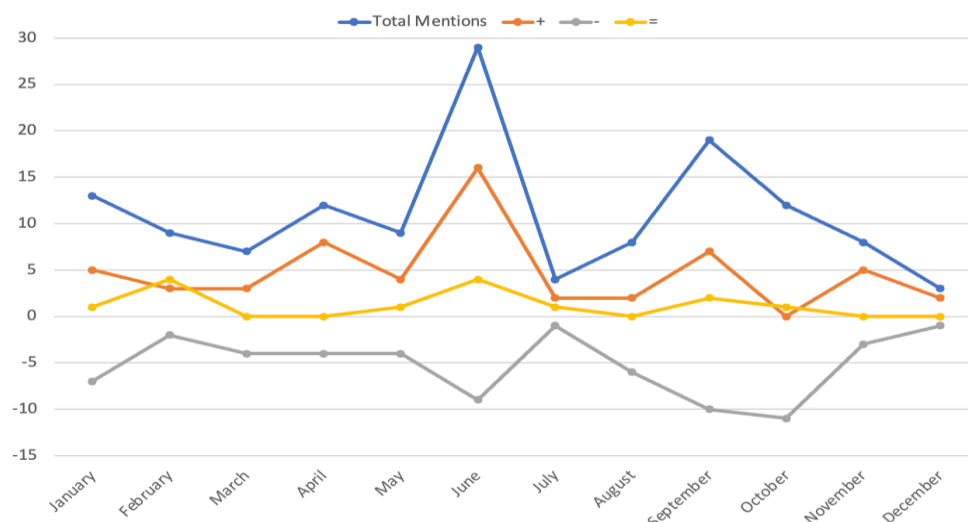
In order to gather the perceptions of Germany and Hungary their government websites were scoured for publications mentioning China for the duration of one year (2016 and 2011 respectively). The result was x and y articles. These in turn usually included more than one mention and so the final number of the mentions was x for Germany and y for Hungary. The next step was the classification. Through a process of codification and cross-codification the mentions were divided into 12 categories corresponding to the month they were made and they were also classified as either positive, negative or neutral. The results were quantified in the figures of the present effort (see Figure 1 and 2). Apart

from the quantification, so as to better understand the topic, it is important to regard them from a qualitative perspective as well.

## Analysis

The aforementioned data when processed yielded a set of interesting results. Firstly, a number of statements pointed to the fact that, at least in the case of Germany, foreign policy is the product of the struggle with bureaucracy, as at times some actions and words seemed to contradict others. For example, Minister Sigmar Gabriel sought counter offers to the acquisition of Kuka (Federal Government of Germany, 2016a) while the stance of the Federal Office was that the matter was strictly entrepreneurial and that the Federal Government would not interfere (Federal Government of Germany, 2016a; 2016b; 2016c). Apart from that, it became clear that Germany's position progressively evolved. The main concern of Germany throughout 2016 was reciprocity as regards regulations for investing in China (Federal Government of Germany, 2016d). Seeing that its vocally expressed wishes were not fulfilled (Federal Government of Germany, 2016e) and that at the same time China took advantage of the unregulated investment environment in Germany, with the acquisition of Kuka as a turning point, the latter moved to a regulation of investments, with closer scrutiny of future acquisitions by foreign companies and of investments in general (Bickenbach & Liu, 2018; Donges et al., 2008), and it also set the matter on the agenda at a European level (Bickenbach & Liu, 2018). Finally, this stricter Germany was more critical on China on a number of matters which previously were only mentioned as secondary (Federal Government of Germany, 2016f; 2016g). Nevertheless, the continuity of the German political system gradually rebalanced the state's foreign policy and the end of 2016 found Germany cooperating with China in the context of G20 (Federal Government of Germany 2016f).

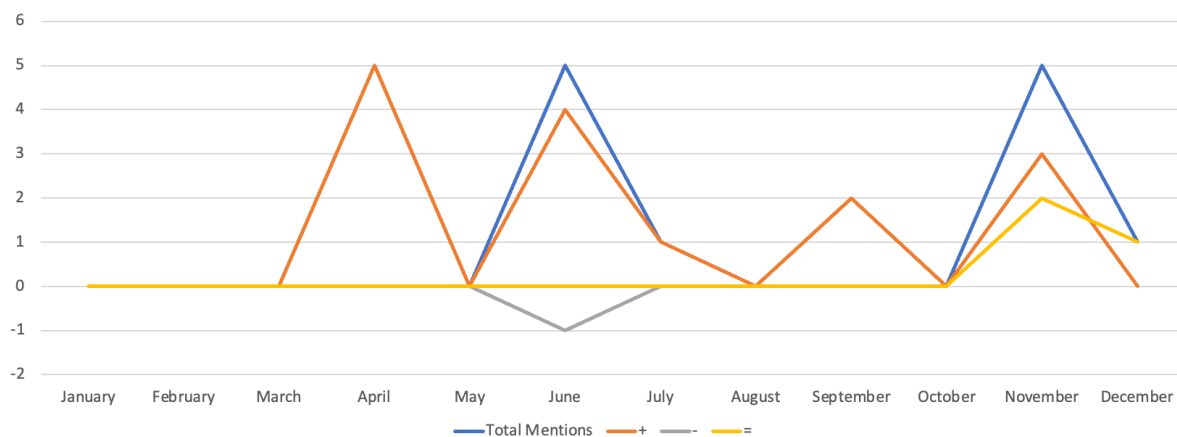
**Figure 1: Germany's mentions of China-2016**





Hungary is also an interesting example, as Huawei's announcement that it would increase its presence in the country only served to reinforce the positivity of Hungary (Éltető & Szunomár, 2016; Government, 2011; Ministry of National Development, 2011a; 2011b; 2011c; 2011d; 2011e; Ministry of Public Administration and Justice, 2011). Since Hungary did not have that many mentions, it is necessary to supplement them with the views of the literature. Namely, prominent figures on the matter attest to the fact that despite claims pointing to the importance of Chinese investments there have been many plans that have never been implemented (Éltető & Szunomár 2016; Szunomár, Völgyi & Matura, 2014). Moreover, according to the same authors, both sides have misconceptions about each other as Hungary would choose the EU funds if it had to choose between the European Union and China and the contribution of Chinese investments does not seem to be significant (Szunomár, Völgyi & Matura, 2014).

**Figure 2: Hungary's mentions of China-2011**



## Conclusions

From the above, a multitude of foreign policy responses to investments is visible, ranging from regulation and less cordial relations (gradually stabilizing) to a more than welcoming approach. Germany and Hungary, each with their own realities as regards their clout in the international system, made different assessments and acted in a manner that would promote cooperation while not harming the interests of the factions they represent. In Germany those interests were often conflicting but in the end the status quo prevailed, however the negativity towards China did not just disappear. At the same time, Hungary was a different case as the objective of amassing wealth was common, clear and stable from the beginning and any moves were only in its service. In both cases, there seems to be a clear connection between foreign policy in general and investments. This is congruent with the fact that the latter, in the cases examined, were connected with political issues, influenced agenda setting

and elicited different threat perceptions that manifested into specific foreign policy decisions and attitudes.

Noting this finding, this effort will close with some recommendations for the case of Greece. The latter needs to make the best of both worlds. In other words, it needs to have more long-term planning, like Germany, through the organization of transpartisan parliamentary committees pledging to draft and follow strategies lasting more than five years. However, at the same time, it should diversify its mix of alliances, mimicking Hungary in regarding the gains and limits of cooperation, by testing the thresholds of lenience towards noncompliance. In the context of China, especially in a post economic crisis environment, Greece should be more assertive in the terms it sets for Chinese investments in state companies while also being realistic about the prospective benefits of such investments.

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# European Green Deal: Will the Transition Be Orderly for the Private Sector, or Will There Be Discrepancies?<sup>1</sup>

Thessalia Mysirli<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

In this paper we will try to understand whether the transition towards a green economy, according to the targets and values of the European Green Deal, will be harmonious for the private sector of the EU, or it will lead to discrepancy and adversity. In order to achieve this, we will examine each sector that is most affected by this transition separately and the extent it will be affected. The sectors that we are going to examine are those of energy, transport, agriculture, industry, building, renovation and tourism. Our aim is neither to predict nor to judge the way this transition will play out, but to understand and inform those who are interested in and affected by this new Deal.

**Keywords:** European Green Deal; private sector; green economy; private sector; just transition

## Introduction

The European Green Deal was introduced in 2019 in order to support the EU in implementing the goal of becoming the first net zero continent ever (Macaulay, 2020). The strategy for achieving this could affect many sectors of the public and private market. In fact, the most affected sectors will be those of energy, agriculture, transport, industry, building and renovation as well as tourism. A Just Transition Strategy and Mechanism (Colli, 2020a) has been incorporated in order to provide economical support and spread know-how to the countries, regions and sectors most affected by this transition to a greener economy.

The subject examined is the extension of the effect this transition will have on the private markets of the EU Member States. In the energy sector, focus is given on the obstacles that might appear (European Commission, 2019). In the transport sector, the strength of the German automotive industry that has put pressure on the European Green Deal's targets and actions will be examined (Haas & Sander, 2020). Accordingly, focus will be given also on the renovation wave that might appear as well as its effect on the building and renovation sector and how the reduction of pesticides may change the agricultural sector (European Commission, 2020a; European Commission, 2021c). Lastly, this paper will examine the industry digitalization and green jobs, the "reduction" of tourism

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Mysirli, T. (2021). European Green Deal: Will the Transition Be Orderly for the Private Sector, or Will There Be Discrepancies?. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 230-238. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29510

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as well as the challenges these two sectors could face as a result of the transition (Sulich et al, 2020; Saseanu et al, 2020). The basic aim is to understand the separate challenges each unique sector shall face and the common difficulties these sectors might encounter, as a result of the transition and the changes in the EU market.

## **Energy**

A significant amount of Green House Gas (GHG) emissions in the EU come from the energy sector. That is the reason why decarbonizing the EU's energy system is the biggest challenge to reach the European Green Deal's goals. The goal for GHG is to be reduced 50-55% by 2030 and to have reached net zero by 2050 - by 1990 standards (European Commission, 2019). Furthermore, all other sectors are using energy in their everyday function and energy consumption is where their GHG emissions are mostly coming from. This creates a domino effect and makes it clearer why the sectors that are examined in this paper are influenced in such a way by the Green Deal's transition and why the energy sector is the most affected one.

According to the European Commission (2021a), the goals of the EGD for the energy sector are energy efficiency, a power sector based on renewable sources, secure, autonomous and affordable EU energy supply and a fully interconnected and digitalized energy market. For the implementation of these goals, legislation on the EU energy system will be reviewed by the European Commission and Funding Programs have already been set (e.g., Horizon Europe, JTM etc.).

The energy sector shall face many obstacles in the transition to a greener economy (European Commission, 2019). Firstly, the upskilling/reskilling of the labor market is a significant step so that new job positions will be created and covered by those that will lose their old ones due to low demand in traditional energy factories. Cooperation and motives for companies to make a commitment to the transition are needed in order to reduce their hesitancy and fears, and inform them about the benefits. This will be achieved by giving certifications and global recognition to the companies that pass the standards.

A second obstacle the energy private sector shall face is that of low demand. The financing mechanism for clean energy is a tool built to link countries that voluntarily pay into the mechanism with countries that agree to have new projects built on their soil. This broadens the market for many countries that are reluctant to transition and for countries which show low internal demand. In order to support companies to make the change, the EU needs to better inform consumers and providers about their options (European Commission, 2020c).

The obstacle that the private sector will face through this transition - that might not be able to be eliminated - is the mismatch of prices. Renewable resources will cost, for a period of time, a bit more than non-renewables due to the duration of their domination in the market. This could cause non-wanted competition and companies trying to make the change could be left behind in demand due to higher costs. A few years later, this difference in prices is deemed to be decreased and prices to set. However, in the meantime, this will cause discrepancy and abnormality in the market.

To recover from the pandemic crisis, the private sector should move on to increase in using sustainable practices that are deemed to be the future demand (Colli, 2020b). It is almost certain that there will be a period of time with ups and downs in the energy market, due to the fact of the vast change. Therefore, many of the obstacles the energy sector might face could be reduced by the appropriate planning and action-taking from the EU's tools and programs, but surely they could not be totally eliminated.

## **Transport**

The transport sector is the only sector since the proposal of the EGD in 2019, in which emissions have been increased by 20% (European Commission, 2021d). Car manufacturers will have to put their mind on producing zero - and low-emission vehicles (ZLEV) and the car demand and supply chain to be influenced towards them. In 2017, binding rules were set by the Commission which deemed that stricter targets would lead to more job losses and companies shutting down (European Commission, 2020b). There are several reasons for this abnormality. Firstly, the fact that some member states have different national interests about the automotive industry and influence the EU transport policies accordingly, especially Germany. Secondly, increasing traffic volume is strongly linked to national economic growth. Thirdly, lobbyism is a power that influences and tortures the EU's decision-making practices. As we can understand from the above said, the private sector and especially the German automotive industry has put pressure on the European Commission in order to bring the targets of the EGD to their own liking. More specifically, Germany (Haas & Sander, 2020) was able to reduce the pace of the transition program and fees for the cars that will not make the transition on time. On the other hand, there are many companies and associations (ECSA, 2019) in the private transport sector that support the EGD's targets and see it as an opportunity for them and for the EU to evolve as a global giant through the pandemic crisis.

The EGD, as stated by the European Commission (2021d), promises a greener transport field that will support the private sector and create new jobs, opportunities and an all-inclusive transport system. It is important to note that as a result of the implementation of the EGD's targets, many job



positions will be lost, demand will not balance supply and companies that are not able to make the transition due to lack of know-how or resources will not withstand the pressure. The re-education of the labor market will be a subject covered by EU programs and funding, but it is impossible for it to be all-inclusive. Furthermore, green transport will not be affordable by many until the prices are set. Thus, the market will experience a shock if the appropriate measures are not taken.

## **Agroecology**

Agriculture is responsible for 10.3% of the EU's GHG emissions and nearly 70% of them come from the animal sector. The Farm to Fork Strategy (European Commission, 2020a) has been created to set goals for the agricultural transition towards agroecology. The goals include reduction of the environmental and climate footprint of the EU food system, reduction of food and water waste, spreading information for each food pack (nutrition labelling on the front of the package), recovery of biodiversity, promotion of a more sustainable and healthy diet for European citizens, reduction of chemical pesticides, supporting of local markets, strengthening the market's resilience in the event of crises, ensuring food security and leading a global transition towards agroecology.

For all of this to be implemented, research and innovation are the first step the EU is investing on (Gargano et al, 2020). New legislation and funding programs for farming, fishing and animal farming will be promoted to achieve the goals and many programs will take place for the upskilling/reskilling of the producers that will be interested and seize the opportunity given to them. Unfortunately, many producers will not be able to make the transition due to increased costs from new technologies necessity, using less pesticides that will lead to more plant deaths and from the fact that they will not be able to get the upskilling/reskilling needed. However, this transition seems to attract young farmers and entrepreneurs and to create new jobs for them due to funding and reduction of challenges for the newcomers.

To conclude, there is no clear EU strategy for agroecological practices and action plans at national level are still disorganized. A problem the EU faces is that the actual number of investments needed for the implementation of the goals in each country are not certain (European Commission, 2020a). All this will most probably lead to a period of shock in the agricultural sector that could take many years to set to a normality. The best way to avoid this shock period is for the private - public sectors to cooperate with local societies to drive supply and demand in the right direction. It is important to acknowledge that the EU will have little to do with this step and that governments and the action of the private sector and of society itself is of much more essence to the outcome of this transition.

## **Building and Renovation**

The building sector is affected and affects the sector of energy in a significant amount. It represents a large amount of EU's GHG emissions, final energy consumption, extracted material, water use and waste produced. Most EU's buildings were built with limited energy efficiency requirements, resulting in a need for a partial or total refurbishment in order to fulfill the EU's Energy Efficiency objectives (Mercader-Moyano & Esquivias, 2020). As for the reduction of extracting raw materials and the reduction of waste, it is proposed that recycled materials and ecological equals will be used. The EU will provide certification and global recognition for companies' buildings and builders who have incorporated in their work green building practices. Furthermore, campaigns supporting demand-supply and skill building will take place and policies will be mandatory for the national governments to follow. The building and renovation market will grow through this pandemic crisis, using more renewable sources of energy and more lasting materials according to the EGD's targets.

A Renovation Wave (European Commission, 2021c) will be imperative in the first years of sustainable transition implementation. As a result of this, a bloat in the demand of new practices might appear, but it will most certainly not last longer than a decade or so when most buildings will by then be sustainable. However, more lasting materials might cause a severe drop in demand on the building and renovation field in a few decades and when the demand drops, a rise in unemployment in the field is a probability. Moreover, once again a need for upskilling/reskilling of the labor market in this sector appears, as it will be imperative in all other sectors. For this need to be covered the EU will provide with programs that might not be able to cover the entirety of the field's personnel. Unemployment will rise and companies that will not be able to make the transition could "tumble and fall". Another subject to be examined is the fact that, for many years, demand will not match supply and prices for renovation and construction with renewable sources and more eco-friendly practices will be way higher than those of traditional building and renovation. All this could lead to an upset market. Careful steps can be taken in order to make this abnormality in the market last for shorter periods than expected, but it is not expected to be fully banished.

## **Industry**

There is a chance for the EU to take measures against climate change through its recovery and restructure program from the covid-19 crisis. The EU needs a skills revolution to ensure people can thrive in the green and digital transitions. Rising unemployment (potentially long term), job insecurity and negative wage development are the main concerns of many EU workers. This is where the European Skills Agenda (European Commission, 2020d) comes in. Funds will be coming from

governments, enterprises and the EU's Recovery Plan for Europe and other programs, such as Erasmus. Green jobs (García-Vaquero et al, 2021; Sulich et al, 2020) can be used as an asset to solve or reduce youth unemployment problems, in these trying times. The educational system standards will need a change, bringing forth new jobs, new skills developed and new needs covered in the market. These changes should be incorporated at a national level, but the EU could support them by reviewing and restructuring EU education policies and making proposals for governments and companies to follow.

Competition policies need to be addressed as an issue that will probably lead companies not being able to do the transition to exit the market (Lucchese & Pianta, 2020). This could destroy the balance in many markets and could lead to rise in prices. EU trade policies are also to be reviewed between EU member states. When it comes to the EU's Bilateral Trade Agreements changes should be made to accumulate the transition and to make it more accessible for those who have undergone the transition to sell globally and enlarge their markets.

It is difficult to measure how many people in the EU work in green jobs since there is no agreed definition on the term (Sulich et al, 2020). France, Germany, Portugal and Spain are the four countries that are already taking steps towards green jobs and restructure their education system. It is important to understand what capabilities European citizens are lacking and what capabilities are needed for the transition to a greener economy and then take action. With that being said, upskilling/reskilling programs might not be able to cover the entirety of the labor market in each sector and this shall create adversity in each separate field. In every sector, the use of recycled materials, eco-friendly practices and renewable sources will most certainly be followed by higher prices for the decades to come. A rise of prices is expected and a mismatch of demand and supply. These are some common characteristics that will be met in every industry field of the EU due to the domino effect that will disrupt the markets. As it has already been pointed out, these can be reduced but not eliminated, with the support of the EU.

## **Tourism**

Europe is the world's main tourist destination for foreigners and residents of the EU (European Commission, 2021b). Thus, tourism has a huge environmental impact for the EU member states. Sustainability of tourism covers the responsible use of natural resources, the environmental impact of activities (waste production, pressure on water, land and biodiversity, etc.), clean energy use, the protection of the heritage and preservation of the natural and cultural integrity of destinations, the quality and sustainability of jobs created, the local economic fallout or customer care.

The EU and soft tourism 231 actions (Saseanu et al, 2020) have launched a campaign in favor of a decrease in the tourism sector to reduce the numbers of visitors, overnight stays, economic activities, etc. as a first step towards a more socially and ecologically equitable urban model, through policies of seasonal adjustment, delocalization and decongestion. This will cause a decrease in demand on famous travelling destinations. On the other hand, destinations and tourism establishments that did not enjoy much demand can take advantage of this transition to attract more tourists. Balance may be created in the demand and supply field of tourism. The increase of Internet use and digitization in travel planning has also influenced the sustainability and the demand of tourism in remote regions. There are businesses in this field that continue to neglect their obligations related to the environment, possibly due to a misunderstanding of the benefits they might obtain or a lack of best practice examples.

The EU has developed a European Tourism Indicators System as a simple method for measuring sustainability performance of companies and an EU ecolabel that is a voluntary tool to prove and promote their environmental excellence (Zago, 2020). This is a practice that will help many companies get global recognition and attract tourists from all over the world. The tourist sector might be the only one where demand might be redistributed in other regions to produce balance and not be reduced, as a result of the transition.

Sustainable tourism will be mostly affected by the transport and industry sector and by the digitalization and turn of interest of the public. Famous regions that were filled up with tourists in the past years could be negatively influenced by this transition (European Commission, 2021b). Apart from that, investments could more easily transfer to more sustainable practices than in other sectors due to the flexibility that characterizes the tourist sector.

## **Conclusions**

On becoming the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050, the EU needs to support the private sector, engage citizens, inform and spread the know-how to companies in order to reduce the consequences of an abnormal transition. Through innovation, collaboration and transparency, this big leap towards a greener economy can give a significant relief to the EU economy in the post-pandemic period (Colli, 2020b). Supply chains should transform to adapt to new values, new investment strategies should be built and ambition should be the driving force for the companies that could try to go down this road (Macaulay, 2020). All this could create value and benefit those companies and regions that decide to seize the opportunity of this transition.

If the private sector of EU member states does not cooperate and move towards the same direction, the markets of the above-mentioned sectors and generally, the whole EU economy, might pass a period of time that could be characterized by severe discrepancies and adversity (Herweijer & Joppa, 2020). Once again, a change in the private sector is not to be sustainable if a socio-economic change does not follow. A period of disruption could appear as a result. Unfortunately, a disturbance in the EU markets is most likely. The size of it is more related with the ways governments, the private sector and the public could react rather than with EU reaction.

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# European Green Deal and Policies Towards the Green Transition in the EU<sup>1</sup>

Nikolaos Konstantonis<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

This paper will pursue to demonstrate the aspects of the environmental policies and initiatives inside the European Union, with reference to legislative content. The research starts with a historical retrospect of the EU policies for the environment. Afterwards, it focuses on the new European Green Deal, launched in 2019, its climate targets, areas which it covers and the actions needed for its accomplishment. Policy instruments are presented quite analytically, with special reference to a just transition, along with other policies. Additionally, the basic impacts and difficulties in the implementation of environmental legislation inside the European Union are explained. In the end, an overall assessment of the topic is carried out.

**Keywords:** European Green Deal; environment; European Union; emissions; Commission; energy transition; renewable energy sources

## Introduction: Short history of EU's environmental policy

The European Union (EU) can be characterized as an international leading factor in the field of environmental and climate policies. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the first measures for the environment were taken, although mainly concerning the establishment of the internal market (Orlando, 2013). There have been two first steps towards the development of climate policies inside the European Community, both in 1972. During a summit in Paris, heads of states defined new fields of action from the Community, including environmental, energy and industrial policies. The same year, at a conference in Stockholm, held by the United Nations, environmental issues took their place at the forefront of international concerns, for the first time (United Nations, 1972). This led to the dialogue between developed and developing countries about the connection of economic growth with environmental pollution. The following year, 1973, the first -out of seven to date- Environmental Action Program was launched (Ministry of Environment of Denmark, n.d.), which remained a main tool for implementing measures concerning the environment.

With the coming of the 1980s, we can see more consistency in the environmental policies, adopted by the European Community. The Single European Act in 1986, was of great importance for the implementation of policies, as it provided a legal basis for the environmental legislation in Europe and it was the first Treaty to include the title "Environment" (Mathis, 2020). Moreover, it gave the

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Konstantonis, N. (2021). European Green Deal and Policies Towards the Green Transition in the EU. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 239-249. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29511

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Parliament more responsibilities in policy - making for the environment, through the cooperation with the Council (Selin & VanDeveer, 2015). Environmental protection obtained its own chapter in the Treaty (Hey, 2007). The following years were characterized by controversies between the internal market and protection of the environment. In the last years of the decade, the Commission explored new instruments of environmental policy towards the implementation of norms, by the private sector. Between 1989 and 1994 a reorientation of the EU climate policies was introduced (Hey, 2007). The European Court of Justice has played a crucial role in the consolidation of environmental policies inside the European Union, as it helped to clarify the role of environmental protection among other Community targets (Orlando, 2013).

The beginning of the new decade signaled a quantitative reduction in environmental laws (Golub, 1996) and more differentiation and flexibility in the Union's policies for the environment. Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties, in 1992 and 1997 respectively, although did not introduce substantial changes to the legislation of the SEA, were vital for the development of climate policies, as they added two significant specifications. In Maastricht Treaty, there was a specific reference to the protection of the environment among the EU objectives. With the Amsterdam Treaty, sustainable development was introduced for the first time as one of the Union's targets (Orlando 2013). All in all, there are four remarkable points for the establishment of environmental legislation in the European Union: The Single European Act in 1986, the Treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam in 1992 and 1997 respectively, and finally the Cardiff Process since 1997 (Perga, 2019).

The enlargement of 2004 was seen as a difficulty for the implementation of the environmental legislation, due to poor expertise and resources (Bar, Homeyer and Klasing, 2001; Lee, 2005: 19), but also as a good opportunity to enhance environmental protection in the new member-states and thus, in Europe and globally (Schreurs, 2004). In the period from 2002 to 2012, global climate change constitutes the greatest issue to be tackled. The EU has a leading role in international environmental agreements and cooperates with the rest of the world. Nowadays, the big challenge for the European Union is the coupling of economic growth and competitiveness with the protection of the environment (Orlando, 2013).

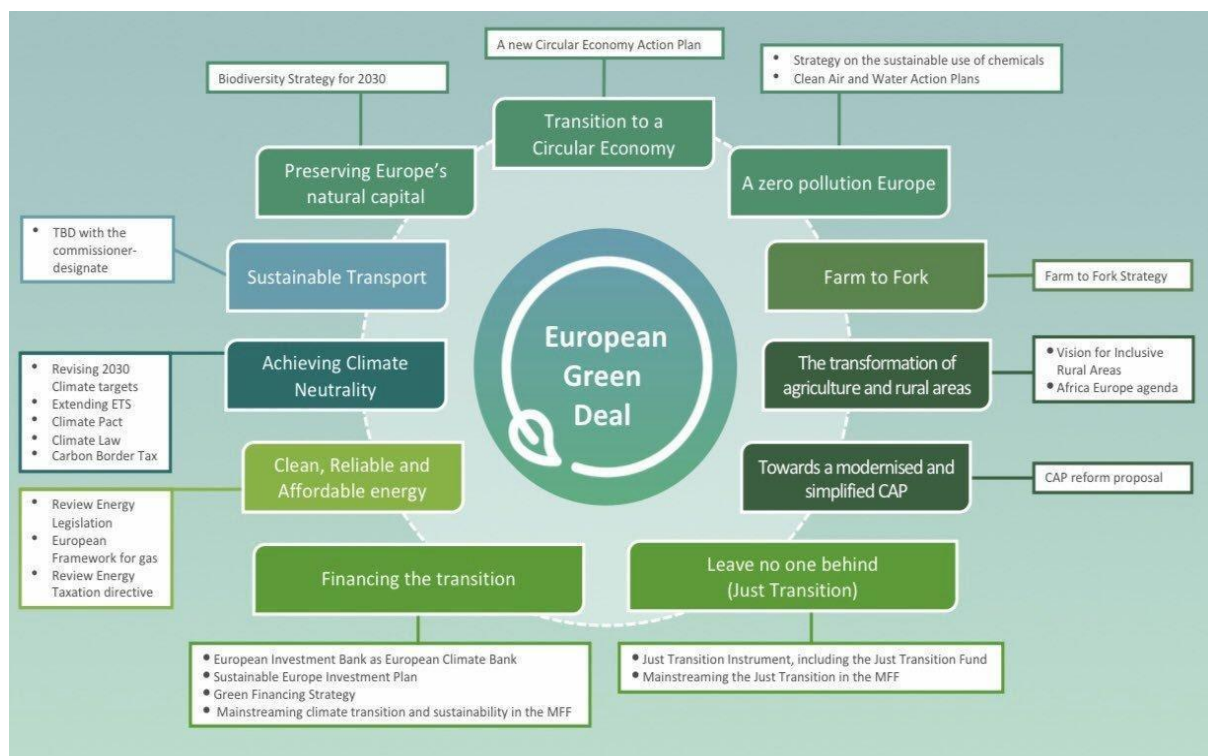
### **The European Green Deal, climate targets and other laws and policies for the environment**

In December 2019, a Green Deal was launched by the European Commission, with the ambitious aim to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. As President Ursula Von der Leyen stated: "The overarching goal was, and of course is, to make Europe the very first climate neutral continent in the world and to build a new growth strategy to get there. Our Package aims to combine the

reduction of emissions, with measures to preserve nature, and to put jobs and social balance at the heart of this transformation.” (European Commission, 2021a). This new deal constitutes the European Union’s approach for the implementation of the 2030 United Nations’ Agenda for sustainable development and has four main aims to achieve: Make Europe climate-neutral, protect humans, animals and plants by limiting emissions, enable companies to play a leading role in clean technologies globally, and ensure a fair energy transition for all countries (Dimitriadis, 2021). The new deal will pursue to include the ambitious aim for a climate-neutral Europe, into legislation (Canevari, 2020). Thus, three main requirements which are included in climate legislation, have been set by the Commission for 2030, in order for the Agenda to be successful. Greenhouse gas emissions should be reduced at least by 40%, comparing to 1990 levels, renewable energy sources must have a 32% share in the energy mix and 32.5% improvement in energy efficiency is also a necessity (European Council, 2014).

The new Deal could play a significant role for the recovery after the end of the pandemic and aspires to limit carbon emissions, decouple economic development from resource use and ensure that no country is excluded or left behind in this process (Belardo, 2021). The Deal refers to all economic sectors, including transport, energy, buildings, industries and agriculture.

**Figure 1: European Green Deal**



Source: European Compost Network (n.d.) <https://www.compostnetwork.info/eu-green-deal/> (Accessed: 05/07/2021)

The reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and the aim for the share of renewable energy sources are binding for all member-states, however energy efficiency is does not bind the states (Siddi, 2020). Legislation will be updated towards an augmented 55% target for the reduction of Greenhouse Gas emissions in the European Union. Legislative proposals will be introduced, concerning different areas, including: EU Emissions Trading System, energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, CO2 emissions from road transports, Agriculture, Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry and effort sharing (European Commission, 2020a). There are some basic features, and policy areas in which the European Green Deal (EGD) aims to achieve its goals. These are the following (Norton Rose Fullbright, 2021):

- Climate action
- Clean energy
- Sustainable industry
- Buildings - renovations
- Sustainable transports
- Combating pollution
- Farm to fork strategy
- Preservation of biodiversity
- Research and development
- Preventing unfair competition from carbon leakage

There are integrated rules for the designment, monitoring and progress report for the 2030 targets, energy targets and international commitments set by the Paris Agreement, which is a legally binding international treaty for global climate change (United Nations, 2021), and requires common efforts from all nations of the world. Regulation and standardization, investments and innovation, national reforms and international cooperation are means of politics for the achievement of the Green Deal (Mathis, 2020). If it will be considered necessary, the European Commission will recommend an intermediate target for 2040 (European Council, 2021). The cohesion policy in the EGD requires investments in place-based innovations and smart economic transformations, abandonment of unsustainable practices and ensuring a fair transition for all regions (Happaerts, 2021).

The Commission envisages a longer-term objective for the year 2050, in order for Europe to be climate-neutral and its economy to have net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. This objective is in the

core of the EGD and is aligned to the Union's commitment to climate action, as imposed by the Paris Agreement in 2015. Prerequisites have been set for the achievement of climate neutrality, including 80% cut of Greenhouse gas emissions in comparison with the 1990 levels and additionally 90% reduction in order to finally reach zero emissions, and, the process of decarbonization. The Commission in addition, enacted the European Climate Law towards the accomplishment of the European Green Deal's targets. It was adopted by the European Council and the Parliament (European Council, 2021). This law will ensure that the whole of the EU policies will be in alignment with the goal of the economic and social climate neutrality and that all sectors will contribute to that goal. It will be legally binding for all member-states to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and will include a monitoring mechanism to observe the progress made by each state (European Commission, 2020b). The European Climate Pact concerns the involvement of institutions, citizens and companies to cooperate in order to establish a framework that goes beyond the limits of consultation (Dimitriadis, 2021). Moreover, a new Adaptation Strategy was adopted, to cope with global climate change. According to this strategy, the adaptation will have to be smarter, faster, more systemic and encourage international actions for adapting to climate change. Climate diplomacy, which comprises negotiations with third countries in, and outside Europe, is a means of political action that has been renewed (European Commission, 2021b). The Council made a call for all actors to work together on a strategic approach to climate diplomacy (European Council, 2020). International discussions have an influence on state action and promote the development of domestic policies, although there is no official treaty (Dimitrov, 2015).

The National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) for 2030 constitute a framework for the EU member states to plan their climate and energy targets and the means to achieve them by 2030. The final NECPs had to be sent by the end of 2019 and member states are obliged to submit progress reports every two years, in order to show their compliance with the 2030 aims, of course under the Commission's supervision (Maris & Flouros, 2021). The main aim of these plans is to support the expansion in the use of renewable energy sources, a fact that will consequently lead to increased investments and creation of new jobs in this sector (Wind Europe, 2021). Transport and energy security are two fields, in which renewable sources could be extensively used (Hafner & Raimondi, 2020). Furthermore, the EU Emissions Trading System is an important policy tool for the cost-effective reduction of greenhouse gases inside the Union and it covers the total volume of Greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions. Through this system, emission allowances can be traded, in order for the total emissions to remain within the allowable limits (European Commission, 2015).

## Energy transition, just transition and effects of the Green Deal

The ultimate goal of all these policies and measures, is a transition in the energy sector, in which carbon emissions will have been extremely limited. This way, renewable energy sources will have a greatly increased share in the energy mix. According to Christian-Rynning Tonnesen (2021), it is possible, at least on a theoretical basis, for the European continent, to have an energy system that relies exclusively on renewables, which will replace fossil fuels. The energy transition and the measures implemented for climate change should be seen as not only governmental, but international efforts (Wettengel, 2021). The transition towards a clean energy mix, requires a number of actions which are also included in the Green Deal: A secured and affordable energy supply for the European Union. The creation of a fully integrated, interconnected and digitalized energy market, making energy efficiency a top priority, enhancing the energy performance of buildings and finally the reliance of power sector on renewable energy sources (European Commission, 2019). Another requirement is the reduction in energy consumption, through the use of more eco-friendly technologies, and also limited use of carbon and nuclear power (Kemfert, 2019). It is a fact that the transformations made in the energy sector, will have a significant impact on countries with high emissions of hydrocarbons, because it is quite possible for the demand of principal goods and global prices to drop and decline respectively (Teevan, Medinilla & Sergejeff, 2021). Furthermore, technologies used for energy storage, contribute to reduce significantly carbon emissions in the electricity sector (Kittner, Lill & Kammen, 2017).

It is vital that the transition to a carbon-free energy sector, will be fair for all countries, and no one is left behind or excluded from this process. The great aim of a just transition is to couple a strong economy with a healthy environment (Sierra Club, n.d.). The sustainability of financial resources is of great importance for the economic transition to a low-carbon Europe, to be fair. Thus, a Just Transition Mechanism (JTM) has been created for this purpose. Along with the Just Transition Fund, it will contribute to the limitation of the negative effects on the most vulnerable member states of the EU (Eurocities, 2020). The notion of the just transition is closely linked to sustainable development. In order for the transition to be socially fair, investments must be made to provide affordable solutions to those affected the most by carbon pricing. Simultaneously, measures for tackling energy poverty and re-skilling of the workers in the energy sector, should be implemented (Sabato & Fronteddu, 2020). Fossil fuel workers will be the first included in the just transition processes (Mertins-Kirkwood & Deshpande, 2019).

Apart from JTM, a policy tool for the control of the carbon quantity traded among countries, is the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism. The main aim of this policy instrument is to prevent phenomena of carbon leakage. In this process, companies inside the Union, can transfer intense carbon production to countries around the world, with less strict climate legislation (European Commission, n.d.). But how this system will function? With this mechanism, domestic and imported carbon price will be the same. Moreover, it will be ensured that climate targets set by the European Union, are not to be undermined by practices which lead to carbon leakage.

The energy transition is following different paces among EU members. In Italy for example, renewable energy sources are becoming more and more attractive to investments, while Poland is failing to make changes in its energy mix (being opposed to the 2050 aim of climate neutrality) (Hafner & Raimondi, 2020). When it comes to Greece, the transition to a low carbon economy and a differentiated energy mix, becomes a priority. A basic means for this change is electricity storage. It enables the increased use of renewable energy sources in electricity systems. Although energy storage is still in its first steps, 2021 is an important starting point for the country (Norton Rose Fullbright, 2021). The main renewable energy sources in Greece, are photovoltaics and wind power.

The implementation of the EGD and the targets set for 2030, are not without difficulties and obstacles. It is not that easy either for states and industries, or for EU citizens, to radically change attitude towards energy consumption and practices. The financial cost for the transition to an extremely low or zero carbon energy sector, will be vast. About 1 trillion euros will be required by the next ten years, as the European Commission assesses (Harvey & Rankin, 2020). In addition, deep transformations in economic and industrial strategies in order to meet the targets set for a climate neutral Europe, are required (Bloomfield & Stewart, 2020). A serious obstacle for the success of this new endeavor, is the willingness of member states to transform their economic systems. Moreover, it is a fact that if the largest carbon emitters (USA and China), do not conform to some reduction policies, EU's action will not achieve much, globally (Moutii, 2021). Although the aforementioned difficulties exist, the Deal has much to offer to citizens in Europe, and also will have some worldwide effects, if implemented properly. First and foremost, health lies on top of the benefits. That's because replacing fossil fuels by clean renewable energy, could potentially prevent 3.6 million (!) premature deaths annually, worldwide (Haines & Scheelbeek, 2020). The well-being of the Union's citizens will be positively affected by the EGD. The measures implemented, will provide cleaner air, water and soil. Food can be healthier and buildings will obtain more energy efficiency than now. The creation of greener jobs and the development of more competitive and resilient industries are also included in the positive effects of the EGD (European Commission, 2021d). As far as the rest of the world is



concerned, the external dimension of the Deal depends on domestic policies and EU's relations with partner countries. Three different approaches exist: The collaborative, which addresses Western Balkans, the Southern Neighborhood and Africa, and includes initiatives and investments in these places. The coercive approach aims to promote the green transition elsewhere and prevent carbon leakage. Finally, the diplomatic approach refers to the fact that traditional climate diplomacy is implemented with the partner countries (Teevan, Medinilla & Sergejeff, 2021).

## Conclusions

All in all, one can easily conclude that the European Union, from the long and recent past, until nowadays, is making strong efforts to protect the environment. An extended framework of policies, agreements and initiatives has been created over the years - with the EU Green Deal being the most ambitious one -, in order to enact environmental legislation inside the Union. The qualitative and quantitative data offer a good illustration of the policies implemented. The big threat of climate change can be seen also as a good opportunity for humanity, not only in Europe, but all over the world. An opportunity to create healthier and more sustainable conditions for the current and future generations. However, it requires strong commitment and consistency from governments, companies, industries and citizens so as to achieve the goal of combating climate change and form a healthier environment for all. It cannot be questioned that the whole process is facing serious obstacles. However, it seems that it is worth the pain to try and change some of our habits for the sake of the environment in which we live, grow and evolve.

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# Maternity Leave at EU Level and Its Impact on Gender (In)Equality<sup>1</sup>

Maria Damaskou<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Discussions around the issue of maternity leave are timeless and although there has been a great improvement regarding the rights of working mothers, the total policy upgrade remains a challenge. This research focuses on the efforts that have been made at EU level in order for its member states to coordinate their maternity leave policies and establish favorable terms. Furthermore, the impact that maternity leave has on employment rates, gender equality, family roles and generally, on many aspects of people's lives is highlighted. Last but not least, it should not be neglected that the mistreatment of working women affects the whole of society and not only pregnant women, thus for this reason, this situation should be dealt with through pioneering and revolutionary changes.

**Keywords:** Maternity leave; maternity leave policies; EU; working mothers; women; gender equality; employment; fertility

## Introduction

Maternity leave is a field of research that concerns social security and affects people's lives. It is a period off-work for the working mothers from a certain time during their pregnancy and until a certain time after the childbirth. Maternity leave is a way to protect mothers' and children's health and although the existence of an EU legal framework, it is obvious, from the analysis below, that the European states act independently establishing more or less favorable maternity leave policies. Moreover, the issue of maternity leave reminds all people of the challenges around genders, which exist in all societies, in any kind of field, from the family's traditional roles to the working environment (ILO, 2010).

In the first section of the present analysis, an overview regarding the EU legal framework on maternity leave is introduced, presenting all the important acts that have been made at European level. Afterwards, the situation in EU member states is analyzed with an emphasis on weeks and on payment of each state's maternity leave policy, while this data is compared to each other and also to the index of women's participation to the labor market and to the index of fertility. In the third section, the correlation between maternity leave policies and gender issues is highlighted, followed by a critical analysis regarding three case studies and suggested recommendations.

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Damaskou, M. (2021). Maternity Leave at EU Level and Its Impact on Gender (In)Equality. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 250-259. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29512

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## **An overview of policy coordination efforts at EU level**

In 1992 the EU issued the Directive “92/85/EEC”: “on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding”. The 1992 Pregnant Workers Directive is valid until today and sets a minimum period of 14 weeks for maternity leave, with 2 of them for mandatory leave before and/or after the childbirth. At the same time, member states should prohibit the dismissal of the worker during the period of her pregnancy and until the end of the maternity leave (Eur-lex, 1992). In 2008 a new proposal was advanced by the European Commission regarding the extension of the period of maternity leave to 18 weeks with 6 compulsory weeks after confinement. Two years later, in 2010, the European Parliament accepted this proposal but made some amendments. It extended the maternity leave to 20 weeks. However, in 2015 the proposal was withdrawn because of Council’s discrepancy (EPRS, 2019). Regarding the salary of workers, the 1992 Directive set an adequate allowance subject to national legislation, while the 2008 proposal set an allowance amounting to full salary (EPRS, 2015).

The Juncker Commission published in 2015 a Roadmap: “New start to address the challenges of work-life balance faced by working families”. It was focused on the women’s low participation in the labor market and emphasized on equal distribution of care responsibilities between mothers and fathers in order to strengthen women in the workplace (Foubert, 2017). In 2017, a new work-life balance package, proposed by the European Commission, replaced the previous proposal in order to revitalize the EU legislation about the already existing parental leave framework. This included a scheme for paternity and caregivers’ leave and, generally, flexible working settings to all working parents with children up to 12 years old and caregivers with dependent relatives. These measures were about bringing equality between women and men in the workplace but without changing the period of maternity leave. After some amendments that were proposed by the European Parliament and the Council, in 2017 and 2018, the agreement was finally reached in June 2019. On 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2019 the Directive came into force and member states have 3 years to adapt the laws (European Parliament, 2021).

## **The current situation in EU member states**

According to Fallon et al. (2017), great correlation has been found between maternity leave policies and fertility rates. For instance, in Denmark, Sweden and France, the fertility rates are among the highest in Europe, and this happens due to high payment rates (see table 1), which are above the average. As it is obvious from figure 1 below, in these three countries the percentage of fertility

fluctuates approximately between 1.6 and 2. In contrast, the same percentage in three other countries (Slovakia, Hungary, Cyprus) fluctuates approximately between 1.2 and 1.57. In these three countries, according to table 1, the payment rates are between 70% and 75%. Although fertility is not the only indicator connected to maternity leave, it can provide some related results. Nonetheless, there can be other conditions that can affect the percentage of fertility in a country, such as the ageing population. According to Risse (2006), some people when they are arguing about being parents or not, they think in terms of utility theory. It is a cost-benefit analysis which illustrates the advantages and disadvantages of having a child, basically in economic terms. Some other women think how much the level of their career will be affected, or the amount of money that they will earn during maternity leave and if they will be able to afford the costs of raising a child. On the other hand, others think that they will leave a legacy to society, as children supply the next generation of human capital, labor and tax revenue.

**Table 1: Maternity leave in EU member states**

Country	Paid weeks prenatal*	Paid weeks postnatal*	Payment rate
Bulgaria	6	52	90%
Greece	8	12	100%
United Kingdom	11	46	first 6 weeks 90%; next 33 weeks a flat-rate payment of either £145.18 (€169.47) or 90% of average gross weekly earnings (whichever is lower); the remaining 13 weeks are unpaid.
Slovakia	8	26	75%
Croatia	4	24	100%
Czech Republic	8	20	70%
Ireland	2	40	100% for 26 weeks; the remaining 16 weeks unpaid
Hungary	4	20	70%
Italy	4	16	100%
Luxembourg	8	12	100%
Estonia	4	16	100%
Poland	6	14	80 - 100%
Denmark	4	14	up to DKK 4 300 (€576) per week based on former earnings
Cyprus	9	9	72%
Romania	9	9	85%
Malta	8	10	weekly rate of €66.25
Lithuania	10	8	100%
Finland	8	9	the allowance is normally about 70% of income.
Latvia	8	8	80%
France	3	13	100%
Austria	8	8	100%
Netherlands	6	10	100%
Spain	10	6	100%
Belgium	6	9	100%

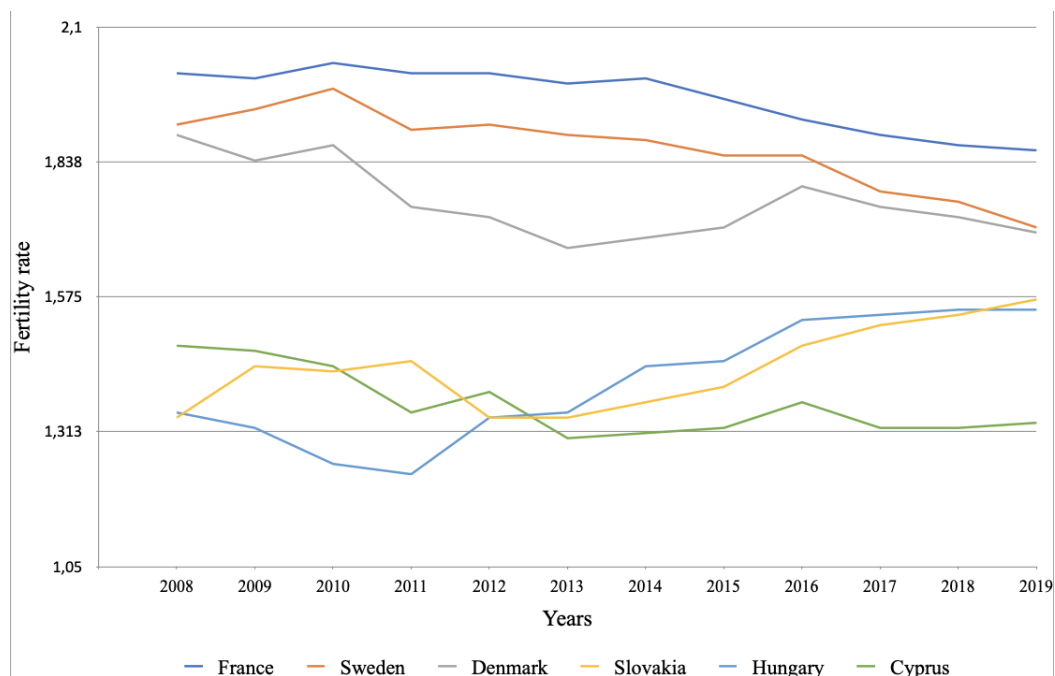
Slovenia	4	11	100%
Germany	6	8	100%
Sweden	2	* <sup>1</sup>	* <sup>1</sup>
Portugal	4	6	100%

Source: European Parliament, 2019

\* The paid weeks prenatal and postnatal are estimated by both mandatory and non-mandatory number of weeks.

\*<sup>1</sup> Swedish legislation on this issue is more gender neutral than in other Member States. Rather than maternity leave, parental leave is the most relevant. Each parent is eligible for up to 240 days paid parental leave (all but 90 days of which may be transferred to the other parent), plus unpaid leave until the child is 18 months old. Maternity leave can be taken before or after birth within 60 days of delivery.

**Figure 1: Total fertility rate of 6 EU member states**



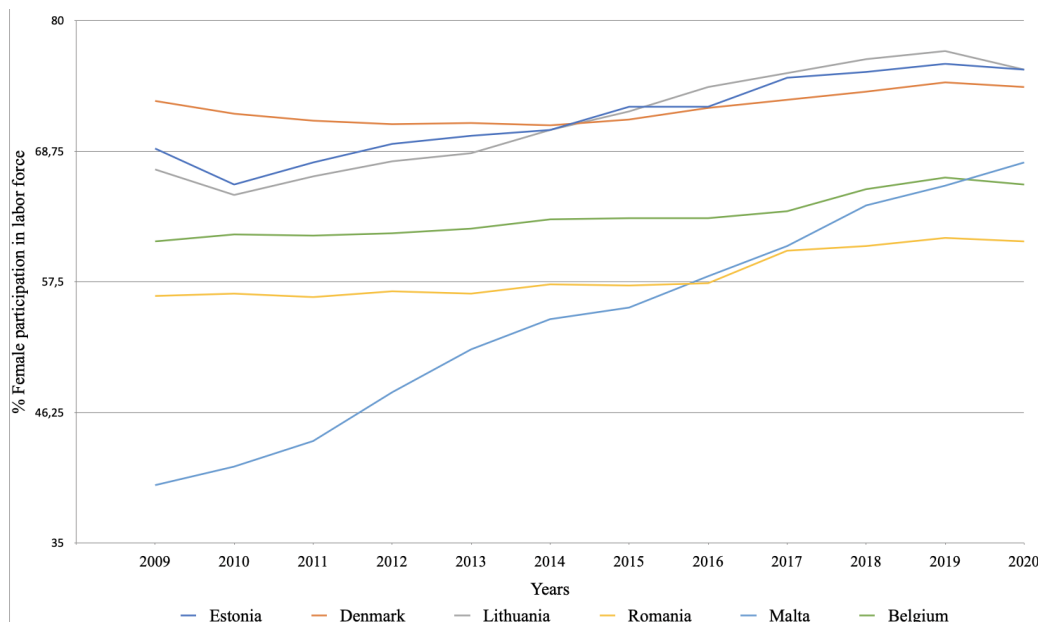
Source: Eurostat, 2021c

According to Shapiro and Mott (1994), a well-structured maternity leave scheme can positively affect the participation of women in the labor market as well as their performance. The duration and the compensation are the two main factors in order to characterize a system as “maternity leave friendly” or not. About the correlation between maternity leave policies and women’s labor force participation, it is obvious from table 1 and figure 2, that in countries such as Romania, Malta and Belgium, the participation of women is very low due to the few paid weeks or to partially (not full) compensation. On the other hand, the other three countries of figure 2, Estonia, Denmark and Lithuania have higher percentages of female participation in the labor force due to a better organized maternity leave framework, which guarantees to working mothers a safer environment. However, it should not be



neglected that there are more factors that can also affect the participation of women in the labor force, except for maternity leave frameworks, such as the economic and educational status, family background, traditions, and the society women live in. For example, for mothers who do not earn a satisfactory salary, it is difficult to afford to take unpaid time off (Mandel, 2012).

**Figure 2: Total employment of females in 6 EU member states**



Source: Eurostat, 2021a

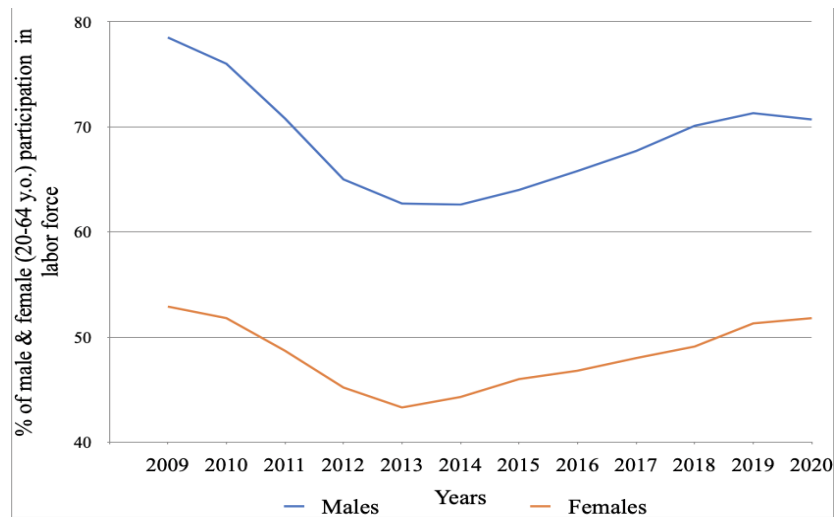
### Gender issues in relation to maternity leave policies

In general, when having a baby, men tend to work more in paid positions while women spend more time on unpaid work ending up working part time or to completely drop out of the labor market, although they would like to continue their previous careers. This situation creates dependent women who may live under poverty conditions. It is also a very common phenomenon that many of them are dismissed and thus, several psychological problems can be caused. Women's participation in the labor market in the EU has not been increased very exponentially since 2006 and the employment rate is still lower than in the other West countries (European Commission, 2015).

The figures below show that there are several differences between men and women in some fields, such as their participation in the labor force. However, it should be mentioned that this gap exists regardless of a certain time period, in other words, it is not affected by factors such as economic crisis, but mostly by policies which discourage women from entering the labor market. For example, in Greece (figure 3), in 2009, only 52.9% of women were working, while the men's percentage was around 78.5% for the same year. During the economic crisis, in 2015, 64% of men participated in the

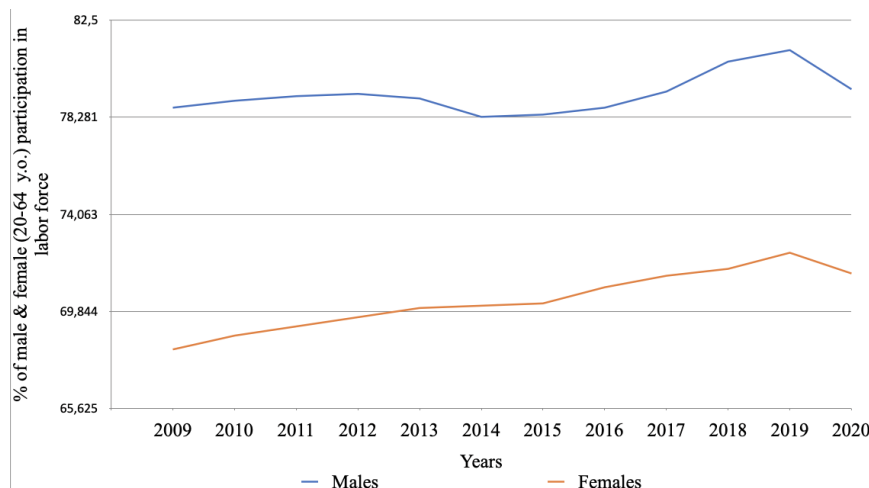
labor force, but only 46% of women. On the other hand, in countries with a more balanced gap between men's and women's participation in the labor market, maternity leave policies are more favorable. In Austria, for instance, the percentage of working men was 79.5% in 2020, while women's was around 71.5% (figure 4). This fact, in combination with the evidence from table 1 (16 paid weeks and 100% compensation in Austria) confirms this common sense.

**Figure 3: women's and men's participation in labor force in Greece**



Source: Eurostat, 2021a

**Figure 4: women's and men's participation in labor force in Austria**

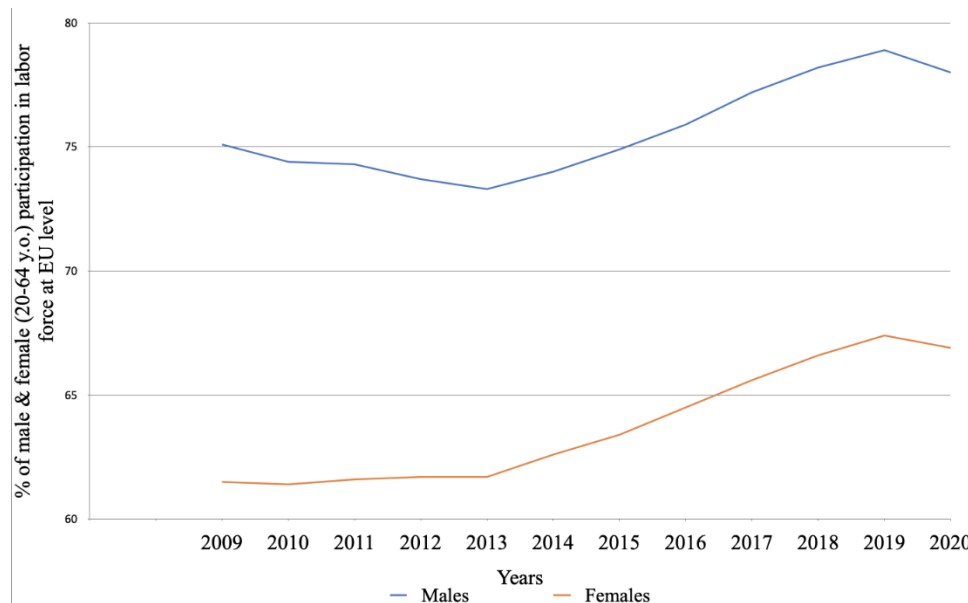


Source: Eurostat, 2021a

Moving broadly to the EU level, the goal that was set in 2015 regarding the EU2020 Strategy for an equal employment rate (75%) of women and men has not been totally achieved. Specifically, the number of working men in the EU-27 in 2020 was 78%, while this number was only 66.9% for women (figure 5). Furthermore, it was proven that the more children a woman has, the lower the

employment rate. In 2020, for example, the average employment rate of women with three children or more was 59.1%. In contrast, men without children had the lowest average employment rate (80.9%), while the number of employed men with two kids was around 92.4% and with three or more children around 86.7% (Eurostat, 2021b).

**Figure 5: women's and men's participation in labor force in the EU-27**



Source: Eurostat, 2021a

### Case studies and recommendations

In 2010, in Denmark, the number of women with children (under the age of 12) that were working was higher than the number of women without children that were working. According to ECORYS, Denmark was considered to have a dual earner system, which means that both male and female parents were compensated the same. This amount of compensation was also the highest on average. At the EU level, however, the reconciliation policies of 2011, which supported the parallel occupation in both family and professional level, did not cover the gap between men and women. The International Labor Organization (ILO) supported that maternity leave schemes are a vital part of reconciliation policies and the European Commission emphasized the importance of a long maternity leave period for the health of both the mother and the baby. These policies also help women to have a smoother transition in the workplace as their main goal is to balance the liabilities of parents both in family and in the workplace. For this reason, the example of Denmark is a great opportunity for the EU and its member states to give a push in reconciliation policies or to develop other similar policies, regarding the gender equality, as the Danish system made obvious that father's active role

in caregiving is a meaningful social progression which positively affects all the members of a family (European Parliament, 2015).

On the other hand, Greece has been an example to be avoided because of the distinction between private and public sector regarding the quality and the duration of maternity leave. While the public sector employees are eligible for five months of paid maternity leave and nine months for childcare leave, the private sector employees receive four months of maternity leave and four months for childcare leave. Regarding compensation, mothers in the first category earn full payment. Conversely, mothers working in the private sector receive allowances from their employer, the social insurance system (IKA), and the Greek Manpower Employment Organization (OAED - part of the federal government) (Ray, 2008, Hatzivarnava-Kazassi & Karamessini, 2020). Nonetheless, the conditions under which a pregnant woman is entitled to these benefits are very complicated, and although they play an important role in this study, the focus should remain on the complexity of the whole process, so their detailed analysis will not be mentioned. Furthermore, in the private sector, adoptive mothers do not have any adoption leave protections, while in the public sector they have the right for three paid months of leave (Ray, 2008, Hatzivarnava-Kazassi & Karamessini, 2020). This situation further intensifies the need for an EU common mandatory action framework for maternity leave policies in order to prevent states from pursuing policies that favor specific situations without taking the mother into account. Regarding this case study, a great injustice to a certain portion of the population (pregnant women in the private sector) will cease to exist under a common legislative framework. The example of Greece is a special case which highlights that in addition to gender inequality, there is also inequality among people of the same gender.

Finally, Ireland has a minimum number of only 2 prenatal weeks, as seen in the table 1 above. Moreover, from the total of 42 weeks, only the 26 are paid, while the rest 16 are unpaid. For the 26 paid weeks, a weekly maternity benefit rate of €245 is received only by the qualifiers. In other words, mothers who are entitled to some social welfare payments are qualified only for half of this amount. In general, a stagnation regarding the number of mothers who receive the maternity benefit prevails. In 2014, there were 22,708 recipients and in 2018 only 21,182. The 1/3 of employed women who participated in a survey declared that they have faced problems with the maternity leave and especially with its duration (Daly & Szelewa, 2020). A legal framework at EU level which will determine the exact number of weeks a pregnant woman is entitled to, before and after the childbirth, should be established. Two months before the childbirth is not an appropriate number for the duration of the prenatal maternity leave period. Taking into consideration the duration of breastfeeding, the financial burdens of hiring a nanny or enrolling the baby to a nursery school, the possible not existence

of third persons to help such as grandparents and the possibility of a single-parent family, it makes more sense that the maternity leave period should last more even from the 14 weeks that have been proposed by the EU and the proportion of weeks before and after the childbirth should be distributed very carefully as the health of both mother and the embryo is of the highest importance, and of course, two weeks before the birth do not guarantee this priority.

## Conclusions

Despite the efforts of the EU to bring equality between men and women in the labor market and to empower the second ones even more with family friendly policies, it is supported that these efforts are not strong enough, as it is clearly proven that there is still room for improvement. Some people criticize these attempts very cynically, arguing that gender stereotypes, which want women to continue to play a leading role in childcare, are still reinforced but at least in a better organized environment with more favorable terms. On the other hand, there is a gap in the policy about the rights of single mothers, a fact which shows that the typical traditional family model is taken as granted while it should not be (Foubert, 2017).

In general, it should be understood that more action at EU level is necessary because competition as well as cooperation among member states are key factors in order for a common framework, in which member states will not act on their own arbitrary rules, to function better (European Commission, 2015). This common framework, although existing, is neither binding nor strong enough to cope with current challenges, and as a result, women are marginalized for one more time, in one more area.

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# Immigration as a Common European Challenge: The Crucial Role of the Greek and Turkish Case<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

European immigration policy as a multilevel and polymorphic process, by definition, constitutes a complex phenomenon defined as a transcendent set of socio-economic and political processes that are considered to transform the present transnational treaty into a construct of multiple policies to be found between member states. Recently, it is accounted as a complex network of supranational interconnection in both economic and sociological terms to combat various refugee crises. This paper aims to address the inner dialogue regarding the Dublin contribution among others updated immigration policies, especially regarding the Greek and Turkish case, within the updated political turmoil to deal with. Therefore, it is crucial not to overlook the multicultural dimension as one of the most critical factors in understanding the political structure within developing the indicative path of socio-political relationship between member states, thus of variable factors to deal with, such as immigration, extremism etc. The consequences and extensions of this complex structure have already outlined a historical moment on a global or even humanistic scale. Member states are called to renegotiate their understanding of space, time, human rights either in an international or supranational environment; however, by confronting the vulnerability of modern democracies in a world of risks caused by democratic deficit; the lack of challenging with the dilemmas and responsibilities on a pan-European political perspective on immigration issues, indeed with respect on democratic terms. This paper will emphasize (on) which of existing policies and initiatives should be implemented to achieve common ground to overcome the multiple crises and will examine the particular role of Greece and Turkey on immigration and refugee issues, thus is of significance in developing an interdisciplinary dialogue that may contribute to the re-examination of the member states role within the contribution of the institutional and legal framework, in a new world of potential risks by rethinking the EU policies and why the “know how” should work.

**Key Words:** European immigration policy; European Commission; Dublin Regulation system; illegal immigration; Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ); Contiguous Zone; Territorial waters; European Union (EU)

## Introduction

The wave of refugees from Middle Eastern war zones, in particular from Syria and Iraq, and from the forgotten ones of Africa, as well as economic migrants fleeing endemic situations of poverty and

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Papadakis, K. and Spyrakou, V. (2021). Immigration as a Common European Challenge: The Crucial Role of the Greek and Turkish Case. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 260-266. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29513

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violence, in the last five years has reached European territory to a substantial extent, crossing the dangerous Mediterranean or Balkan routes. The arrival of millions of refugees and migrants has had strong repercussions in various European Union (EU) countries in both the social, political and economic spheres, not only creating problems regarding the initial reception of migrants and their distribution -problem still not solved thus to be solved, but also putting in crisis a whole tested system of integration and coexistence between the native population and newcomers -mostly of Muslim religion, that had been laboriously developed in the decades following the end of the World War II. Nevertheless, European immigration is an ongoing procedure which raises a crucial question: what really does the EU lack, a common sense or a common immigration policy?

### **The particular role of the European Commission on immigration and the Dublin outcomes and its alternatives to be reconsidered**

Since October 2019, the Commission published an update project report on the implementation of the European Agenda on Migration, which examines progress made and shortcomings in the implementation of the Agenda. This contribution raises fundamentally systematic approach regarding the policies to be taken under a common ground of necessity among the member states and nevertheless Europe's critical response. Moreover, September 2021, a year after adopting the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, the Commission adopted the first report on migration and asylum with respect to human rights and reconsidered the whole picture of aspects of immigrations developments, as well as asylum policy of the last year's outcomes.

All policy developments are closely monitored by the European Migration Network, established in 2008 as an EU network of migration and asylum experts from all the member States, who will work together in order to provide objective, comparable and policy-relevant information (European Parliament, 2021). Concerning the immigration crisis, the Commission indicates an overarching and specific plan focusing on overcoming the issue thus a key advanced role which meets institutional and legal impact among member states regarding the policies should be adopted in a manner of common reaction in order to ensure the highest of policies addressed to immigration policy.

The upcoming crisis created a political situation which appeared as a starting point of negotiations and norms to be ensured, such as the Dublin system and its outcomes. The Dublin Regulation is the main document adopted by the EU on the subject of asylum law. It has also been signed by non-member countries, such as Switzerland. Since 1990, when the Dublin Convention was signed, a series of changes have been introduced although in part limitedly implemented, but the basic criterion has always remained fixed: the first country of entry of a migrant has the task of examining his application

for asylum and take care of its reception and integration, precluding him from submitting the application in another state of the Union. Practically that means that pressed by the massive arrival of asylum seekers who weighed mainly on Greece, Italy, Spain among others, since 2015 the European Union has tried to harmonize asylum policies in EU member states in order to overcome - the principle underlying the Dublin system, but has not established a permanent balance between the different national legislations mainly because of their legal and institutional diversities (European Commission, n.d.).

Moreover, the reform attempts made by the European Commission and the European Parliament in November 2017, which wanted to introduce the parameter of by default solidarity among the EU countries in the distribution of quotas for asylum seekers, the member states were not able to find a common agreement during the ongoing immigration crisis (Crespy *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, the fact that five years later of the crucial refugee crisis, European countries have not yet found an agreement to prevent Greece, Spain among other member states, from being left alone to deal with the reception of migrants, brings in the fore that that lacking of a common legislation policy (Lavenex, 2006) nevertheless is a drawback to be solved yet a crisis to overcome as an opportunity<sup>4</sup> to act in a common ground of policies in need or to find out alternatives<sup>5</sup>. For example: the acknowledge that the Dublin system lacking of a new approach in order to be approved from the whole of the EU member states and consequently, ensure that the member states first obligations are fulfilled in order refugees are not forced to move to a second-third member state in order to be taken under consideration in a fair within respect approach, thus by adopting a common distribution policy regarding their hosting and safety rights.

### **Immigration: The crucial role of Greece and Turkey**

Recently, it has become clear that Turkey is trying to force illegal immigration towards Europe. The provocative statements of the Turkish president towards Greece and the European Union have

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<sup>4</sup> The so-called opportunity examines the possibility of further integration policies among the member states within the case of such a crisis to be seen as a positive or negative impact for the EU interrelationship and co-existence enhanced by the legal and institutional framework. For an introductive example, among others, see Vink, M. P. (2002). Negative and Positive Integration in European Immigration Policies. *European Integration online Papers (EIoP)*, 6(13): 1-19.

<sup>5</sup> For an indicative analysis regarding the alternatives should be taken into consideration, is highly recommended generic initiatives among member states such as Anghel, S. E. (2019). *Western Balkans: State of play in the European Council. Overview of discussions since the Lisbon Treaty*. EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service, PE 631.770. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/631770/EPRS\\_BRI\(2019\)631770\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/631770/EPRS_BRI(2019)631770_EN.pdf) (Accessed: 12/11/2021). For further dynamics see also Bauer S. (2020). *Citizens' Support for the European Union During the Euro Crisis: Between Scylla and Charybdis* (pp. 275-287). In: *Citizens' Support for the European Union*. Contributions to Political Science. Cham: Springer.

become a daily fact. In other words, Turkey is using the human pain of immigrants and refugees as a weapon of an ‘asymmetric war’ against Greece and as a blackmailing means against the European Union in order to access financial support. Unfortunately, this behavior leads hundreds of people to death, among them many children, during their attempts to pass the Mediterranean and enter Europe. Furthermore, Greece aims to preserve human lives, guarding jointly by Frontex both sea and land borders, as any modern European state should do, with determination and disposal of great numbers of personnel and resources. However, it would be crucial for Greece to establish a Contiguous Zone to deal with illegal (and Turkish-led) immigration. Greece, once a ship with illegal immigrants enters the coastal zone, and after conducting a boarding, if it finds out that there are immigrants on the ship, is obliged to examine whether their repatriation entails its responsibility otherwise it would be a violation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. In the face of such a possibility, Greece is usually led to the decision to finally accept them and lead them to an Aegean island, which most of the islands are now overcrowded with immigrants and refugees. The adoption of the Contiguous Zone could offer Greece the opportunity to control the illegal (and frequently Turkish-led) immigration and the opportunity to consider alternatives, without being under the pressure that would be caused by the fact that illegal immigrants are in the coastal zone.

The main reason that Turkey promotes illegal immigration towards Greece is because of the long-term Aegean Dispute between the two countries. The Turkish Coast Guard (TCG) has published alleged official maps and documents claiming that half of the Aegean Sea belongs to Turkey. In this sense, Ankara claims to gain dozens of Greek islands, the entire eastern Aegean from the island of Samothraki in the North to Kastelorizo island in the South. The maps and claims have been uploaded on the website of the Turkish Coast Guard Sahil Güvenlik Komutanlığı in the context of a 60-page report about the activities of the TCG in 2016. On page 7 and 13 of the report, the maps allegedly show Turkey’s Search and Rescue responsibility area. The maps show half of the Aegean Sea and also a large part of the Black Sea, where Turkey’s SAR area coincides with the Turkish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). It should be noted that Turkey has not signed the International Convention for the Law of the Sea of 1982, which delimits the boundaries of the EEZs. However, Turkey claims an EEZ of more than 200 nautical miles.

**Chart 1: Turkish Claim in the Aegean**

Source: Turkish coast guard, Available at: [www.sahilguvenlik.gov.tr](http://www.sahilguvenlik.gov.tr) (Accessed: 09/10/2021).

Turkey is taking advantage of the fact that Greece has not yet a designated Contiguous Zone in order to control illegal immigration and to perform save and rescue operations in high seas. Therefore, Turkey is using the immigrants and refugees as a way to question Greece's sovereignty over several islands of the Aegean and its EEZ as well as also the right to extend its Territorial Waters width to 12 Nautical Miles (UN, 1982).

### **The vital necessity of the maritime delimitations between the two nations states: a particularity**

The Contiguous Zone of a coastal state, in accordance with Article 33 of the 1982 Law of the Sea, is the zone bordering its territorial sea. The Contiguous Zone cannot extend beyond the 24 nautical miles of the baseline from which the width of the territorial sea is measured. Within the Contiguous Zone, the coastal state may exercise the control necessary to prevent the violation of customs, fiscal, immigration or health laws and regulations on its territory or in its territorial sea and additionally punishes violations of the above laws and regulations committed on its territory or in its territorial sea (Papadakis, 2018).

Moreover, Greece is obligated to prevent the illegal immigration according to the European Union Laws. In particular, the Regulation 2016/399 of the European Parliament of 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2016 states: *"The control of borders is not only in the interest of the Member States on whose external borders it*

*is exercised but in the interest of all Member States that have abolished control at their internal borders. Control should help combat illegal immigration and human trafficking, as well as prevent any threat to internal security, public order, public health and international relations between Member States”* (EUR-LEX, 2016). It turns out that for all the above-mentioned reasons, immigration has been used as a means for foreign policy pressures and thus, European coordination in foreign policy in order to ease these regional tensions and enhance constructive partnership and stability is more than crucial.

## Conclusions

The refugee problem stresses the necessity for more coordination on the European level both in terms of immigration and foreign policy. It turns out that without a common policy for the allocation of refugees in European countries based on the population, needs assessment of refugees and the local labor markets as well as refugees’ skills and competences, are more than necessary in order to efficiently assist the European Mediterranean countries, such as the Greek case indicates.

It is also true that Greece has a crucial role regarding the illegal immigration among other institutional and legal issues hence there will be no permanent solution to regional tensions with Greece and Turkey unless there is not a common policy and a decisive stance by the EU. Undoubtedly, it should become clear that the European states of the Mediterranean (Greece, Italy, Spain and Malta) are not just protecting their own borders, but at the same time they are protecting the borders of the EU.

Therefore, the latter needs to strongly support those countries with personnel, resources and as well to provide political support especially in the case of Greece towards Turkey in order to ease tensions and to construct more fruitful partnerships, consequently to better solve the immigration and refugee problems that emerged in the Mediterranean countries -it is urgent for the EU to implement a common immigration and foreign policy. Thus, the allocation of refugees in all EU member states with the above-mentioned prerequisites is crucial both for assisting entrance countries and enhancing social and economic integration with respect to human condition and needs.

At the same time, the increase of a European coordinated action both for guarding sea borders in the Mediterranean as well as for creating camps for the asylum seekers in the Mediterranean African countries could be an upcoming policy as a result of the Dublin system and Lisbon Treaty. Finally, the EU needs to strongly enhance a more comprehensive foreign policy towards countries such as Turkey in order to build constructive partnerships and ease regional tensions.



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## Topic 7

### Health Politics and Policies



# A Tool for Litigation Risk Analysis for Medical Liability Cases<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Mistakes in the context of medical care can occur anywhere in the healthcare system. On the one hand, the doctrinal uncertainties, which lie at the heart of the current medical liability system, combined with the inherent uncertainty of medical science and the human body's complexity, create an extremely "foggy" landscape. On the other hand, litigation is not always effective. Thus, it is essential to cope with the uncertainties in a reasoned way. This paper presents a tool for litigation risk analysis in medical liability cases which permits identification of the multiple uncertainties that will affect the potential outcome and the exploration of their interrelationships. The basic uses, purposes and features of the tool will be presented. In addition, its core advantages as well as its aims, benefits and financial/social/scientific impact will be discussed.

**Keywords:** medical liability; medical negligence; civil liability; compensation; decision analysis; litigation risk analysis; decision trees; health care; medical errors

## Introduction: Medical Liability as a Contemporary Issue

Mistakes during medical care can occur anywhere in the healthcare system (European Commission, 2006). In Greece, the assessment of the nature and total financial burden of medical errors is difficult and cannot be accurately approached, due to the lack of data from an organized information system (Riga et al., 2014). According to the Eurobarometer of the European Commission (2014), 78% of the Greek respondents think it is likely that patients could be harmed by hospital care and 71% of the respondents think it is likely that patients could be harmed by non-hospital healthcare. Moreover, 20% of the Greek respondents have - personally or through a member of their family - experienced an adverse event while receiving healthcare (European Commission, 2014). Generally, the amount and level of compensation awarded by courts for medical errors in Greece is worryingly high, with the frequency and the amount of mean compensation increasing dramatically in the late years (Vozikis & Riga, 2008; Riga et al., 2014). The Greek redress system is a traditional tort system. Even though according to the Greek Civil Law a claim for medical negligence can be based on either contract or tort law (or –cumulatively- on both), tort is the prevailing legal basis.

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Vozikis, A., Panagiotou, A. & Karakolias, S. (2021). A Tool for Litigation Risk Analysis for Medical Liability Cases. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 268-277. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29514

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## The doctrinal issues

On one hand, the doctrinal uncertainties lie at the heart of the current medical liability system. Specifically, the - central to the medical liability regime - notions of “*fault*”, “*standard of care*” and “*causation*” are unclear (Panagiotou, 2016). This vagueness, combined with both the inherent uncertainty/inexactness of medical science and the human body’s complexity, create an extremely “foggy” landscape, especially when medical liability must be attributed, and these notions need to be specified in a particular case (Panagiotou, 2016). Both the legal and the medical communities are equipped with ambiguous theoretical tools, which need to be specified based on particular facts, a task which has been proved to be very challenging (Panagiotou, 2016).

## The Uncertainties of Litigation

On the other hand, litigation is not always effective. Although the basic goal of the tort system is to compensate adequately and fairly those injured due to substandard care (Common Good, 2006), research has shown that it fails to achieve the particular aim. Negligence-based standards leave many patients harmed by preventable injuries ineligible for compensation (Baker 2005; Bovbjerg and Berenson 2005). The aforementioned vague concepts of tort law for the formulation of the required standard of care (based on which, the physician’s professional conduct is evaluated), the judge’s lack of technical knowledge and expertise and the significant failings of the basic procedure (medical expert testimony) established in tort systems to help the court go through the relevant scientific evidence, render fault-based liability systems ineffective with respect to the judgment of error and the identification of negligence/fault (which is the core of the liability determination).

Even when the tort system does provide redress, it lacks fairness and horizontal equity in payments (Common Good, 2006). Although the rationale behind redress is for the victim to be fully compensated and be put back in the position, in which he/she would have been, if the injury had not taken place, this is almost impossible to be achieved, especially by a court (Vliamos & Chatzis, 2009). The distribution of compensation by Greek courts is problematic, as the latter grossly underestimate lost future earnings and hedonic/non-monetary damages (Vliamos & Chatzis, 2009). Greek judges inevitably consider the impact of the fiscal crisis on the public health care system, the already suppressed budgets of public hospitals and the potential effect of compensation decisions on their operation, when they determine the compensation level. Furthermore, tort litigation not only undercompensates, but also presents significant delays regarding the resolution of disputes, with the profound financial and emotional ramifications to harmed patients and their families. In addition,

lengthy litigation diverts doctors' professional attention from the clinical care to the courtroom (Grad, 1986).

### **Decision analysis: A reasoned and organized way to deal with medical litigation uncertainties**

To effectively manage a dispute, it is essential to cope with uncertainties in a reasoned way. Business people have traditionally used decision analysis to model complex decisions involving multiple uncertainties (Lewis & Roca, n.d.). More recently, the legal community abroad has started using decision analysis as a methodology for making decisions in complex litigation (Victor, 1985). Given that medical liability litigation in Greece is associated with major uncertainties, increasing delays and costs, it is necessary that the efforts to reach settlements early in the litigation process or use mediation be intensified. Decision analysis will help disputing parties (patients and/or their families, physicians, their lawyers, hospitals, and insurance companies) evaluate their litigation alternatives.

The first step in performing a good risk analysis of litigation is: 1) to identify the uncertainties that will affect the amount of money the client will be ordered to pay (if defendant/physician/hospital/insurance company) or will be awarded (if plaintiff/patient and/or family), and 2) to explore their interrelationships (Glidden et al., 2016). The key product of risk analysis is a *decision tree* (Victor, 2001).

When all the key uncertainties of a case and their interrelationships have been identified, this information is converted into a decision tree (Glidden et al., 2016). The decision tree presents all the possible litigation scenarios, along with their respective consequences, and, thus, is an extremely useful tool in examining/analysing how the legal and factual uncertainties in a case could play out (Glidden et al., 2016).

Hence, a decision tree puts multiple uncertainties into perspective, taking all potential outcomes into account (Lewis & Roca, n.d.). It constitutes a tool for making effective decisions, keeping a record of the way you reached them, and improving the chances of achieving a good outcome (Lewis & Roca, n.d.). Decision analysis relies on the idea of *expected value*. "Expected value" is the value of a potential outcome, multiplied by the probability of happening. In the multiple uncertainty world of medical dispute management, it is the weighted average value of all potential outcomes.

The legal community usually expresses its opinions in qualitative, not quantitative, terms, e.g., "It is probable that ....," "It is more likely that ....," "There is a good chance that ...." However, a lawyer's "probable" may mean 55 % to her, but 85% to you. On a million-dollar decision, that can be a

\$300,000 misunderstanding. Thus, it is essential that a common and measurable language be used (Lewis & Roca, n.d.).

Probabilities expressed in percentages provide the essential qualitative ingredient as shown in the following example (taken from Lewis & Roca, n.d.: 1-2): “The plaintiff (patient) has offered to settle for 60.000 euros. My best estimate is that I have a 40% likelihood of being held liable. If I am held liable, there is about a 25% probability the verdict would be in the 225.000 range, a 50% probability of being in the 100.000 range, and a 25% probability of being in the 35.000 range. Should I accept the offer?”

But when there are several variables (and this is certainly the case with respect to medical liability litigation, where multiple legal and factual issues play a significant role in the outcome), the human mind faces difficulties structuring, keeping in mind, and analyzing all the possible outcomes (Lewis & Roca, n.d.). *Decision trees* are the essential tools to express opinions in quantitative terms.

### **Basic Uses, Purposes and Features of Decision Making in Litigation**

The primary ways lawyers and clients use decision tree analysis in litigation are the following: (i) to be sure the lawyers have a clear understanding of the key issues, uncertainties and exposure presented by a case; (ii) to gain settlement permission from the client; (iii) to convince the other side to accept a given settlement; (iv) to persuade a mediator or even a judge of the rationale of their position; and (v) to plan a cost-effective litigation strategy (Victor, 2001).

The basic *purpose* of decision trees is to show the most important and uncertain *ultimate issues* and *influencing factors* if the case is litigated (Victor, 2001). The identification of the major *uncertainties* and the determination why a case can still be lost even if you have won an important issue are of the utmost importance. It certainly helps parties make better judgments as well as identify areas where you need more *factual investigation* or *legal research* (Victor, 2001). It is a lawyer’s best subjective opinions on the major *uncertainties* in a case, their *interrelationships* and *consequences*, and their *probabilities* of occurring (Victor, 2001). The *ultimate issues* are those whose outcomes individually or in combination would be dispositive of the case with respect to liability (provision of health care services, fault on the part of the health care professional, causation etc.), plus those comprising the major components of damages (Victor, 2001). The *influencing factors* are those uncertainties that will influence how the ultimate issues are resolved (civil procedure rules, admissibility of a document, role of a witness etc.) (Victor, 2001). They cannot directly resolve the case, but they influence the outcomes of some of the ultimate issues.

A decision tree used in litigation usually has two branches: "*litigate*" and "*settle*." The "*settle*" branch may constitute the other side's most recent offer, or it may constitute the lawyer's estimate of what the adverse party might accept in settlement (Hoffer, 1996). The "*litigate*" branch usually includes branches which represent the different events that may arise during litigation (Hoffer, 1996).

The parts of a decision tree are the following: 1) *Decision node*, represented by a square, constitutes a strategy choice that is totally within your control (even though the consequences are not) (Victor, 2001). Your possible strategic options would be written on the branches (horizontal lines) that follow the node (Victor, 2001), 2) a *chance node*, represented by a circle, identifies an uncertainty—something that is not totally within your control (Victor, 2001). The branches that follow a chance node show the possible ways in which the uncertainty might be resolved (Victor, 2001).

There can be any number of branches following a chance node (Victor, 2001). The uncertainty on which they focus must be capable of being resolved in at least one of the ways shown on the branches, in no more than one of the ways shown, and in no additional ways beyond those already shown (Victor, 2001). The probabilities, which are shown under each branch, represent the lawyer's (or mediator's or other's advisor's) qualitative "*best guesses*" of the relative likelihood of the possible outcomes of each branch (Victor, 2001). They are shown under their respective branches (Victor, 2001). Probabilities at a chance node must sum to 100% (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Advance Decision Tree**



Source: <http://www.settlementperspectives.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/advance-decision-tree.pdf> (Accessed: 15/10/2021)

When deciding and reviewing the *probabilities*, it is essential to go behind the numbers based on different important *considerations*. For example:

- 1) what supports your judgment on both sides of the specific issues like the existence or non existence of fault/malpractice, negligence (breach or non-breach of the required standard of care), and the causal link between the physician's conduct and the damage caused to the patient etc.)
- 2) What evidence (unfavorable as well as favorable such as the existence of relevant clinical guidelines and/or clinical protocols, the content of relevant medical records, relevant medical literature, written medical expert opinions) do you have?
- 3) What witnesses (harmful as well as helpful) are we going to confront?
- 4) Are the witnesses physicians of the same or different specialty (compared to the defendant)?
- 5) What experience does each expert witness have?
- 6) What specific/special expertise (if any) does each expert witness have?
- 7) Are there any previous decisions (bad as well as good) on the issue?
- 8) How have the courts handled/resolved similar cases? Based on which arguments and jurisprudence?
- 9) What general factors (such as a. the physician's specialty, expertise and/or specialized training in the specific medical subfield, b. the severity of the patient's injury/ damage, c. the fact that the patient was the only source of income for the family, d. the family's financial status and/or lack of social insurance, e. his/her children's age, f. the inefficiencies of the health and social care provided by the state) may come into play?

## **Stages and Research Methods of the Project**

The steps of our research are briefly outlined below:

Stage 1: Identification and analysis of the key uncertainties/issues and influencing factors that arise in the context of medical negligence cases and have an impact on its outcome as well as their interplay/interrelationships.

Stage 2: Examination of decision tree analysis and the major issues/practical features of its application in order to use it for the development of decision trees in the field of medical liability in Greece.

Stage 3: Practical application of decision tree analysis in order to conduct legal risk evaluations with reference to medical liability cases (case-studies and practical examples):

- Incorporation of all the key uncertainties (the tough legal and factual questions), which will have emerged at the previous stages, into the decision trees,

- Assigning probabilities to the possible outcomes of each uncertainty /issue (based on the role/weight of each issue and influencing factor in the relevant cases, as it has emerged based on the research findings of the previous steps),
- Measuring the value of litigation and its alternatives.

### Core Advantages of the Proposed System

The advantages of the proposed system are the following:

**1) *Facilitation of decision-making:*** Analysis of the risks inherent in following a specific strategy and identification as well as structuring of the important issues leads to an understanding of their significance. Hence, the judgments, choices and decisions of the parties involved in medical negligence litigation are made based on reasoned, thoughtful analysis. Decision trees also lead to better communication about the dispute between both opposing parties and lawyer and client (and this very significant in medical disputes that are inherently emotional).

**2) *Early settlements (Victor, 2014) and the use of alternative dispute resolution methods (such as mediation):*** Litigation is costly, unpredictable, emotionally draining, and inefficient. Its negative consequences are intensified in the complicated area of medical liability. Showing the uncertainties of the case, keeping reasons why specific issues will be won or lost and determining the probabilities of prevailing on an issue may lead the various parties to choose an early, cost-saving dispute resolution method and avoid the emotional aspects of the dispute.

Specifically, the use of decision trees and probabilities should create an environment helpful to dispute resolution. The decision tree shows both parties that not all scenarios in the case conclude in a total victory—or defeat (Victor, 1990). In addition, the use of probabilities shows recognition that litigation has no sure outcomes but contains *risks* and *uncertainties* (Victor, 1990). A good decision tree analysis should also force discussion to the level of individual issues, influencing factors, and probabilities rather than the overall value of the case (Victor, 1990). Discussing the merits issue by issue, in numerical probabilities, helps to define real differences and, thus, disclose true settlement potential (Victor, 1990).

Mediation is a process with multiple benefits for both the parties involved and society. Its advantages are: a) speed, b) impartiality, d) confidentiality, e) low cost, f) flexible procedure, g) maintaining good relations, h) enforceability of the agreement, i) the parties decide the outcome having control over the process.



In addition, mediation is particularly important (Gitchell, & Plattner, 1997) in the healthcare sector, as according to the European Hospital and Healthcare Federation, it allows hospitals to prevent conflicts before they occur, to create ground conducive to an out-of-court settlement, and to identify and resolve the deeper issues that led to the conflict (Hope, 2012).

In Greece, the new legal framework for mediation (Law 4512/2018) makes it a mandatory stage of disputes concerning claims for compensation of patients or their relatives against physicians, which arise in the exercise of the professional activity of the latter. Therefore, given this new framework, the use of a litigation risk analysis tool to come to agreement in the context of mediation in medical liability cases presents both significant research interest as well as prospect of wider practical application.

### **Aims- Benefits-Financial/social/scientific impact**

The *key aim* of the project is to apply a litigation risk estimation system to medical liability cases in Greece as a tool to: a) ameliorate decision- making, b) reduce medical liability litigation uncertainty, c) evaluate litigation alternatives in a reasoned and organized way and, *thus* d) facilitate settlements and enhance the use of mediation in civil cases and, *hence*, e) decongest Greek courts as well as f) contribute to the sustainability of the National Healthcare System.

By helping them make more disciplined, more thoughtful, and more accurate decisions, decision tree analysis will have a positive social and financial impact and it can be proved beneficial to all the parties involved in medical injury litigation. Particularly it will benefit:

- a) ***patients and/or their families (claimants)***: Good settlements will be facilitated and the aforementioned disadvantages of malpractice litigation could be avoided.
- b) ***Physicians (defendants)***: Facilitating good settlements and avoiding the negative consequences of litigation such as the financial ramifications, the repercussions on their professional reputation and the psychological impact on physicians, which in turn lead to the practice of defensive medicine.
- c) ***Hospitals***: they will be able to make effective litigation risk analysis and, thus, make the most advantageous (from a financial perspective) decision.
- d) ***Attorneys***: they can express their opinion on the possible outcome of the relevant cases and their alternative options in quantitative terms away from the inaccuracy and highly speculative nature of subjective –based on experience- judgments and estimations.

- e) **Mediators:** They may convince the parties reach a commonly accepted solution to their dispute.
- f) **Insurance companies:** They can conduct more effective malpractice litigation risk analysis, and this can contribute to their long-term financial sustainability.
- g) **Health Care and Social Insurance System:** Given that significant financial resources of public hospitals are diverted to the payment of damages for medical liability, decision analysis may contribute to their financial sustainability and stability. Decision trees will assist patients harmed by medical errors (and their families) make informed decisions whether to start a claim or not and many of them may abandon the litigation option and prefer either the settlement or the use of alternative dispute resolution methods (like mediation). Taking into account that the use of mediation in the field of administrative law (and specifically for the resolution of disputes between individuals and the state) is discussed, decision tree analysis could also be useful (in the future) for effective decision-making and facilitation of settlement with respect to disputes between patients and public hospitals. The resolution of these disputes through mediation could result in more efficient control of administrative fees, savings from the courts' operational costs, quicker administration of justice and decongestion of administrative courts. At the same time, it could contribute to combatting bureaucracy and maladministration by enabling public services to improve substantially.
- h) **The judicial/civil justice system:** The early settlements and the use of ADR methods will lead to the decongestion of courts (since fewer cases will finally reach them), will make the administration of justice quicker (the cases which finally reach the courts will be resolved more quickly), and will secure cost savings.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it is the first time at both national and international level that research focuses on the application of decision tree analysis to a specific litigation area. Decision trees and their application to litigation risk analysis have never been studied in Greece. Taking the multiple uncertainties and the complexity of medical liability cases into consideration, the relevant litigation area constitutes a good ground for decision tree research.

## Funding

This paper is one of the deliverables of the Proposal entitled "Support for researchers with emphasis on young researchers - cycle B" (Code: EDBM103) which is part of the Operational Program "Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning" which is Co-financed by Greece and the European Union (European Social Fund) and specifically of the Operation entitled "A System of

assisting decision-making in a state of uncertainty with respect to the legal and financial management of civil medical liability cases” (MIS 5050634).

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## The Rise of NGOs in Global Health Governance and Credibility Issues in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century<sup>1</sup>

Symeon Sidiropoulos<sup>2</sup>, Alkinoos Emmanouil-Kalos<sup>3</sup>, Maria-Eirini Kanakaki<sup>4</sup>, Athanassios Vozikis<sup>5</sup>

### Abstract

NGOs/ CBOs have emerged as an integral pillar of both global and national governance, and are recognized as such by the official institutions founded after World War II. This is evident from the important gaps they are called upon to fill, their formal partnerships with international organizations and national governments, and the funding they manage for this purpose. Global health is perhaps the area where NGO activity has made the biggest difference. Over the last two decades, however, issues of transparency, effectiveness and, in some cases, legitimacy of their activities have arisen. This policy brief examines the circumstances that have led to the consolidation of NGOs in the international stage, and the reasons why their existence is vital. Finally, a framework that will restore and strengthen their credibility is envisaged, which in turn could potentially enhance their effectiveness too.

**Keywords:** NGOs; Global Health Governance; World Health Organization; United Nations; International Health

### Introduction

The rapid growth of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) after the Second World War and their development into a major actor at the international level has triggered a particular interest in their study. Their unique characteristics and their ability to fill gaps left by Governments and International Organizations - sometimes successfully and sometimes less so - now make them an integral part of international governance, with a particularly important role in global health.

The term Non-Governmental Organization refers to non-state actors, voluntary Civil Society Organizations, associations and non-profit institutions (Hudson & Bielfeld, 1997; Tvedt, 2006), which promote issues in the public interest (Hall-Jones, 2006). The adoption of a fairly general definition, which nevertheless captures their unique status, is an unavoidable choice in order to avoid conflicts with various individual definitions that may arise on a case-by-case basis. As Malena (1995)

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA Style: Sidiropoulos, S., Emmanouil-Kalos, A., Kanakaki, M. E. and Vozikis, A. (2021). The Rise of NGOs in Global Health Governance and Credibility Issues in the 21st Century. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 278-288. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29516

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notes, the term NGO can be used for any non-profit organization that is independent of government. In this spirit, the World Bank defines NGOs as

"...a wide variety of groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of government and are characterized primarily by humanitarian and cooperative, rather than commercial objectives. Setting aside terminological and name differences that vary from one country to another, the Bank's policy recognizes the nature of NGOs as private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment or undertake community development." (Cernea, 1988: 43).

The dynamic growth of NGOs in the second half of the 20th<sup>oo</sup> century has generated a lot of enthusiasm in the international literature about the potential they create. Clark (1991) refers to them as forces for democratizing development, while Farrington & Bebbington (1993) also recognize them as agents that increase citizen participation. Drabek (1987) noted the alternatives they create for global development. This enthusiasm may have waned in the last two decades, but NGOs still have a very important role in the international system, having redefined the concepts of development and security by giving them a strong humanitarian dimension (Davies, 2008). In the health sector, as Stachowiak (2010) points out, many of the major developments can also be attributed - directly or indirectly - to the actions of NGOs. Nevertheless, issues of transparency and effectiveness remain to be resolved. The aim of this policy brief is to seek a framework that will restore the credibility of NGOs in the health sector through enhanced transparency and effectiveness.

## **Methodology**

This policy brief provides a brief, narrative review of the literature on the role of NGOs in the international system, and more specifically on their work in global health. It examines their rapid growth, their partnerships with the World Health Organization and other international organizations, and their characteristics that make their operations in health essential. For our study we used two literature databases, Google Scholar and PubMed, in which through the main keywords listed in our study we searched for the most relevant published studies in reputable journals (Green et al., 2006). Also, for our study we used material from the official websites of international organizations and global institutions that maintain data on the action of NGOs operating in the health sector (Ferrari, 2015).

## **The Rise of Non-Governmental Organizations**

International NGOs have a long tradition, with the founding of the Anti-Slavery International in 1839 being considered the beginning. However, as Davies (2008) points out, their development to date has

fluctuated, with the two world wars and the Great Depression of 1929 creating periods of decline in the rate of new NGO creation. Similarly, there have been periods that have favored the flourishing of NGOs. Notable examples include the period of the Hague Conferences (1899-1907), and the 1920s, when twice as many international NGOs were created as in the entire 19th century (Davies, 2008).

The great growth of NGOs and their significant involvement in contemporary global governance is due both to the post-World War II international political environment and to the very characteristics of NGOs that made them necessary. Initially, as McGann and Johnstone (2006) point out, the creation of new states and large transnational international organizations (such as, for example, the UN and the World Bank) created the space for the development of new NGOs. Indicatively, as Hall-Jones (2006) mentions, the term “NGO” itself was created at that time in order to distinguish the various UN intergovernmental bodies from private organizations. At the same time, waves of democratization and the opening up of societies strengthened the consciousness of civil society. The end of the Cold War - for which international NGOs are considered to have played an important role (Davies, 2008) - also prompted the creation of new international NGOs (Gordenker, 1995). Notably, the number of international NGOs increased from 6,000 in 1990 to 26,000 in 1996 (McGann and Johnstone, 2006; Young and Dhanda, 2013). Globalization and technological developments, which among other things make finding and sharing information faster than ever before, have strengthened civil society and the capacities of NGOs (McGann and Johnstone, 2006; Davies, 2008).

The creation of many NGOs worldwide in the last century has also created a social automatism, which has resulted in the growth of the number of civil society organizations in staggering numbers. At the global level, there is no yearbook of NGOs updated by national authorities to know the exact number of organizations worldwide. Moreover, the specificity of NGOs, which are part of different legal systems and whose legal status therefore varies greatly from country to country, creates additional problems in the overall mapping of organized civil society (Council on Foundations, n.d.). We have organized NGO list archives mainly in developed countries, either because of their policy to include them in a crisis management plan and national policies, or because of the need to fight tax evasion - tax avoidance. The specificity of their main activities gives us the opportunity to map NGOs and categorize them. We can therefore see that in databases of accredited organizations or members, such as the database of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (csonet.org), but also in other broader NGO self-organization sites (congo, wango, etc.) NGOs that hold accreditation or membership in broader formations are defined or self-characterized as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), non-profit organization (NPO), social benefit organization (SBO), community based organizations (CBO), civil society organization (CSO), citizen sector organization (CSO),



advocacy organization (AO), patient organization (PO), voluntary organization (VO), grassroots support organization (GSO), non-state actor (NSA), etc., but also depending on the scope of their activities into local, national, regional or international non-governmental organizations. Of course, this perpetual differentiation of NGOs and naming continues to this day as they are a cornerstone of social self-organization (Willetts, 2001).

Apart from the developments in the international political environment, the growth of NGOs is also due to their specific characteristics, which are absent from other institutions of international governance. One of the most important of these is their connection and proximity to the local communities they help and whose interests they promote (Gellert, 1996; McGann and Johnstone, 2006; Bagire et al., 2014). In health in particular, their ability to deliver care to the most remote or small communities is crucial (McGann and Johnstone, 2006), especially in cases where local government fails to intervene effectively (McGann and Johnstone, 2006; Smith, 2010). Particularly with the rise of neoliberalism and the imposition of the “Washington Consensus”, NGOs have taken on the task of filling - to the extent possible - the huge gaps in welfare created by the deliberate withdrawal of the state (Berthoud, 2001). These close links between NGOs and local communities also enhance the participation of citizens as well as local groups and organizations (Gellert, 1996; WHO, 2002), giving civil society even greater momentum. Moreover, according to Stachowiak (2010), NGOs are often the first actors to bring new issues that arise in the communities in which they operate to the surface in an organized manner. This role of NGOs to provide some forms of welfare when the state has withdrawn or is unable to intervene and markets fail, at relatively low cost, has gained the support of formal institutions (Fowler, 1988; Meyer, 1992) and made them the preferred channel for the diffusion of international aid (Edwards and Hulme, 2013).

### **NGOs, the United Nations and the World Health Organization**

Non-governmental organizations have had an active relationship with the United Nations (UN) almost since their inception in 1945. Indeed, as Alger (2002) characteristically states, there were representatives from 1,200 voluntary organizations at the UN founding conference, significantly influencing the content of the founding treaty. Structured relations exist with the UN Secretariat, as well as with other bodies of the organization, mainly through the consultative status offered to member states (ECOSOC, DGC, OSAA, OEWG Ageing, WSSD, etc). As of September 2021, about 5188 NGOs with consultative accreditation to the UN are counted through the ECOSOC csonet database (DESA NGO Branch, n.d). NGOs contribute to a range of activities such as information dissemination (especially through the Global Communications Department - DGC), awareness



raising, education, policy advocacy, joint operational projects, participation in intergovernmental processes and contribution with specific technical expertise and expertise services.

Article 71 of the UN Charter, which was particularly pushed for by the civil society representatives (Willetts, 2000) and which established the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), defines the following:

"The Economic and Social Council may make appropriate arrangements for consultations with non-governmental organizations (NGOs - CSOs) concerned with matters within its competence" (Charter of the United Nations, Chapter X, Article 71).

Regarding consultative status in ECOSOC, as stated in the standard operating procedures, *"Consultative status may be granted to international organizations and, where appropriate, national organizations if their actions are consistent with the values and rules of the Council and contribute to further strengthening the institution"* (United Nations, 2018).

Over time and with the growing influence of NGOs at the international level, their cooperation with the UN system has been strengthened. The 1990s brought major initiatives on the part of the UN to further enhance the role of NGOs in its processes (Willetts, 2000; Alger, 2002; WHO, 2002). A typical example of the growing NGO momentum is the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), where civil society organizations are represented on the Board of Directors (WHO, 2002).

As with the UN, so with the World Health Organization (WHO), institutional cooperation with NGOs was on the agenda from the beginning. In addition to the provisions in the constitution for consultation and cooperation with NGOs, the first World Health Assembly in 1948 adopted the first framework of rules for the development of formal WHO-NGO relations, which has been continuously updated and updated over time (WHO, 2002). In 2016, the 69th World Health Assembly adopted the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors (FENSA), which currently governs WHO's relations with NGOs. This document reaffirms the important and special place that NGOs have in global health, stating *"WHO engages with non-State actors in view of their significant role in global health for the advancement and promotion of public health and to encourage non-State actors to use their own activities to protect and promote public health."* (WHO, 2016, 4), as well as *"WHO's engagement with non-State actors can bring important benefits to global public health and to the Organization itself in fulfilment of its constitutional principles and objectives, including its directing and coordinating role in global health."* (WHO, 2016, 5). As of January 2021, 218 international NGOs were in official relation with WHO (WHO, 2021).

## Examples of Active NGO Participation in Public Health

In the US, where the culture of limited state intervention in health has prevailed over time and with short-term exceptions, the contribution of NGOs in the field is vital. Over 40% of health insurance services are owned by NGOs. Community hospitals, nursing homes and health centers are for the most part run by NGOs. NGOs at the local level, in addition to operating and managing hospitals, are active in providing additional health benefits to members of local communities that are applicable to the health sector (health education and training programs, research support, reduced insurance premiums, etc.) (Metcalf, 2002). In addition, we could not omit to mention the world-renowned NGOs that assist war veterans of the US military<sup>6</sup>, who receive personalized care from these organizations (Detert et al., 2019).

A notable example of an NGO with a long history and a significant contribution to public health is the case of the American Lung Association (ALA). The ALA was founded in 1904 due to the outbreak of tuberculosis in the United States, under the name "The National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis" (Stachowiak, 2010). The ALA funded awareness campaigns as well as major research projects on TB. With the discovery of a cure in 1946 and its (near) elimination in the U.S. in the 1950s, the ALA turned its attention to the treatment and prevention of all diseases that strike the lungs (ALA, n.d.; Stachowiak, 2010). It was, in fact, one of the first to link smoking to lung cancer in 1960, and launched widespread awareness campaigns. When tuberculosis made its resurgence in the 1980s and became more resistant, ALA, in collaboration with the WHO and with funding from USAID, undertook international planning for its control (Stachowiak, 2010).

A different approach (due to different circumstances) but also crucial for public health was that of the NGOs ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) and The NAMES Project, which were founded in the 1980s and aimed to raise awareness and inform about AIDS (Stachowiak, 2010). The more radical of the two, ACT UP, achieved this through powerful protests and marches, which addressed the high prices of available drugs and the stigma and indifference from society and relevant government agencies. As the organization says of its founding story, *"Soon it found itself needing to fight corporate greed, lack of solidarity and various forms of stigma and discrimination at home and abroad"* (ACT UP, n.d.). The NAMES Project, on the other hand, started a more symbolic movement where anyone who had lost a loved one to AIDS would write the person's name on a plaque and affix

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<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that the US Government itself has approved almost 45,000 NGOs whose main task is to support US war veterans, which provide support to their members, and the Government itself has created the NonProfit Program Office (NPPO) under the US Department of Veterans Affairs with the main objective of coordinating NPCs engaged in research and development activities that will ultimately benefit veterans.

it to the Federal Building in San Francisco. This action went viral and became internationally known, and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987 (Stackowiak, 2010).

The above examples were chosen because they show how decisive a contribution even individual NGOs can make to public health, and because they show the many ways in which an NGO can make a difference. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, NGOs are now institutional actors in global health governance and are constantly working with international organizations and governments to achieve goals. In countries such as Rwanda, Afghanistan, Mozambique and Liberia, collaborative programs have been developed between NGOs and governments to develop and strengthen health systems (Partners in Health) (Connelly, n.d).

An important example of international organizations, governments and NGOs working together on a large-scale project is the implementation of the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). As Sparks (2010) states, this is essentially the first global public health treaty. Efforts to develop the program began in 1995, with the treaty being voted on in 2003 with wide acceptance at the United Nations and was implemented in 2005 (WHO, 2005). NGOs were recognized in the treaty as an essential ally for implementation both internationally and in local communities. As stated in the preamble to the treaty (WHO, 2005, 2):

"Emphasizing the special contribution of nongovernmental organizations and other members of civil society not affiliated with the tobacco industry, including health professional bodies, women's, youth, environmental and consumer groups, and academic and health care institutions, to tobacco control efforts nationally and internationally and the vital importance of their participation in national and international tobacco control efforts"

NGO activity covers the full range of practices necessary for treaty implementation, from awareness-raising campaigns to training government officials and developing legislative proposals (Sparks, 2010).

### **Credibility and Legitimacy Crises in the 21st<sup>o</sup> Century: The Need for an Enhanced Framework for Transparency and Efficiency**

The growing power and involvement of NGOs in global governance has confronted them with a crisis of credibility and legitimacy of their action (McGann and Johnstone, 2006). This crisis has been encouraged for a number of reasons, including the involvement of some in terrorist activities, the staging of protests causing intense unrest and the scheduling of independent meetings alongside official meetings to challenge the legitimacy of official bodies. Thus, at the 1992 Earth Summit held

in Rio, 17,000 NGO representatives organized an alternative forum, while only 1,400 attended the official meeting (McGann and Johnstone, 2006).

Funding is critical especially for achieving immediate results, which are often prioritized, strengthening health systems in the long term (Connelly, n.d.). However, compliance mechanisms are lacking (McGann and Johnstone, 2006). Bodies such as the World Bank and the UN, which work extensively with NGOs, would be useful to support the development of concrete practices to improve transparency and accountability. To a large extent, the problem for NGO activity in developing and transition economies comes from the fact that funding mainly flows from industrialized countries, and donors may dictate the NGO's action objectives. This suspicion can be exploited by authoritarian regimes and lead to the closure of NGOs. The political system of states is important particularly for organizations involved in health advocacy and activism (Getahun and Raviglione, 2011). It is understood that it is important to develop a state-specific approach. Communication on the delineation of priorities and action boundaries between NGOs and central authorities is useful to be provided by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), as well as outlined in a clear legal framework.

As McGann and Johnstone (2006) point out, monitoring the entire financial flow is probably impractical at present. In the developed world, NGOs are accountable to the state and the private sector through taxation and the publication of annual reports. The benefits of transparency are also evident in terms of communication and cooperation between NGOs and Ministries of Health (Connelly, n.d.). Specifically, transparency, flexibility and adaptability in implementing programs that align with government goals and the needs of each region, develops trust between parties and strengthens partnerships. At the local level, it is important to monitor skills and expertise received by Community Health Workers (CHWs). NGOs need to ensure that effective and equitable care is provided.

Public opinion questions the credibility of governments themselves given their poor performance and inefficient bureaucracy (McGann and Johnstone, 2006). NGOs come to cover up the inefficiencies of the state apparatus, yet they face similar questioning. Although there is a positive correlation between financial aid (channeled through NGOs) and progress to fighting diseases (Sidiropoulos et al., 2022), conditions such as local corruption appear to affect the performance of operations, especially in sub-Saharan African countries. It is important that NGOs are willing to undergo evaluation and achieve a greater degree of transparency in order to have more coherent and effective action, and ensure their independence by establishing reliable and verifiable criteria for action (Bagire et al., 2014).

## Conclusion

It is apparent that NGOs are vital in global health governance, and the great increase in their numbers in the last decades is a result of this. Yet, there are important steps to be taken, to ensure their credibility and efficiency. As noted by McGann and Johnstone (2006), transparency will be achieved through a systematic dialogue on this issue within the NGO community with the aim of reaching agreement on the level of transparency and setting realistic targets. Private sector funders, national governments and international organizations should actively encourage the effort and provide the necessary resources. The importance of transparency in NGOs should then be promoted. The implementation of the principles must be coordinated and specific with no room for deviation and take into account the social and political environment in which they operate. It is therefore important to develop an international mindset of accountability and transparency within NGOs. Such a framework should be developed, implemented and overseen by international institutions, in cooperation with the NGOs.

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## Psychiatric Care Policy in Greece in the First Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

Psychiatric care in Greece followed a similar course to the rest of Europe with a significant difference, the delay in the creation of asylum. The present study aims to investigate a) the development of psychiatric hospitals in the Greek state as well as the historical and social context from the beginning to the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and b) the formulation of the Psychiatric Reform (PR) program. The methodology followed included literature and research data review, which were collected through online databases, publications, articles, journals, and dissertations. A crucial outcome of the study is that the obvious gaps and the very serious shortages of psychiatric care in Greece, during the previous decades, were not enough to point out the necessity of a Psychiatric Reform (PR), but were only perceived as another imposed obligation towards europeanization.

**Keywords:** Psychiatric hospitals in the 20th century; mental illness; institutional framework in Greece; Psychiatric Reform

## Η Πολιτική για τα Ψυχιατρικά Νοσοκομεία στην Ελλάδα κατά το Πρώτο Μισό του 20<sup>ου</sup> Αιώνα

Σταματίνα Δούκη, Στυλιανός Ιωάννης Τζαγκαράκης, Δέσποινα Καρακατσάνη

### Εισαγωγή

Η ψυχιατρική περίθαλψη στον Ελλαδικό χώρο ακολούθησε παρόμοια πορεία με την υπόλοιπη Ευρώπη με μία σημαντική διαφορά, την καθυστέρηση στη δημιουργία ασύλων. Η παρούσα ερευνητική μελέτη στοχεύει στη διερεύνηση: α) της ανάπτυξης των ψυχιατρικών νοσοκομείων στο Ελληνικό κράτος και του ιστορικοκοινωνικού πλαισίου από τις αρχές έως τα μέσα του 20ου αιώνα και β) της διαμόρφωσης της Ψυχιατρικής Μεταρρύθμισης (ΨΜ). Η μεθοδολογία που ακολουθήθηκε περιελάμβανε την αναζήτηση σχετικής βιβλιογραφίας και ερευνητικών δεδομένων, τα οποία συλλέχθηκαν μέσα από την ηλεκτρονική βάση δεδομένων Google Scholar, μέσα από έντυπα, άρθρα, περιοδικά, διπλωματικές εργασίες και διδακτορικές διατριβές. Η μελέτη αναδεικνύει ότι τα προφανή κενά και οι σοβαρότατες ελλείψεις της ψυχιατρικής περίθαλψης στην Ελλάδα, κατά τις προηγούμενες δεκαετίες, δεν ήταν αρκετά για να επισημανθεί η αναγκαιότητα της ΨΜ, αλλά εκλήφθηκαν ως μία ακόμη επιβαλλόμενη υποχρέωση έναντι της πορείας προς τον εξευρωπαϊσμό.

**Keywords:** Ψυχιατρικά νοσοκομεία 20ος αιώνας; ψυχική νόσος; θεσμικό πλαίσιο στην Ελλάδα; Ψυχιατρική Μεταρρύθμιση

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Douki, S., Tzagkarakis, S. I. & Karakatsani, D. (2021). Psychiatric Care Policy in Greece in the First Half of the 20th Century. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 289-297. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29518

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## Εισαγωγή

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## Ελληνικό Κράτος-Περίοδος 1900-1950

### *Θεσμικό πλαίσιο*

Η χρονική περίοδος των αρχών του 20ου αιώνα είναι πολυτάραχη για το Ελληνικό κράτος, με πολέμους (Βαλκανικοί Πόλεμοι, Μικρασιατική καταστροφή), ασθένειες, φτώχεια, μεταναστευτικά κύματα και εκτεταμένες καταστροφές. Το 1916, επί κυβέρνησης Ελ. Βενιζέλου, υπάρχει πλέον αυτόνομο Υπουργείο για υγειονομικά ζητήματα, το «Υπουργείο Περιθάλψεως Οικογενειών Επίστρων και Προσφύγων» με Υπουργό τον Σπυρίδωνα Σίμο, ενώ το 1917 μετονομάζεται «Υπουργείο Περιθάλψεως» συγκεντρώνοντας όλες τις υγειονομικές υπηρεσίες και στελεχώνοντάς το με κρατικούς λειτουργούς, γιατρούς, νομικούς και παιδαγωγούς, με τον ίδιο υπουργό. Το 1922, το Υπουργείο Περιθάλψεως μετονομάστηκε σε Υπουργείο Υγιεινής και Πρόνοιας, με το νόμο 2882/1922, όμως λίγο μετά την ψήφιση του εν λόγω νόμου ακολούθησε η Μικρασιατική καταστροφή, και λόγω των ραγδαίων εξελίξεων, ο συγκεκριμένος νόμος δεν τέθηκε σε εφαρμογή. Η κυβέρνηση του Σ. Γονατά, με νομοθετικό διάταγμα ενσωματώνει το «Υπουργείο Περιθάλψεως» στο νεοϊδρυθέν «Υπουργείο Υγιεινής και Πρόνοιας και Αντιλήψεως», ενώ κατά τη διάρκεια της δικτατορίας Πάγκαλου, όλες οι υγειονομικές υπηρεσίες που είχαν ενσωματωθεί σε ένα Υπουργείο διασπώνται και επιμερίζονται στα Υπουργεία Εσωτερικών, Παιδείας και Στρατιωτικών. Το 1926, η κυβέρνηση του Γ. Κονδύλη, επανίδρυσε το «Υπουργείο Υγιεινής και Πρόνοιας και Αντιλήψεως» και επιπρόσθετα σύστησε «Υφυπουργείον Υγιεινής», ενώ το 1929 με το νόμο 4172/1929, ο Ελ. Βενιζέλος επανίδρυσε αυτοτελές «Υπουργείο Υγιεινής», το οποίο συνέχισε να διατηρεί την αυτονομία του παρά τις αλλεπάλληλες διαφοροποιήσεις. Καθοριστικό ρόλο την ίδια χρονική περίοδο και μεταγενέστερα, διαδραμάτισε η ιδιωτική πρωτοβουλία αναφορικά με τη δημιουργία νοσηλευτικών ιδρυμάτων, συνθήκη που ενισχύθηκε ιδιαίτερα από τον δικτάτορα Ι. Μεταξά, πριν

ξεσπάσει ο Β΄ Παγκόσμιος Πόλεμος, δημιουργώντας νέες κτιριακές εγκαταστάσεις σε νοσηλευτικά ιδρύματα της χώρας, ευρωπαϊκών προδιαγραφών (Σπηλιοπούλου, 2018).

Το 1934, η ψήφιση του νόμου 6077/1934 «Περί οργανώσεως Δημοσίων Ψυχιατρείων» φαίνεται να προσπαθεί να θεμελιώσει τη ψυχιατρική περίθαλψη στη χώρα, προβλέποντας τον εσωτερικό κανονισμό λειτουργίας των Ψυχιατρικών Ιδρυμάτων, αλλά ουσιαστική νομοθετική κωδικοποίηση δεν επιχειρήθηκε παρά μετά τον Πρώτο Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο (Πλουμπίδης, 1981).

### **Η νοσοκομειακή ψυχιατρική περίθαλψη στο ελληνικό κράτος από το 1900-1950**

Στην αρχή του 20ου αιώνα, παρατηρείται μεγαλύτερη κινητικότητα στη δημιουργία δημοσίων και ιδιωτικών ψυχιατρικών ιδρυμάτων. Παράγοντες όπως, η προοδευτική αστικοποίηση, η αργή αλλά σταδιακή εκβιομηχάνιση της ελληνικής οικονομίας, ο μετασχηματισμός της ελληνικής οικογένειας, η απουσία μέχρι τότε κρατικής πολιτικής, καθώς και η σημαντική πληθυσμιακή αύξηση στον ελλαδικό χώρο, ως απόηχος της Μικρασιατικής καταστροφής και της επακόλουθης ανταλλαγής πληθυσμών, συνέτειναν στην ανάγκη ίδρυσης νέων δημόσιων και ιδιωτικών ψυχιατρικών ιδρυμάτων. Επιπροσθέτως, το σύνολο των ψυχοπαθών στην Ελλάδα υπολογιζόταν σε 2.000-3.000 άτομα, ενώ μείζον πρόβλημα αποτελούσε η έλλειψη ψυχιάτρων, οι οποίοι δεν ξεπερνούσαν όλοι μαζί, στην Ελλάδα, στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, στη Σμύρνη και στην Αλεξάνδρεια, τις δύο ή τρεις δεκάδες (Πλουμπίδης, 1981).

Τα νοσοκομειακά ιδρύματα που είχαν ιδρυθεί παρείχαν ψυχιατρική περίθαλψη έχοντας τα τυπικά χαρακτηριστικά του ασύλου, δηλαδή είχαν ελάχιστους γιατρούς, μεγάλο αριθμό φυλάκων και οι συνθήκες διαβίωσης ήταν άθλιες (Μαδιανός, 1994; Πλουμπίδης, 1981; 1995).

Τη δεύτερη δεκαετία του 20ου αιώνα, παρά τις ρητές απαγορεύσεις του νόμου ΨΜΒ΄/1862 «Περί δημιουργίας φρενοκομείων», δημιουργείται στην Αθήνα η πρώτη εστία εγκλεισμού απόρων ψυχικά αρρώστων, στα υπόγεια του Αστυνομικού Τμήματος Μεταγωγών Αθηνών στην περιοχή της Πλάκας, όπου παραμένει η κράτηση των «ανήσυχων» ψυχικά πασχόντων στα υπόγεια της αστυνομίας για την προστασία της κοινωνίας, μαζί με ληστές, τοξικομανείς και περιθωριακούς, ενώ μεταγενέστερα, το 1919, διακομίζονται στο Άσυλο της Αγίας Ελεούσας στην Καλλιθέα, υπό τις διαταγές του υπαξιωματικού της αστυνομίας (Μαδιανός, 1994; Πλουμπίδης, 1995). Το 1924, στο Άσυλο της Αγίας Ελεούσας το προσωπικό αποτελούνταν από μερικούς χωροφύλακες και πολιτικούς υπαλλήλους, αρκετοί από τους οποίους σταδιοδρόμησαν αργότερα στο Ψ.Ν.Α., ενώ οι ασθενείς ανέρχονταν σε 300 και διέμεναν σε συνθήκες απερίγραπτης αθλιότητας. Την ίδια χρονιά, το Άσυλο της Αγίας Ελεούσας αποσπάται από το Υπουργείο Εσωτερικών, μετατρέπεται σε Υγειονομικό Ίδρυμα υπό την εποπτεία της Δ/σης Υγιεινής του Υπουργείου Υγιεινής, Πρόνοιας και Αντιλήψεως

και μετονομάζεται σε «Δημόσιο Ψυχιατρείο Αγίας Ελεούσας». Διορίζονται άμεσα πέντε γιατροί και μαζί με το προσωπικό διαμένουν εντός του ψυχιατρείου (Μισουρίδου, 2008).

Στα μέσα του 1930 ιδρύθηκε το Δημόσιο Ψυχιατρείο-Δαφνί. Στο τέλος του Β΄ Παγκοσμίου Πολέμου τα ψυχιατρικά ιδρύματα ήταν υπερπλήρη και φιλοξενούσαν 2 ασθενείς σε κάθε κρεβάτι. Το 1957, στο ιταλικό ναυαρχείο Λέρου αποφασίστηκε με βασιλικό διάταγμα, στις 28/5/1957, να ιδρυθεί η Αποικία Ψυχοπαθών Λέρου, στην οποία μεταφέρθηκαν οι πρώτοι 300 ασθενείς από το Λοιμοκαθαστήριο Αθηνών το 1958 (Φιλανδριανός, 1977; Πλουμπίδης, 1981).

### ***Αιγινήτειο (Πανεπιστημιακή κλινική)***

Το νοσοκομείο ιδρύθηκε με πρωτοβουλία του πρώτου τακτικού καθηγητή νευρολογίας και ψυχιατρικής, Κατσαρά Μ., εγκαινιάστηκε το 1905 με χωρητικότητα 25 κλινών, οι οποίες αυξήθηκαν σε 112 το 1938. Το νοσοκομείο επισκέπτονταν 150 ασθενείς το χρόνο και το μεγάλο του πλεονέκτημα ήταν η επάρκεια προσωπικού, καθώς αριθμούσε 25 νοσοκόμους για 44 ασθενείς (Πλουμπίδης, 1981).

Στο Αιγινήτειο, τα νοσήλια διαβαθμιζόνταν σε τρεις τάξεις, «εις την κατοικίαν και το ποικίλον της τροφής». Οι ασθενείς της Α΄ τάξης νοσηλεύονταν σε ιδιωτικό θάλαμο που κόστιζε 360 δρχ. μηνιαία, της δεύτερης μαζί με έναν ακόμα ασθενή που κόστιζε 210 δρχ. το μήνα, της τρίτης με περισσότερους με αντίτιμο 120 δρχ. μηνιαία, ενώ η νοσηλεία των απόρων χρηματοδοτούνταν από τις αμοιβές των εξωτερικών ασθενών που έκαναν υδροθεραπείες και ηλεκτροθεραπείες (Πλουμπίδης, 1981). Οι ασθενείς που αδυνατούσαν να καλύψουν τη δαπάνη της νοσηλείας τους, μετατάσσονταν σε χαμηλότερη τάξη, συνήθως 1-2 μήνες μετά την εισαγωγή τους. Επιπροσθέτως, ο Νόμος ΨΜΒ/1862 προέβλεπε την κάλυψη των νοσηλίων των απόρων και των ασθενών της Γ΄ τάξης, από την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση και το κράτος, σε περίπτωση αδυναμίας. Σύμφωνα όμως με τα καταγεγραμμένα μητρώα, διαφαίνεται ότι εκτός από το ύψος των νοσηλίων, στο είδος του δωματίου επιδρούσαν και άλλοι παράγοντες όπως οι διαθέσιμες κλίνες και η βαρύτητα της κατάστασης του ασθενούς (Κριτσωτάκης, 2009; Πλουμπίδης, 1981).

### ***Ψυχιατρικό Νοσοκομείο Αττικής (ΨΝ. Α.)-Δαφνί***

Το 1925 αποφασίστηκε κάποιοι από τους τροφίμους του Ασύλου της Αγίας Ελεούσας να μεταφερθούν στο Δαφνί, περιοχή που από παλιά χρησιμοποιούνταν για τη φροντίδα των ψυχικά ασθενών. Η κάλυψη των νοσηλίων των απόρων και των φτωχών ασθενών, με το Νόμο ΨΜΒ/1862, αναλαμβανόταν από την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση, το κράτος και τις δωρεές ιδιωτών (Φιλανδριανός, 1977; Πλουμπίδης, 1981).

Ο Νόμος 6077/1934 «Περί Οργανώσεως Δημοσίων Ψυχιατρείων» καθόρισε τη λειτουργία του ιδρύματος, θέτοντας τις βάσεις εκσυγχρονισμού. Κατασκευάζονται τα πρώτα περίπτερα, χωρητικότητας 380 κλινών. Στα τέλη του 1934 οι ασθενείς αριθμούνται σε 1000 και στεγάζονταν σε άθλιες παράγκες. Το 1939, ο αριθμός των ασθενών ξεπερνούσε τους 1800, ενώ μέχρι το 1940 είχαν κτιστεί τα 13 πρώτα περίπτερα. Η ταραχώδης δεκαετία του 1940 ενέτεινε τα πολλαπλά προβλήματα του Ψυχιατρείου (προβλήματα στην τροφοδοσία, αύξηση της νοσηρότητας εξαιτίας της πείνας κ.ά.), με αποτέλεσμα τον αποδεκατισμό των ψυχοπαθών, που ο αριθμός τους πλέον δεν υπερέβαινε τους 1000 (Μισουρίδου, 2008). Κατά τη διάρκεια του εμφυλίου πολέμου ο αριθμός των ασθενών αυξήθηκε δραματικά γιατί: α) ο εξαθλιωμένος πληθυσμός δεν μπορούσε να πληρώσει νοσήλια σε ιδιωτικές κλινικές και β) οι αντιφρονούντες τιμωρούνταν με αναγκαστική νοσηλεία ή δήλωναν ψυχοπαθείς για να γλιτώσουν τις διώξεις (Μισουρίδου, 2008).

Οι ασθενείς νοσηλεύονταν σε άθλιες συνθήκες, δεν υπήρχαν εξατομικευμένες θεραπείες, ενώ αποτελούσε διαδεδομένη «θεραπευτική τεχνική», η μέθοδος ακινητοποίησης των ασθενών χειροπόδα με λουριά. Ωστόσο, λόγω του στιγματισμού και του φόβου που χαρακτήριζε τη ψυχική νόσο, τα άτομα που επέλεγαν το ψυχιατρείο για να εργαστούν ήταν κυρίως αναλφάβητα και ανειδίκευτα, ενώ ελάχιστα είχαν απολυτήριο δημοτικού (Μισουρίδου, 2008). Ως εκ τούτου, προσέφεραν μόνο τα στοιχειώδη στους ασθενείς, όπως μία στοιχειώδη φροντίδα καθαρισμού, τη χορήγηση φαγητού και την προσπάθεια να βρεθεί τρόπος να ηρεμήσουν τους διεγερτικούς. Επιπροσθέτως, τα άτομα του προσωπικού κοιμόνταν μέσα στους θαλάμους των ασθενών και συμβίωναν κυριολεκτικά με τους ψυχοπαθείς (Μισουρίδου, 2008).

### ***Τμήμα Επικίνδυνων Ψυχοπαθών***

Αρχικά οι ψυχοπαθείς υπόδικοι ή κατάδικοι κλείνονταν στη φυλακή και μερικοί μεταφέρονταν στο Δρομοκαΐτειο για παρατήρηση. Το 1902 ο Μ. Γιαννήρης πρότεινε τη δημιουργία τμήματος επικίνδυνων ψυχοπαθών στη φυλακή της Αθήνας, επιχειρώντας την αναθεώρηση του Νόμου ΨΜΒ/1862 και αποκλείοντας τη δημιουργία ξεχωριστού ιδρύματος επικίνδυνων ψυχοπαθών (Πλουμπίδης, 1981).

Πρότυπο αναφοράς για τον Μ. Γιαννήρη, αποτέλεσε η φυλακή του Buch, κοντά στο Βερολίνο και πρότεινε την κατασκευή κτιρίου χωρητικότητας 50-60 κλινών, μέσα στον αυλόγυρο της μελλοντικής φυλακής της Αθήνας, που θα στέγαζε τους επικίνδυνους ψυχοπαθείς και μεταγενέστερα τη δημιουργία δύο παραρτημάτων ασφαλείας σε ένα δημόσιο ψυχιατρείο, για την κάλυψη των αναγκών. Η διάρκεια της νοσηλείας δεν έπρεπε να υπερβαίνει το εξάμηνο και γι' αυτό ο γιατρός του φρενιατρικού τμήματος των φυλακών, έπρεπε να υποβάλλει έκθεση στο Υπουργείο Εσωτερικών,

προκειμένου ο ασθενής να μεταφερθεί μέσω Υπουργείου σε κοινό ψυχιατρείο. Η πρόταση του Μ. Γιαννήρη δεν υλοποιήθηκε ποτέ. Αρχικά, μία αίθουσα των φυλακών Συγγρού δέχθηκε μερικούς επικίνδυνους ψυχοπαθείς, ενώ αργότερα δημιουργήθηκε ένα τμήμα φρενοπαθών στις φυλακές Αβέρωφ και στις φυλακές Καλλιθέας (Πλουμπίδης, 1981).

### ***Φρενοκομείο Θεσσαλονίκης***

Στη Θεσσαλονίκη, η εβραϊκή κοινότητα, αρχικά, το 1908, δημιουργεί το «άσυλο φρενοβλαβών», στη συνοικία Βαρώνου Χιρς και μεταγενέστερα, το 1910, η ελληνική κοινότητα το μεταφέρει σε ένα οίκημα στην οδό Αφροδίτης, περιοχή κακόφημη για την εποχή, που έβριθε οίκων ανοχής, χασισοποτειών και συμμοριών (Τσιτιρίδης, 2018). Το 1925, μετονομάζεται «Δημόσιο Ψυχιατρείο Θεσσαλονίκης», όπου τα πρώτα χρόνια λειτουργίας του μαζί με τους ψυχικά ασθενείς, διέμεναν πυροπαθείς, πρόσφυγες, ορφανά, αλκοολικοί, επιληπτικοί και άτομα με παραβατική συμπεριφορά που συνέλλεγαν και διακόμεζαν οι αστυνομικές αρχές, ενώ οι συνθήκες στέγασης και περίθαλψης των ασθενών παρέμεναν άθλιες (Τσιτιρίδης, 2018).

Το 1930, η Αμερικανίδα φιλόδοξος Πάτισον, κατασκεύασε νέες κτιριακές εγκαταστάσεις, ενώ κατά τη διάρκεια της γερμανικής κατοχής, εντείνονται τα πολλαπλά προβλήματα του ψυχιατρείου (προβλήματα στην τροφοδοσία, αύξηση της θνησιμότητας κ.ά.) και επιτελείται μόνο ο εγκλεισμός των ασθενών και όχι η θεραπεία (Τσιτιρίδης, 2018).

### ***Φρενοκομείο Σούδας***

Το 1910, ιδρύθηκε το «Άσυλο Φρενοβλαβών Σούδας» που στόχευε στην ανακούφιση της τοπικής κοινωνίας, παρά στη θεραπεία των ψυχασθενών. Το 1925, μετονομάστηκε «Δημόσιο Ψυχιατρείο Σούδας», δυναμικότητας 150 κλινών, ενώ τη δεκαετία του 1930, παρόλο που μεταφέρεται σε καταλληλότερο κτίριο, παρέμενε λειτουργικά ατελές για την περίθαλψη των ασθενών. Με το Νόμο 965/1937 μετατράπηκε σε Νομικό Πρόσωπο Δημοσίου Δικαίου, αυξήθηκε η δυναμικότητα των κλινών του σε 330 και στελεχώθηκε, αρχικά, από γενικούς γιατρούς, αλλά οι συνθήκες νοσηλείας παρέμεναν άθλιες (Καρτάκις, 2006).

### ***Ψυχιατρική Μεταρρύθμιση (ΨΜ) στην Ελλάδα***

Ο όρος «Ψυχιατρική Μεταρρύθμιση» δηλώνει τον μετασχηματισμό όλων των θεσμικών και λειτουργικών παραμέτρων που συνθέτουν την οργάνωση του συστήματος των ψυχιατρικών υπηρεσιών. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, η φιλοσοφία της ΨΜ στοχεύει στην υπέρβαση του ψυχιατρικού Ασύλου και στην αντικατάστασή του από ένα πλέγμα νοσοκομειακών και κοινοτικών δομών που θα απαντούν, με ολοκληρωμένο τρόπο, σε κάθε αίτημα για παροχή υπηρεσιών ψυχικής υγείας



(Μαδιανός, 1994). Συνεπώς, η ΨΜ συνίσταται στο «σύνολο όλων εκείνων των παρεμβάσεων που επιτρέπουν στον ψυχικά ασθενή να παραμείνει ενεργός πολίτης, μέσα στο οικογενειακό του περιβάλλον, με αυτονομία, οικονομική δράση και κοινωνική ένταξη» (Φωτιάδου κ.ά., 2005).

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η ΨΜ που διαμορφώθηκε στη χώρα μας, στα μέσα της δεκαετίας του 1980, κατ' εφαρμογή του Κανονισμού 815/1984 «Εκτακτη οικονομική ενίσχυση της Ελλάδας στον κοινωνικό τομέα», αντανακλά την επιτακτική ανάγκη για αλλαγή της τότε παραδοσιακής, ασυλιακού - σε μεγάλο βαθμό - τύπου περίθαλψης προς μία αποκεντρωμένη παροχή φροντίδας ψυχικής υγείας, καθώς και επαναπροσδιορισμό των κοινωνικών ορίων, ώστε να επιτευχθεί ο κοινωνικός αποστιγματισμός των ατόμων με ψυχικά προβλήματα και η επανένταξή τους στο κοινωνικό περιβάλλον.

Το πρόγραμμα πέρασε από διάφορα στάδια στασιμότητας και δυσαπορροφητικότητας κονδυλίων, μέχρι που αναπτύχθηκε στην τελική του μορφή, τον Ιούνιο του 1995. Δημιουργήθηκαν περίπου 250 νέες υπηρεσίες αποκαλούμενες «νέες δομές». Σημαντικές αλλαγές στην ψυχική υγεία επήλθαν το 1999, οπότε ψηφίστηκε πιο προοδευτικός Νόμος (2716/17.5.99), αποτέλεσμα του οποίου ήταν το πρόγραμμα «Ψυχαργός», ως συνέχεια του μεταρρυθμιστικού εγχειρήματος. Το πρόγραμμα ήταν φιλόδοξο, ξεκίνησε το 2000, είχε κόστος 700 εκατομμύρια ευρώ και στόχευε: α) στον αποϊδρυματισμό των εναπομεινάντων χρόνιων ψυχικά ασθενών και στο κλείσιμο οκτώ δημόσιων ψυχιατρείων, β) στην περαιτέρω ανάπτυξη κοινοτικών υπηρεσιών σε όλη τη χώρα και γ) στην ψυχοκοινωνική αποκατάσταση των ασθενών (Μαδιανός, 2013), παρόλο που η Ελλάδα δεν διέθετε ακόμη το ιδεολογικό υπόβαθρο για το ριζικό μετασχηματισμό των υπηρεσιών ψυχικής υγείας.

Μέσα σε αυτό το πλαίσιο διαδικασιών αλλαγής της ψυχιατρικής περίθαλψης, στη χώρα μας, που βρίσκονται ακόμη σε εξέλιξη, ενέσκηψε η μεγάλη οικονομική και κοινωνική κρίση, με απώλεια 25% του ΑΕΠ, συρρίκνωση αποδοχών και συντάξεων (40%) και ανεργία (26%), που επιδείνωσε την όλη κατάσταση. Πολλές υπηρεσίες ψυχικής υγείας υποχρεώθηκαν να σταματήσουν τα ειδικά προγράμματά τους, ενώ παράλληλα παρατηρήθηκε αυξητική τάση των αστέγων στα μεγάλα αστικά κέντρα, πολλοί δε από αυτούς ετύγχανε να νοσούν ψυχικά (Μαδιανός, 2013).

## Συμπεράσματα

Η χρονική περίοδος που εξετάστηκε χαρακτηρίζεται από τη σταδιακή ανάπτυξη της ψυχιατρικής και την περιθωριοποίηση των παραδοσιακών πρακτικών, με σχετικά αργούς ρυθμούς. Η δημιουργία ιδρυμάτων/ασύλων, κυρίως δημόσιων και ο συγκεχυμένος και περίπλοκος τρόπος παροχής των δωρεάν ψυχιατρικών υπηρεσιών, καθιστούσε ανεπαρκή τη ψυχιατρική περίθαλψη και τη δωρεάν νοσηλεία. Παράλληλα, η αύξηση του αριθμού των ψυχοπαθών στα διάφορα ιδρύματα, υπήρξε



συνάρτηση της εξέλιξης των γνώσεων και των θεωριών για τη φύση των ψυχοπαθολογικών μηχανισμών και των θεραπευτικών μεθόδων, καθώς και της εξέλιξης της κοινωνικής οργάνωσης και της νοοτροπίας, στην κρατική και στην κοινωνική πολιτική.

Μεταγενέστερα, η βαθμιαία αντικατάσταση του ιδρυματικού συστήματος, στην ψυχιατρική περίθαλψη, με ένα δίκτυο προληπτικών και θεραπευτικών υπηρεσιών στην κοινότητα και στα γενικά νοσοκομεία, καθώς και η παροχή κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών επαγγελματικής αποκατάστασης, στο πλαίσιο εφαρμογής της ΨΜ, φάνηκε ότι αποτέλεσε ένα δύσκολο εγχείρημα για την Ελλάδα.

Τα προφανή κενά και οι σοβαρότατες ελλείψεις της ψυχιατρικής περίθαλψης στην Ελλάδα, κατά τις προηγούμενες δεκαετίες, δεν ήταν αρκετά για να επισημανθεί η αναγκαιότητα της ΨΜ, αλλά εκλήφθηκαν ως μία ακόμη επιβαλλόμενη υποχρέωση έναντι του εξευρωπαϊσμού που ακολούθησε τις επόμενες δεκαετίες η χώρα. Εξάλλου, η ΨΜ ως μία δημόσια πολιτική υγείας, προκειμένου να στεφθεί με επιτυχία χρήζει προγραμματισμού, πόρων και μακρόπνοης εφαρμογής, με σαφές όραμα και εμπλοκή όλων των μετόχων.

Παρόλο που η κοινοτική ψυχιατρική σήμερα, αποτελεί τον αποτελεσματικότερο τρόπο παροχής υπηρεσιών ψυχικής υγείας, σε επιστημονικό επίπεδο, στην πράξη δεν τυγχάνει της ανάλογης δυναμικής που απαιτείται για τη συνεχή προώθηση του μεταρρυθμιστικού εγχειρήματος, συνθήκη που επιτάχθηκε με τη δεκαετή οικονομική κρίση και οδήγησε στην υποχρηματοδότηση και υποστελέχωση των ψυχιατρικών δομών.

Επιπροσθέτως, η έντονη έλλειψη μεταρρυθμιστικής κουλτούρας και η απουσία μίας νέας θεώρησης για τη ψυχική υγεία, που να συνάδει με τις επιταγές της κοινοτικής φροντίδας, που παρατηρήθηκε όχι μόνο στον κοινωνικό χώρο που συνήθως παραμένει αμέτοχος στην υλοποίηση του εγχειρήματος, αλλά και εντός της κοινότητας των επαγγελματιών υγείας, καθώς και η έλλειψη μεταρρυθμιστικής βούλησης σε πολιτικό επίπεδο, καθιστά σαφές ότι η ΨΜ αποτελεί αναμφισβήτητα μία σύνθετη διαδικασία.

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## Climate Change Policy and Mental Health<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

Climate change is a major problem that modern society faces. The impact of human activity on the environment, worldwide, has had irreversible negative effects on daily lives as well as on mental health. The present study aims to investigate climate change, its effects on mental health of the population and the development of strategies to address the eminent negative consequences. The methodology included literature and research data review, which were collected through Google Scholar, Pub-med online database, articles, journals and dissertations. This study makes evident that climate change affects the mental health of the population and requires further investigation and planning in order to implement appropriate information and consultation programs as well as to promote the adoption of habits and behaviours in order to address and reduce the negative environmental consequences.

**Keywords:** Climate change; environment; mental health

### Η Πολιτική για την Κλιματική Αλλαγή και η Ψυχική Υγεία

Σταματίνα Δούκη, Στυλιανός Ιωάννης Τζαγκαράκης, Εμμανουήλ Σπυριδάκης<sup>4</sup>

### Περίληψη

Η κλιματική αλλαγή αποτελεί ένα μείζον πρόβλημα που καλείται να αντιμετωπίσει η σύγχρονη κοινωνία. Η επίδραση της ανθρώπινης δραστηριότητας στο περιβάλλον, σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, έχει επιφέρει μη αναστρέψιμες αρνητικές επιδράσεις στην καθημερινότητά τους και στην ψυχική τους υγεία. Η παρούσα ερευνητική μελέτη στοχεύει στη διερεύνηση της κλιματικής αλλαγής, των επιπτώσεών της στη ψυχική υγεία του πληθυσμού και της χάραξης στρατηγικών αντιμετώπισης. Η μεθοδολογία που ακολουθήθηκε περιλάμβανε την αναζήτηση σχετικής βιβλιογραφίας και ερευνητικών δεδομένων, τα οποία συλλέχθηκαν μέσα από την ηλεκτρονική βάση δεδομένων Google Scholar, Pub-med, μέσα από άρθρα, περιοδικά, διπλωματικές εργασίες και διδακτορικές διατριβές. Η μελέτη καθιστά ξεκάθαρο ότι η κλιματική αλλαγή επηρεάζει τη ψυχική υγεία του πληθυσμού, γεγονός που απαιτεί περαιτέρω διερεύνηση και σχεδιασμό για την υλοποίηση κατάλληλων προγραμμάτων ενημέρωσης και υιοθέτησης συνηθειών και συμπεριφορών, για την αντιμετώπιση και τον περιορισμό των περιβαλλοντικών συνεπειών της.

**Keywords:** Κλιματική αλλαγή; περιβάλλον; ψυχική υγεία

<sup>1</sup> To cite this paper in APA style: Douki, S., Tzagkarakis, S. I. and Spyridakis, E. (2021). Climate Change Policy and Mental Health. *HAPSc Policy Briefs Series*, 2(2), 298-306. DOI: 10.12681/hapscpbs.29517

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## Εισαγωγή

Η κλιματική αλλαγή αποτελεί ένα μείζον πρόβλημα που καλείται να αντιμετωπίσει η σύγχρονη κοινωνία. Η επίδραση της ανθρώπινης δραστηριότητας στο περιβάλλον, σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, έχει επιφέρει μη αναστρέψιμες αρνητικές επιδράσεις στην καθημερινότητά τους, καθώς και στη σωματική και στη ψυχική υγεία τους (Becken et al., 2015, Thomas et al., 2014). Οι αρνητικές αυτές επιπτώσεις σχετίζονται με την υπερθέρμανση του πλανήτη και την καταστροφή του φυσικού περιβάλλοντος (όπως: ερημοποίηση, λιώσιμο πάγων, ένταση και συχνότητα επικίνδυνων καιρικών φαινομένων κ.ά), που έχει πυροδοτήσει η ανθρώπινη παρέμβαση (Berry et al., 2010) και έχουν ως συνέπεια τη διακινδύνευση της ζωής πολλών ανθρώπων (UNESCO, 2017).

Επιπροσθέτως, η κλιματική αλλαγή έχει σημαντικό αρνητικό αντίκτυπο στη ψυχική υγεία και στην ευημερία των ατόμων. Όπως θα παρουσιαστεί παρακάτω, μελέτες έχουν αναδείξει ότι τα έντονα καιρικά φαινόμενα (όπως: πλημμύρες, ξηρασίες, ανεμοστρόβιλοι, σεισμοί, πυρκαγιές, κ.ά) επιδεινώνουν τα χρόνια ψυχικά νοσήματα, προκαλώντας άγχος, μετατραυματικό στρες (PTSD) και συμβάλλουν στην εκδήλωση αυτοκαταστροφικών συμπεριφορών. Ωστόσο, τα υγειονομικά συστήματα, σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, δεν έχουν αναπτύξει επαρκώς τους μηχανισμούς ετοιμότητας που απαιτούνται, προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσουν το μείζον αυτό ζήτημα (Liu et al., 2020).

## Κλιματική Αλλαγή

Στην κλιματική αλλαγή συντελούν άνθρωποι αλλά και φυσικοί παράγοντες. Οι αλλαγές στη συγκέντρωση των αερίων του θερμοκηπίου, των αερολυμάτων της ατμόσφαιρας και της ηλιακής ακτινοβολίας, απόρροια της ανθρώπινης παρέμβασης, που αναδεικνύεται η κύρια αιτία της κλιματικής αλλαγής, σύμφωνα με την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή (Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, 2020), επιδρούν μεταβάλλοντας την ενεργειακή ισορροπία του κλιματικού συστήματος (Alley, Bernstein et al., 2007). Ο συνδυασμός των επιδράσεων ανθρώπινων και φυσικών παραγόντων στο κλίμα, παγκοσμίως, περιγράφεται με τον όρο ενεργειακό ισοζύγιο (Alley, Bernstein et al., 2007).

Η κλιματική αλλαγή φαίνεται ότι οδηγεί σε περιβαλλοντικές και κοινωνικές αλλαγές, επηρεάζοντας την επιβίωση των ανθρώπων και αυξάνοντας την πιθανότητα έκθεσης σε κίνδυνο, μεγάλων τμημάτων του παγκόσμιου πληθυσμού. Επιδρά άμεσα στη σωματική υγεία των ατόμων (όπως: φυσικοί τραυματισμοί, αύξηση των μολυσματικών ασθενειών, άσθμα, αλλεργίες, αφυδάτωση, θερμοπληξία, αναπνευστικές παθήσεις και καρδιαγγειακά προβλήματα) και έμμεσα (μείωση τροφής, λιμός, έλλειψη νερού, μείωση των χώρων καλλιέργειας κ.ά) (Field et al., 2012). Εξάλλου, φαίνεται ότι μετά την περίοδο της covid-19, η σύνδεση της κλιματικής αλλαγής με τη χρήση της γης και την

απώλεια βιοποικιλότητας, συμβάλλουν στην εξάπλωση μελλοντικών πανδημιών (Vidal, 2020), με το 70% των μολυσματικών ασθενειών, σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, να προέρχονται από το φυσικό περιβάλλον (Brennan & Micklas, 2020).

Σύμφωνα με τον Παγκόσμιο Οργανισμό Υγείας (Π.Ο.Υ.), η ατμοσφαιρική ρύπανση σκοτώνει, περίπου, 7 εκ. ανθρώπους ετησίως, εκτιμάται ότι 12,6 εκ. θάνατοι που αποδίδονται σε περιβαλλοντικούς παράγοντες, λόγω της κλιματικής αλλαγής, θα μπορούσαν να αποφευχθούν, ενώ προβλέπονται 250.000 επιπλέον θάνατοι ετησίως, μεταξύ των ετών 2030 και 2050 (WHO, 2021).

### **Κλιματική Αλλαγή και Ψυχική Υγεία**

Η ψυχική υγεία αποτελεί την ισορροπημένη συνύπαρξη όλων των πλευρών της ανθρώπινης ζωής, που περιλαμβάνει: τη σωματική, τη διανοητική, τη συναισθηματική και την πνευματική ευεξία (Ζήση & Στυλιανίδης, 2004). Η έννοια της ψυχικής υγείας, σύμφωνα με τον Παγκόσμιο Οργανισμό Υγείας (WHO), δεν αναφέρεται μόνο στην απουσία ψυχικής διαταραχής αλλά περιγράφει την κατάσταση ευημερίας, κατά την οποία κάποιος αντιλαμβάνεται και αξιοποιεί τις ικανότητές του, αντιμετωπίζει αποτελεσματικά το καθημερινό στρες, εργάζεται παραγωγικά και μπορεί να συνεισφέρει στην κοινότητα (WHO, 1975).

Οι κλιματικές αλλαγές που σχετίζονται με τις φυσικές καταστροφές και τα ακραία καιρικά φαινόμενα, θέτοντας σε κίνδυνο το φυσικό και κοινωνικό περιβάλλον, έχουν αρνητικό αντίκτυπο στη ψυχική υγεία των ατόμων (μπορεί να αποτελέσουν πηγή τραύματος, επιφέροντας άγχος σε ποικίλο βαθμό), στην οικονομία, στις κοινωνικές δομές, ενώ διαταράσσουν τους πόρους και την πρόσβαση στην υγειονομική περίθαλψη (O'Neill et al., 2014; Watts et al., 2017). Επίσης, το οικονομικό κόστος των καταστροφών, που σχετίζονται με την κλιματική αλλαγή, επιβαρύνει, κυρίως, τις μειονεκτούσες πληθυσμιακές ομάδες (φτωχούς και κοινωνικά περιθωριοποιημένους), ενισχύοντας την ευαλωτότητά τους στο ψυχολογικό στρες.

Τα αποτελέσματα αρκετών ερευνών, ανέδειξαν ότι η διαταραχή του μετατραυματικού στρες (PTSD), ο αυτοκτονικός ιδεασμός και οι αυτοκτονίες συσχετίζονται σημαντικά με την έκθεση των ατόμων σε καταστροφές, που προέρχονται από την κλιματική αλλαγή (Burke et al., 2018; Clayton, et al., 2017). Πιο συγκεκριμένα, το PTSD φαίνεται να συσχετίζεται με το σοβαρό τραυματισμό, την αναγκαστική απομάκρυνση από το σπίτι και το θάνατο οικογενειακών μελών, ως αποτέλεσμα φυσικών καταστροφών. Ερευνητικά επιβεβαιώθηκε από μελέτες, η σημαντική συσχέτιση του PTSD με τις σοβαρές πλημμύρες. Ενδεικτικά, μελέτη στην Ισπανία το 2012, που διερεύνησε τις επιπτώσεις σοβαρής πλημμύρας στο γενικό πληθυσμό, διαπίστωσε ότι ο κίνδυνος εμφάνισης PTSD στα άτομα που επλήγησαν ήταν 8,18 φορές μεγαλύτερη, σε σχέση με τον υπόλοιπο πληθυσμό, ενώ τα

συμπτώματα διαρκούσαν αρκετούς μήνες, μετά την πάροδο του τραυματικού γεγονότος (Fontalba-Navas et al., 2017). Παρόμοια αποτελέσματα ανέδειξαν έρευνες στις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες (Η.Π.Α.) και στις Ινδίες, που το PTSD μετά από έντονες πλημμύρες, συσχετίστηκε με τον αναγκαστικό διαχωρισμό των μελών της οικογένειας, τη διάρρηξη των μεταξύ τους δεσμών και την ανεπαρκή λειτουργία των συστημάτων κοινωνικής στήριξης (Grineski et al., 2019; Dar, Iqbal et al., 2018).

Κατά τη διάρκεια περιόδων καύσωνα και παρατεταμένων ξηρασιών, λόγω της κλιματικής αλλαγής, έχει παρατηρηθεί ότι αυξάνεται το ποσοστό του αυτοκτονικού ιδεασμού και των αυτοκτονιών. Σε αναδρομική μελέτη που πραγματοποιήθηκε στις Ινδίες, συσχετίστηκε σημαντικά η αύξηση της θερμοκρασίας με 60.000 αυτοκτονίες, τα τελευταία 30 χρόνια (Carleton, 2017).

Οι αγρότες αποτελούν ιδιαίτερα ευάλωτη ομάδα, γιατί βιώνουν σημαντικά υψηλότερα επίπεδα άγχους, συναισθηματικής δυσφορίας και κατάθλιψης (Clayton et al., 2015; Coêlho et al., 2004) που οδηγούν σε αυξημένο κίνδυνο αυτοκτονιών, σε σχέση με το γενικό πληθυσμό, σε περιόδους έντονης ξηρασίας (Ellis & Albrecht, 2017). Παρόμοια αποτελέσματα, ανέδειξε μελέτη που πραγματοποιήθηκε σε κατοίκους περιοχών με έντονη ξηρασία, η οποία συσχετίστηκε, επίσης, με αυξημένο αριθμό αυτοκτονιών (Clayton et al., 2015, Coêlho et al., 2004).

Οι περίοδοι καύσωνα μπορεί επίσης να οδηγήσουν σε επιδείνωση των οξέων και χρόνιων προβλημάτων ψυχικής υγείας. Σε μελέτη που διενεργήθηκε στον Καναδά, διαπιστώθηκε ότι οι ακραίες περιβαλλοντικές θερμοκρασίες (υψηλές θερμοκρασίες) συνέβαλαν στην επιδείνωση της σχιζοφρένειας, που συσχετίστηκε με σημαντική αύξηση των επισκέψεων στα Τμήματα Επειγόντων Περιστατικών των νοσοκομείων (Τ.Ε.Π.) (Wang et al., 2014). Στην Αγγλία σε ερευνητική μελέτη, παρατηρήθηκε ότι οι ασθενείς που έπασχαν από ψύχωση και άνοια, εμφανίζουν αυξημένο κίνδυνο θνησιμότητας (Page et al., 2012), ενώ παρόμοια στο Βιετνάμ διαπιστώθηκε αύξηση των εισαγωγών στα ψυχιατρικά νοσοκομεία, κατά τη διάρκεια καυσώνων (Trang et al., 2016). Στις προαναφερόμενες μελέτες, σε σχέση με την ηλικιακή ομάδα, τα αποτελέσματα διαφέρουν. Ειδικότερα, στην Αγγλία επιδείνωση της ψυχικής νόσου καταγράφηκε σε υψηλότερο ποσοστό στους ηλικιωμένους, ενώ στο Βιετνάμ στα νεότερα ηλικιακά άτομα (Dean et al., 2008).

### **Πολιτική Στρατηγική Αντιμετώπισης**

Ο αρνητικός αντίκτυπος της κλιματικής αλλαγής στη ψυχική υγεία του πληθυσμού, αποτελεί μείζον πρόβλημα δημόσιας υγείας που απαιτεί διεπιστημονική και πολυεπίπεδη προσέγγιση, περιλαμβάνοντας φορείς χάραξης πολιτικής, ερευνητές και επαγγελματίες υγείας σε κυβερνητικό, ακαδημαϊκό, κλινικό και κοινοτικό επίπεδο (Liu et al., 2020).



Με βάση καλές πρακτικές που εφαρμόζονται διεθνώς, μια σταχυολόγηση της πολιτικής στρατηγικής αντιμετώπισης των προβλημάτων ψυχικής υγείας που προκαλούνται από την κλιματική κρίση, μπορεί να συμπεριλάβει τα κάτωθι αλλά δεν περιορίζεται σε αυτά:

- Ενίσχυση των δομών ψυχικής υγείας στην κοινότητα, κυρίως σε περιοχές με αυξημένο κίνδυνο καταστροφών, απόρροια της κλιματικής αλλαγής, ώστε να βελτιωθεί η πρόσβαση των κατοίκων στις υπηρεσίες ψυχικής υγείας (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018).
- Προώθηση πρωτοβουλιών και δράσεων ψυχικής υγείας σε επίπεδο κοινότητας, που στοχεύουν στις ευάλωτες πληθυσμιακά ομάδες, όπως: παιδιά, ηλικιωμένους, άτομα χαμηλού εισοδήματος με περιορισμένους πόρους, ώστε να ενισχυθεί η ψυχική τους ανθεκτικότητα, κατά τη διάρκεια των έντονων καιρικών φαινομένων (Rowan et al., 2013).
- Εκπαίδευση των ψυχικά πασχόντων και των μελών των οικογενειών τους, για τους κινδύνους που επιφέρει η κλιματική αλλαγή, ώστε να ενισχυθούν οι μηχανισμοί προετοιμασίας και προστασίας (Rowan et al., 2013).
- Θεραπεία των ασθενών με ψυχικά νοσήματα που σχετίζονται με την τραυματική εμπειρία καταστροφών και απωλειών (Rowan et al., 2013)
- Ενίσχυση των συμβουλευτικών υπηρεσιών και των άλλων εγκαταστάσεων στην κοινότητα με ανθρώπινο δυναμικό, εξειδικευμένους επαγγελματίες ψυχικής υγείας στη διαχείριση κρίσεων, όπως είναι η κλιματική αλλαγή, για ποιοτικότερη παροχή φροντίδας (Rowan et al., 2013)
- Παροχή συμβουλών (Hayes, et al., 2018) για την άρση των εμποδίων στην πρόσβαση και το κόστος, σχετικά με την παροχή υπηρεσιών ψυχικής υγείας σε ασφαλιστικά προγράμματα (Rowan et al., 2013).
- Ενίσχυση των Γενικών και των Ψυχιατρικών Νοσοκομείων με εξειδικευμένους επαγγελματίες ψυχικής υγείας στη διαχείριση κρίσεων, για να αντιμετωπιστεί αποτελεσματικά η αθρόα προσέλευση ασθενών στα Τ.Ε.Π., καθώς και η αύξηση των εισαγωγών, σε περιόδους έντονων κλιματικών φαινομένων (Dournik et al., 2018).
- Βελτίωση της επικοινωνιακής διασύνδεσης των Τ.Ε.Π. με τις υπηρεσίες ψυχικής υγείας στην κοινότητα (όπως: Κέντρα Υγείας, Κέντρα Ψυχικής Υγείας, Μ.Κ.Ο.-Μη Κυβερνητικοί Οργανισμοί κ.ά), ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί το θεραπευτικό και υποστηρικτικό συνεχές των ασθενών, που νοσηλεύτηκαν και πήραν εξιτήριο, μετά από περιόδους φυσικών καταστροφών και να μειωθεί το ποσοστό ενδεχόμενης επανεισαγωγής τους (Dournik et al., 2018).



- Ανάπτυξη νέων προσεγγίσεων για τη βελτίωση της παροχής ψυχικής υγείας στο Τ.Ε.Π., ενσωματώνοντας την ειδική εκπαίδευση του προσωπικού του Τ.Ε.Π., προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσουν τα τυχόν ψυχικά προβλήματα των ατόμων που έχουν υποστεί φυσικές καταστροφές (Laderman et al., 2018)
- Σχεδιασμός προληπτικών μέτρων ευαισθητοποίησης στο γενικό πληθυσμό, που θα στοχεύουν στην αύξηση της γνώσης και των επιπτώσεων της κλιματικής αλλαγής, για να ενισχυθεί η ετοιμότητά του σε πιθανά επικίνδυνα κλιματικά φαινόμενα (Berry et al. 2018)
- Ένταξη σε προγράμματα πρόληψης σχολικών συμβούλων, νοσηλευτών, κοινωνικών λειτουργών σε γηροκομεία, οίκους ευγηρίας και εργαζομένων σε σπίτια με ηλικιωμένους, ώστε να επιτευχθεί η έγκαιρη αναγνώριση και παρακολούθηση πιθανών προβλημάτων ψυχικής υγείας, συνέπεια της κλιματικής αλλαγής (Hayes et al., 2018; Zalon, 2019).
- Ενίσχυση των ερευνητικών προγραμμάτων, που αφορούν στρατηγικές πρόληψης και παρέμβασης, για τη μείωση των επιπτώσεων της κλιματικής αλλαγής στην ψυχική υγεία (Liu et al., 2020).
- Αύξηση της χρηματοδότησης των ερευνών που διεξάγει το Διεθνές Ινστιτούτο Ψυχικής Υγείας (NIMH) (National Institute of Mental Health, 2019).
- Ενίσχυση των ερευνητικών προγραμμάτων, που αφορούν τις ειδικές πληθυσμιακές ομάδες (παιδιά, εφήβους, ηλικιωμένους, άστεγους, μετανάστες, φτωχούς κ.ά) και τους πρόσφυγες, καθώς αναγκάζονται να εγκαταλείψουν παράκτιες περιοχές ή τόπους με αυξημένο κίνδυνο πυρκαγιάς, συχνά, εξαιτίας φυσικών καταστροφών (Liu et al., 2020).
- Ανάπτυξη συνεργασίας του NIMH με άλλους διεθνείς οργανισμούς, που παρακολουθούν τις επιπτώσεις της κλιματικής αλλαγής στη ψυχική υγεία του πληθυσμού, όπως: Climate Psychiatry Alliance and Climate and Mental Health Caucus of APA, για την εκπαίδευση των παρόχων υγειονομικής περίθαλψης και του κοινού ευρέως (Liu et al., 2020).
- Αύξηση του προϋπολογισμού του Υπουργείου Εσωτερικών, για την ενίσχυση των μηχανισμών ετοιμότητας και ανθεκτικότητας των Τοπικών Υγειονομικών Συστημάτων, που πλήττονται από φυσικές καταστροφές, προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσουν άμεσα πιθανά προβλήματα ψυχικής υγείας στον γενικό πληθυσμό (Department of Homeland Security, 2019).

## Συμπεράσματα

Η κλιματική αλλαγή αποτελεί μία παγκόσμια πρόκληση, παρόλο που ως απειλή για τη ψυχική υγεία και την ευεξία των ατόμων θεωρείται υποβαθμισμένη. Τα ακραία καιρικά φαινόμενα προκαλούν

σοβαρά ψυχολογικά τραύματα, συμβάλλοντας στην αύξηση του ποσοστού των αυτοκτονιών, στην πυροδότηση των ψυχικών ασθενειών, στην επιδείνωση των ήδη υπαρχουσών, καθώς και στην όξυνση των ανισοτήτων υγείας, στις ευάλωτες πληθυσμιακές ομάδες.

Η εκπαίδευση, η ενημέρωση, η ενίσχυση των μηχανισμών ετοιμότητας των υπηρεσιών ψυχικής υγείας και η επιτήρηση των μεταβαλλόμενων κινδύνων που προκαλεί η κλιματική αλλαγή, μπορούν να αποτελέσουν σημαντικά διαγνωστικά και προληπτικά εργαλεία που θα συμβάλλουν στη χάραξη και το σχεδιασμό πολιτικών για τη διαχείριση κρίσεων. Αυτή η αναγκαιότητα απαιτεί την δόμηση μιας ολοκληρωμένης στρατηγικής με οδηγό κατευθύνσεις που εφαρμόζονται διεθνώς και συνακόλουθα τη στενή συνεργασία του Συστήματος Υγείας με τους φορείς Πολιτικής Προστασίας.

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- c) Associated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications (DGC)
- d) Member of the International Political Science Association (IPSA)
- e) Partner organization in the annual Peace Week conference held in Geneva at the UN facilities (Geneva Peace Week – Palais des Nations). The main organizers of the conference are the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, the Graduate Institute of Geneva, the United Nations (United Nations Geneva Office) supported by the Government of Switzerland.

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Hellenic Association of Political Scientists  
(EOIIE - HAPSc)  
Athens, 2021  
[www.hapsc.org](http://www.hapsc.org)