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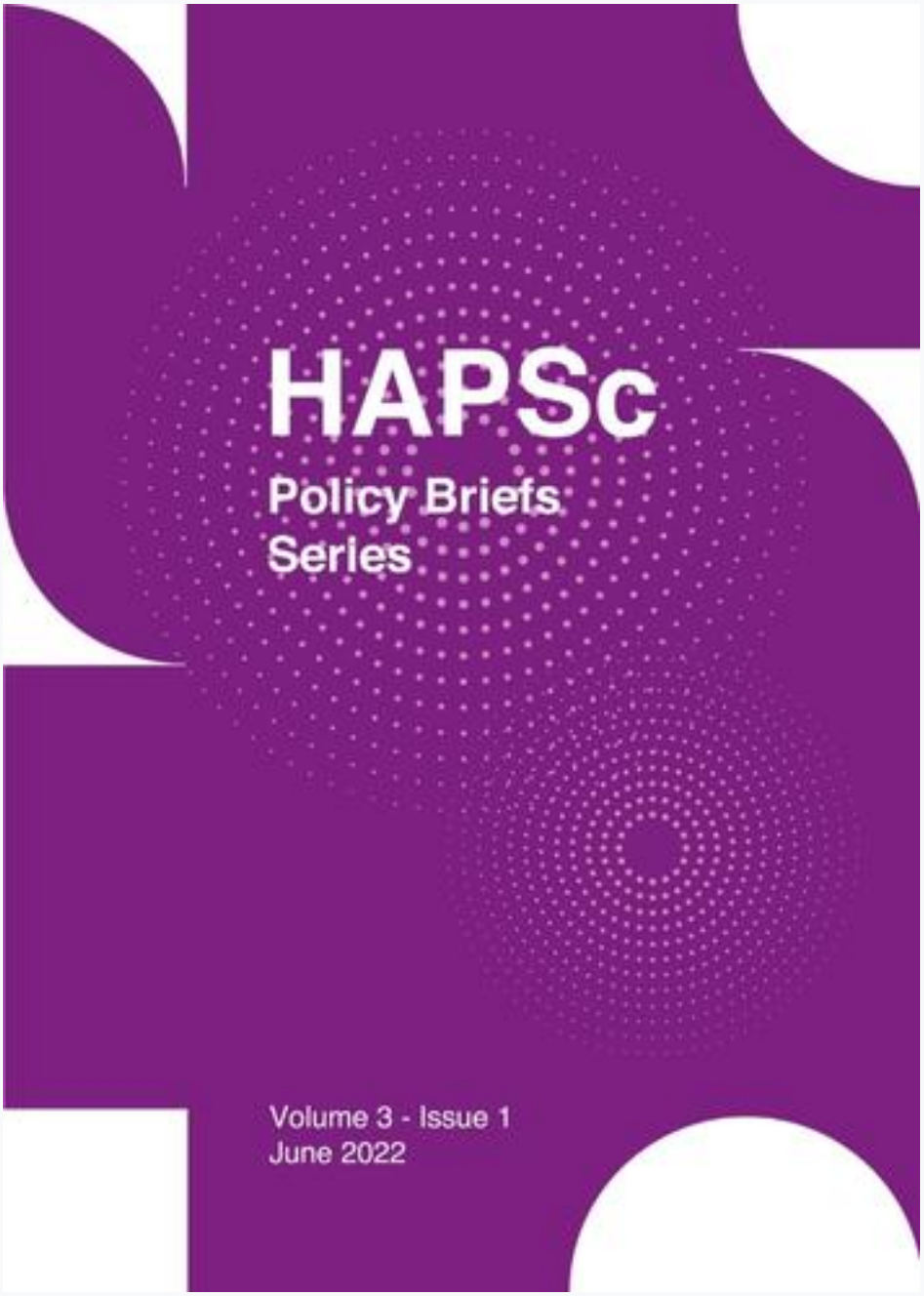

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Topic 1

Democracy and Civil/Human/Social Rights

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Anthropolitics: An Alternative Approach for Parliamentary vs. Revolutionary Politics in India[1]

Nayakara Veeresha[2]

Abstract[3]

Indian democracy is experiencing various uprisings in the regions of Central and Eastern India, Jammu & Kashmir and North-Eastern regions. However, the nature and causative factors of these uprisings are different. The insurrection in Central India is popularly known as "largest internal security threat" that the country is facing as described by former Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh in 2006. The insurrections of Jammu & Kashmir and North-Eastern regions have strong identity base and assumed the form of insurgencies. The failure of the parliamentary democracy in implementing the provisions of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution and the inadequacy of the revolutionary politics of the CPI (Maoist) in delivering good governance to the people indicate the need for alternative politics. These alternative politics may be called as Anthropolitics where human dignity and rights of an individual preferred over the power-centred politics.

Key Words: Anthropolitics, Democracy, Insurrection, Governance, Fifth Schedule, Constitution, India, Revolution, Maoist Party.

Introduction

The birth of parliamentary democracy in India has been intrinsically linked with state violence through the repressive apparatus such as Military and Police. Massive killings have taken place in military operation known as 'Operation Polo' in Telangana region as documented in Pandit Sundarlal Committee Report on the Massacres in Hyderabad (1948). Currently, Indian democracy is experiencing various uprisings in the regions of Central and Eastern India, Jammu & Kashmir and North-Eastern regions. However, the *nature and causative factors* of these uprisings are different. The insurrection in Central India is popularly known as "largest internal security threat" that the

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country is facing as described by former Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh in 2006. The insurrections of Jammu & Kashmir and North-Eastern regions have strong identity base and assumed the form of insurgencies.

Why and how the insurrection in Central India does become "largest internal security threat" concern for the governing class of people? In this context, Sundar (2016:14) argues that:

"*My narrative is really about Indian democracy when it reduces what are essentially political contests over rights, distributive justice and alternative visions of the good to law and order problems, and when it would rather fight against its poorest citizens than talk to them*".

This means that the government, media and the ongoing discourses on insurrection in Central India have deduced the issues of rights over natural resources, tensions between self versus state led governance systems, distribution of economic prosperity to the local communities, coercive land acquisition and faulty development model imposed by state on *adivasis* (also known as indigenous and Scheduled Tribe in official language) communities to a *security and law and order problem*. The discourse has become sanitised to an extent that if any one questions or raises voice against state actions they will be labelled as anti-national and anti-development.

In her recent work entitled 'The Burning Forest: India's War in Bastar', Sundar observes that "not only have India's democratic institutions failed to respond adequately to serious human rights violations (Sundar, 2016: 256)" in the name of fighting Maoist insurgents and providing security to the local people in the chapter on 'The Amnesias of Democracy'. To what extent it is true that the democratic failures of Indian State have given rise to insurrection in Central India? The answer to this question is plausible. It is argued that the "current Maoist upheaval needs to be understood as a part of the general phenomenon of democratic deficit (Mukherji, 2013:73)". The near failure of parliamentary democracy in implementing the provisions of Fifth Schedule is one of the major causative factors for the growth of insurrection. In other words, insurrections are inevitable when the elected governments fail to deliver the rights and justice in day to day life of the citizens. Democracy and insurrections are the two sides of the same coin i.e. political legitimacy. Proper understanding and appreciation of insurrections have the potentiality to strengthen democratic tradition, helpful in improving the quality of local governance.

Democratic deficit: Case of Bastar, Chhattisgarh

The whole Bastar region of the Chhattisgarh State has only one Member in Parliament. It consists of seven districts and all of them are experiencing insurrection. There is a need to increase the

representation of *adivasis* from this region in Parliament. From its inception the Vidhan Sabha consist of only 90 constituencies. Increase in representation of *adivasis* both in Parliament and Vidhan Sabha is necessary through delimitation of seats as per Article 170 of the Constitution. Accordingly, the representation of local democratic entities should also be increased. Along with this, the long pending National Policy on Tribals that has drafted in 2006 covering most of the aspects of the tribal well-being, need to be tabulated in the coming parliamentary session for its enactment. This is with respect to the representation in parliamentary democracy. The poor representation of *adivasis* is also reflected in executive positions and in judiciary. There are no official estimates about these figures. The following facts provide a grim picture about the representation of *adivasis* in Indian democracy,

"*The one-third strong adivasi populace of Chhattisgarh had failed to force the government to give its constitutionally mandated share of jobs, both an indication and an outcome of its marginality in the state's electoral arena* (Sharma, 2012:21)"

"*The adivasi, we know, has not been able to participate fully and effectively in this system of representation, because neither numbers nor the liberal concept of minority works in their favour* (Banerjee, 2016:9-10)".

The above analysis reveals that under or poor representation of adivasis in legislative, executive and judiciary positions i.e. institutions of government is a clear *indicator of the political 'alienation'* (term borrowed from Marx's writings) in the Indian democracy. In every census there is an increase in the per cent of *adivasis* (from 30 million in 1961 to 104 million in 2011) in the country but not the representation in parliamentary democracy. Ironically *adivasis* are one of the largest sections of the society which has been displaced in post-Independent India in the process of pursuit of the so called-development.

Governance of CPI (Maoist) Party

The Maoist party argues that it is fighting with the deficiencies of Indian Democracy, particularly with the structures of inequality in economic, political and social institutions. It is observed that:

"*Though elections have been held several times and several governments had changed in the past 65 years of 'independent' rule, it is a fact that even to this day the basic needs of the people like food, clothing, shelter, education and health care remained out of reach. The oppressed masses who constitute 95% of the population are confronting poverty, illiteracy. Unemployment, price rises, diseases, starvation deaths, corruption etc on a daily basis* (Collected Statements of Central Committee, CPI (Maoist) Party, 2014:302)".

The view of the CPI (Maoist) party is that, Indian democracy is working only for the big industrialists, land owners and not for the improving the lives of all people. It is perpetuating the social and economic inequalities in the social fabric and is the growing cause of social and political unrest. The issues raised by the CPI (Maoist) party are definitely connected with serious aspects of the social and economic development. The question is not just about the democracy, but its deliverables in terms of public goods and services.

The CPI (Maoist) party in Dandakaranya is running primary schools, teaching in local languages, engaged in organic farming, establishing village defence committees, organising cultural festivals, fighting for the land and forest rights with the local bureaucracy, traders, providing health volunteers. Issues concerning the life and livelihood of the people are discussed wherein the failure, inadequacy or injustice of State mechanisms and institutions created space for naxalite activities. Such a description may help people to appreciate why naxalites derive support (Government of India, 2008: 45). To illustrate, the Maoist party has made efforts to negotiate the wage rates paid for adivasis for the collection of tendu leaves, one of the Minor Forest Produces and a major economic source of livelihood for almost 300 million *adivasis (indigenous)* and other forest dwelling communities. It is observed that:

"*these wages- negotiated by Maoists with private contractors-are higher than those announced by the Chhattisgarh government. Maoists were also able to eliminate traditional social evils such as free first day labour for tilling the land of the village chief. These measures explain why adivasis feel indebted to Maoists* (Mukherji 2013: 118)".

By the time Chhattisgarh State has come into existence in 2000, the party has established its social base in the region. In a way the Maoist party's social legitimacy is relatively better when compared to that of the elected local government in the State. This observation can be corroborated by the fact that:

"*We are implementing the MGNREGS in 25 Panchayats only. Earlier it was only in 16 Panchayats; this year another 9 were added making it to 25. The CPI (Maoist) party has initially resisted; however due to the people's pressure we were able to extend it to another 9 Panchayats in this current financial year*[4]".

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, a total number of 338 Adalats (People's Court) have been held throughout the country during 2011-16 by the CPI (Maoist) party. From the above discussion, it

[4] Field notes (2016).

may be inferred that the parliamentary democracy of India is facing resistance from the CPI (Maoist) party whose aim is to establish people's democratic government. A competition between democratic politics and the politics of insurrection is observed.

The Maoist party led Janathan Sarkar's or people led government have established the different departments such as (i) finance (ii) defence (iii) agriculture (iv) judiciary (v) education-culture (vi) health (vii) forest protection and (viii) public relations; however the delivery of public goods and services to the local people is not widely known. For example,

"*there is no mention of even a single health centre with permanent structure initiated by Maoists. Given the acute conditions of malnutrition among children and women, what the 'alternative model' of agriculture and other efforts at Maoist 'development' has done to the people of Dandakaranya*" (Mukherji 2013: 120-21)".

Apart from these deficiencies in delivering the developmental outcomes at the local level, one of the most important critiques towards CPI (Maoist) party is its restrictions on the people's mobility and freedom of movement. The CPI (Maoist) party does not hesitate to use coercive means to stop the villagers from voting particularly in the villages located in interior areas. In this context it is worth to recollect the words of a Standing Sarpanch[5] of a Gram Panchayat as follows,

"*Each person who is coming out of the village has to communicate to the local dalam member of the party and their purpose of going out of the village. They have to report after reaching the home in time. If there is a delay proper explanation has to be given otherwise the villagers have to be ready to face the severe consequences*".

This indicates that the CPI (Maoist) party is restricting the people's movements and curtailing the liberty in their own vicinities. This is undesirable for a party which is aiming to bring 'New Democratic Revolution' (Communist Party of India (Maoist), 2004) in the country. This kind of restrictions on people's mobility in itself negates the spirit of democracy which insurgents are claiming to establish through insurrection. One of the main limitations in understanding the CPI (Maoist) party's Janathan Sarkar's functioning is the unavailability of the same for an objective and open inquiry. This raises many doubts in the minds of the citizens about the claims of CPI (Maoist) party on what the party calls as "liberated zones (Banerjee, 2006: 3159)".

Insurrections take place in a given society for the reasons of failures of democracy as a political system in ensuring equality and justice. In this case it is observed that even though there is an electoral

[5]President of the Local Government Institution (Rural). Field notes (2016).

legitimacy at State and national levels, it has not been able to transform the ideals of democracy at grass roots politics. The near failure of parliamentary politics and the Indian State in addressing the specific democratic governance issues have laid the platform for insurrections in Central and Eastern India. The current insurrection in Central and Eastern India is a classic example for the rival relationship between democracy and insurrection. In this context, the Indian State needs to see the aspects of citizenship where the assertion of rights in the form of insurrections does fall under the democracy within the Constitutional scheme of governance framework. Similarly, the CPI (Maoist) party needs to acknowledge and appreciate the legitimacy of the electoral system functioning through independent Election Commission of India in spite of limitations on the grounds of accountability and transparency.

Therefore, there is no escape for the Indian State from addressing genuine issues raised by the CPI (Maoist) party and especially poverty, unemployment, land reforms, rights over resources and most importantly social and political inequality. Insurrections are potential tools to build 'active citizenry'. There is a need to locate insurrections in a broader framework of democracy and its institutions for a stable social order. For this to happen, there is a need for transforming the way politics is operating in Bastar the epicenter of insurrection from power centred to human centric politics known as Anthropolitics.

The ongoing insurrection needs to be looked beyond the binary categories of state and ideological perspective within which the parliamentary and revolutionary approaches of politics have inadequately acknowledged and appreciated the humanistic elements. To contextualise, the Indian state and the Maoist party perceive and treat the *adivasis* society and most importantly the youth, as political rather than apolitical subjects. The local communities were reduced to the subjects of power struggle of Indian state and the Maoist party by negating the human consciousness and its varied manifestations. Anthropolitics urges the Indian state and Maoist party to look at the human component of the adivasis society rather than as mere political subjects in the pursuit of power politics. Anthropolitics is essential to explore the fullest human capacities and capabilities of the people in fifth schedule areas and it would be beneficial to the Indian state and the Maoist party. For the Indian state, it provides an opportunity to improve the governance and standard of living whereas for the Maoist party it gives scope to revisit the political ideology in the changing democratic scenario.

Conclusion and a way forward

The near failure of the parliamentary democracy in implementing the provisions of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution and the inadequacy of the revolutionary politics of the CPI (Maoist) in delivering

good governance to the people indicates the need for alternative politics. This alternative politics may be called Anthropolitics where human dignity and rights of an individual are preferred over the power-centred politics. Anthropolitics combines the human values into the political theories and tries to look beyond the power, authority or sovereignty concepts. The Union Home Ministry data clearly shows that the common citizens who lost their lives are more in number when compared to the security forces and the insurgents. Anthropolitics is an approach and process to understand the politics from the humanitarian dimension. To contextualize this to what is happening in the central and eastern states is not to be treated as politics but as war. "Politics is war without bloodshed while war is politics with bloodshed (Mao-Zedong)". Even if we are considering it as war, it is an unjust war because both the state apparatus and Maoist party are indulging in killing each other. In other words, death has become an end itself to the both parties.

In this battle of killing each other the local citizens are also losing their lives. Both the state and insurgents are not thinking of the invaluable human lives of the local people. In a sense the human element is largely missing in the struggle for power. The State and the Maoist ideologues are contesting each other for the sovereignty over the local citizens. Therefore there is a need to explore alternative politics which emphasize on human component preceding the political struggles. Anthropolitics calls for the priority of humane content into the political discourses particularly in the conflict zones. It ascertains the fact that human life is more important than the ideology or power though both have a role in shaping the life of the humankind.

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Deliberation as a Collective Decision-Making Mechanism in Multicultural Communities[1]

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Abstract

In this policy brief, the potential that deliberative democracy as a decision-making process has for enhancing the inter-cultural dialogue and dealing with the issues present in multicultural communities is examined. Besides analyzing the advantages of deliberation and its operationalization in reality, in the final part of the policy brief, I offer some possible paths for improving the deliberative process in fostering intercultural communication and problem-solving.

Keywords: deliberative democracy, deliberation, multiculturalism, decision-making, citizen participation, public policy.

Introduction

In this paper, the contribution and possibilities that deliberative mechanisms can offer to intercultural dialogue, the positive effects they can bring to the establishment of a new basic consensus, but also decision-making and solving of everyday problems shared by all members of a political community will be examined. First, the current situation and the main currents in theories dealing with the issue of identity pluralism will be discussed, and then the possibility of application and the effects that the application of deliberation at the local level can offer will be investigated.

Multiculturalism today

The notion of multiculturalism as a phenomenon has gained importance in the second half of the 20th century and escaped from the marginality of social theory, but also political issues. Will Kymlicka is correct when he claims that ethnicity was on the margins of political theory until the 1970s, but since then there has been a lively debate about the phenomenon of ethnicity, and thus the problem of multiculturalist coexistence in modern societies (Kymlicka, 2009:363). A real example is the liberal theory before the theory of multiculturalism came into the mainstream of political debate. Namely, the liberal theory has long been of the opinion that the only thing that matters is the association of free individuals without paying attention to their identity (religious, ethnic or any other), but that

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individuals are governed by universal liberal principles in a political community based on the already mentioned principles (Beljinac, 2011:3). The balance of power between supporters of multiculturalism and those who oppose the concept has changed. Thus, there has been the rise and setting of the theory of multiculturalism as a positively valued axiom of the 90s of the XX century in the Western academic community, which is best reflected in the sentence of Nathan Glazer: "Multiculturalism has won! Now we are all multiculturalists!" (Glazer, 1997:14). There is something fukuyamian in that statement that was premature and perhaps too uncritical. However, today, two decades later, the picture is quite different, we have a thorough critique of the very concept of multicultural coexistence, and the political elites of Western countries themselves are having doubt about the possibility of implementing such type of coexistence (Vuksanović-Ćalasan, 2014:25). This coincided with the waves of xenophobia, which raised the ratings of right-wing extremists and led to the mainstream observation of immigrants through a new movement of security threats.

In the beginning, the very concept of multicultural coexistence needs to be defined and for that occasion, the definition given by Gordy will serve the purpose: "Multiculturalism and diversity are basic living conditions where different cultures meet, but do not drown in each other" (Denić, 2015:21). Although the second part of the definition may be more normative than descriptive, it shows the right path toward a functional multicultural society that does not strive for assimilation or the creation of a new inclusive identity, but for the coexistence of multiple identities, of any kind, without endangering the minority. It is normal, however, to expect the influence of some kind of communication of identity in a certain territory, which can lead to the enrichment of the very lives of citizens, but also to conflicts. The problem in such a society is the harmonization of majority and domicile identity, which strives for uniformity, homogeneity and continuity and, in contrast, the demands of minority immigrant communities that seek some institutional and discourse adjustment to their identity, acceptance and respect for their identities and cultures (Denić, 2015:21).

What is very worrying today is the discourse that can be heard in the public sphere, which is full of prejudice, xenophobia and racism. Such a discourse is only one part of the manifestation of cultural violence that has had a distinct instrumental political use for a longer period than just the emergence of the discussion on the problem of multiculturalism. Johan Galtung defines cultural violence as: “a means of legitimizing structural and direct violence” (Galtung, 2009:15). Structural violence, in the case of identity relations, is always directed towards the “Other”, ie the second identity group, whose “Otherness” may vary in relation to the perceived closeness of the two groups and their common characteristics (Hansen, 2006). Often the reason for such an antagonistic relationship is precisely the construction and maintenance of the identity of one group, which implies, directly or indirectly, the

construction of the identity of the "Other" with different (often inferior) characteristics compared to the first group (Campbell, 1992).

As a potential tool to be seriously considered, the establishment of deliberative democracy, at least at the local level is offered. This, I believe, will not only contribute to solving many problems, primarily local and everyday ones but will also get citizens better acquainted with each other and create a kind of cross-cultural empathy.

Deliberation and deliberative democracy

First, the theory of deliberation will be discussed and on a theoretical level, the value of deliberative democracy for the phenomenon of multiculturalism will be examined. Here, "decision-makers exchange reasonable arguments in the spirit of equality, critical reflection and refinement of their esteemed position with the intention of monitoring and deepening the notion of the public good ", he continues:" they seek a decision based on the widest possible inclusion and overlapping consensus different opinions and which will therefore be reasonable and accepted by all reasonable participants in deliberation" (Walters, 2018:169). So, it is obvious that deliberation includes at least a minimum of respect for the interlocutors, which must be achieved during deliberation. This is possible because the deliberative process by discussion puts people of different backgrounds in contact and creates a humanizing image of the "Other" among them. The deliberation process insists on the most rational argumentation, but also on leaving particular interests for the common good and consensus and accepting better arguments and proposals (Janković, 2012:34). Identity combined with a bad economic situation leaves little room for reasonable debate. However, the discussion itself and intergroup contact during deliberation lead to a better understanding of the interests and experiences of other identity groups, and to the potential for creating a certain level of empathy for others (Elster, 1986:112).

What is even more important to emphasize is the question of the final outcome of the deliberation process. Does it have to be a clear consensus that all parties are satisfied with, or can it be something less than that? The aforementioned Walters distinguishes between the two outcomes of deliberation:

1. A weak form of deliberation that requires only dialogue on all sides with respect, without consensus, but with the intention of deepening the common good.

2. A strong form of deliberation which, with all the demands of a weak form, adds a final solution that is in favor of the common good of all parties and which is accepted by them (Walters, 2018:169).

The weak form of deliberation can be extremely useful for our problem. The implications of a weak form of deliberation can go in the direction of restructuring the problem itself and this is a great direction to move in solving the issues. One of the leading theorists of deliberative democracy, Jon Elster, insists on information and insight towards the "Other" brought by the deliberative process, we listen to the arguments of others, and build relationships and trust from session to session, thus becoming more open critics and begin to appreciate more argument for the sake of the arguments themselves, and we become more informed (Elster, 1986:112). With this information and the solidarity built within the group, we are able to restructure the problem and set it in the right way, because it is the first, most important, but also one of the most difficult steps in making the right public policy in this area (Djordjevic, 2009:58). Bringing even the best-considered solution to a poorly structured problem does not lead to improvement, but can only heal superficially for a while, but the pain remains and it is only a matter of time before it causes new conflicts. That is why deliberation has a great advantage over traditional ways of solving these types of problems.

The traditional way of making decisions involves the political elite making decisions with no or little discussion with the constituency, therefore without any kind of input. But, if we look at what deliberation offers us in this regard, we see the insistence on fluidity in terms of preferences. Why is this important and how does it solve our problem? Before entering the deliberative process, each of us has a clearly defined preference regarding the issue to be resolved by deliberation, these are pre-liberative preferences that are often supported by ill-informed prejudices, but during the deliberation, citizens can learn and there is a chance of them changing their perspectives on certain issues. Several theorists insist on the neutrality of deliberation regarding the goal needed to be achieved (Jackson, 2014), although this may not always be the case because deliberation can give more space to marginalized groups if deemed necessary in order to empower them and make a fairer public policy.

Implementing deliberative mechanism

When talking about the implementation of deliberative democracy, the focus is mostly on the bodies through which deliberation takes place, they can be called by different names, but here they will be labeled as mini-publics (Stephen Elstub & Gianfranco Pomatto, 2018). In their opinion, the mini-publics are: "bodies made up of randomly selected citizens (from the national register, author's note) who are of a representative sample of the entire population (ethnic, religious, status, author's note) and who are gather in them, get informed and then discuss specific topics" (Elstub & Pomatto, 2018:297). It is difficult to imagine that everyone can participate in such discussion bodies, it is not possible for practical reasons, not everyone could be accommodated, and we could only dream of a

quality and meaningful debate. Therefore, the ideal number of participants is 50-100, although, in Iceland, deliberative bodies numbered up to 1500 participants (Elster, 1998). It is of great importance for the mini-publics to have those who manage the deliberation processes, moderators, they must be trained people who will direct the discussion in the most efficient and objective way, in the most useful direction toward the set goals of reaching consensus. Our situation is complicated by the very topic that is being discussed here because deliberation here is also intercultural dialogue. This implies intercultural communication that "involves the interaction of people whose cultural perceptions and symbolic systems are different enough to change the act of communication." (Samovar et al. 2013, 57). Thus, in this case the duty of moderators is even greater because they have to harmonize different culturally conditioned ways of communication, they have to merge horizons, and their training is extremely important for the success of the process. Experts play an important role too by providing accurate and clear data from an objective point of view, but also as witnesses that deliberation participants can examine in order to better understand the problem they are discussing. The application of this theory proved to be satisfactory, but not perfect. There were still problems of insufficient information of the participants, insufficient interest (although the monetary compensation solved the problem quite well), as well as the subsequent obligations and the issue of mandatory characteristic of the decision made through this process. However, a process with similar characteristics managed to bring quite good results in building a new society of equals in a deeply divided society such as the Republic of South Africa in the 1990s (Sorial, 2018:332).

Finally, various authors point out that the main advantages of including deliberation in policymaking are that citizens better understand the values of the community; increased responsibility of decision-makers towards citizens; administration benefits from citizens' input during deliberation; legitimizes final decisions; but also facilitates information flow between participants in deliberation (Abdullah & Rahman, 2015).

Conclusion: New possibilities

After all that has been written before, it can be concluded that deliberative democracy has the potential for application to solve the problems present in multicultural societies. Deliberation has the power to change the preferences of participants through relatively rational discussion and arguments, as well as personal contacts and connections that are created among the participants, during its process. However, contact itself and discussion might not lead always to desired results and division across the ethnic lines can impose a heavy burden on deliberation sometimes. It is up to those who lead this process (moderators) to prevent it. It should be noted that this way of making collective decisions is

not cheap, however, that is why see this decision-making process in places such as Italy, Iceland and British Columbia.

There are two ways to go forward with deliberation:

1. Adding corporate elements to the process itself through the participation of professional civil society organizations in public deliberation (Jelena Lončar, 2011:102). NGOs dealing with relevant topics could provide valuable input and proposals as they have expertise and pieces of information.

2. The use of local infrastructure owned by municipalities, municipalities, cities, local communities, etc.

the second point concerning the use of local government infrastructure should be further elaborated. The critique of this model is that the process is shaped by randomly (though representatively) selected citizens, and only one part, not the entire population. This problem could be reduced through, what can be called, the process of smallpox, which would mean simultaneous or short-term deliberation in a large number of local government institutions to solve the problems of multicultural communities on a regular basis. With more deliberations in different places, we would achieve greater involvement, although still far from the entire population. If we marked all those mini deliberation sites with a red dot on the map, we would get a map full of small red dots, hence the name. The role of bureaucracy here is crucial as they are the ones facilitating and organizing the deliberative forums (which, while active, are part of administration). That is why it is important to put focus on deliberative training of the administration in order to make deliberation as efficient as possible and also develop any further deliberative event.

This way of deliberation after the initial costs would be cheaper to implement because the institutions of local authorities would be used to it and the reduction of intergroup conflict costs could make up for the facilitation costs. In time, there would be a routine and more skillful implementation of these mini deliberations by those who lead it. What is interesting about this theory of collective decision-making is that it is relatively new in political theory and leaves a lot of room for creativity and innovation in solving and improving problem-solving.

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Nudging As a Public Policy Tool: Exploring the Relationship Between Nudge and the Ability of Citizens for Rational Thought and Choice[1]

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Abstract

This paper presents a theoretical analysis of the use of nudge as a tool of governments in influencing people's behaviour. It captures the emergence of nudge as a policy making tool and its meaning within the context of policy interventions. Then, the different conditions under which nudge effectively leads to citizens' loss of their ability for choice and thought are examined, which are (i) referring to the choice of architects promoting their own interests, (ii) unconscious nudging, (iii) overuse of nudging and (iv) the issue of who gets nudged and its associated implications. To conclude, the summative assessment of nudge's role in negatively influencing citizens' ability for choice and rational thought while also providing comments for future analysis is also discussed. Overall, this paper critically examines the use of nudge as a policy tool for governments, adding to the existing public management and policy literature.

Keywords: Public management, public policy, governance, nudge, behavioral economics.

Introduction

There has been an increase in the level of attention gained towards nudge as a tool of governments in influencing people's behaviour and this is evident both in the literature and practice. In particular, nudge became popular by Thaler and Sunstein with their book of Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth and Happiness (Thaler & Sunstein, 2009). This is also demonstrated by the fact that soon after in 2010 the UK government established a Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) which developed interventions and publications showing how behavioural insights could be applied to a range of areas with examples from public health or energy use (Leggett, 2014). Following from that, other special BITs were formed inside many governments including Denmark, France, Germany, Singapore and the Netherlands (Feitsma, 2019). Inspired by these BITs, the Nudge Unit Greece (NUG) was established in 2017. Consequently, nudge is considered a significant tool that governments employ in order to help citizens make better decisions with the aim of improving the wellbeing of the population. It is important to note the existence of various definitions of nudge as each of them encompass something slightly different. This paper understands nudge as 'any aspect

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of the choice architecture that alters people behaviour in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives' (Thaler & Sunstein, 2009:6).

Despite the popularity of nudge, there has been a shift in the literature regarding nudge towards the development of a more critical literature with focus on areas inclusive of manipulation, restriction of autonomy and other ethical considerations against nudge (Whitehead et al., 2011; Hansen & Jespersen, 2013; Leggett, 2014; Schubert, 2017). This analysis places the attention to one particular aspect of the debate that is the relationship of nudge and the ability for rational thought and choice. Specifically, the argument is that under certain conditions nudge can lead to the loss of ability of citizens to rational thought and choice, consequently resulting to a loss of agency. Section II analyses the concept of nudge and its meaning within the context of policy interventions. This is essential as it provides the underlying background to introduce nudge as a distinctive tool for the governments. Section III explores the different conditions under which nudge effectively leads to citizens' loss of their ability for choice and thought. This is performed by critically examining four certain conditions such as choice architects promoting their own interests, unconscious nudging, overuse of nudging and the issue of who gets nudged and its associated implications. Lastly, Section IV concludes the paper with a summative assessment of nudge's role in negatively influencing citizens' ability for choice and rational thought while also providing comments for future analysis.

The Emergence of Nudge within the Toolbox of Governments

Governments want to change the behaviour of their citizens to tackle a range of acute social problems such as obesity, climate change, crime and binge drinking (John et al., 2009). However, it is now apparent that traditional tools of government inclusive of legislation, regulation and information provision are largely insufficient in achieving this. In particular, Snyder et al. (2004) found an average effect size of 9% of traditional approaches, highlighting the limitation of traditional tools. According to Thaler and Sunstein (2009), the problem for traditional approaches to behavioural change is that they assume humans are generally capable of acting rationally, meaning they act optimally according to their reflected preferences as long as they are given true information and the right incentives to guide them. However, in a behavioural world this is not the case as people often make decisions based on limited information and attention as well as biases, leading to poor choices and decisions (Thaler & Sunstein, 2009). Consequently, the idea of nudge is to link insights from psychology to public policy in order to allow governments effectively persuade people to change their behaviour. The rationale behind this, is that all human beings have certain values that makes them respond to certain things. As a result, the governments need to know what these values are and work with the reality of

peoples' rationality rather than the assumed one. Thus, the value of nudge comes from its design which is devised to capture the fact that human decision making and behaviour are influenced by cognitive biases and boundaries in ways that may be utilised for promoting particular behaviours and help solve social problems that are pervasive (Hansen, 2016). It is within this context together with the fact that nudge is a relatively cost efficient option that makes nudge attractive to governments in the era of austerity.

Nudge: Key Conditions under which Citizens Lose their Ability for Choice and Rational Thought

Choice architects promoting their own interests

Perhaps an important starting point in the discussion, is the argument that some kind of nudging always takes place within a society and this cannot be avoided. In particular, Sunstein (2014:130) emphasizes that 'every hour of everyday choices are implicitly made for people' as they are influenced by their environment one way or another. This means that peoples' choices whether they like it or not, are influenced or 'nudged' in a way in their everyday lives and this is inevitable. Therefore, the mistake that many critics of nudge make is to assume that before the implementation of public nudges, people act upon preferences that are somehow pure and nudging spoils them by distorting processes of preferences formation (Schubert, 2015). Indeed, it is apparent that the private sector employs nudging techniques constantly to influence peoples' choices for profit. Since, the choice architecture is not neutral and private sector exploits nudge, it make sense for the governments to use nudge to improve the lives of its citizens rather than leaving them to profit or chance. Some even argue that the governments as choice architects have a moral obligation whenever possible to be doing what they can to construct the choice environment in a way that is more likely to improve health and well-being than to worsen it (Vlaev et al., 2016). This seems to enhance citizens' ability for choice and agency as when nudges are employed freedom of choice is not compromised and agency always takes place in the context of some kind of choice architecture (Sunstein, 2015).

However, scholars make a distinction between accidental intervention and intentional intervention which aims to affect behaviour change (Hausman & Welch, 2010; Hansen & Jespersen, 2013). They argue that when intervention is intentional by governments, this has certain implications for the governments and policymakers that the concept of nudge does not sufficiently address (Hansen & Jespersen, 2013). Indeed, the legitimacy of governments to nudge comes from the paternalistic aspect of nudge which emphasizes that it is acceptable to nudge peoples' behaviour as long as it benefits them as judged by the choice architectures themselves (Sunstein, 2014). This in turn, assumes that

the state knows best the interests of the people, nevertheless this may not always be the case. This is because the state could misplace the interests of its citizens or even worse act against those interests in favour of the governments' own interests. Thus, nudged can be turned to a tool of manipulation to shape us, using the hidden face of power. In this sense, the use of nudge becomes problematic as there is the danger instead of government realising peoples' aspirations, government change them to fit its own aspirations and values. In such conditions, the ability of citizens to choose and think for themselves is seriously impaired.

Consequently, this raises questions such as what is limiting and stopping the government in promoting its own values rather than the interests of its citizens (Hansen & Jespersen, 2013). Supporters of nudge argue that in the possibility that some kind of elite imposes its own values, the answer is still nudge as opposed to other tools as default rules rather than mandates give citizens the choice to opt out (Sunstein, 2015). However, this may not always hold in practice as citizens may not have that choice in reality. Since, the legitimacy of governments rests on the fact that they represent and serve the people, it is necessary for choice architects to engage better with citizens to explore what is acceptable and what is not (Vlaev et al., 2016). Similarly, before policymakers consider how they can apply new insights, they need to determine whether they should be attempting to change behaviour in the first place, thus it is vital that publics' views and permission are taken into account when introducing interventions (Vlaev et al., 2016).

Unconscious Nudging: limiting citizens' ability for thought and choice?

The libertarian aspect of nudge theory refers to the fact that people are free to do what they like and to opt out of any undesirable arrangement if they want to (Hansen, 2016). Thus, in principle people have a choice to choose otherwise if they want to and as a result their freedom and autonomy to make choices is preserved. Indeed, Sunstein (2015) emphasises that if the cost of opt-out is low and if publicity and transparency is guaranteed then there is far less threat to the autonomy and ability of citizens to make choices. Following from this argument, it make sense to support nudge as a government tool as it does not restrict choice, in the contrary it seems to open new possibilities of choice unlike traditional tools such as banning or regulation. This seems compatible with the types of nudges that work by opening up decisions to the benign influence of our reflective system, such as forcing a conscious choice on an issue or requiring a cooling off period to reflect on a decision, leading to effectively enhance an individual's control over their behaviour (Horton, 2009). Nevertheless, this argument seems to work less when one considers the type of nudges that appeal to the unconscious system of decision making. This is because if people are unaware that they are in a situation that they are nudged, then it becomes very difficult to opt out of it in practice (Oliver, 2013).

Similarly, Hansen and Jespersen (2013) argue that while in principle citizens may be free to choose otherwise, one can hardly appeal to this in a practical context because the nudge approach to behavioural change is applied exactly in contexts where we tend to fall short of such principles. Instead, one important way to protect against such abuse and to respect autonomy that is the control an individual has over his choices, is to make sure that the governments actually inform people of efforts to shape their choices and not merely that it be able and willing to do so (Hausman & Welch, 2010).

Overuse of Nudging: decreased capacity for active citizenship

As mentioned above, in principle at least nudge gives citizens have the ability to choose otherwise if they want to. Such conception of freedom is regarded as negative because it encompasses a very narrow definition of what freedom is (Hausman & Welch, 2010). As negative freedom is merely concerned with just being able to make a choice, however that way it ignores the qualitative nature of the choice being made (Goodwin, 2012). What is missing here, is for citizens to be able to enhance their capacities and not just have the choice to opt out of an undesirable arrangement. Indeed, autonomy is important in the sense that people can develop their personality through taking responsibility for their lives and deciding how to organise their lives as they see fit (Furedi, 2011). This is something that nudge does not allow to happen as it is merely concerned with providing an alternative choice. This in turn, has important implications for citizens in terms of being active and reflexive agents. Firstly, nudge and other behavioural interventions aim to encourage people make decisions for their best interests, which indirectly prevent people making the wrong choices. However, if citizens are freed from the burden of distinguishing between right and wrong they cease to be choice makers, thus their ability for thought and choice is eliminated (Furedi, 2011). This is because citizens no longer have the capacity to decide for themselves what the right choice is. Consequently, Furedi (2011) comes to the conclusion that it is better to make wrong choices than to follow the right advice as this entails no thinking from the part of the citizens.

Equally significant is the argument that overreliance on nudge can decrease the capacity of citizens in making active choices in the long run. This is because, nudges work by systematically relieving agents from the need to muster mental and cognitive efforts (Schubert, 2017). For example, green defaults allow to act in a pro-environmental way without even thinking about it, framing the cafeteria experience allows you to go with the vegetables with a minimum level of self-control and peer comparison allows you to save willpower when deciding upon your energy use (Schubert, 2017). This is up to a certain extent unavoidable and even desirable. As Quigley (2013) argues any conception of ideal autonomy conceived of as set apart from the reality of contextual influences is a

philosophical fiction. Once this is realized, there is a potential to see that not all non-autonomous decision should be rejected as unwanted. In fact, a certain level of non-autonomous functioning helps us go about our daily lives (Quigley, 2013). Although to a certain extent this may be unavoidable and even desirable, too much nudging result in dangerous practices as it becomes convenient and it is no longer questioned as it has become the norm. It is within this context, that Schubert (2015; 2017) emphasizes the potential for a vicious circle, as the more individuals lose their identity as recognizable agents, the more they need to rely on the support nudges so seductively provide. Thus, individuals will end up expecting other members of society to take responsibility for nudging them away from anything that is bad for them. Consequently, this leads to morally lazy, fragmented selves that are quick to have others take responsibility for their welfare (Bovens, 2009; Selingrer & Whyte, 2011). Therefore, these individuals will not have an interest in making conscious choices and in having the ability to decide for themselves. As a result, there is the question of what citizens does nudge produce in the long run and if these types of citizens are compatible with what the governments want.

Who is nudged?: does it make a difference?

Following the example of health, one could convincingly argue that someone who actively and reflectively opts for the default option and chooses for instance a calorie-reduced, low-fat canteen meal, has not been nudged stealthily and thus, could be assimilated to the ideal of an actively engaged citizen (Ewert, 2018). In such cases, the choice architecture merely played an informational role that facilitated citizens' active choice. On the other hand, it is the person who mindlessly follows behavioural cues and unreflectively goes along the default option who is the primary target of nudge (Ewert, 2018). Consequently, what is important here is that behavioural influences does not target and nudge all citizens in the same way, leading to a fragmented or multi-tier conception of health citizenship (Ewert, 2018). This means that those who are the most vulnerable in a society because they lack the resources or the critical thought will not be able to resist. Then, nudge can become a tool of oppression in the system. In a similar way, choice architecture does not work out similarly for governed actors from different socio-economic backgrounds, meaning that less affluent actors appear to make poorer choices than affluent actors (Kosters & Van der Heijden, 2015). This means in practice that some people may have less ability to choose for themselves due to structural barriers. In this sense, this call into question whether nudging is an inclusive or exclusive tool of government intervention.

Conclusions

In recent years, there has been a shift away from traditional approaches of government intervention towards behavioural tools such as nudge. This idea of nudge gained prominence after the influential book of Thaler and Sunstein on nudge and decision making (Thaler & Sunstein, 2009). The value of nudge lies in the idea that governments can influence peoples' behaviour and nudge them towards better decisions without restricting their choice. Together with the fact that they entail a kind of rationality that is bounded by peoples' biases thus can better influence people. Nevertheless, the use of nudge by government as a tool is not uncontroversial as many critics of nudge point to issues like manipulation, decrease in autonomy or even how effective is (Hansen & Jespersen, 2013; Leggett, 2014; Schubert, 2017). This paper has focused on one aspect of the debate and the issue of citizens' choice and ability for rational thought. The analysis demonstrated that under certain conditions nudge can decrease or even eliminate citizens' choice and showed what can be done to counterbalance this. One such condition is when choice architects tend to promote their own interests and values through nudge as opposed to that of their citizens. The second condition was the unconscious nudging which in practice challenges the idea that citizens can opt out of a nudge intervention easily, leading to citizen's ability for choice to be constrained. Similarly, the overuse of nudging in expense of the rest of traditional tools can have negative effects on active citizens as citizens will no longer want to make their own decisions but rather rely solely on nudge. Lastly, the analysis demonstrated that who gets nudged matters as not all people react to nudge in the same way and this leads to concern about the inclusivity of nudge. It would be interesting to see in the future the new ways in which nudge will be used in practice and what implications this might produce.

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Locating Civil Society's Anti-Corruption Role Through Configurational Analysis: Towards A Policy and Research Agenda[1]

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Abstract[3]

While corruption studies abound, there is a dearth of scholarship that deals with corruption from the perspective of set relations. A configurational analysis of corruption is helpful in understanding the complexity of such phenomenon. For one, given the complex nature of corruption, democratic governments and civil society are prompted to address it via holistic and integrative anti-corruption strategies. This complexity seems to resonate with what qualitative comparative analysts hold regarding the import of contexts and with the configurational character of much of social life. From the perspective of set-theoretic, configurational analysis, in particular qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), corruption should also thus be seen as a conjunctural, equifinal, asymmetrical, and multifinal phenomenon.

Keywords: anti-corruption, corruption, civil society, qualitative comparative analysis, set relations.

Introduction

The scholarship on civil society-corruption linkage reveals three important strands: (1) the optimists, who believe that civil society's impact is undeniable (Mungiu-Pippidi & Dusu, 2011); (2) the skeptics, who claim that civil society have become corrupt and or conduits for corruption (Greenlee, Fischer, Gordon and Keating, 2007); and (3) those who claim that the role of civil society is conditional on several factors (Donaghy, 2011; Uhlin, 2009).

The "optimist" literature asserts that civil society indecisively plays an active anti-corruption role in several respects. Foremost, they are information providers, reporting on governmental malfeasance and raising public awareness on these (Grimes, 2013); they serve as vehicles for association where the mass public articulate their grievances and organize calls for transparency and accountability (Tusalem, 2007); they diagnose and monitor the performance of public institutions and thus also provide a system of checks and balances (Mungiu-Pippidi & Dusu, 2011); and they partake in anti-corruption policy advocacy and the redesign of anti-corruption institutions (Wampler & Avritzer, 2004).

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The "skeptics", on the other hand, caution that civil society organizations can also be corrupt and this affects their anti-corruption efforts. This claim springs from two important questions on internal accountability and autonomy. For one, civil society organizations are not insulated from challenges to internal accountability mechanisms (Townsend & Townsend, 2004; Greenlee, Fischer, Gordon & Keating, 2007). Second, civil society organizations' autonomy is compromised due to them being embedded in the state's bureaucratic network and their reliance on funding from either the state or external donors (Lorentzen, 2004 in Saglie and Sivesind, 2018).

The "conditionality" literature supposedly narrows the division between the two preceding bodies. This strand engages in the pertinent question of what conditions civil society to contribute to anti-corruption, be it those that the "optimists" consider as strengths of civil society or what the "skeptics" claim as its weaknesses and challenges. Specifically, it looks at conditions under which civil society may affect anti-corruption (see Donaghy, 2011; Uhlin, 2009, 2010).

From the perspective of set-theoretic, configurational analysis, in particular qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), corruption is conjunctural, equifinal, asymmetrical, and multifinal. Similarly, the conditionality of civil society's anti-corruption role is explained from the standpoint of QCA; that is, such role is dependent on the presence or absence of the other specified conditions. Context is also central in this regard. In what follows, a review is conducted on the larger democracy-corruption nexus scholarship and the supposed anti-corruption role of civil society in different regimes.

Differential role for civil society? The case of different regimes

Looking at corruption and anti-corruption in regimes of different types is one way to understand corruption as a political phenomenon. Amundsen and Jackson (2021: 1) claim that "the nature of a regime or polity affects both the nature of corruption in the country and the abuses of anti-corruption interventions." They continue that such regimes differ, among many others, as to the type and scale of corrupt practices that are mostly in place, the government's power and capacity to curb such practices, and in the independence and capacity of institutions and social actors outside of the government to pursue much needed anti-corruption reforms (Amundsen & Jackson, 2021: 22). Consequently, they propose that while anti-corruption interventions transpire by means of the introduction of reforms to political institutions, building capacity of enforcement institutions, and reinforcement of civil society oversight, they succeed only to the extent that the nature of the polity is considered.

In emerging democracies, or those that are in transition, corruption is a transitional phenomenon given that procedural practices have yet to be founded on firm liberal culture and effective institutions

(Harris-White and White, 1996; Rose-Ackerman, 1999). Among intermediate democracies, the eventual consolidation of democratic institutions would reduce corruption (Sung, 2004). In fully consolidated democracies, anti-corruption is usually a government agenda promoted and supported by the electorate, media, and civil society. While corruption is sporadic and limited in these polities, anti-corruption primarily centers on refinement of laws, of investigation, and of enforcement (Amundsen & Jackson, 2021). In backsliding democracies, or autocratizing states, anti-corruption is increasingly a concern. As Amundsen and Jackson (2021: 4) note, "because de-democratizing leaders and would-be autocrats benefit from corruption, traditional governance-focused reforms are rolled back, and traditional anti-corruption measures can be hijacked and weaponized." Therefore, as the case of extractive political corruption shows, corruption serves a political purpose beyond personal pecuniary enrichment. In illiberal regimes, the purpose of corruption is to curb citizen influence, reduce accountability, subvert institutional checks and balances, and establish a non-competitive political system. Thus, anti-corruption is of strategic importance only if it forms part of the broader domestic agenda and international alliance to halt de-democratization (Amundsen & Jackson, 2021: 3).

The supposed anti-corruption role of civil society in democracies is as complex as the relationship between democracy and corruption itself. Under certain circumstances, civil society may strengthen and stabilize democracy (Boulding & Nelson-Nuñez, 2014). Rose-Ackerman (2007) posit that it is only when well-functioning democratic institutions are in place that growth and transformation can begin. Under this pretext, the anti-corruption role of civil society primarily rests on the presence and consolidation of other democratic institutions. Boulding (2014: 37) acknowledges that while civil society may promote political participation in all minimally democratic contexts, the type of participation that emerges will depend on the quality of democracy specifically the extent to which elections are competitive and perceived to be free and fair. Thus, where these institutions in place are strong and well developed, civil society is thought to contribute to anti-corruption.

On the other hand, Hira (2016) notes that while democracy should encourage more competition and alteration of clientelistic networks through civil society, having a democracy is not a requirement for anti-corruption. Cornell and Grimes (2015) caution that at times, civil society also contributes to political instability. Thus, under certain deteriorating conditions, civil society may as much be a burden as a help (Encarnación, 2012). Particularly where dissent is risky, corruption issues are one way newly formed assertive social groups take regimes to task without directly challenging their claims to rule (Hao & Johnston, 2005 in Johnston, 2009: 5). In the case of competitive authoritarian regimes, dissenting social forces turn to civil society as they have no access to political institutions

to democratically challenge the government. Unlike in closed autocracies, competitive authoritarian regimes engage rather than eliminate civil society as they cannot ignore societal consent and legitimacy and rule by pure coercion (Yabanci, 2019: 286). The case of autocratizing states is no different. Understanding how and where autocratization or de-democratization begins is crucial in understanding the severe consequences of democratic backsliding for anti-corruption (Amundsen & Jackson, 2021: 6). The Varieties of Democracy (2020) report notes that in countries that slid in the last ten years, the scope for media and civil society (including political opposition) were first restricted, and then followed by elections. Amundsen and Jackson (2021: 8) highlight the double bind of corruption in these regimes: "corruption becomes more systemic even as democratic checks and balances are eroded".

Autocratization can thus lead to the possibility of a co-opted civil society. This has serious repercussions to the anti-corruption role of civil society. First, the growth and diversification of civil society in such regimes (including in competitive authoritarian ones) cannot guarantee for its ability to become agents of democratic change (Giersdorf & Croissant, 2011; Yabanci, 2019). Second, given the politicization of civil society, the roles of the civil society are contingent to the preferences of the government. Under faux collaboration (façade of cooperation) and non-collaborative co-presence (shared governance role without compromise-based solutions), active civil engagement may produce suboptimal outcomes. Worse, civil society may hinder long-term goals of anti-corruption, including democratization and effective governance (Zaloznaya, et al., 2018).

Thus, the importance of context, in this case the polity or regime, in understanding both corruption and the anti-corruption role of civil society cannot be understated. Tilly (2003) opines that civil society lends organizational structure to social interactions and this relational power may be channeled into different forms of political action in different political regimes. Any study of civil society, if it were to contribute to our further understanding of the corruption-democracy nexus, must consider the characteristics of the institutional context and the regime. Boulding's (2014: 676) pertinent question succinctly captures this: "which institutional conditions might influence whether civil society is inclined to work toward developing clientelistic relationships with politicians, or conversely, when they may be more likely to employ other strategies for serving members' needs?" Moreover, given this, one may ask, does civil society play the same anti-corruption role in autocratizing states as it does in democratic contexts?

Set-theoretic method in corruption research: A missing piece?

Corruption is studied not only from different academic disciplines and theoretical perspectives but also from a myriad of empirical approaches. While this is the case, most of corruption research is rather statistical and cross-sectional and less comparative (Johnston, 2009). There is also a long tradition for in-depth case studies that explore it. However, despite the influx of articles and scholarly publications on corruption, set-theoretic method, particularly Qualitative Comparative Analysis, is yet to be applied extensively. Only few studies on the configurations of corruption have so far been done (Stevens, 2016; Ingrams, 2018; Zimelis, 2019; Dunlop et. al, 2020). This, despite the increase of QCA applications since its introduction in 1987 by Charles Ragin.

Missing from the current scholarship is the treatment of corruption as characterized by causal complexity in set-theoretic terms (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012). From the standpoint of QCA, corruption (or anti-corruption) implies conjunctural causation, equifinality, asymmetry, and multifinality. First, corruption results from conjunctural causation; that is, it is a product of a combination of different conditions. Corruption is also equifinal: there are possibly multiple pathways to corruption. Third, the absence of conditions that lead to corruption may not necessarily lead to its absence; thus, corruption is asymmetrical. Lastly, corruption implies multifinality: the conditions leading to corruption may be causally relevant for both the presence of corruption and its absence.

Most of the studies thus far treat corruption symmetrically and this is where QCA can contribute further. The symmetrical treatment of corruption assumes that what causes corruption is the same mirror image of what could bring about anti-corruption. Addressing the causes of corruption is not necessarily the same that would bring about an effective anti-corruption. In set-relational terms, the conditions for the presence of corruption are possibly different for its absence. Perhaps, this is what Zimelis (2020: 298) pushes for when claiming that anti-corruption should also be studied and not just corruption, to wit: “we need to study specifically the elements of anti-corruption, especially those that lead to more effective anti-corruption, to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the causes and remedies to corruption”. The analysis of the contextual dependencies of corruption remains as an important agenda in corruption research. However, the identification of which conditions and their configuration leads to both the absence and/or presence of corruption remain relatively underexplored.

Conclusion

A set-theoretic study of corruption contributes to anti-corruption research in three ways. First, it addresses two important gaps in anti-corruption research: (1) the need for an integrative approach to

anti-corruption and (2) the lack of understanding of anti-corruption as an equifinal, asymmetrical, and conjunctural phenomenon. The first can possibly be addressed by a combination of individual level (micro) and national level (macro) social and political institutional conditions that are considered relevant for the outcome of interest: corruption or anti-corruption. Through qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), the second is addressed via the development of a framework for necessary and/or sufficient conditions for the outcome.

Secondly, a set-theoretic study addresses an issue in the study of civil society's role in anti-corruption; that is, civil society's effect may be conditional on several factors. This is addressed by the identification of specific conditions that combine with civil society for an outcome (anti-corruption or corruption). Third, it focuses on the role of context in anti-corruption and attempts to address the larger corruption-democracy nexus debate in this regard through an analysis of the outcome in two different regime transformation types: autocratization and democratization.

Given the complex nature of corruption, democratic governments and civil society are prompted to address it via holistic and integrative anti-corruption strategies. This complexity seems to resonate with what qualitative comparative analysts hold regarding the import of contexts and with the configurational character of much of social life. While this is the case, the analysis of the contextual dependencies of (anti-)corruption in set-relational terms (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012) remains wanting.

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A Helpful Guide for Parents and Guardians of People on the Autism Spectrum Disorder - Knowing Your Main Rights[1]

Photini Masoura[2], Alexandra Skitsou[3], Marianna Dre[4] & Georgios Charalambous[5]

Abstract

Autism is a serious developmental disorder that affects people throughout their lives, affecting their perception, thinking and behavior. It has been observed that there is a lack of information regarding the rights of parents and guardians of children on the autism spectrum, especially those of vulnerable social groups. A short guide was written in order to inform the parents and guardians about their rights. Furthermore, a bibliographic review of the international, European and Greek legislation framework was carried out and we came to the conclusion that there is an extensive legislation framework for the protection of the rights of individuals on the autism spectrum and their parents.

Key Words: autism; autism spectrum; children; parents; guardians; rights; allowances; legislation; retirement; education.

Χρήσιμος Οδηγός προς Γονείς και Κηδεμόνες Ατόμων στο Φάσμα του Αυτισμού - Γνωρίζοντας τα Κυριότερα Δικαιώματά Σας

Φωτεινή Μασούρα, Αλεξάνδρα Σκίτσου, Μαριάννα Δρε, Γεώργιος Χαραλάμπους

Περίληψη

Η αυτιστική διαταραχή (αυτισμός) αποτελεί μία διάχυτη αναπτυξιακή διαταραχή, η οποία συνοδεύει το άτομο σε όλη του τη ζωή, επηρεάζοντας την αντίληψη, τη σκέψη και τη συμπεριφορά του. Έχει παρατηρηθεί ότι υπάρχει έλλειψη ενημέρωσης όσον αφορά στα δικαιώματα των γονέων και κηδεμόνων των παιδιών στο φάσμα του αυτισμού, ειδικότερα των ευάλωτων κοινωνικών ομάδων. Με την εργασία αυτή συντάχθηκε ένας σύντομος οδηγός με σκοπό την ενημέρωση των γονέων και κηδεμόνων των παιδιών στο φάσμα του αυτισμού σχετικά με τα δικαιώματά τους. Περαιτέρω έγινε βιβλιογραφική ανασκόπηση του διεθνούς, ευρωπαϊκού και ελληνικού θεσμικού πλαισίου και καταλήξαμε στο συμπέρασμα ότι υπάρχει ισχυρό θεσμικό πλαίσιο προστασίας των δικαιωμάτων των ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού και των γονέων τους.

Λέξεις-Κλειδιά: αυτισμός, φάσμα αυτισμού, παιδιά, γονείς, κηδεμόνες, δικαιώματα, επιδόματα, νομοθεσία, συνταξιοδότηση, εκπαίδευση.

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Εισαγωγή

Η αυτιστική διαταραχή (αυτισμός) αποτελεί μία διάχυτη αναπτυξιακή διαταραχή, η οποία συνοδεύει το άτομο σε όλη του τη ζωή, επηρεάζοντας την αντίληψη, τη σκέψη και τη συμπεριφορά του και χαρακτηρίζεται από α) σημαντικές δυσκολίες στην ανάπτυξη κοινωνικών και επικοινωνιακών δεξιοτήτων και αμοιβαίων αλληλεπιδράσεων του ατόμου με τους γύρω του, και β) περιορισμένα και επαναλαμβανόμενα στερεοτυπικά ενδιαφέροντα και συμπεριφορές. (ICD10, DSM IV). Παρατηρείται αυξημένο άγχος ανάμεσα στους γονείς ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού και ειδικότερα αυτών που ανήκουν στα χαμηλότερα κοινωνικά στρώματα και στους νεότερους σε ηλικία (Gatzoyia et al., 2014). Γίνεται δεκτό ότι τα προβλήματα στη συμπεριφορά και στην ανάπτυξη του παιδιού δύνανται να μειωθούν μέσω υποστηρικτικών κοινωνικών δικτύων. Επίσης τα δίκτυα αυτά συνδέθηκαν με την καλύτερη προσωπική ευημερία και με πιο θετικές στάσεις και επιρροές στις σχέσεις μεταξύ γονέα-παιδιού. (Dunst et al., 1986). Στο διεθνές, ευρωπαϊκό και ελληνικό νομικό και πολιτικό σύστημα υπάρχουν διάφορα κείμενα τα οποία θεσπίσθηκαν με σκοπό την καλυτέρευση της ποιότητας ζωής των ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού και των γονέων και κηδεμόνων τους. Τα κείμενα αυτά εντοπίστηκαν και μέσα από μία βιβλιογραφική ανασκόπηση, καταγράφηκαν, μελετήθηκαν και παρατίθενται στην παρούσα μελέτη. Περαιτέρω, εντοπίζεται στην Ελλάδα αδυναμία πλήρους ενημέρωσης των γονέων και κηδεμόνων σχετικά με τα δικαιώματά τους τα οποία είναι σημαντικά και μπορούν να οδηγήσουν στην βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής του συγκεκριμένου πληθυσμού. Κρίνεται σκόπιμη η συγγραφή ενός συνοπτικού εγχειριδίου που αναλύει τα δικαιώματα της ομάδας και η διανομή του μέσω διάφορων φορέων, εγχείρημα το οποίο επιχειρήσαμε με την παρούσα μελέτη και σύμφωνα με τη μεθοδολογία που ακολουθεί.

Σκοπός - Μεθοδολογία

Έχει παρατηρηθεί ότι υπάρχει έλλειψη ενημέρωσης όσον αφορά στα δικαιώματα των γονέων και κηδεμόνων των παιδιών στο φάσμα του αυτισμού, ειδικότερα των ευάλωτων κοινωνικών ομάδων. Προχωρήσαμε σε αυτή την πρωτογενή μελέτη και ανάλυση της νομοθεσίας με σκοπό την κάλυψη του κενού αυτού έτσι ώστε να περιγραφεί το ισχύον θεσμικό πλαίσιο στην Ελλάδα, σύμφωνα και με τις διεθνείς συμβάσεις και συνθήκες. Προβήκαμε στη βιβλιογραφική αυτή επισκόπηση της διεθνούς, της ευρωπαϊκής και της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας κατά το διάστημα Μαρτίου - Απριλίου 2022.

Αποτελέσματα

Διεθνής Νομοθεσία

Σύμβαση του ΟΗΕ για τα δικαιώματα των ατόμων με αναπηρία (CRPD 2006).

Σκοπός της σύμβασης είναι η προαγωγή, η προστασία και η διασφάλιση της πλήρους και ίσης απόλαυσης όλων των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και θεμελιωδών ελευθεριών, από όλα τα άτομα με αναπηρίες (δηλαδή τα άτομα τα οποία έχουν μακροχρόνια και σωματικά, διανοητικά, πνευματικά ή αισθητήρια εμπόδια, που, σε αλληλεπίδραση με διάφορα εμπόδια, μπορούν να παρεμποδίσουν την πλήρη και αποτελεσματική συμμετοχή τους στην κοινωνία, σε ίση βάση με τους άλλους) και η προαγωγή και ο σεβασμός της εγγενούς αξιοπρέπειάς τους. Οι αρχές που διέπουν τη Σύμβαση είναι αυτές του σεβασμού της εγγενούς αξιοπρέπειας, της ατομικής αυτονομίας, συμπεριλαμβανομένης και της ελευθερίας ατομικών επιλογών και της ανεξαρτησίας των ατόμων, της μη διάκρισης, της πλήρους και αποτελεσματικής συμμετοχής και ένταξης στην κοινωνία, του σεβασμού της διαφοράς και της αποδοχής των ατόμων με αναπηρίες, ως τμήματος της ανθρώπινης ποικιλομορφίας και της ανθρωπότητας, της ισότητας των ευκαιριών, της προσβασιμότητας, της ισότητας μεταξύ ανδρών και γυναικών , ο σεβασμός των εξελισσόμενων ικανοτήτων των παιδιών με αναπηρίες και ο σεβασμός του δικαιώματος των παιδιών με αναπηρίες να διατηρήσουν την ταυτότητά τους. Τις αρχές αυτές οφείλουν να διασφαλίσουν τα συμβαλλόμενα κράτη μέσω της θέσπισης κατάλληλων μέτρων τόσο διοικητικών όσο και νομοθετικών. Στη συνέχεια στο κεφάλαιο της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας θα διερευνηθεί η εφαρμογή αυτών των μέτρων από την ελληνική πολιτεία.

Ευρωπαϊκή Νομοθεσία

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή δεσμεύεται πλήρως ως προς την προστασία και προώθηση των

θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων, καθώς και τη βελτίωση της κατάστασης των ατόμων με αναπηρία στην Ευρώπη. Το άρθρο 24 του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης ορίζει ότι «τα παιδιά έχουν δικαίωμα στην προστασία και τη φροντίδα που απαιτούνται για την καλή διαβίωσή τους». Επίσης στο ίδιο άρθρο εγκαθιδρύεται η αρχή του συμφέροντος του παιδιού τόσο σε πράξεις που διενεργούνται από δημόσιους φορείς όσο και σε πράξεις που διενεργούνται από ιδιωτικούς φορείς. Γενικότερα θεσπίζεται η προστασία της αξίας του ανθρώπου (Α-1), της ζωής (Α-2) και της σωματικής και διανοητικής ακεραιότητας. (Α-3).

Επίσης με τη γραπτή Διακήρυξη για τα δικαιώματα των ατόμων με αυτισμό η οποία υιοθετήθηκε από το Ευρωπαϊκό κοινοβούλιο στις 9-5-1996 τίθεται ο χάρτης με τα κυριότερα δικαιώματα των ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού. Ένα από αυτά τα δικαιώματα είναι και το δικαίωμα στην εκπαίδευση. Η εκπαίδευση των ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού είναι ένα ιδιαίτερα ευαίσθητο και πολύπλοκο θέμα το οποίο ρυθμίζεται με παρόμοιες παρεμβάσεις και πολιτικές στον ευρωπαϊκό και το διεθνή χώρο.

Εκπαιδευτική Πολιτική

Οι van Kessel, et al., (2019) ερευνούν το νομοθετικό πλαίσιο και τις πολιτικές που ακολουθούν η Γερμανία, η Ολλανδία και το Βέλγιο σε σχέση με την εκπαίδευση των ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού.

Καταλήγουν στο συμπέρασμα ότι αν και η πολιτική της Γερμανίας για την Ειδική Εκπαίδευση έχει εναρμονιστεί, ωστόσο παρουσιάζονται διαφορές, μεταξύ των διαφόρων περιοχών της χώρας εξαιτίας του διαχωρισμού που υπέστη μετά το Β΄ Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο (Δυτική και Ανατολική Γερμανία), γεγονός το οποίο επεκτάθηκε και στην εκπαιδευτική πολιτική. Στην περίπτωση της Ολλανδίας παρατηρούν ότι παρόλο που υπάρχει ειδικός νόμος για την ειδική εκπαίδευση και για το ρόλο συμμετοχής των γονέων στην εκπαίδευση των παιδιών τους, δεν υπάρχει κάποιο εθνικό σχέδιο δράσης ή στρατηγική συνδεδεμένη με τον αυτισμό. Τέλος στο Βέλγιο υπάρχει το συνταγματικά θεμελιωμένο δικαίωμα της εκπαίδευσης με ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στην επιλογή του καταλληλότερου είδους της εκπαίδευσης η οποία θα εγγυάται την ανάπτυξή των παιδιών τους. Περαιτέρω στο Βέλγιο θεσπίστηκαν προϋποθέσεις παρακολούθησης ειδικής εκπαίδευσης ήδη από το 1970. Στην Ελλάδα υπάρχουν σημαντικότατα νομοθετήματα που αφορούν κυρίως στην εκπαιδευτική πολιτική, στη συνταξιοδότηση και εν γένει στην πολιτική του κράτους προνοίας απέναντι σε αυτό το ευαίσθητο θέμα, τα οποία και παραθέτουμε στη συνέχεια.

Ελληνική Νομοθεσία

Ο Έλληνας νομοθέτης αναγνωρίζοντας από πολύ νωρίς την έννοια του φάσματος του αυτισμού συμπεριέλαβε την έννοια στο ν. 2646/1998 (ΦΕΚ Α΄236 20.10.1998) Στο πλαίσιο του Εθνικού Προγράμματος για τα Άτομα με Ειδικές Ανάγκες καθορίζονται Ειδικά Προγράμματα μεταξύ άλλων και για τον αυτισμό με γνώμονα την ένταξη των ατόμων στην κοινωνία, στην παραγωγική διαδικασία και επαγγελματική απασχόληση και την συμμετοχή σε διάφορες μορφές διαβίωσης. Οι παραπάνω αρχές ακολουθούν τις πρόνοιες της Σύμβασης του ΟΗΕ για τα δικαιώματα των ατόμων με αναπηρία ενώ αξιοσημείωτο είναι το γεγονός ότι ο Έλληνας νομοθέτης προχώρησε σε λήψη μέτρων πολλά χρόνια πριν από την υπογραφή της Σύμβασης του ΟΗΕ. Μέσω των Ν.Π.Δ.Δ. που εποπτεύονται από το Υπουργείο Υγείας και Πρόνοιας και πιστοποιημένους φορείς, που αναπτύσσουν δραστηριότητες που αφορούν άτομα που βρίσκονται μεταξύ άλλων και στο φάσμα του αυτισμού δύναται να λειτουργήσουν προστατευόμενα παραγωγικά εργαστήρια. (Π.Π.Ε).

Απασχόληση στα Προστατευόμενα Παραγωγικά Εργαστήρια

Στα Π.Π.Ε. τουλάχιστον τα τρία πέμπτα (3/5) των απασχολούμενων είναι άτομα με νοητική υστέρηση, αυτισμό, βαριές σωματικές και πολλαπλές αναπηρίες, ανεξαρτήτως αν λαμβάνουν

σύνταξη από αποθανόντα γονέα ή προνοιακό επίδομα. Τα άτομα αυτά εντάσσονται ως απασχολούμενοι, εφόσον έχουν συμπληρώσει το 20ό έτος της ηλικίας τους και έχουν παρακολουθήσει τουλάχιστον διετές πρόγραμμα επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης.

Με τον παραπάνω νόμο συστήνονται δίκτυα Κέντρων Στήριξης Αυτιστικών Ατόμων με σκοπό την κοινωνική προστασία και στήριξη των αυτιστικών ατόμων και του οικογενειακού περιβάλλοντός τους με τη δημιουργία υπηρεσιών θεραπευτικής και εκπαιδευτικής παρέμβασης και μέριμνας.

Εκπαιδευτική πολιτική

Το Ινστιτούτο Εκπαιδευτικής Πολιτικής

Στην Ελλάδα τα καίρια ζητήματα εκπαίδευσης των παιδιών και έμμεσα των γονέων με παιδιά στο φάσμα του αυτισμού αναλαμβάνει το Ινστιτούτο Εκπαιδευτικής Πολιτικής. Στήριξη προς του γονείς παρέχεται μέσα από το νόμο 3699/2008 (ΦΕΚ Α΄199/2-10-2008) όπως τροποποιήθηκε και ισχύει με το ν. 4186/2013 (ΦΕΚ Α΄193/17-09-2013) . Καθορίζονται οι προϋποθέσεις παράλληλης στήριξης των μαθητών που βρίσκονται στο φάσμα του αυτισμού γεγονός το οποίο θα μπορούσε να συνδράμει στη μείωση των αρνητικών συναισθημάτων των γονέων. Με την τελευταία τροποποίηση του νόμου η υποστήριξη του μαθητή μπορεί να υλοποιείται και από ειδικό βοηθό που εισηγείται και διαθέτει η οικογένεια του μαθητή κατόπιν σύμφωνης γνώμης του Διευθυντή και του Συλλόγου διδασκόντων της σχολικής μονάδας. Το ίδιο ισχύει και στην περίπτωση στήριξης από σχολικό νοσηλευτή κατόπιν γνωμάτευσης δημόσιου νοσοκομείου. Η ύπαρξη ειδικού βοηθού ο οποίος προτείνεται από την οικογένεια του παιδιού οδηγεί στην αίσθηση ασφάλειας του ίδιου του παιδιού αλλά και κατ' επέκταση των γονέων. Έχοντας υπόψιν τα χαρακτηριστικά των παιδιών στο φάσμα του αυτισμού που αναφέρθηκαν παραπάνω (ICD10, DSM IV) σε συνδυασμό με το γεγονός ότι οι φροντιστές ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού αντιμετωπίζουν αυξημένο άγχος (Adib et al., 2019) ενδείκνυται η πρόσληψη ενός προσώπου οικείου προς το παιδί που παρέχει ένα σταθερό και ασφαλές περιβάλλον τόσο στο παιδί στο φάσμα του αυτισμού όσο και στο μαθητικό περιβάλλον. Επιπλέον, όπως αναλύεται κατωτέρω, έχει θεσπισθεί μία σειρά από παρεμβάσεις στον εργασιακό χώρο των γονέων μέσα από την παροχή γονικής άδειας ανατροφής παιδιού, στη συνταξιοδότηση των γονέων με ευνοϊκές διατάξεις και στη θέσπιση καταβολής επιδομάτων, όλες δε οι παρεμβάσεις σκοπό έχουν τη βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής των ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού και των γονέων τους.

Δικαιώματα εργαζόμενων γονέων - Άδειες

Γονική άδεια ανατροφής τέκνου

Κάθε εργαζόμενος γονέας ή πρόσωπο που ασκεί τη γονική μέριμνα έχει ατομικό και αμεταβίβαστο δικαίωμα γονικής άδειας για την ανατροφή του παιδιού, διάρκειας τεσσάρων (4) μηνών, την οποία

μπορεί να χρησιμοποιήσει συνεχόμενα ή τμηματικά, μέχρι το παιδί να συμπληρώσει την ηλικία των οκτώ (8) ετών, με σκοπό την εκπλήρωση των ελάχιστων υποχρεώσεων ανατροφής προς αυτό. Σε περίπτωση υιοθεσίας ή αναδοχής τέκνου ηλικίας έως οκτώ (8) ετών, η γονική άδεια χορηγείται από την ένταξη του παιδιού στην οικογένεια. (Α-28ν. 4808/2021 ΦΕΚ Α΄101/19.06.2021). Επίσης για τους πρώτους δύο μήνες της άδειας ο ΟΑΕΔ καταβάλλει επίδομα γονικής άδειας στον κάθε γονέα ύψους ίσου με τον ελάχιστο θεσμοθετημένο μισθό.

Μειωμένο ωράριο

Οι γονείς, που εργάζονται σε επιχείρηση ή εκμετάλλευση που απασχολεί τουλάχιστον πενήντα (50) άτομα και έχουν παιδιά με πνευματική, ψυχική ή σωματική αναπηρία, η οποία πιστοποιείται με ιατρική γνωμάτευση του ασφαλιστικού φορέα στον οποίο υπάγονται τα πρόσωπα αυτά, έχουν το αυτοτελές δικαίωμα για κάθε παιδί, να ζητήσουν τη μείωση του ωραρίου εργασίας τους κατά μία (1) ώρα την ημέρα, με ανάλογη περικοπή των αποδοχών τους. (Α-41ν. 4808/2021 ΦΕΚ Α΄101/19.06.2021).

Ειδική Γονική άδεια γονέων παιδιών στο φάσμα του αυτισμού

Σε γονείς παιδιών στο φάσμα του αυτισμού που εργάζονται με σχέση πλήρους ή μερικής απασχόλησης στον ιδιωτικό τομέα ή στο Δημόσιο Τομέα όπου εφαρμόζεται η εργατική νομοθεσία (ευρύς δημόσιος τομέας και Ν.Π.Δ.Δ, ΝΠΙΔ, ΟΤΑ, ΟΚΑ κ.α) χορηγείται ειδική γονική άδεια, διάρκειας δέκα (10) εργασίμων ημερών κατ` έτος, με αποδοχές. (Α-54ν. 4808/2021 ΦΕΚ Α΄101/19.06.2021).

Συνταξιοδοτικά δικαιώματα

Οι γονείς και τα αδέλφια ατόμων άγαμων με ποσοστό αναπηρίας 67% και άνω, τα οποία δεν εργάζονται και δεν νοσηλεύονται σε ιδρύματα με δαπάνη ασφαλιστικού ή άλλου δημόσιου φορέα, θεμελιώνουν δικαίωμα συνταξιοδότησης με τη συμπλήρωση 7.500 ημερών εργασίας ή 25 ετών πραγματικής ασφάλισης. Προϋπόθεση να είναι ασφαλισμένοι σε φορείς κύριας και επικουρικής ασφάλισης, αρμοδιότητας του Υπουργείου Εργασίας και Κοινωνικής Ασφάλισης. Η θεμελίωση του δικαιώματος γίνεται ανεξαρτήτως ορίου ηλικίας και ανεξαρτήτως χρόνου υπαγωγής στην ασφάλιση. Οι γονείς και τα αδέλφια οι οποίοι δεν συμπληρώνουν τον απαιτούμενο χρόνο δικαιούνται να εξαγοράσουν το χρόνο στρατιωτικής θητείας, το χρόνο γονικής άδειας ανατροφής παιδιών του άρθρου 6 του ν. 1483/1984 (ΦΕΚ Α` 153/08-10-1984). Επίσης λαμβάνεται υπόψη ο προβλεπόμενος από την Ε.Γ.Σ.Σ.Ε. χρόνος απουσίας από την εργασία λόγω κύησης και λοχείας.

Εισοδηματικές και άλλες προϋποθέσεις

Ο έτερος γονέας του ανάπηρου τέκνου που δεν θα ασκήσει την αίτηση για συνταξιοδότηση, πρέπει, κατά την ημερομηνία υποβολής της αίτησης για συνταξιοδότηση, να μην λαμβάνει ή να μη δικαιούται σύνταξη από οποιονδήποτε ασφαλιστικό οργανισμό ή το Δημόσιο.

Δικαίωμα συνταξιοδότησης σε περίπτωση λύσης του γάμου- δικαστικής συμπαράστασης

Αν ο γάμος λυθεί, το δικαίωμα ασκείται από τον γονέα που έχει την επιμέλεια του ανάπηρου παιδιού με αμετάκλητη δικαστική απόφαση και αυτό ισχύει και μετά την ενηλικίωση του τέκνου.

Εάν ένα παιδί στο φάσμα του αυτισμού έχει τεθεί σε δικαστική συμπαράσταση με αμετάκλητη δικαστική απόφαση, το δικαίωμα ασκείται από τον γονέα που έχει ορισθεί δικαστικός συμπαραστάτης.

Συνταξιοδότηση αδελφού

Α. Πέντε έτη πριν από την ημερομηνία υποβολής της αιτήσεως για συνταξιοδότηση πρέπει να έχει οριστεί δικαστικός συμπαραστάτης του/της αδελφού/ής με ποσοστό αναπηρίας 67% και άνω με αμετάκλητη δικαστική απόφαση ή

Β. ο/η με ποσοστό αναπηρίας 67% και άνω αδελφός/ή να συνοικεί αποδεδειγμένα και να τον βαρύνει.

Για να συνταξιοδοτηθεί αδελφός απαιτείται κατά την υποβολή της αίτησης συνταξιοδότησης οι δύο αδελφοί να είναι ορφανοί και από τους δύο γονείς ή ο εν ζωή γονέας να έχει συμπληρώσει το 75ο έτος της ηλικίας του ή ο εν ζωή γονέας να είναι ανάπηρος με ποσοστό αναπηρίας 67% και άνω (Α-Α 5 ν. 3232/2004 (ΦΕΚ Α΄ 48/12.02.2004), 26§8 ν. 4075/12 ΦΕΚ Α΄89/11-04-2012).

Συνταξιοδότηση ασφαλισμένων ΟΓΑ

Για γονείς και αδέλφια αγάμων οι οποίοι είναι ασφαλισμένοι στον ΟΓΑ, απαιτούνται 20 έτη ασφάλισης και καταβολής ασφαλιστικών εισφορών στον Κλάδο Κύριας Ασφάλισης Αγροτών για όσους θεμελιώνουν συνταξιοδοτικό δικαίωμα μέχρι 31.12.2012. Ενώ αν θεμελιώνουν συνταξιοδοτικό δικαίωμα από 1.1.2013 και εξής είναι απαραίτητα τα 25 έτη ασφάλισης. Είναι δυνατόν εφόσον δεν επαρκεί ο χρόνος ασφάλισης, να εξαγορασθεί ο χρόνος της στρατιωτικής θητείας, ενώ λαμβάνεται υπόψη ο χρόνος διαδοχικής ασφάλισης σε φορείς κύριας ασφάλισης και ο χρόνος ασφάλισης που διανύθηκε υπό τη νομοθεσία κοινωνικής ασφάλειας κρατών-μελών της Ε.Ε., χωρών του Ε.Ο.Χ. ή της Ελβετίας ή χωρών με τις οποίες έχει συναφθεί διμερής σύμβαση κοινωνικής ασφάλειας.

Αναγνώριση ποσοστού αναπηρίας από την επιτροπή ΚΕΠΑ

Για να αναγνωριστεί το ποσοστό αναπηρίας – προϋπόθεση για τη συνταξιοδότηση γονέων παιδιών στο φάσμα του αυτισμού, τα παιδιά στο φάσμα του αυτισμού ελέγχονται ως προς το ποσοστό αναπηρίας από τις αρμόδιες επιτροπές. Από 1.9.2011 δημιουργήθηκε Κέντρο Πιστοποίησης Αναπηρίας (ΚΕ.Π.Α.), το οποίο υπάγεται στη Διεύθυνση Αναπηρίας και Ιατρικής της Εργασίας της Διοίκησης του Ι.Κ.Α.-Ε.Τ.Α.Μ., για την εξασφάλιση της ενιαίας υγειονομικής κρίσης όσον αφορά στον καθορισμό του βαθμού αναπηρίας των ασφαλισμένων όλων των ασφαλιστικών φορέων, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του Δημοσίου, καθώς και των ανασφάλιστων, για τους οποίους απαιτείται πιστοποίηση της αναπηρίας (ν.4331/2015 ΦΕΚ Α΄69/02.07.2015).

Σύμφωνα με την 80100/101202 απόφαση περί Ενιαίου Πίνακα Προσδιορισμού Ποσοστού Αναπηρίας (Ε.Π.Π.Π.Α.) ΦΕΚ Β΄6282/29-12-2021 για την απόφαση του ποσοστού λαμβάνονται υπόψη η νοημοσύνη και η συνολική λειτουργικότητα για τον προσδιορισμό της οποίας συνυπολογίζονται:

1. Η σοβαρότητα της έκπτωσης στην κοινωνική επικοινωνία, στις επαναλαμβανόμενες στερεοτυπικές συμπεριφορές και τα περιορισμένα ενδιαφέροντα

2. Η προσαρμοστική λειτουργικότητα για τον προσδιορισμό της οποίας λαμβάνονται υπόψη η ανάπτυξη λόγου και ομιλίας, οι δεξιότητες γραφής και ανάγνωσης, κατάκτηση αριθμητικών δεξιοτήτων, γνώση και διάκριση χρονικών μεγεθών, δεξιότητες φροντίδας εαυτού, δεξιότητες αυτόνομης διαβίωσης, αυτό ή ετεροεπιθετικές συμπεριφορές, κοινωνικά οχλούσες συμπεριφορές, υπερκινητικότητα ή στερεοτυπίες, ανάγκη αυξημένης ή συνεχούς επίβλεψης, συννοσηρότητα με άλλες σωματικές ή ψυχικές διαταραχές.

Τα ποσοστά αναπηρίας καθορίζονται μεταξύ 50-80% και επανακαθορίζονται στην ηλικία των 7 και των 17 ετών.

Παροχή επιδομάτων από τον ΟΠΕΚΑ

Επίδομα βαριάς αναπηρίας

Δίδεται σε άτομα με ποσοστό αναπηρίας άνω του 67%, ανασφάλιστα ή έμμεσα ασφαλισμένα και σε άμεσα ασφαλισμένους υπό ειδικές προϋποθέσεις (ποσό επιδόματος 313 ευρώ).

Πρόγραμμα οικονομικής ενίσχυσης ατόμων με βαριά νοητική υστέρηση

Δικαιούχοι είναι τα άτομα με διαταραχή αυτιστικού φάσματος ή διάχυτη αναπτυξιακή διαταραχή ή αυτισμό ή σύνδρομο Asperger, με ποσοστό αναπηρίας από 80% και άνω Π.Α. ≥ 80% εφόσον είναι ανασφάλιστα ή έμμεσα ασφαλισμένα. (ποσό 527 ευρώ)

Προσωπικός Βοηθός Ατόμων με ειδικές ανάγκες

Πρόσφατα τέθηκε σε εφαρμογή πιλοτικό πρόγραμμα για την υποστήριξη της ανεξάρτητης διαβίωσης Ατόμων με Αναπηρία μέσω του θεσμού του προσωπικού βοηθού. Επιλέξιμοι ωφελούμενοι είναι άτομα με αναπηρία ηλικίας 16 έως 65 ετών τα οποία έχουν την κύρια κατοικία τους εντός των ορίων της Περιφέρειας Αττικής, διαθέτουν Γνωστοποίηση Αποτελέσματος Πιστοποίησης Αναπηρίας από το Κέντρο Πιστοποίησης Αναπηρίας (ΚΕ.Π.Α.) του Ηλεκτρονικού Εθνικού Φορέα Κοινωνικής Ασφάλισης (e-Ε.Φ.Κ.Α.), με συνολικό ποσοστό αναπηρίας ίσο ή μεγαλύτερο του 67%, που είναι σε ισχύ κατά τον χρόνο υποβολής της αίτησης και τα εισοδήματά τους δεν υπερβαίνουν τις εξήντα χιλιάδες (60.000) ευρώ (Υπουργείο Εργασίας, 2022).

Συμπεράσματα

Το νομοθετικό πλαίσιο προστασίας των ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού και εν γένει των ατόμων με αναπηρία έχει θεσπισθεί τόσο σε διεθνές όσο και σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο. Η διεθνής και η ευρωπαϊκή κοινότητα θέσπισε κανόνες προστασίας της ζωής, της υγείας και της αξία των ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού αναδεικνύοντας τις ανθρωπιστικές και πνευματικές αξίες των κοινοτήτων. Στην Ελλάδα υπάρχει ισχυρό νομοθετικό πλαίσιο το οποίο προστατεύει τα δικαιώματα των ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού και των γονέων – κηδεμόνων τους. Η Ελλάδα ακολουθεί την ευρωπαϊκή πορεία στα ζητήματα αυτά και παρουσιάζει αξιόλογο νομοθετικό έργο ήδη από το 1998. Θεσπίσθηκε ένα πλέγμα δικαιωμάτων που αφορούν στην οικονομική και ασφαλιστική πολιτική απέναντι στους γονείς και κηδεμόνες των ατόμων στο φάσμα του αυτισμού, θεσπίσθηκε ο προσωπικός βοηθός ατόμων με ειδικές ανάγκες, καθορίσθηκε προστατευτικό πλαίσιο απέναντι στους εργαζόμενους γονείς με σκοπό την κάλυψη της αυξημένης ανάγκης των παιδιών να βρίσκονται κοντά στους γονείς τους. Από εμπειρική σκοπιά συνιστούμε την εκπαίδευση του κοινωνικού συνόλου στα θέματα αυτισμού.

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Topic 2

Education, Life-Long Learning and Human Capital

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Vocational Education and Training (VET) School Autonomy and Accountability: An analytical framework to contribute on moving forward VET policies and system in Ukraine[1]

J. Manuel Galvin Arribas[2]

Abstract

In the last years, the evolution of decentralization in education in Ukraine, whether in the field of general education or vocational education and training (VET), has created effective political will and good synergies to address systemic reforms. However, the steadily decreasing number of VET institutions, students -and teachers- testify to the need to further reform the VET system. In the context of its effort to make the VET system both more attractive for students and the labour market through decentralization, Ukraine is facing the challenge of advancing VET school autonomy and accountability regarding managerial, financial and pedagogical functions. Increasing vocational school autonomy has been considered a key policy driver for decentralization process. School autonomy (managerial, financial, and pedagogical autonomy) might enable schools to support on such ambitious goal. The European Training Foundation (ETF)[3] working very closely with Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (2019-2020) explored-in pilot basis-how to make possible moving towards VET school autonomy and accountability in Ukraine, from a governance perspective of the VET system. The analytical framework is a result of desk research, focus groups in three Ukrainian regions (Poltava, Kharkov and Odessa). Further, it helped to implement national survey-online- in 24 Ukrainian regions Key outcome is an *Analytical Framework for VET School Autonomy and Accountability*[4]. The purpose of such tool has been to provide a clear description of the suggested distribution of tasks among stakeholders at the different levels of the education system (practitioners and policy makers). This might support the decision-making authorities, i. e. first and foremost the Ministry of Education and Science) in their efforts to advance VET school autonomy and accountability in Ukraine to advance in policy agendas and continue improving effectiveness -and efficiency of VET system.

Keywords: VET, Ukraine, ETF.

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[3] The ETF is an EU agency that helps transition and developing countries to harness the potential of their human capital through the reform of education, training and labour market systems in the context of the EU's external relations policy. It is based in Turin, Italy, and has been operational since 1994.

[4] The author acknowledges and thanks ETF team for implementing this work: Inna Dergunova-ETF, Hans Schustereder-International Expert, Rodion Kolyshko-National Expert and ETF colleagues: Stylianos Karagiannis, Eva Jansova and Mirella Gavoci (questionnaire survey and statistical support). The author wants to deeply thank from heart all beautiful and brave Ukrainian people who is currently suffering an unjustifiable, -brutal aggression and invasion of their lands and lives- by Russian Federation Government. They are all our heroes. Ukraine and the whole world wish to live in peace.
The paper also pays tribute to professional performance on Vocational Education and Training (VET) -which is still a work in progress- to those practitioners, experts and policy stakeholders in the country who are committed and working, hard from years ago, to support Ukraine becoming a reference in Vocational Education-and Training- skills systems-. They are smoothly working in partnerships with European Union and international community in successful way for doing so. Overall, this paper goes to the memory of Ukrainian citizens-included lot of children's- killed by Russian military forces, as a consequence of such unacceptable war which is violating international law.

Introduction

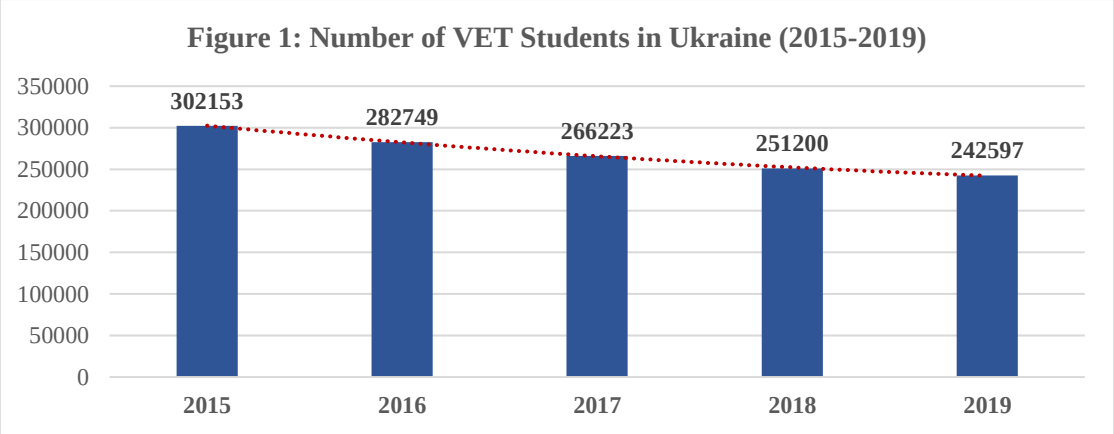
Ukrainian government (June 2019) adopted a concept in order to address *Modern* Vocational Education and Training (VET) (2020 up to 2027), to support the implementation of necessary reforms[5]. The concept identifies the following three priority tasks:

- Further decentralisation of VET by increasing school autonomy, optimising VET provider networks and ensuring the acquisition of vocational qualifications in a lifelong learning (LLL) context;
- Aligning VET provision with regional labour market needs;
- Improving the quality of VET, through competence-based and flexible provision; by improving the status of VET teachers and trainers and attracting professionals from industry to teach in VET institutions; and developing cooperation and different forms of interaction and partnerships with employers and the private sector to increase the relevance of VET.

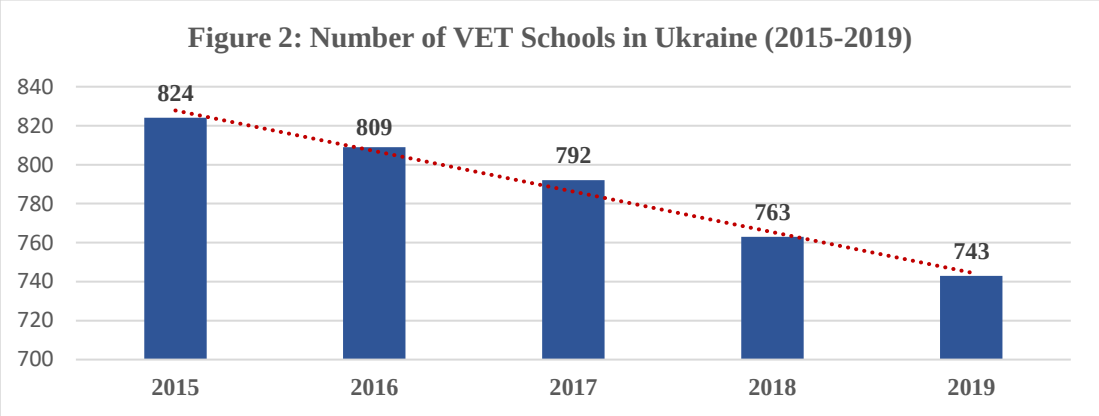
A new draft Law on VET has been prepared. This is still an on-going task (ETF 2020a). All these key policy aspects steered a cooperation among European Training Foundation (ETF) with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (Directorate of Vocational Education and Training) to explore -in pilot basis- how to move towards VET school autonomy and accountability in Ukraine by looking at the distribution of tasks and responsibilities at the different levels of the VET system (2019-2020). In this policy context, the issue of VET School Autonomy is playing a prominent role in the sphere of Ukrainian policy dialogue/making for two key facts:

- Enrolments in secondary VET have been rapidly declining in the last five years. The drop has been sharper among students who have completed secondary general education in full (after 11th grade) (Figure 1).
- Continuous decline of VET institutions (PTUs). The number of schools dropped by 10% from 824 in 2015 to 743 in 2019. Obviously, this has had an impact on the number of VET directors (Figure 2).

[5] See: https://www.kmu.gov.ua/npas/pro-shvalennya-koncepciyi-realizaciyi-derzhavnoyi-politiki-u-sferi-profesijnoyi-profesijno-tehnichnoyi-osviti-suchasna-profesijna-profesijno-tehnichna-osvita-na-period-do-2027-roku-i120619



Source: Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) of Ukraine (2020)



Source: Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) of Ukraine (2020)

Conceptual framework and methodology

There are several definitions of school autonomy[6] but generally it means granting schools certain rights, primarily the right to make decisions. Those rights regard different areas, such as staffing, teaching contents, finances, pedagogical practices, staff assessment. School autonomy is exercised within the policies set at the central level. School autonomy results in a shift of rights and responsibilities of bodies associated with the school, such as the School Council. School autonomy exists to different degrees and schools may be autonomous to varying degrees with regard to different aspects. School autonomy does not preclude approval of certain decisions from higher authorities. School autonomy entails responsibility and accountability (ETF 2020b).

The participatory working methodology to pilot an analytical framework on VET School Autonomy and Accountability- in pilot basis – is summarized below:

[6] See references section for learning on such definitions. In particular: EU (2014), Neeleman (2019); ETF (2021) and World Bank (2015).

TABLE 1 . ETF & MoES OF UKRAINE PROJECT ON VET SCHOOL AUTONOMY & ACCOUNTABILITY: MAIN STEPS AND OUTCOMES		
STEPS & KEY TASKS	**DESCRIPTION**	**REMARKS**
PHASE 1: PILOT EXERCICE (3 & 4th Q 2019)	▪ ETF Desk research ▪ Focus groups: MoEs selected 3 pilot regions (Poltava, Kharkiv, Odessa). Questionnaire validation with regional peers. ▪ Draft report: main findings on 3 regions	▪ Testing questionnaire in pilot groups (20- 25 people each). ▪ Shaped draft of analytical framework.
PHASE 2: ON-LINE SURVEY (4th Q 2019-1st Q 2020)	▪ On-line Survey 24 Ukrainian regions ▪ 1st Draft Report key national survey-descriptive- results at national level. ▪ 1st Final report: End of February 2020. ▪ Data analysis report	▪ Final sample: 963 respondents to questionnaires. ▪ The survey(questionnaire) includes 41 questions- with 276 sub questions-.
PHASE 3: DISCUSSION & DISEEMINATION OF RESULTS [7]	▪ Policy discussion (*lab)*: acknowledgment & appropriation of results by MoES & Ukrainian VET Community : consolidated evidence to support discussion on Policy issues *vs*. policy options ▪ Strategic use of findings by Ukrainian MoEs & VET Community.	▪ MoEs strongly support to disseminate results in National meeting (2nd half May 2020). ▪ EU practice to mobilize in the country: Poland, Estonia, Austria.

The background issues translated into policy research domains-and questions- worked by informants are:

- Roles, functions and composition of VET schools councils or boards[8].
- Powers of school directors, teachers and other staff policies.
- Regional component role on the issue of having more autonomous VET school networks.
- Methods and ways of coordinating mobilization and allocation of funding for boosting VET quality programs (e.g. academic wages, formula funding, multi-channel sources of funding, and for fund-raising to support VET schools operations (e.g. income generation).
- Role of VET schools in cooperation with other stakeholders shaping curricula as well as on facilitating and implementing student assessments of learning process and outcomes. This takes into account the role of Centers of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs)
- Tasks of VET schools in planning and coordination with other layers (national and regional) for implementation of VET quality assurance.
- VET school capacities for networking with private sector and social partners to address, for instance, development of work-based learning approaches (WBL).

[7] This phase (planned on-site) could not be implemented, unfortunately, due to COVID pandemic.
[8] *School councils* is a term used in this work. Other terms frequently used are “school board” and/or “executive council”.

- Teachers and trainers –expanded roles on learning and curricula design processes, as well as on their professional development within the context of increased school self- governance.

Analytical framework on VET School Autonomy and Accountability in Ukraine

All these steps, based on country intelligence, primary information - and international practices - analysis -, allowed to approach an *analytical framework* for addressing how to implement VET School Autonomy and Accountability policies in Ukraine. VET School Autonomy on this Analysis is clustered on managerial, financial, and pedagogical autonomy, whilst focussing on selection of different types of VET stakeholders and VET providers).

In the framework the key policy layers and main stakeholders are:

- National (Ministry-MoES).
- Regional VET- (Regional Government/ Regional Council).
- VET Providers: VET School Directors/ Teachers /Workshop instructors/Masters).

This has been aligned to current VET system and policy context to guide Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (working with VET Community-fit for purpose).

The framework outputs after desk research, working groups piloted in three Ukrainian in regions (oblasts) (Poltava, Jarkov, Odessa) plus using results of survey responses (N=963) gathered in 24 Ukrainian regions (oblasts) which are[9]: Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk (Controlled by Ukraine), Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Khmelnytskyi, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Luhansk (Controlled by Ukraine), Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odessa, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Ternopil, Vinnytsia, Volyn, Zakarpattia, Zaporizhzhia, Zhytomyr

All these results are presented in the analytical framework below (see table).

[9] The study covered all these Ukrainian regions (oblasts) – not included Crimea. These regions integrate territorial political and economic geography of the country, before Russian invasion (24 February 2022), according to international law.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR VET SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN UKRAINE: PILOTING RESULTS FROM A GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE						
AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY CAPACITIES BY FUNCTIONS	**NATIONAL**	**REGIONAL**		**VET SCHOOLS**		
	MoES	**Regional VET Council**	**Regional Education Department**	**School Council[10]**	**School Director**	**Teachers & Workshop Instructors**
MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS						
Staff management	Designs job descriptions for VET school directors and deputy directors. Designs job descriptions for VET school teachers	-	Selects the director Dismisses the director	Recommends candidates for the position of the director Recommends the dismissal of the director	Hires teachers Hires deputy directors Dismisses teachers Dismisses deputy directors Assesses teacher performance Assesses performance of deputy directors	Have a say in the appointment and dismissal of the director Have a say in the appointment and dismissal of deputy directors

[10] As for the results of the survey, the following should be represented in the school council: employers, teachers, unions, experts on career guidance, parents, and the Regional VET Council.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR VET SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN UKRAINE: PILOTING RESULTS FROM A GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE						
AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY CAPACITIES BY FUNCTIONS	**NATIONAL**	**REGIONAL**		**VET SCHOOLS**		
	MoES	**Regional VET Council**	**Regional Education Department**	**School Council[10]**	**School Director**	**Teachers & Workshop Instructors**
Educational planning	Designs medium- and long-term education strategies	Approves strategic documents on the purpose and functioning of the regional VET school network Promotes VET in the region Supports forecasting of labour market needs in the region and suggests training in priority occupations Provides school directors with expertise in autonomy and accountability issues	Implements medium- and long-term education strategies at the regional level	Approves the school development plan Sets key performance indicators Provides advice and recommendations on school-autonomous training contents	Designs school development plan Communicates and leads change Develops the VET school	Participate in the design of school development plan Provide feedback on training contents Provide feedback on the contents of exams

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR VET SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN UKRAINE: PILOTING RESULTS FROM A GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE

AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY CAPACITIES BY FUNCTIONS	NATIONAL	REGIONAL		VET SCHOOLS		
	MoES	**Regional VET Council**	**Regional Education Department**	**School Council[10]**	**School Director**	**Teachers & Workshop Instructors**
Cooperation with employers	Provides guidelines for the cooperation between the VET system and ESPs	Sets the overall framework and provides methodological support for partnerships with employers in the region Supports the organization of information events for schools and ESPs and highlights benefits of cooperation Supports collecting information on training needs for in-company trainers and promotes providing such trainings	-	Coordinates cooperation with employers Signs agreement with employers	Maintains communication with stakeholders Monitors the quality of WBL	Provide methodological support to in-company trainers
Analysis	Provides methodology and tools for tracer studies Provides methodology and tools for labour market analyses	Supports conducting labour market analyses and ensures that the regional order is based on the data delivered by the analyses	Considers the results of labour market analyses in the implementation of medium- and long-term education strategies	Considers the results of labour market analyses in actions resulting from its functions	Implements tracer studies	-

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR VET SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN UKRAINE: PILOTING RESULTS FROM A GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE						
AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY CAPACITIES BY FUNCTIONS	**NATIONAL**	**REGIONAL**		**VET SCHOOLS**		
	MoES	**Regional VET Council**	**Regional Education Department**	**School Council[10]**	**School Director**	**Teachers & Workshop Instructors**
Quality assurance	Establishes quality criteria Establishes quality assurance procedures	-	Implements quality assurance procedures	Considers the results on quality assurance procedures in actions resulting from its functions	Ensures the quality of training Ensures training of VET school staff in quality issues	Participate in training on quality assurance issues
Legal framework	Provides the legal provision on VET school autonomy and accountability	-	Ensures implementation of the legal framework	Approves legal provisions at the VET school level	Proposes legal provisions at the VET school level	Participate in the design of legal provisions at the VET school level
Licensing and accreditation	Designs legal provisions on licensing and accreditation	Establishes the need for accredited programs at the regional level	-	Suggests training programs for accreditation	Participates in licensing and accreditation processes	-
FINANCIAL FUNCTIONS						
Extra-budgetary funding	Provides legal provision on the funding of VET schools	Establishes the framework for extra-budgetary funding for VET schools Collects proposal to attract extrabudgetary funding	Provides operational support to VET schools in securing extra-budgetary funding	Secures support from external donors	Is responsible for processes generating extra-budgetary funding	Participate in processes related to generating extra-budgetary funding
Procurement	Provides legal provision on procurement issues	-	Ensures adherence to the provision on procurement	Approves procurement needs	Identified procurement needs	Participate in the identification of procurement needs
Budget design	Provides legal provision on budgeting	-	Ensures adherence to the provision on budgeting	Designs and approves the school budget	Participates in the design of the school budget	-

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR VET SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN UKRAINE: PILOTING RESULTS FROM A GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE						
AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY CAPACITIES BY FUNCTIONS	**NATIONAL**	**REGIONAL**		**VET SCHOOLS**		
	MoES	**Regional VET Council**	**Regional Education Department**	**School Council[10]**	**School Director**	**Teachers & Workshop Instructors**
Use of financial resources	Provides legal provision on the use of financial resources	-	Ensures adherence to the provision on the use of financial resources	Participates in training on financial issues Ensures the proper use of financial resources by the VET school	Decides on spending of funds for the daily operation of the school Participates in training on financial issues	-
PEDAGOGICAL FUNCTIONS						
Training contents	Sets framework for skills development (hard and soft skills) Provides curricula Provides regulation on the requirements for and approval of textbooks	Identifies priority training contents at the regional level and supports delivery of training	Approves priority training contents at the regional level	Approves school-autonomous training contents	Makes suggestions on school-autonomous training contents Ensures employer participation in the development of suggestions for school-autonomous training contents	Participate in the identification of school-autonomous training contents Participate in the design of teaching and learning materials

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR VET SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN UKRAINE: PILOTING RESULTS FROM A GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE						
AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY CAPACITIES BY FUNCTIONS	**NATIONAL**	**REGIONAL**		**VET SCHOOLS**		
	MoES	**Regional VET Council**	**Regional Education Department**	**School Council[10]**	**School Director**	**Teachers & Workshop Instructors**
Assessment	Provides legal provision on assessment Provides national framework criteria	-	Ensures adherence to the legal provision and the national framework criteria for assessment	-	Is responsible for the proper organization of exams	Provide feedback on the relevance of current assessment criteria Design assessment criteria at the school level based on national framework criteria Participate in training on assessment Provide methodological support to in-company trainers in assessment issues
Career counselling for students	Provides legal provision on career counselling for students	Supports the establishment of career counselling services at the regional level	Ensures adherence to the legal provision on career counseling for students	Monitors quality of career counseling services at the school level	Ensures implementation of career counseling services at the school level and/or students' access to services at the regional level	May qualify as career counselors

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR VET SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN UKRAINE: PILOTING RESULTS FROM A GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE						
AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY CAPACITIES BY FUNCTIONS	**NATIONAL**	**REGIONAL**		**VET SCHOOLS**		
	MoES	**Regional VET Council**	**Regional Education Department**	**School Council[10]**	**School Director**	**Teachers & Workshop Instructors**
Teaching and learning processes and conditions	Provides legal provision on pedagogical approaches (e. g. the adoption of competency -based training) Sets minimum standards for teaching and learning conditions	-	Ensures adherence to the provision on pedagogical approaches Ensures that VET schools meet minimum standards for teaching and learning conditions	Assesses teaching and learning conditions in the VET school Ensures access for children with special educational needs	Ensures the implementation of the legal provision on teaching and learning processes and conditions	Analyze teaching and learning processes Make recommendations for the improvement of teaching and learning processes Act as role models for students
Teacher professional development	Provides legal provision on TPD Identifies TPD needs Develops a medium- and long-term TPD strategy	Supports the identification of TPD needs	Organizes regional TPD courses	-	Participates in the identification of TPD needs Organizes regional TPD courses in the school Nominates experiences teachers as trainers in TPD courses	Participate in the identification of TPD needs Provide feedback on the relevance and impact of TPD courses Experiences teachers act as trainers in TPD courses

Conclusions

Among many others take aways from this pilot action, key conclusions are:

- The paper does not discuss pross and cons of policy decision on VET School Autonomy and Accountability. Overall, the objective of this work has been to propose a working framework for testing such policy option in Ukraine.
- The analytical framework -pilot- presented in this paper – is linked to a governance perspective and is proven to be relevant and useful. Findings show that it works for further supporting policy - analysis, discussions, and learning-. This should be done by correlating

both, distribution of responsibilities among policy layers and relevant VET staff/practitioners, to be engaged. Managerial, financial and pedagogical functions are those relevant ones to target VET School Autonomy and Accountability. This means, for example, to deliver a cross-analysis (matrix) based on these key three functions on VET School Autonomy- and Accountability, shorted by different stakeholders (National Regional, School board, Directors, teachers & workshop instructors) and spatial levels (National, Regional & VET schools).

- The analytical framework might further support other countries worldwide, which might further work on such a strategic issue (policy makers, practitioners as well as research/experts community).
- Overall, these findings inform on the need to deliver a differentiated analysis on Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) role. This issue might support on streamlining policy discussions, to address high quality VET network optimization-and provision-reform in the country.
- Other key actions might be needed to reform network in the country (e.g. conducting evaluation-and audit-of VET sector; facilitating guidelines for restructuring VET school networks; issuing methodology for assessing performance, effectiveness and quality of VET network; strategic communication plan to motivate -and build trust on- VET Community etc.).

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Topic 3
Sustainable Development and Environmental Policies

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Traditional Villages and Smart cities: Planning Rural Greece's Revival through Potential Erasmus+ Training Courses[1]

Maria-Argyro Pelagidou[2]

Abstract

This paper discusses the potential of Greece to accommodate more training courses that could be funded by Erasmus+. Its limitation is that it suggests potential training courses mostly on the topics of preserving local culture and developing smart city technologies. Scarcity in Erasmus+ training courses and hosting cities highlights the need for a more creative approach to the subject. Traditional villages and smart-cities are located in the center of the creation of new training courses. This, in turn, would create job opportunities and help transmit knowledge from the hosts of the courses to the incoming trainees and vice-versa. A variety of training courses is proposed to take place in rural areas and attract specific categories of trainees.

Keywords: Erasmus+, rural Greece, smart cities, village revival.

Introduction

Greek rural population has been relying upon subsidizations from the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and the European Agricultural Fund for rural development (EAFRD) for ages. The funding aims at developing sustainably the rural areas, supporting and advancing agricultural practices, such as farming, husbandry, forestry and beekeeping. Taking advantage of European and national funding, as well as engaging in programs such as "Leader", has been the corner stone of rural development in Greece (European Commission, n.d.). But, what about utilizing other programs, which are not inherently relevant to rural development, such as Erasmus+?

Since Greece has participated in Erasmus in 1987, students in secondary and, especially, higher education have exploited the opportunities it creates to study abroad and explore new places and cultures. Erasmus+ funded vocational training, through one- or two-week programs, is becoming more and more popular to Greek students and youth in general. Greek trainees in Erasmus+ programs in 2019 and 2020 were 2,253 and 2,101 respectively (European Commission, 2020, 2021). The ever-growing role these programs play in younger generations' lives call for a more entertaining approach to the potential Greece has to offer in terms of training youth from countries across the European Union, through the creation of training courses, and for the examination of the potential benefits such programs would have in our local communities, should they be implemented.

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Problem Analysis

Although the statistical data show that the incoming trainees in Greece for 2019 and 2020 were 2,846 and 2,913, respectively, numbers larger than that of the outgoing trainees, the number of the cities that host these programs is meagre. The majority of training courses take place in Corfu and Athens (Erasmus+ in Greece, 2020). Kalamata, Thessaloniki, Crete, Nafpaktos, Nafplio and Patras follow with a small number of training courses per year. The absence of other Greek cities and small towns, bearing interesting culture, history or pioneering in technology, are missing from the map of Erasmus+ training courses. What Europe, and especially Greece, needs during the times its rural depopulation is taking place (Sanchez-Colomer, 2020; World Bank, 2022) is the engagement of its rural areas, people and knowledge in building a stronger Europe. Hosting Erasmus+ training courses in rural Greece would create new job opportunities, an answer to the above 14.2% unemployment rates in Greece (Eurostat, 2021), and space for further development through the transmission of knowledge. People need to, among others, train the trainees, organize, coordinate, manage the funding.

Moreover, the lack of diversity in the topics of the available courses, and those having already taken place, must be noted. The majority of them pertain mostly to train teachers, while the second most common subject these courses treat is that of sustainable development and environmental sensitization in general (Erasmus+ Greece, n.d.). As much important as these courses appear to be, taking into account the challenges new generations are facing due to the pandemic, globalization and climate change and their repercussions, namely digitalization of education, multiculturalism and extreme natural phenomena, people should not be unilaterally developed. Greece has a lot more to offer. An interesting and attractive variety of vocational courses is much needed, especially in rural Greece, where funding is attracted more by inherently agricultural activities (European Commission, n.d.).

More importantly, the value of Erasmus+ training courses should not be underrated. Their duration is limited to a number of certain days, making them not time-consuming, so that even hard-working employees could leave their hometowns for one or two weeks in order to attend training to enhance their work competence. Training courses appear as an opportunity for everyone, not just youth students and workers, in order to gain new skills, interact with different cultures and, thus, enhance their cultural competence. Besides, taking into account that Erasmus+ programs for universities or internships usually require certain qualifications, training courses emerge as the ideal option for people who are not eligible for other Erasmus+ programs. Producing more training courses would

boost mobility, and therefore tourism, and overall the external picture our country is showing, through cultural diplomacy (Kapsaskis, n.d.)

Suggestions

The scarcity in Erasmus+ training courses in Greece and the hosting cities can be of our advantage, should we exploit some of the available funding of €26.2 billion (European Commission, Erasmus+, 2021). Following, a short list of potential training courses in certain places in Greece, other than those already hosting training courses, is provided, in order to make a good understanding of its endless potential. As it is impossible to cover geographically all of the country, only some places and few of the courses they could offer are illustrated below.

Traditional Arts

Cyclades are well-known for their marbles. Bearing large quantities of white marble, these islands have developed an ancient tradition of marble-sculpting. Tinos, among others, flourished into an artistic island, in the 19th century, and contributes to Greek arts ever since (Sigalas, n.d.). In cooperation with local workshops, training courses in marble sculpting with the guidance of experienced artists and workers would provide the inhabitants of Tinos with a chance to share their work and knowledge, as well as the trainees with a unique experience to learn an art that is doomed to vanish if the younger generations do not delve into it and leave the island in the quest of employment elsewhere. Other islands in the Cyclades, such as Paros and Naxos, traditionally related to marble-sculpting, could offer such courses as well.

Arts are not only flourishing in the islands. In mainland Greece, arts are predominantly affiliated with wood. Karditsa's contribution to arts has been gradually augmenting, with the academic work implemented at the Department of Wood and Furniture Design and Technology. The Department is innovative in its domain and emphasizes creation in accordance to the environment, with respect to affordability and social acceptance and utility (Department of Wood and Furniture Design and Technology, n.d.). Such training courses would be addressed not only to artists, marble sculptors or wood and furniture designers, but also to those who wish to cultivate their artistic skills. Vocational training in arts and local culture would aid in the transmission of Greek culture abroad, therefore functioning as a cultural diplomacy tool (Kapsaskis, n.d.).

Smart city technologies and active citizenship

In the prefecture of Thessaly, other than Karditsa, Trikala's potential for training courses are quite transparent. Trikala is considered Greece's first smart-city (The Guardian, 2018), having developed smart technologies to facilitate everyday commute in the city and improve its citizens' quality of life. Citizens through a mobile phone application have access to data such as the availability of parking spaces in the city center and can communicate their complaints or requests to the city hall digitally (Trikala City Hall, n.d.). The status of traffic lights, road lights, water pipes, rubbish trucks and the environmental conditions, such as the air quality, are also monitored remotely (The Guardian, 2018). Training courses could be organized by Trikala's City Hall and cooperative organizations as well as entrepreneurs with emphasis on smart city technologies and digital innovation. Such programs would be addressed to city hall employees and people who wish to acquire smart-technologies related skills and enhance the implementation of digital technology and sustainable development Erasmus+ guidelines (Erasmus+ Greece, 2021).

Larisa is another smart city, in terms more of governance and citizens' participation, rather than in effective monitoring of its public services. The Municipality of Larisa has created a Board of the Youth. This initiative aims to familiarize young citizens, aged 17 to 30, with the decision-making process, include them in the designation of youth-related strategies and the organization of social events (Kolovou, n.d.). Active participation in one's community contributes in shaping a multidimensional personality and setting the ground for future development. Training courses on active participation in decision-making could be different than MUN models. They could educate trainees from the starting point, not require eloquence, skills in debating, but rather they could function as a workshop in which city counsellors share their own advice on public speaking and taking a part in the community's events, thus promoting the civic engagement and participation guidelines of Erasmus+ (Erasmus+ Greece, 2021).

Village revival

A small group of friends in Sparta, Peloponnese, are currently battling against the rural depopulation that has been taking place in the district. Five young people from the village of Vamvakou, in cooperation with Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF), began in 2018 a project aiming at the revival of their village. Vamvakou Revival is a Social Cooperative Enterprise funded by SNF whose purpose is to attract new residents back to the village, through the creation of job opportunities, such as the opening of restaurants, cafes, small hotels. In order to increase the number of tourists in the area, Vamvakou Revival has been organizing weekend activities at the village's school, which hosts the

V.Lab (Vamvakou Technology Lab), and promoting its journey on social media (SNF, Vamvakou Revival, n.d.). This model could attract not only new residents and tourists, but also trainees, who would be taught how they could fund such projects, create new jobs as well as draw the interest of tourists and potential residents. Such a program could be the basis of the revival of other Greek and, further, European villages and small towns.

Conclusions

Bearing in mind that these suggestions for potential Erasmus+ training courses are just an inadequate representation of Greece's potential, one can only imagine the depth of our people's ability in creating programs that reflect on its traditions, skills, experience, but also cater to its needs and make space for further advancement. As teaching methods change so as to adapt to new challenges, that should be the case with Erasmus+ as well. European Union has provided us with a gift, that we sure take care of and cherish, but we should also look forward now not only in protecting the environment and success in business, but also protect the past, benefit from it and include it in training courses. The possibilities Erasmus+ offers must be exploited at people's own benefit: reviving rural Greece. Traditional villages and smarts cities may be the new norm in the country, and should the Greek countryside become alive again, smart villages will not be a utopian dream, but a feasible plan, a future reality.

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Topic 4
Political Economy in the 21st Century

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The Greek Law on Strategic Investments in Light of the FDI Screening Regulation: Will the Greek Investment Regime's Openness Endure?[1]

Dionysis N. Fotopoulos[2]

Abstract

Attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is vital for Greece's growth in the aftermath of a lengthy economic crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic. Concurrently, the European Union (EU) seeks to safeguard essential bloc-wise security interests that are compromised by third country investors, especially Chinese ones, sprawling across member states – a policy concern substantiated in normative text as recently as 2019 by the enactment of Regulation 2019/452. The latter set the basic pan-European contour in terms of member states' cooperation for the screening of FDI. A year later, the Greek Parliament voted for Law 4864/2021 on Strategic Investments, with a view to incentivizing aspiring high-profile investors. In that regard, the main objective of the present policy paper is to examine how Law 4864/2021 interplays with Regulation 2019/452. The paper will conclude that the Greek liberalized framework will have to align in the future with the European trend of extended screening over FDI, notwithstanding Law 4864/2021 moving into the opposite direction.

Keywords: FDI; strategic investments; legal framework; incentives; screening; Greece; European Union.

Introduction

The mainstream definition for FDI, in economic terms, lies with the direct acquisition of an asset by a foreign natural person or legal entity in the territory of another nation state (the host state) that is projected in the long-run and gripped with a certain business risk (Moosa, 2002; Dolzer & Schreurer, 2012: 60). As has been repeatedly affirmed, FDI is of tremendous importance for prosperity and development – to name just few of the benefits, FDI is a vehicle for the transfer of technology, stimulates employment, boosts a country's balance of payments vis-à-vis its trading partners, and may increase productivity (Moose, 2002: 73). Traditionally, and in view of the benefits gained, nation states have been competing in the international market for the attraction of FDI, especially against the backdrop of economic globalization (Broome, 2014: 171). As per Greece, the attraction of FDI has long been proclaimed by politicians, technocrats, and employers' organizations, as the gateway to exit the post-2008 crisis and as the path to level up the country's development paradigm (Hellenic Republic, 2020: 191; Tsitouras et al., 2019: 45; SEV, 2021; IME GSVEE, 2019).

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In that regard, one of the most prominent and emblematic investments made in recent years in Greece was the acquisition of the majority stake (51%) of the Piraeus Port Authority by the COSCO Shipping Group, a state-owned Chinese multinational, for 280.5 million euros (HRADF, 2016) and the acquisition of another 16% of stake as of October 2021 for 88 million euros (HRADF, 2021). The total value of the Share Purchase Agreement is expected to reach 1.5 billion euros, including the expected earnings for the Greek State as well as additional investment that is agreed to be made by the COSCO Shipping Group (HRADF, 2016). Other significant investments have also been carried out in Greece by Chinese undertakings in crucial areas, such as energy and information technology, and by other third countries' entities (Tonchev, 2020: 537).

However, the benefits for the Greek economy notwithstanding, concerns were raised by other European member states, particularly by the most technologically advanced, and the EU itself, as to what the impact of such investments, which comes down to the control over strategic infrastructure – as the Piraeus Port is – by third country government-led entities, would be on security (Qianqian & Davarinou, 2019: 117; Chan & Meunier, 2021). In response to this growing concern, and in the context of its exclusive competence on FDI under common commercial policy pursuant to Articles 3(1) and 207(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) (European Union, 2007), the EU enacted Regulation 2019/452 (European Parliament and Council of the EU, 2019) to establish a framework for the screening of FDI at Union level. Subsequently, absent a national universal screening mechanism, the Greek Parliament voted for Law 4864/2021 (Government Gazette 237/A, 2021) on strategic investments, aiming at attracting investors by offering legal security and incentives.

This policy brief will attempt to shed some light upon the main features and facets of those two legislative texts. Particularly, our analysis will be swinging between two polars; *on the one hand*, the EU-led policy concern to secure essential interests within the bloc that are intertwined with security and public order; and *on the other hand*, the member states', especially Greece's, quest for FDI and the openness of their investment regimes. The paper will argue that Greece, despite its pursuit for investment and the recent legislative developments, will need to align with the European trend and pressure for an established and more coordinated FDI screening.

EU FDI screening Regulation: Conceptualizing in context

The EU, as a supranational bloc, had the highest inward stock of FDI in 2020, which amounted to 11,424 billion USD, compared to other superpowers, such as the US and China, according to OECD (2020). Interestingly enough, FDI screening laws had long remained in shadows, while almost every investment was being accepted in the European market as a confirmation that the market is

competitive (Hindelang & Moberg, 2020: 838) – the EU itself was considered as one of the most open regimes for foreign investment (OECD, 2022). Nevertheless, Regulation 2019/452, which entered into force on 11 October 2020, is but the most intense proof that the direction of European investment-related policy making has undergone an unprecedented swift. As the Commission's Executive Vice-President, Valdis Dombrovskis, eloquently commented, '*[t]he EU is and will remain open to foreign investment. But this openness is not unconditional'*, claiming also that the Regulation equips properly the Union towards external threats against its collective security (European Commission, 2021a).

Notably, at the critical times of Covid-19, as early as March 2020, the European Commission communicated with the member states that they should make full use of any existing FDI screening mechanism, while it also urged the ones lacking such mechanisms to proceed with their development (European Commission, 2020). Put differently, the message was that protection of the EU internal market should be the priority, whereas the critical moments of Covid-19, and the ensuing effect on the critical healthcare products' industry, necessitated inbound FDI to undergo extensive investigation and assessment.

In fact, the Regulation's very preamble ascertained that a comprehensive framework at Union level was not in place, while the major trading partners of the Union had already developed such frameworks, as was indeed the case with the U.S. and Canada. So, the Regulation's imperative was to fill in an EU-wide legislative gap in order to catch up with EU competitors. According to the European legislators' perspective, the comparatively low restrictiveness level on foreign FDI was necessary to go up.

Pursuant to Article 1(1), the Regulation's subject matter is twofold: **a)** the establishment of framework for the screening by the member states of FDI on the grounds of security and public order; and **b)** the establishment of a mechanism for multilateral cooperation between member states and the European Commission. Expressly stipulating in Article 1(3) that '*nothing shall limit the right of each Member State to decide whether or not to screen a foreign direct investment*', the Regulation can only be understood as a product of compromise between the EU and member states – as Carcy (2021: 6) puts it, the Regulation reflects the member state's pursuit to preserve competences at national level and the Commission's target, in light of concerns for third country investors sprawling across EU, to create more integrated tools at Union level. Indeed, the Regulation does not establish a common EU framework of FDI screening, nor does it harmonize national legislations – instead, it creates a cooperation facility among member states and the Commission in the context of which exchange of information is upgraded and the possibility for making reservations is accorded.

Institutionally, however, the Commission is not granted with any power to reject or suspend investment plans. If such a power was ultimately granted, this would mean that third country FDI would be subject to a European level screening, and consequently there could have been a possibility for rejection or suspension for want of compliance with public order or security requirements at the discretion of an EU organ. The Commission was careful not to touch on national competences as is the national security (Article 4 Treaty on the EU), while it was because of that reason that critics argued that the Regulation was nothing more than a mere political declaration rather than an effective legal instrument (Gadocha, 2020: 38).

Article 4(1) of the Regulation provides for factors to be taken into consideration in order to determine whether an FDI is *likely* to affect security or public order. The factors assessed include, in particular, the potential effects that the FDI would bring about on critical infrastructure (i.e., energy, transport, health, communication, media, data processing or storage, aerospace, defense, electoral or financial infrastructure, sensitive facilities, land and real estate), on critical technology (artificial intelligence, robotics, semiconductors, cybersecurity, aerospace, nuclear technology, nanotechnology, etc.), on the supply of critical inputs (e.g., energy, food security, etc.), on the access to sensitive information, and on the freedom and pluralism of media. The Regulation genuinely provides for broad indicative categories of kinds of infrastructure/industries/functions, which virtually include any contemporary field of public concern and interest that must be entrenched vis-à-vis private power and influence – *a fortiori*, the entrenchment is assumed necessary by the Regulation, if the entity seeking to invest therein is controlled, either directly or indirectly, by the government of a third country.

Greek Law 4864/2021 on Strategic Investments: Perspectives and policy orientation

Regulation 2019/452 paved the way – even tentatively – for tightening screening within EU. Almost a year later, Greece did not take the step to align with that trend when voting Law 4864/2021 on Strategic Investments. For the purpose of Law 4864/2021, which entered into force within the Greek jurisdiction as of 1 December 2021, *Strategic Investments* are the investments which, because of their strategic importance for the national or regional economy, may boost the employment, the productive resurrection, and the promotion of the natural and cultural environment of Greece, with respect to sustainable development (Article 2).

It is worth noting that Law 4864/2021 does not set out any nationality restriction, meaning that it may cover both European and third country investors. It classifies the investments into the five following categories: **1)** *Strategic Investments I*, **2)** *Strategic Investments II*, **3)** *Emblematic Investments of High Importance*, **4)** *Strategic Investments of Fast-track Permit Granting*, and **5)** *Strategic Investments by*

default. The main factors for the classification are the total budget of the investment and the creation of Annual Employment Units (AEU).[3] For instance, the threshold budget may be €75,000,000 with not AEU needed for Strategic Investments I, or €20,000,000 along with 30 AEU created each year for Strategic Investments of Fast-track Permit Granting.[4]

Law 4864/2021 also provides for substantial incentives, such as spatial planning incentives, taxation incentives, fast permits' granting incentives, and state aid incentives (Articles 7-10). In essence, the type and pecuniary amount of incentives granted to investors is dependent on the project's classification into one of the above 1 to 5 categories.

Further, a legal framework for the assessment and screening of strategic investments is stipulated by Law 4864/2021, but no provision is inclusive of screening on the grounds of security or public order. The process kicks off by a submission of an investment plan proposal before Enterprise Greece S.A., which is the body competent for the administrative assessment of the investment's legality and expediency and the issuance of an opinion thereof. The administrative legality check mainly involves whether the proposal fulfils the criteria and documentation required by law, while the broader administrative expediency check involves the reasons why the investment should be characterized as strategic for the purposes of Greece's growth and development.

The licensing process goes on by forwarding the investment plan to the competent department of the Ministry of Development and Investments. The Inter-ministerial Committee for Strategic Investments has the final say for the integration of the proposal into the Law's scheme and the granting of incentives – its decision is issued in the Government Gazette.

The Greek investment regime's openness

Analyzing the determinants for national preferences for EU-wide FDI screening, Chan and Meunier (2021) classify Greece as a country initially opposing screening, because of its dependence on third country investment – particularly Chinese investment – as a result of its recent economic turbulence. As of 1 July 2021, Greece remains one of the 9 member states that have not yet introduced a national FDI screening mechanism. According to the Commission's Annual Report on the screening of FDI dated November 2021 (European Commission, 2021b), Greece is classified as a '*member state having initiated a consultative or legislative process expected to result in the adoption of a new mechanism*'.

[3] The AEU express the number of persons employed in a business. Anyone who worked full-time in a business, or on behalf of a business, during the reference year, is counted as one AEU.
[4] For reasons of brevity, the particular categories' characteristics are omitted but they may be found in Law 4648/2021 (Article 1).

The only legislative process made until now is that of Law 4781/2021 (Government Gazette 31/A, 2021), as amended, which *inter alia* provides that a Department for Special Investments' Attraction will be operating within the B1 Directorate for Extroversion Planning and Coordination of Extroversion Bodies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Article 166). The said Department will be the Greek contact point for the implementation of Regulation 2019/452, will coordinate the checking on FDI pursuant to EU legislation, and will draft and submit with the Commission the annual report on the FDIs that took place in Greece for the determined calendar year (Article 169).

It is surprising why Greece, in the aftermath of the EU FDI Regulation's enactment, did not opt for some kind of tightened screening to be integrated into its new legal instrument for investments that came into force in December 2021. Overall, Law 4864/2021 is a contemporary legislative text that embeds dispersed provisions and reflects a high level of flexibility. Yet, by no means does the type of administrative screening of Law 4864/2021 assess the investment plan's potential effects on Greek critical infrastructure, critical technologies etc., nor does it consider such factors as the investor's direct or indirect links with third country governments. It can be said that all investment plans and proposals submitted pursuant to Law 4864/2021 will be licensed and granted facilities and incentives, provided that they get through the legality and expediency administrative checks, and there would be no legal grounds to be suspended or rejected based on security concerns. In that regard, Law 4864/2021 falls short of the notions set by Regulation 2019/452, and it depicts a member state's unequivocal – and in a way unconditional – openness to FDI.

Notwithstanding the intense desire for investment and its importance for the Greek economy (Vargiu, 2020), it is sure that Greece, as a participant country in the European project, will be under pressure in the forthcoming years to tighten its investment screening regimes for the sake of security – this would be a pan-European imperative necessitated by the rise of China and other international actors. We could expect in the future that the Commission would extend its efforts to consolidate member states' screening mechanisms – this task embeds a high level of difficulty as the Commission will need to balance between, on the one hand, national interests and national competences (i.e., security affairs), and, on the other hand, the European quest for integration and unified stance vis-à-vis third countries.

Conclusions

Law 4648/2021 inaugurated a new era for Greek strategic FDI, providing foreign investors with an invaluable legal tool for their operations in the Greek market. It is unfortunate that Greece did not align with the EU trend and selected not to develop FDI screening mechanisms in the context of Law

4648/2021 – instead, it prioritized national perspectives that require the country to absorb as much as inbound FDI as possible for its development and growth, without giving due consideration to security concerns.

Arguably, the desire for inbound FDI is not to be condemned *per se*. However, from the entry into force of Regulation 2019/452 onwards, the signal for both EU Member States and third country investors has been rendered explicit – Greece, as said, was urged by the Commission to put an end to unconditional, non-screened on security grounds, FDI, and develop a national screening mechanism. If not in strictly legally enforceable terms as the critics argue, the message was sent by the Commission at least *politically*. As said, Greece is one of the Member States that have initiated a consultative or legislative process for a new mechanism. This, of course, provides for some optimism but the recent Greek legislative practice has suggested otherwise. In view of the international developments, it is plausible to expect that Greece will ultimately align in the future with the European trend, and any new FDI legislation will be giving due consideration to security concerns.

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Technological Change and Small Enterprises in Greece: Investments, Digital Technologies and Digital Policies[1]

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Abstract

Disruptive technological progress is rapidly changing critical dimensions of social and economic activity. Within the domain of small enterprises particularly, technological change constitutes a cross-cutting driving force of transformation across the spectrum of the value chains (e.g. manufacturing, distribution, marketing, logistics). However, the digital transition is characterized by strong asymmetric trends of differentiation depending on a wide set of parameters. Under this prism, emerging paradigms of digital policies is a key policy mechanism for accelerating and symmetrically diffusing digital adaptation.

Keywords: Digital technologies, digital transformation, SME's, investments, financing, digital policies.

Τεχνολογικός Μετασχηματισμός και Μικρές Επιχειρήσεις στην Ελλάδα: Επενδύσεις, Ψηφιακές Τεχνολογίες και Πολιτικές Ψηφιακής Ανάπτυξης

Αντώνιος Αγγελάκης[2]

Περίληψη

Οι ραγδαίες τεχνολογικές εξελίξεις μεταβάλλουν με ταχύ ρυθμό κρίσιμες διαστάσεις της κοινωνικής, παραγωγικής και οικονομικής δραστηριότητας. Ιδιαίτερα σε επίπεδο επιχειρήσεων, η τεχνολογική εξέλιξη στο πεδίο των ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών αποτελεί μια εγκάρσια τάση μεταβολής σε όλο το φάσμα της παραγωγικής αλυσίδας αξίας (π.χ. προμήθειες, παραγωγή και διάθεση προϊόντων). Εντούτοις, η ψηφιακή μετάβαση των μικρών επιχειρήσεων διακρίνεται από έντονες τάσεις διαφοροποίησης εν σχέσει με ένα ευρύ πλέγμα παραμέτρων. Υπό το πρίσμα αυτό, οι σύγχρονες πολιτικές ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης αποτελούν έναν κρίσιμο μηχανισμό επιτάχυνσης και συμμετρικής διάχυσης της ψηφιακής προσαρμογής.

Keywords: Ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες, ψηφιακός μετασχηματισμός, μικρές επιχειρήσεις, επενδύσεις, χρηματοδότηση, πολιτικές ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης.

Εισαγωγή

Η ανάδυση και επέκταση των «τεχνολογικών επαναστάσεων» βασίζεται στη σύντηξη σημαντικών τεχνολογικών και παραγωγικών εξελίξεων που μεταβάλλουν τα υφιστάμενα τεχνο-παραγωγικά υποδείγματα (Freeman & Louca, 2001; Perez, 2004; Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014; McAfee & Brynjolfsson, 2017). Η ανάπτυξη και εφαρμογή νέων ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών (π.χ. Τεχνητή

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Νοημοσύνη, Διαδίκτυο των Πραγμάτων, ρομποτικά συστήματα), μεταβάλλει σημαντικά το περιεχόμενο των νέων προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών, τις παραγωγικές και επιχειρησιακές διαδικασίες, τα επιχειρηματικά μοντέλα καθώς και τη διάρθρωση των επιμέρους κλάδων. Μολονότι, η ψηφιακή προσαρμογή αποτελεί ολοένα και περισσότερο πάγιο χαρακτηριστικό της παραγωγικής λειτουργίας των επιχειρήσεων, ο βαθμός υιοθέτησης νέων ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών και συστημάτων διακρίνεται από έντονες διαφοροποιήσεις. Ιδιαίτερα σε επίπεδο πολύ μικρών επιχειρήσεων διαπιστώνεται ότι οι τάσεις ψηφιακής μετάβασης κινούνται με βραδύτερο ρυθμό και επικεντρώνονται σε τεχνολογικές υπο-κατηγορίες χαμηλότερης συνθετότητας. Το παρόν άρθρο περιγράφει βασικές τάσεις της ψηφιακής προσαρμογής των μικρών και πολύ μικρών επιχειρήσεων σε εγχώριο επίπεδο κατά την περίοδο πριν και μετά την κύρια διετή περίοδο της πανδημίας (2020 και 2022). Η αποτύπωση της υφισταμένης κατάστασης αναφορικά με την ψηφιακή ωριμότητα και το βαθμό προσαρμογής των μικρών επιχειρήσεων στις αναδυόμενες τεχνολογικές εξελίξεις βασίζεται σε πρωτογενή και δευτερογενή δεδομένα που εξετάζουν θεμελιώδεις πτυχές της ψηφιακής διάστασης (π.χ. βαθμός υιοθέτησης, επίπεδα επενδύσεων σε νέες τεχνολογίες, πηγές χρηματοδότησης). Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, περιγράφεται ένα αναλυτικό πλαίσιο κατανόησης των διαφορετικών διαστάσεων παρέμβασης ως προς την κατεύθυνση ενίσχυσης της ψηφιακής προσαρμογής των πολύ μικρών και μικρών επιχειρήσεων.

1. Τεχνολογική και ψηφιακή μεταβολή σε επίπεδο μικρών επιχειρήσεων

Η ανάλυση της υφιστάμενης κατάστασης της ψηφιακής προσαρμογής των πολύ μικρών και μικρών επιχειρήσεων απαιτεί την εξέταση ενός πλήθους παραμέτρων που συγκροτούν μια ευρύτερη «αλυσίδα ψηφιακής αναβάθμισης» και αφορά σε θέματα όπως ενσωμάτωση και υιοθέτηση ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών και συστημάτων, επίπεδο επενδύσεων σε ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες και ενδυνάμωση ψηφιακών δεξιοτήτων. Επιπροσθέτως, η λεπτομερής εξέταση πρωτογενών στοιχείων ως προς το ρυθμό ψηφιακής προσαρμογής των μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων καθιστούν σαφή έναν υψηλό βαθμό διαφοροποίησης μεταξύ επιχειρήσεων σε διαφορετικές κλίμακες μεγέθους. Όπως αναδεικνύεται αμέσως παρακάτω, ιδιαίτερα σε επίπεδο πολύ μικρών επιχειρήσεων, οι τάσεις ψηφιακής προσαρμογής καταγράφουν πολύ χαμηλότερο βαθμό ενσωμάτωσης καθώς και περιορισμένο εύρος τεχνολογικής κάλυψης (π.χ. υιοθετούμενες τεχνολογίες και συστήματα), σε σύγκριση με τις κατηγορίες μεγέθους μικρών και μεσαίων επιχειρήσεων. Συναφώς, ο διαφοροποιημένος βαθμός ψηφιακής προσαρμογής συσχετίζεται και με το επίπεδο τεχνολογικής έντασης και παραγωγικής εξειδίκευσης των επιχειρήσεων.

Σε επίπεδο γενικότερων στοιχείων, βάσει του Δείκτη Ψηφιακής Οικονομίας και Κοινωνίας (DESI, 2021), η Ελλάδα κατατάσσεται 25η μεταξύ των 27 κρατών μελών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Παρότι

καταγράφεται βελτίωση της χώρας σε αρκετούς από τους υπο-δείκτες του DESI, σε αρκετές κατηγορίες η βαθμολογία εντοπίζεται κάτω από το μέσο όρο. Ειδικότερα, στην υπο-κατηγορία «Ενσωμάτωση της ψηφιακής τεχνολογίας» στις επιχειρηματικές δραστηριότητες, η Ελλάδα κατατάσσεται στην 22η θέση στην Ε.Ε. Συγκεκριμένα, το 4% των επιχειρήσεων πραγματοποιεί διασυνοριακές ηλεκτρονικές πωλήσεις σε σχέση με το μέσο όρο 8% στην Ε.Ε., ενώ ο κύκλος εργασιών ηλεκτρονικού εμπορίου σε εγχώριο επίπεδο (διαθέσιμα στοιχεία 2019) εντοπίζεται σε ποσοστό 4%, σε σύγκριση με το 12% σε επίπεδο Ε.Ε.. Παρομοίως, το 9% των επιχειρήσεων χρησιμοποιεί ηλεκτρονικά τιμολόγια σε σύγκριση με το μέσο όρο 32% της Ε.Ε., ενώ το 19% των επιχειρήσεων χρησιμοποιεί μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης σε σχέση με το μέσο όρο 23% στην Ε.Ε.

Αντιστοίχως, σύμφωνα με την ΕΛΣΤΑΤ (2021), σε σύνολο 41.962 επιχειρήσεων (απασχόληση 10 άτομα και άνω), 9.094 επιχειρήσεις έλαβαν παραγγελίες μέσω ιστοσελίδας, ειδικών εφαρμογών ή μέσω μηνυμάτων τύπου EDI[3]. Σύμφωνα επίσης με την ΕΛΣΤΑΤ, σε αριθμό 41.492 επιχειρήσεων, 9.214 επιχειρήσεις χρησιμοποιούν διασυνδεμένες συσκευές που ελέγχονται ψηφιακά εξ αποστάσεως (Διαδίκτυο των Πραγμάτων). Για παράδειγμα, ποσοστό 91,9% των επιχειρήσεων χρησιμοποιεί έξυπνα συστήματα συναγερμού για την ασφάλεια των εγκαταστάσεων. Εντούτοις, σε όλες τις λοιπές κατηγορίες απομακρυσμένου ελέγχου τα ποσοστά είναι πολύ χαμηλότερα. Ενδεικτικά, ποσοστό 43,7% αξιοποιεί έξυπνους μετρητές, λαμπτήρες και θερμοστάτες για τη βελτιστοποίηση της κατανάλωσης ενέργειας, ποσοστό 32,1% αξιοποιεί αισθητήρες για την παρακολούθηση της συντήρησης μηχανημάτων, ποσοστό 28,3% αξιοποιεί αισθητήρες για την παρακολούθηση προϊόντων στη διαχείριση αποθήκης και 16,8% των επιχειρήσεων χρησιμοποιεί αισθητήρες RFID[4].

Η ψηφιακή προσαρμογή των πολύ μικρών και μικρών επιχειρήσεων προ πανδημίας

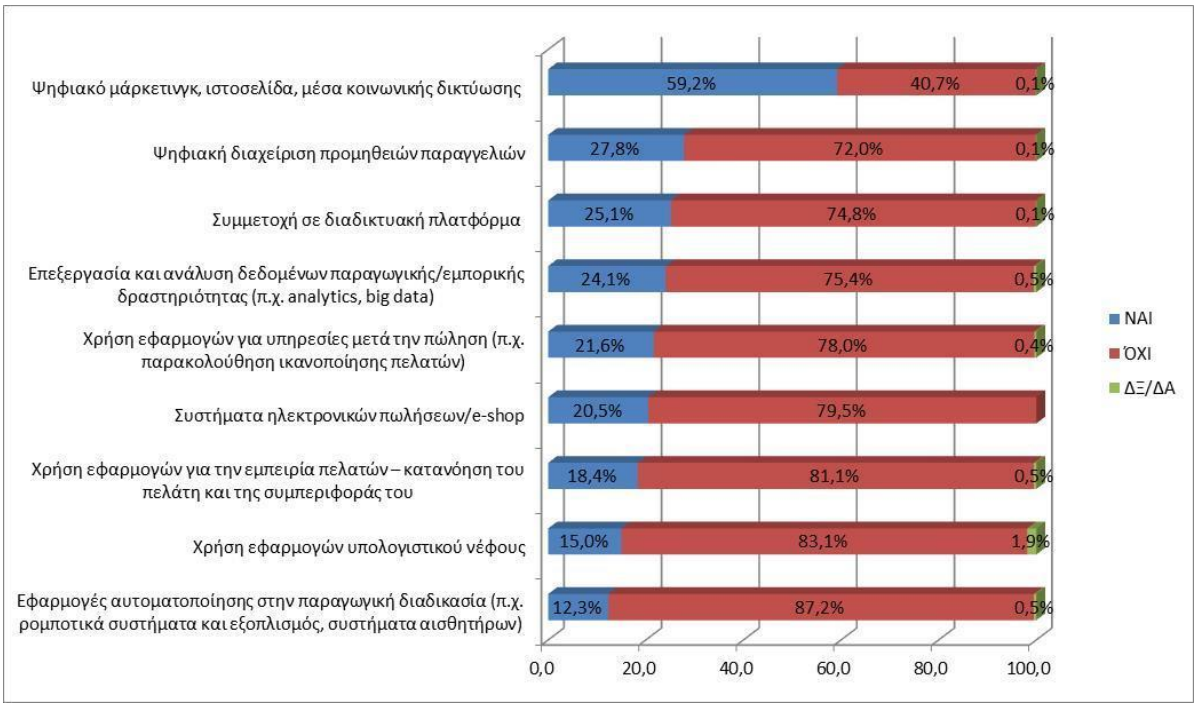
Η εφαρμογή και παραγωγική αξιοποίηση των ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών επιφυλάσσει διαφοροποιημένες επιδράσεις, σε συνάρτηση με μια σειρά από παραμέτρους που περιλαμβάνουν τον εκάστοτε επιμέρους υποκλάδο, την παραγωγική διασύνδεση με αλυσίδες αξίας, το μέγεθος και τον βαθμό παραγωγικής εξειδίκευσης των επιχειρήσεων, τον υφιστάμενο βαθμό τεχνολογικής έντασης παραγωγικών δραστηριοτήτων καθώς και τη γεωγραφική διάσταση (π.χ. περιφέρεια). Βασικός δείκτης αποτίμησης της ψηφιακής προσαρμογής των επιχειρήσεων στις νέες τεχνολογικές εξελίξεις είναι ο πραγματικός βαθμός ενσωμάτωσης ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών σε επίπεδο επιχειρησιακών διαδικασιών (π.χ. εφοδιαστική αλυσίδα, παραγωγική διαδικασία) και νέων προϊόντων.

Σύμφωνα με την έρευνα του ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ που πραγματοποιήθηκε στις αρχές του 2020 (προ πανδημίας), προκύπτουν σημαντικές παρατηρήσεις ως προς την ενσωμάτωση ψηφιακών

[3] Electronic data interchange.
[4] Radio Frequency Identification.

τεχνολογιών, ιδιαίτερα στο επίπεδο των μικρών και πολύ μικρών επιχειρήσεων[5], όπου ο βαθμός ψηφιακής προσαρμογής διαφοροποιείται περαιτέρω (Γράφημα 1). Οι περισσότερες επιχειρήσεις δηλώνουν ότι έχουν ενσωματώσει εφαρμογές ψηφιακού μάρκετινγκ (59,2%), ενώ ακολουθούν θετικές απαντήσεις ως προς την ενσωμάτωση εφαρμογών σε επίπεδο ψηφιακής διαχείρισης προμηθειών (27,8) και συμμετοχή σε διαδικτυακές πλατφόρμες (25,1%) (Γράφημα 1).

Γράφημα 1. Ενσωμάτωση ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών προ πανδημίας (%)



Πηγή: ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, 2020

Κατ' επέκταση, μεγάλο τμήμα των πολύ μικρών και μικρών επιχειρήσεων επικεντρώνεται σε τεχνολογικές εφαρμογές με χαμηλότερο βαθμό συνθετότητας που συνδέονται με την προβολή και τη διεύρυνση της πελατειακής βάσης παρά με την εμβάθυνση της τεχνολογικής και παραγωγικής εξειδίκευσης (ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, 2020). Η συγκεκριμένη τάση διαφοροποιείται ωστόσο σε επιχειρήσεις με έντονη τεχνολογική δραστηριότητα, επιχειρήσεις τεχνολογικής βάσης και επιχειρήσεις με υψηλότερο κύκλο εργασιών και μεγαλύτερο αριθμό εργαζομένων, όπου οι επενδύσεις σε τεχνολογίες υψηλότερης συνθετότητας καταγράφουν υψηλότερα ποσοστά.

Αναφορικά με τις σχετικές επενδύσεις σε επίπεδο νέων τεχνολογιών και ψηφιακού μετασχηματισμού προ πανδημίας, το 43,6% των επιχειρήσεων δηλώνει ότι έχει πραγματοποιήσει επενδύσεις κατά τα προηγούμενα 3 έτη (ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, 2020). Ως προς το ύψος των επενδύσεων, το 22,7% των

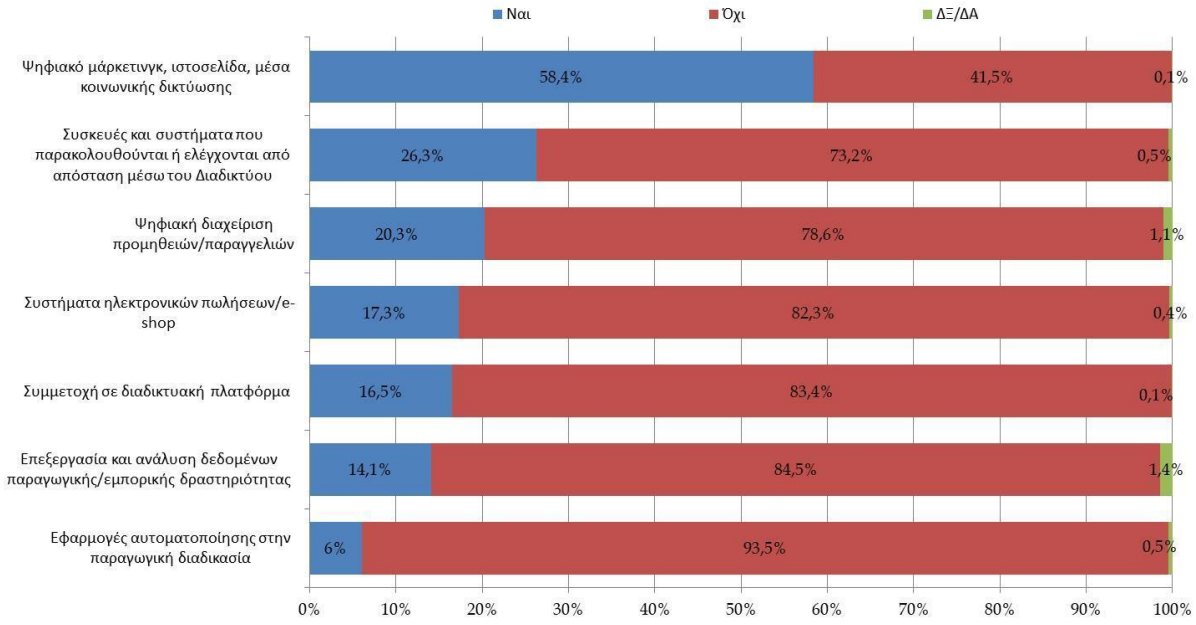
[5] Πρωτογενή στοιχεία από έρευνα ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ (2020) σε δείγμα 801 επιχειρήσεων (0-49 εργαζόμενοι).

επιχειρήσεων που έχουν προχωρήσει σε επενδύσεις έχουν πραγματοποιήσει επενδύσεις έως 5.000 ευρώ, ενώ το 23% έχει πραγματοποιήσει επενδύσεις μεταξύ 5.000-15-000 ευρώ. Εν συνόψει, το 45,7% των επιχειρήσεων που πραγματοποίησαν επενδύσεις κινήθηκε σε επίπεδο χαμηλότερο από 15.000 ευρώ. Αντίστοιχα, το 12,5% των επιχειρήσεων που έχουν πραγματοποιήσει επενδύσεις εντοπίζεται στην κλίμακα 15.000-30.000 ευρώ, ενώ το 12,2% εντοπίζεται στην κατηγορία 30.000-50.000 ευρώ. Ως προς την πηγή χρηματοδότησης της επένδυσης, καταγράφεται ότι το 83,2% των επιχειρήσεων που πραγματοποίησαν επενδύσεις χρηματοδότησαν τις επενδύσεις τους με ίδια κεφάλαια. Επιπλέον, ως προς τα βασικότερα εμπόδια για την ενσωμάτωση τεχνολογικού εξοπλισμού, το 50,7% των επιχειρήσεων δηλώνει ότι το βασικότερο εμπόδιο είναι η «Έλλειψη χρηματοδότησης» και ακολουθεί ο παράγοντας «Υψηλό κόστος αγοράς και συντήρησης» (35,1%).

Επενδύσεις και ψηφιακός μετασχηματισμός κατά την περίοδο μετά την πανδημία

Σε όρους υιοθέτησης νέων τεχνολογιών κατά την περίοδο της πανδημίας, αποτυπώνονται παρόμοιες τάσεις ως προς την ενσωμάτωση των ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών από πολύ μικρές και μικρές επιχειρήσεις. Σύμφωνα με τη σχετική πρωτογενή έρευνα του ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ (Μάιος 2022[6]), καταγράφεται ότι οι επιχειρήσεις ενσωματώνουν ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες σε αντίστοιχα ποσοστά με τα προ πανδημίας επίπεδα, με προτεραιότητα στο ψηφιακό μάρκετινγκ (58,4%) και τις εφαρμογές ιστοσελίδας και μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης (26,3%) (Γράφημα 2).

Γράφημα 2. Ενσωμάτωση ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών μετά πανδημίας (%)



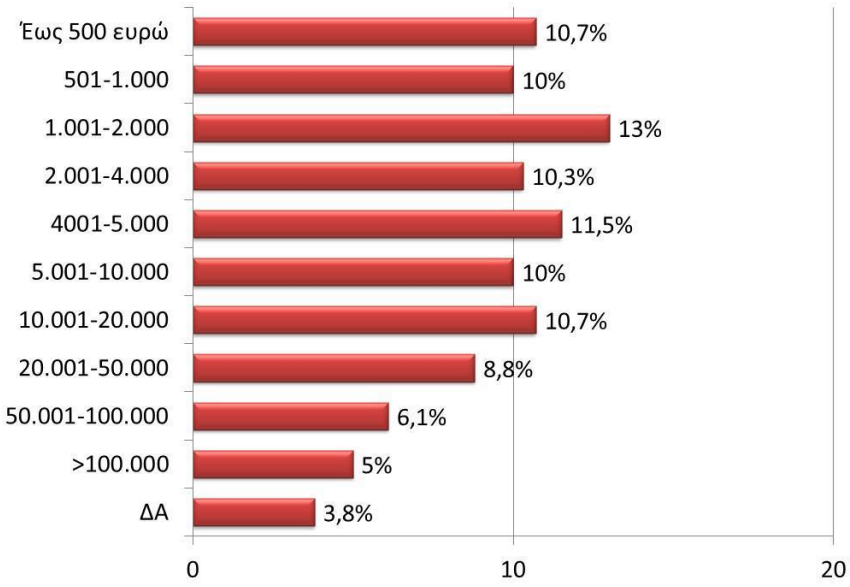
Πηγή: ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, 2022

[6] Πρωτογενή στοιχεία από έρευνα ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ (2022) σε δείγμα 802 επιχειρήσεων (0-49 εργαζόμενοι).

Αναφορικά με την επενδυτική δραστηριότητα, καταγράφεται ότι το 21,8% πραγματοποίησε επενδύσεις κατά το προηγούμενο εξάμηνο σε τεχνολογικό εξοπλισμό και ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες, το 15,6% πραγματοποίησε επενδύσεις σε μηχανολογικό εξοπλισμό και μηχανήματα, το 7,9% πραγματοποίησε επενδύσεις σε κτιριακές εγκαταστάσεις και εξοπλισμό και το 6,1% πραγματοποίησε επενδύσεις κατά το προηγούμενο εξάμηνο σε θέματα κατάρτισης και εκπαίδευσης προσωπικού. Σε σχέση με το ύψος των επενδύσεων, καταγράφεται ότι ποσοστό 44% πραγματοποίησε επενδύσεις στην κατηγορία ποσών έως 4.000 ευρώ (Γράφημα 3), ενώ καταγράφεται ένα ποσοστό 10% των επιχειρήσεων που πραγματοποίησε επενδύσεις στην κατηγορία ποσών 5.001 ευρώ έως 10.000 ευρώ. Αντιθέτως, ποσοστό 6,1% πραγματοποίησε επενδύσεις στην κατηγορία ποσών από 50.001 ευρώ έως 100.000 ευρώ. Αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι το 17,4% των επιχειρήσεων δηλώνει ότι προχώρησε σε ενσωμάτωση ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών κατά τη διάρκεια της πανδημίας.

Αναφορικά με την κλίμακα των επενδύσεων, μια σημαντική επισήμανση αφορά στη συσχέτιση που παρατηρείται μεταξύ ύψους επενδύσεων και κύκλου εργασιών, όπου παρατηρείται ότι οι επιχειρήσεις με κύκλο εργασιών άνω των 300.000 ευρώ πραγματοποιούν συχνότερα επενδύσεις μεγαλύτερης κλίμακας. Για παράδειγμα, καταγράφεται ότι στην κατηγορία κύκλου εργασιών άνω των 300.000 ευρώ, το 18,5% των επιχειρήσεων πραγματοποιεί επενδύσεις ύψους 20.001-50.000 ευρώ, σε σύγκριση με τις επιχειρήσεις στις κατηγορίες κύκλου εργασιών έως 50.000 ευρώ (2,1% των επιχειρήσεων).

Γράφημα 3. Ύψος επενδύσεων (%)



Πηγή: ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ, 2022

Αναφορικά με την πηγή χρηματοδότησης, όπως προκύπτει από τα στοιχεία της έρευνας του ΙΜΕ ΓΣΕΒΕΕ (2022), μια ιδιαίτερα σημαντική παρατήρηση αφορά στο ιδιαίτερο υψηλό ποσοστό (86,4%) που αναφέρεται στα «Ίδια κεφάλαια» (παρόμοιο ποσοστό καταγράφεται παραπάνω και στα στοιχεία του 2020). Τα ίδια κεφάλαια των πολύ μικρών και μικρών επιχειρήσεων αποτελούν τη βασική πηγή χρηματοδότησης επενδύσεων σε νέες τεχνολογίες. Αντιθέτως, τα προγράμματα χρηματοδότησης και ο τραπεζικός δανεισμός εξακολουθούν να αφορούν σε χαμηλά ποσοστά (6% και 3,8% αντίστοιχα). Συνεπώς, το συντριπτικά μεγαλύτερο μέρος των επιχειρήσεων εξακολουθούν να χρηματοδοτούν τις επενδύσεις με ίδια κεφάλαια αξιοποιώντας σε χαμηλό βαθμό τους διαθέσιμους χρηματοδοτικούς πόρους. Κατ' επέκταση, οι συγκεκριμένες τάσεις επιδρούν επί της κλίμακας των επενδύσεων αλλά και επί του ρυθμού ψηφιακής προσαρμογής εν μέσω των ευρύτερων συνθηκών του οικονομικού περιβάλλοντος (π.χ. έλλειψη ρευστότητας, πανδημία, ενεργειακή κρίση).

2. Πολιτικές ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης και μικρές επιχειρήσεις

Οι αναδυόμενες τεχνολογικές προκλήσεις αναδεικνύουν την ανάγκη σχεδιασμού εξελιγμένων υποδειγμάτων σε επίπεδο πολιτικών ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης. Κατ' αρχάς, η υποστήριξη των πολύ μικρών επιχειρήσεων απαιτείται να καλύψει τις λειτουργικές ανάγκες κατά μήκος της αλυσίδας ψηφιακής αναβάθμισης, τόσο σε επίπεδο ενίσχυσης της δυνατότητας πραγματοποίησης επενδύσεων ψηφιακού εκσυγχρονισμού, όσο και σε επίπεδο ενδυνάμωσης των ψηφιακών επιχειρησιακών ικανοτήτων (π.χ. επιχειρηματικά μοντέλα, επιχειρησιακές διαδικασίες, ανθρώπινο δυναμικό). Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, οι πολιτικές ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης καλούνται να αναπτύξουν ένα βαθμό στόχευσης σε δυο επίπεδα. Αφενός, απαιτείται η ανάπτυξη μέτρων πολιτικής εξελιγμένης μορφής ως προς τις ανάγκες επιχειρήσεων που ακολουθούν την αιχμή του τρέχοντος ψηφιακού κύματος. Αφετέρου, οι πολιτικές ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης απαιτείται να αναπτύξουν στοχευμένα μέτρα πολιτικής ως προς τις πιο βασικές ανάγκες μικρών και πολύ μικρών επιχειρήσεων που εντοπίζονται σε χαμηλότερο βαθμό τεχνολογικής έντασης και ψηφιακής ωρίμανσης.

Κατά δεύτερον, η τεκμηριωμένη αναγνώριση των αναγκών των μικρών επιχειρήσεων ως προς τις ψηφιακές ανάγκες συμβάλλει καθοριστικά στη διαμόρφωση κατάλληλα στοχευμένων και πολυεπίπεδων πολιτικών για την ψηφιακή ανάπτυξη. Οι σύγχρονες πολιτικές ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης απαιτείται να αναπτύξουν ολιστική προοπτική σε επίπεδο επιμέρους αναγκών, διευκόλυνσης της υιοθέτησης ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών και βελτίωσης προϋποτιθέμενων συνθηκών (π.χ. υποδομές, χρηματοδότηση). Συνοπτικά, αναδεικνύονται ορισμένες κρίσιμες περιοχές μέτρων πολιτικής που μπορούν να συνοψιστούν στο εξής πολυ-πλέγμα παρεμβάσεων:

- **Διαμόρφωση σύγχρονων εργαλείων χρηματοδότησης**, με σκοπό τη διευκόλυνση της πρόσβασης σε νέες πηγές χρηματοδότησης για την προώθηση του ψηφιακού μετασχηματισμού. Προς την κατεύθυνση αυτή, μπορούν να αξιοποιηθούν ειδικά στοχευμένα προγράμματα χρηματοδότησης καθώς και εργαλεία έμμεσης υποστήριξης (π.χ. φορολογικές υπερ-εκπτώσεις).
- **Διαμόρφωση κατάλληλων υποδομών ψηφιακής καινοτομίας**, με σκοπό την στοχευμένη υποστήριξη των μικρών επιχειρήσεων ως προς τη χρήση και την υιοθέτηση νέων ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών προσαρμοσμένων στις ανάγκες και τις δυνατότητές τους. Για παράδειγμα, η ανάπτυξη ψηφιακών κόμβων καινοτομίας –και σε τομείς χαμηλής και μέσης-χαμηλής τεχνολογικής έντασης- αποτελεί μια εξελιγμένη και ολιστική προσέγγιση προώθησης του ψηφιακού μετασχηματισμού μέσα από την παροχή πολύ-επίπεδων υπηρεσιών.
- **Ειδικά προγράμματα αναβάθμισης ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών για πολύ μικρές και μικρές επιχειρήσεις στη θεματική περιοχή της «4ης Βιομηχανικής Επανάστασης».** Η διαμόρφωση μιας δέσμης στοχευμένων εργαλείων άμεσης χρηματοδότησης με επίκεντρο την επιτάχυνση της ψηφιακής προσαρμογής ως προς τις αναδυόμενες τεχνολογικές ακολουθίες που συγκροτούν το αναδυόμενο τεχνολογικό κύμα (π.χ. ρομποτικά συστήματα, Τεχνητή Νοημοσύνη), κρίνεται σημαντική για την περαιτέρω υποβοήθηση των δραστηριοτήτων των επιχειρήσεων υψηλής τεχνολογικής έντασης (π.χ. νεοφυείς επιχειρήσεις, τεχνοβλαστοί).
- **Ειδικές δράσεις υποστήριξης λιτού ψηφιακού μετασχηματισμού για πολύ μικρές επιχειρήσεις** μέσω συνεργατικών έργων σταδιακής υιοθέτησης αναδυόμενων ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών και ανάπτυξης προσβάσιμων τεχνικών λύσεων προσαρμοσμένων στην κλίμακα, τις ανάγκες και τις δυνατότητες των μικρών επιχειρήσεων σε επιμέρους παραγωγικούς κλάδους (π.χ. μεταποίηση, αγροτική παραγωγή).
- **Ειδικά προγράμματα στοχευμένης μικρο-χρηματοδότησης** σε κρίσιμες και βασικές κατηγορίες ψηφιακού εκσυγχρονισμού σε θέματα εξοπλισμού, λογισμικού, συστημάτων παραγγελιοληψίας και προμηθειών, διαδικτυακής προβολής κ.ά (π.χ. κουπόνια ψηφιακού μετασχηματισμού).
- **Διαμόρφωση εργαλείων υποστήριξης των συμπληρωματικών επιχειρησιακών ικανοτήτων των μικρών επιχειρήσεων** μέσα από την οικοδόμηση προγραμμάτων αναβάθμισης ψηφιακών δεξιοτήτων του ανθρωπίνου δυναμικού. Το συγκεκριμένο επίπεδο παρέμβασης περιλαμβάνει στοχευμένες δράσεις αναβάθμισης ψηφιακών δεξιοτήτων καθώς και ειδικές δράσεις ενημέρωσης.

Βάσει των παραπάνω, επισημαίνεται ότι η ψηφιακή προσαρμογή των μικρών επιχειρήσεων ιδιαίτερα στους κλάδους με υψηλότερη ψηφιακή υστέρηση, προϋποθέτει τη διαμόρφωση πολυεπίπεδων πολιτικών, με έμφαση στην αντιμετώπιση των ανασχετικών παραγόντων (π.χ. χρηματοδότηση) και με επίκεντρο τις πραγματικές ψηφιακές ανάγκες και δυνατότητες των επιμέρους κλάδων.

Συμπεράσματα

Η ανάλυση των παραπάνω πρωτογενών στοιχείων αναδεικνύει επιμέρους πτυχές της ψηφιακής προσαρμογής των μικρών επιχειρήσεων στη νέα ψηφιακή συνθήκη. Ιδιαίτερα σε επίπεδο πολύ μικρών επιχειρήσεων, ως επί το πλείστον, εντοπίζονται και διαπιστώνονται τάσεις εντονότερης ψηφιακής υστέρησης. Εξαίρεση ως προς αυτές τις τάσεις, αποτελούν θύλακες επιχειρήσεων που αναπτύσσουν δραστηριότητα σε τομείς υψηλής τεχνολογικής έντασης ή μεγαλύτερες επιχειρήσεις με εντονότερο τεχνολογικό περιεχόμενο. Κατά συνέπεια, είναι εμφανές ότι το επίπεδο ψηφιακής προσαρμογής και ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης δεν διακρίνεται από ομοιογένεια στο ευρύτερο φάσμα των εγχώριων επιχειρήσεων.

Επιπροσθέτως, ένα εκ των βασικών συμπερασμάτων της παρούσας ανάλυσης είναι ότι η υλοποίηση στοχευμένων και εξειδικευμένων μέτρων ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης για τις μικρές επιχειρήσεις αποτελεί επιτακτική προϋπόθεση ψηφιακής αναβάθμισης. Ως εκ τούτου, ένα βασικό συμπέρασμα πολιτικής σε αναφορά με τα παραπάνω στοιχεία αφορά στην ανάγκη ανάπτυξης ολιστικών και διαφοροποιημένα στοχευμένων μέτρων πολιτικής μέσα από σχήματα «ειδικού σκοπού» (Mazzucato, 2021), με σκοπό την αντιμετώπιση των διαφοροποιημένων ψηφιακών αναγκών των πολύ μικρών και μικρών επιχειρήσεων. Οι σύγχρονες πολιτικές ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης βασίζονται ολοένα και περισσότερο, εμφανώς ή λανθανόντως, στην ανάπτυξη παρεμβάσεων κατά μήκος της «αλυσίδας ψηφιακής αναβάθμισης» (ολιστικές πολιτικές ψηφιακής ανάπτυξης) που καλύπτουν την κατανόηση βασικών τεχνολογικών όρων, την ανάπτυξη δεξιοτήτων, τη διαμόρφωση κατάλληλων εργαλείων χρηματοδότησης και χρηματοδοτικών κινήτρων καθώς και τη διαμόρφωση ψηφιακών υποδομών και σύγχρονων «χώρων ψηφιακής καινοτομίας». Συγχρόνως, ο τύπος της παρέμβασης των μέτρων πολιτικής απαιτείται να ενσωματώσει ένα διευρυμένο φάσμα εργαλείων που θα συνδυάζει εργαλεία χρηματοδότησης, οικονομικά και φορολογικά κίνητρα για την προώθηση επενδύσεων σε ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες, μηχανισμούς καθοδήγησης και υποστήριξης των επιχειρήσεων (π.χ. κόμβοι διευκόλυνσης της πρόσβασης σε νέες τεχνολογίες), μηχανισμούς τεχνολογικής πληροφόρησης και δομές οικοδόμησης νέων κρίσιμων ψηφιακών και συμπληρωματικών επιχειρησιακών ικανοτήτων.

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Topic 5
International Relations and International Security

Food Security in Shambles:
An Impact from Sri Lanka National Economic Crisis[1]

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Abstract

Sri Lanka, a state in the South Asia region, is now in the middle of a national economic crisis. The crisis has been mainly attributed to the state's mounting foreign debts along with its inefficient management of the national economy. Apart from the obvious impact the crisis has over the domestic stability of the state, another impact worth noting is one on the state's food security. The paper aims to provide analysis in answering the questions of how the national economic crisis affects the food security issue and what government policy was responsible for exacerbating the issue. With the use of a qualitative method of analysis, the concept of food security would also be present to better understand the issue. Later, it is explained how the crisis along with the economic state of Sri Lanka inhibits the government's role to tackle the issue, hence worsening public opinion and the overall food crisis. For the government's policy that exacerbated the issue, the past decision back in 2021 to ban the import of chemical fertilizers is believed to be it.

Keywords: Sri Lanka; food security; national crisis; food crisis; Sri Lanka debt crisis.

Introduction

When the international community's attention is focused on the growing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, another problem has taken a new turn in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka, a state in South Asia, is in the middle of a growing national economic crisis. The crisis was caused by the state's mounting foreign debt and dwindling foreign exchange reserves that led to the country's decreasing spending capacity in international trade. With little foreign exchange, it has become harder for Sri Lanka to import goods for its domestic demand or even to procure resources to maintain its industries. The ongoing crisis has severely affected the national economy, so much so that the country finally will take its 17th loan from the IMF in hope to alleviate the crisis. The impact and overall handling by the government over the issue have caused domestic upheavals. People have taken to the street to voice their disappointment over the government's performance, many even call for the resignation of the current president, Gotabaya Rajapaksa (Ramakumar, 2022).

The spotlight over the issue has been given to the mistakes done by the Sri Lankan government in managing their national economy to the overall worsening of Sri Lanka's national economy. Aside

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from the aforementioned issues, food security or even food in general is also a noteworthy variable in the overall scheme of the problem. Being an essential good for the people and an object of commodity, food has also been heavily affected by the crisis. Domestically, the huge price increases of food and its scarcity have been one of the demands the people of Sri Lanka have for their government (Elliott, 2022). The crisis also impairs Sri Lanka's overall food production that also reduces its capacity to sell it, hence worsening the national economic crisis as well.

Noting the issue's recent developments and growth, the writer seeks to elaborate and provide an analysis of the food crisis in Sri Lanka. The paper uses a qualitative method that would analyze secondary data obtained from previous analyses and news coverage considering the novel nature of the issue. Along with the qualitative analysis of secondary data, the concept of food security will also be used to support the following analysis. With that information laid out, the paper will seek to explain the concept of food security, the contribution from the national economic crisis and the government's footprint in the growing deterioration of food security.

The concept of food security

Referring to the United Nations Development Programme report of 1994, food security can be understood as a condition where people are ensured to have both physical and economic access to basic food (Baylis et al., 2014). This particular definition of food security really fits in with the overall idea of human security. Apart from the focus on the fulfillment of the people's access to it, food security has also grown to include the sustainability of the means used in the production process. Moreover, it also sheds light on the importance of a paradigm that would guide how the food previously produced would be sufficiently distributed among the people (Schanbacher, 2010). Noting the various developments food security has been through, it can now be considered as not only a part of human security but also a part of the sustainable development that is concerned with how food is produced and its impact toward the people and environment (Alcock, 2009).

Despite its difference from its national counterpart, food security still plays an important role for the states. In the past, food security has been an omnipresent variable in numerous international dynamics. For example, Indonesia once garnered support from India back when it was still in the midst of its struggle for independence. Back then, when India was faced with a domestic hunger problem, Indonesia, by the initiative from its foreign minister, took this opportunity to send in rice to help the country (Zara, 2020). By making use of the food insecurity issue then, Indonesia secured India's support that would be useful later on its diplomatic path for independence. A more contemporary example of the importance of food security would be how food is now perceived both

as a commodity, hence a means to gain income in international trade, and essential goods that sustain the domestic lives within a state.

How the national crisis contributes to the problem

Considering how the huge depletion of foreign exchange is at the heart of the crisis, it is no surprise that its impact is also felt in other aspects. One of which is the state's capability to engage in international trade. Sri Lanka is one of the states that rely on import to fulfill its domestic demand, especially for food and other resources to mobilize its industries. The declining spending capacity results in the failure of the state to meet the domestic demand for goods. This failure would lead to the decrease of food supply within the state, something that would trigger a price increase as a response to the decreasing supply of goods. The price increase and declining supply have been perceived as the direct impact of the national economic crisis on food security. Another impact from the food shortage and price increase that also worsen the food crisis would be the food hoarding among the people (Kumarasinghe, 2021). The sharp price increase and many food hoardings have led the government to seize countless food supplies and start rationing them as a means to keep the price from another sharp increase. Concerns have been raised over the sustainability of how long the attempt may last. It is the same concern that pushes the people to demand for a more effective and holistic measure, both to tackle the food issue and the entire national economic crisis.

Aside from being one of the main actors that has been involved in the overall worsening of the crisis, the government of Sri Lanka is also one of the biggest affected actors. The crisis development has led the people of Sri Lanka to take it to the street where they voice their wishes for the government to resign as the crisis grows bigger. At times, the demonstration done by the people could escalate to violence between the people and the authorities (Al Jazeera, 2022). The huge accumulation of public distrust has certainly further impaired the government's capacity to perform effectively. A clear example of the public distrust consequences would be the resignations of governmental figures, from the cabinet members to even the prime minister himself, Mahinda Rajapaksa (Handunnetti, 2022). The apparent collapse of the government institution would surely hinder future effective means, combining the huge distrust and dissatisfaction of the people along with the current state of the government. Despite the seeming decline the government is currently facing, they are still present in the overall dynamic of the domestic condition. This would lead them to insist on functioning by responding to the growing crisis, something that is also made difficult by the current state they are in and the bad relation they have with their people. The condition would also lead them to resort to drastic measures and then they may obtain a suitable condition they can work with. The drastic

measures the government has resorted to are the implementation of curfew, rationing food and giving emergency power to the military. As a result of the drastic measure and negative implication it brings, the public distrust over their government would continue to deteriorate, hence providing more hindrance in the long run. This dilemma between the government's attempt at addressing proper response to the crisis and the consequence of deteriorating public distrust is also a consequence from the crisis that would make difficult attempts to address the food crisis.

The government's part in the looming crisis

Apart from the direct impact from the national economic crisis, the government apparently has its own share of direct impact on the food crisis. Back in April 2021, the government of Sri Lanka issued a new program of green revolution by banning the import of chemical fertilizer. The move shocked many within the country as chemical fertilizer has been an important component in helping farmers increase their crops (Wipulasena & Mashal, 2021). The government stated how the program was aimed to improve the food security of the nation by ensuring the quality of the food produced. Attention was also given to the environment over how the use of chemical fertilizer actually would do more harm and the time posed to be unsustainable in the long run. On the other hand, many viewed the initiative as an attempt by the government to cut spending of foreign exchange, something that has proved to be fatal in the coming future. Unfortunately, the execution of the program fell short of its intended effect. The sudden shift caught many farmers unprepared as they could not make their own compost. This issue was dealt with by obtaining organic fertilizers from India, something the farmers welcomed. Unfortunately, it met another problem during its distribution and its overall governmental handling (WION, 2021).

Despite the good end the policy may serve, the formulation appeared to be devoid of any sufficient analysis of the state's agricultural sector. Many farmers, from those who prioritizes in tea to rice cultivation, are dependent on the use of chemical fertilizer and pesticides as a part of their overall activity. With the ban in effect then, it resulted in farmers not being able to use their chemical fertilizer sufficiently or even none at all. This sudden absence of chemical fertilizer would result in a sharp decrease of crops yield. Many had disagreed with the decision to ban the chemical fertilizer, from experts to the farmers on the field. One of them was Herman Gunaratne, a tea expert in Sri Lanka, who highlighted the danger of banning chemical fertilizers. He mentioned how the move would risk a sharp decline that may reach 50% in tea production, something that cannot be compensated with the idea of having organic tea as a new commodity (South China Morning Post, 2021). The sudden decline of yields would then lead to another decrease in the amount of food supplied for the domestic

market and those that were meant to be sold in international trade. The former would exacerbate the food shortage in Sri Lanka while the latter would further worsen the national economic crisis by decreasing the amount of foreign exchange obtained through international trade. In the end, the government ended up lifting some of the bans to allow some of the fertilizers and pesticides. Unfortunately, the damage has been done as crops yield decrease and food shortage grows rampant (Jayasinghe, 2021).

Conclusion

How food security has been a huge demand the people have for their government accentuates the fact of the importance of the concept. The huge impact the crisis has had on the state's food security, in both economic (the sharp price increase of food) and physical access (shortage of food along with the rampant food hoarding), surely highlights the importance of tackling the national economic crisis. To tackle the food crisis Sri Lanka is in, it would need a holistic approach considering the interconnectedness the issue has with the national economic crisis. Countless resources would be needed to combat the hindrances to food security, from those provided among the people to the overall impact resulting from the national economic crisis. Looking at the low amount of foreign exchange the state has, the only resort available would be to get financial loans from other countries or an international institution such as the IMF, an international entity Sri Lanka is no stranger to. Unfortunately, to resort to such means would result in increasing the already mounting foreign debt. It is in this condition that the government of Sri Lanka must make up their mind on how best to deal with the issues, from the food crisis to the overall national economic crisis, with the available means and resources at hand.

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Turkey's Energy Strategic Planning in the Eastern Mediterranean: Business Planning – Challenges – Adjustments[1]

Anastasios-Nikolaos Kanellopoulos[2] & Konstantinos Galanis[3]

Abstract

This paper attempts to describe Turkey's energy strategy, through an approach of its strategic position, energy needs and policies. This analysis presents a modern approach to strategic analysis that concerns a country, as it uses models of international policy, business and energy analysis, which are mainly utilized in business sector of trade and energy. The combination of these models leads to a better and in-depth understanding of the Turkish political and economic reality, which determines the development and evolution of the Turkish energy strategy.

Keywords: Turkey, Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East, Energy Policy, Energy Strategy, PEST Analysis, 4s Analysis, Political Analysis, Energy Transition, Eco Friendly Energy.

Introduction

Turkish energy policy focuses on ensuring the enduring flow of energy resources in its internal energy market. It achieves this by utilizing fossil fuel energy imports, from countries in its wider region, as well as its domestic energy reserves and renewable energy sources. However, the ever-increasing domestic energy demand and the rapid growth of domestic production in the secondary sector, forces to proceed with new energy plans. These include the increase of energy supply, through the exploitation of renewable energy sources, nuclear energy, new agreements and import pipelines, as well as through interventionism moves that involve the country in the energy plans of the Eastern Mediterranean.

This paper uses the theoretical background offered by both theories of strategic analysis and energy policy. Specifically, the theoretical approach of PEST Analysis will be used to describe the general strategic framework and environment in which the Turkish state exists. The PEST model is a tool for strategic analysis of the wider macro environment of an entity, which analyzes its political, economic, social and technological sectors. Additionally, the study will be developed based on the 4AS model (Flouros, 2019), in order to evaluate the energy potential of the Turkish state. This model is a similar

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approach to SWOT analysis, with the difference that, it examines the operational environment internally and externally, in terms of energy factors.

Turkey PEST Analysis

Turkey, is a state created after the First World War, as a result of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, according to the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. The geographical site of the newly formed state, is the backbone of the old empire, being a crossroad between Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East. This fact, makes the Turkish state crucial for the commercial and energy planning of great powers, although internal political and social problems are a timeless obstacle for its development.

Through the following analysis, the Turkish entity will be strategically approached, in order to present specific data, that will help understand its role, as well as the operational and tactical moves it makes in the international political reality, in order to ensure its energy security.

Political and Social

Turkey has a complex historical political course. The political transition from the Ottoman Empire to the newly formed Turkish state, was carried out by a group of soldiers led by Kemal Ataturk, who shaped the army's dynamic involvement in the country's politics, over the following decades (Altinay, 2004).

Turkish army was presented, to international audience, as a new political system of progress, that would turn the Muslim empire into a Western-style state. Phenomenal movements, that followed the genocides of the Armenians, Assyrians and Greeks of Pontus, as well as the retaliation of the Turkish military against the Greek population of Ionia in 1922, enabled the promotion of the new fascism political system (Ihrig, 2014), as the one that could bring positive political and social change for the peoples of Asia Minor. This movement was later informally called "Kemalism" and became the central political thought and identity of the Turkish state for the following decades. In essence, at this time the state is identified with the Kemalist party, but this is not really accepted by a large section of the Asia Minors' population. The "state" comes and settles in the society imposing a general "Turkish" identity which, however, finds it difficult to correspond to the social and cultural reality of everyday political reality (Sarris, 1996; 2010).

In this context, the executives of the Turkish army, enter the Turkish state to the global financial markets, always with the aim of serving the western interests (Biresselioglu, 2016). The main reason that leads "Kemalism" to serve the West is the strategic empowerment, as well as the fear of internal

fragmentation, due to the large number of centrifugal social forces based on religions and ethnicities (Charalambidis, 2020).

The above policy seemed to differentiate with the arrival of Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the political scene of the country and specifically after the period of 2013-2016. However, important members of the so-called "old" Kemalist political establishment, point out that Turkey's domestic policy has not changed (Saygun, 2021; Kilic, & Saygun 2020). In addition, they analyze the overall diachronic planning of the Kemalist policy, which was received by the new Turkish President and implemented without serious changes. On the contrary, the attitude of the foreign interests towards the Turkish state seems to differ, as a result of the conflict of American interests in Iraq, Kuwait and Syria, with the interests of the Turkish Kemalist parastate, which refuses to adapt to the needs and political demands of the region. In three consecutive moves, Turkey denounced co-operation in the Gulf and Iraq wars (Nachmani, 2018; Müftüler-Bac, 2005)[4], and opposed to the Turkish state's co-operation with the US-backed Kurdish government in northern Iraq (Matthees and Seufert, 2013; Hess, 2013)[5].

The United States, which had invested in Gulen-Erdogan political cooperation to shape its new energy policies and interests in the region, by restricting the Kemalist formation and investing in the Bektashi Islamic Theological Battalions, failed. This happened because the Kemalist parastate prevailed and controlled the state energy policy and consequently the other foreign policy implications (Altan, 2010)[6].

Under Erdogan's second term, the form of government was transformed into a Presidential Republic, giving the president supremacy that has gradually led to a climate of totalitarianism, within the country, over the past five years (Bahadir Türk, 2017). Domestic and foreign policy are fully controlled by the President's demands and are characterized by a short-term adjustment and exploitation of temporary circumstances, which in the long run, disrupt the overall political strategy of the Turkish state. However, at the decision-making level, this does not really change the political system of Turkey. Since its inception up to today, the country derives political power from the centralism, handled by a close circle of persons. These persons manipulate the decision-making

[4] Turkey does not agree with the first Gulf War, nor with the second war against Iraq. It does not directly offer its bases in Southeast Asia Minor and thus opposes the energy planning of the region.
[5] Erdogan had sought to co-operate with the Kurdish ethnic group during the period 2008-2013, where he held talks with Kurdish leader Ocalan. The talks focused on the formation of Kurdish autonomous regions in southeastern Turkey and northern Syria, with the aim of cooperating with the Kurdish semi-autonomous region in northern Iraq, with US coverage, and with the ultimate goal of transporting oil from these regions to the West via of the port of Alexandreta.
[6] Since the end of the Cold War, Turkey has studied the evolution of power relations in the wider Middle East, the Caucasus, the Arabian Gulf and the Eastern Mediterranean. Thus, through the Kemalist parastate, it decides to become autonomous gradually, coming into a conflict with Western interests in the region, that is not easily understood if the Turkish political reality is approached, with dualism in narrow political factions and interests.

process by parastatal political methods (Sarris, 2009). In this way, the Kemalist fascist political strategy does not differ over time, but offers the possibility of legitimizing it, by political and economic interests worldwide. Finally, it is noteworthy that, while Kemalism initially seemed to attempt to replace Islam, with a religious approach to social reality, in fact between 1930 and 2000, Kemalist members of the Turkish army, controlled and directed Islamist political parties in Turkey (Sarris, 2011).I In fact, Kemal and Erdogan present the same "political cycle" and method of manipulating the internal Turkish state, taking advantage of their external image, to allies in the West and the East, while maintaining a timeless internal control strategy based on totalitarianism and the Sunni Islam.

Economical

The economic crisis of 2001 in Turkey was caused by the international investors' lack of trust to the state. This situation led Turkish financial system to instability, the result of which was the significant fall of the Turkish lira against USD (Tradingeconomics, 2022).

In 2002, Recep Tayyip Erdogan promoted a program of economic consolidation with tax cuts and simplification of tax legislation (Krueger, 2022). This resulted in GDP growth that raised from 201.752 billion in 2001, to 957.783 billion in 2013 (Data.worldbank.org, 2022). Despite the world financial crisis in 2008, the Turkish financial system did not face any serious problems.

Moreover, the Turkish economy took advantage of the country's geographical location and its proximity to the European markets, as well as of the rapid rise of its population the period 2001-2013, reaching the 75 million residents. As a result, small and medium sized enterprises appeared in central Asia Minor and became the driving force of its external expansion in Middle East and North Africa (OSW Centre for Eastern Studies, 2022).

In addition, Turkey has a persistent trade deficit due to high imports of energy resources, which reaches 74% of domestic demand. Possible access to new energy resources, would solve Turkey's liquidity problem, leading the Turkish lira to stability (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022). The deficit is offset, mainly by western foreign capital inflows. This is helped by the abundance and the low cost of labor. In addition to the high investors' profits, it gives Turkey political influence in foreign countries, but at the same time makes it more dependent on the Western financial system.

The recent years, after a long period of recovery, Turkey went through a difficult economic period, because of the high inflation, the intense interventionism of politics in the economy and the inability

of the Turkish Central Bank to promote and implement a macroeconomically rational monetary policy, in accordance to international economic models of financial development and stability.

Technological

The technological sector, is a determining factor for the rapid development of the Turkish state, contributing to the development of human resources as well as the secondary and tertiary production sector (Oxford Business Group, 2021). Specifically, the financial contribution size of the products, produced through technological innovation, seems to have doubled, during the period 2014-2019, strengthening the country's export potential (International Trade Administration, 2021).

Thus, Turkey playing the role of producing country, managed to acquire technology, which is used to develop domestic production capacities, in important sectors such as the military industry, communications (Yavuz, 2014) and energy production (Turkey Energy Policy Review, 2021; Kalehsar, 2019). In addition, research vessels and drilling rigs were constructed and purchased, with the aim of exploratory and productive exploitation of energy deposits.

Turkey 4S Analysis

The 4AS analysis model, is developed through four main pillars: Availability, Affordability, Acceptability and Accessibility. The approach of these pillars, helps in the holistic analysis and understanding of all the factors that determine the environment of the Turkish energy market and policy.

Availability

Geographically, the Turkish Republic is a hub between Europe, Middle East and Central Asia, which significantly determines its economic value and energy policies (Turkey Energy Policy Review, 2021). The country is trying to align its interests, with the respective interests of the Western and Eastern countries, trying to become an energy hub, between the energy-producing countries of the Middle East, the Arabian Gulf, Central Asia and Europe (Saltvedt, 2016). This policy has significantly defined its strategic cooperation with the Russian Republic. With the construction of the Turkish Stream gas pipeline and in parallel with the Turkish Republic's long-term contracts with the Russian company Gazprom (Sabadus, 2021), Turkey is securing a large percentage of its energy needs, even in times of economic and political instability (Saltvedt, 2016). In addition, the country participates in the TANAP (Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline), through which natural gas is transported from the Shah Deniz field in Azerbaijan to the European market, significantly enhancing Europe's efforts to de-energize from the Russian energy sources (Bechev, 2020). Through the

diplomatic exploitation of the above pipelines, as well as the continuous energy flow they offer, Turkey seeks to integrate other Balkan countries in a framework that accompanies its energy planning, while also serving Russian interests. Furthermore, the country becomes a hub for transporting and consuming petroleum products, which are imported from countries such as Iran, Iraq, Russia and Saudi Arabia via tanker ships (Saltvedt, 2016). For this reason, it has proper energy facilities in its main ports such as Istanbul, Mersin, Izmir and Bursa (Sinha, 2021).

In terms of energy balance, Turkey is an energy importer (Biresselioglu, 2016), with its energy dependence exceeding 93% of annual needs (Turkey Energy Policy Review, 2021). Internal energy consumption is based by 73% (in 2019) on fossil fuels, with the remaining percentage being covered by other geothermal energy production methods using carbon (Turkey Energy Policy Review, 2021). The largest share in energy consumption is maintained by the Turkish industry, reaching almost 1/3 of the total demand, with the transport sector, households and services sector, respectively, following with smaller percentages. The dependence of demand on industry was significantly raised due to the large energy consumption increase in the country, during the period of industrial prosperity in the years 2000-2019 (Erdogan and Gedikli and Yilmaz Genc, 2018). Also, it is important to mention that, the domestic oil production was increased by 19% in 2019, compared to the production of 2017 (Turkey Energy Policy Review, 2021).

In addition, regarding the country's electricity, production from renewable sources has tripled in the last decade, reaching 44% of total production (Turkey Energy Policy Review, 2021). In this context, the country plans, in cooperation with Russia, the construction of a nuclear power plant in Akkuyu region, by 2023 (Erdogan and Gedikli and Yilmaz Genc, 2018). The plant will cover the 8-10% of domestic demand in electricity for 60 years. In this way, it will dramatically increase the energy autonomy of the Turkish economy, while protecting the environment, by reducing production needs using carbon products (Turkey Energy Policy Review, 2021).

Affordability

The economic affordability of energy in Turkey is greatly influenced by energy imports and consequently by political and economic factors that affect energy prices in the producing countries (Furuncu, 2020). The result of energy dependence is the country’s internal political influence by external state and non-governmental entities.

In this context, as mentioned above, the country has launched stabilization agreements for the supply of natural gas from Russia, seekıng to increase domestic production of energy from renewable sources

(Turkey Energy Policy Review, 2021), while exploiting patents for technological innovation (Kiliç, 2006) and seeking to engage in energy planning in the Middle East.

Acceptability

The long-standing dependence of Turkish energy consumption on fossil fuels, combined with the ever-increasing domestic energy demand and poor performance in energy loss reduction from the country's public and private infrastructure (Esiyok, 2006), has led to an increased energy footprint (Erdogan and Gedikli and Yilmaz Genc, 2018).

These facts lead to the development of a new Turkish strategy that aims to reduce gas emissions, in line with the UNFCCC commitments, with a goal of 30% by 2030 (Turkey Energy Policy Review, 2021). In addition, with the development of new renewable energy infrastructure, the country aims to develop new jobs (Kalehsar, 2019), which will benefit local communities and increase the levels of individual acceptance of government energy policy (Turkey Energy Policy Review, 2021).

Accessibility

The existence of a long-term strategic vision and planning of Turkish energy policy, has secured long-term gas supply contracts and seeks to form a mix of energy imports and production, adapted to the country's modern needs.

At the same time, the Turkish government is trying to develop its activity in new sources of fossil fuel production, through explorations in the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean. Proper management of its external relations with countries that maintain parallel interests in these areas, can lead to further ensuring of its energy autonomy.

Conclusions

Turkey's energy policy, at a strategic level, has relied on the great supply needs of its internal market. These needs have largely arisen in the last twenty years, due to the rapid growth of its domestic industry and have been met by increasing imports of fossil fuels from countries such as Russia and Iran. Internal energy production is at very low level and it takes place through the utilization of carbon resources. The high percentage of oil consumption, gas and coal, in combination with other factors of energy loss, has formed a particularly large energy footprint for the Turkish economy.

In this context, and in order to modernize Turkish energy policy, measures are being taken to increase energy production from other more environmentally friendly processes. Also, new prospects are being formed, aiming to further cooperation with Russian companies, setting the goal of increasing

the utilization of natural gas. These policies, however, are not enough to cover all the energy needs of Turkish industrial development in the long run, at costs that will meet the Turkish sustainability strategy. For this reason, the country is seeking its involvement in the Eastern Mediterranean. In this field, the Turkish energy security policy seeks the country's participation in the energy corridors that are drawn up for the utilization of the region's energy resources through their transfer to the European energy market. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the continuous and uninterrupted flow of energy resources in the Turkish market, as well as to ensure the sovereign rights of the country in the energy reserves of the Eastern Mediterranean (Atilgan and Azapagic, 2017).

Gradually since 2008 the Turkish academic and military community has formed a framework of "scientific propaganda", which culminated with the institutionalization of the "Blue Homeland" strategy. With this strategy, Turkish foreign policy applies the law of the sea, as it “fits and asserts” the sovereignty of the Turkish state, in maritime zones, which belong to Greece and Cyprus. In this context, Turkey developed and signed a Maritime Zone Agreement with the Tripoli government, attempting at the same time to reach out other agreements with other states in the region, such as those of Egypt, Israel, Lebanon and the Palestinian Community. The “old” policy of seemingly mild cultural and economic expansion, promoted by Davutoglu's doctrine, was transformed after 2013 into a policy of military engagement and political conflict. This dangerous policy, is burdened by the increase of internal inhomogeneities and their strengthening. The example of the Kurdish entity in Southeastern Turkey is typical, as it seems to have been strengthened in recent years, by the support of United States of America, to other Kurdish groups in Iraq and Syria. At the same time, Turkey seeks to promote and negotiate, in the same context, issues it considers unresolved, such as internal management of Greece, Cyprus, Israel and Egypt.

In addition, Turkey needs the coexistence of industrial and productive internal development, with the possibilities of energy production and supply. Since the country has small sources of fossil fuels, it can focus on the pipeline policy, utilizing its strategic position, while creating external relations that will allow it to gain benefits from the development of new pipelines in its field. The geography of Asia Minor and especially the industrial areas of Konya, allow the development of a large area of photovoltaic parks, taking advantage of the region’s temperate climate. The development of nuclear energy facilities, are in the right direction however, it is necessary to be installed in non-seismic areas of Anatolia.

Finally, in terms of Turkish foreign policy activation and Turkey's demands in the Eastern Mediterranean, the country should go beyond the Kemalist-Erdogan political period and formulate, in the future, an internal policy that will allow the cooperation with its allies in the West, within the

framework international law, as well as the Law of the Sea. The new Turkish policy will aim at creating a climate of trust, so as to join a "cooperative energy game" in the Eastern Mediterranean?

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Putin's Great Patriotic War: Russia's Securitization of the West and Humiliation Narratives Surrounding the 2022 Invasion of Ukraine[1]

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Abstract

The paper seeks to analyze Vladimir Putin's securitization of the West in his speech at a military parade in Moscow's Red Square on the 9th of May 2022. Thereby, the article employs political discourse analysis and Copenhagen School's securitization theory to show how Putin uses speech acts to transform the West into an existential threat and justify the adoption of extraordinary measures, such as the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. Furthermore, the research refers to Richard Sakwa's concepts of "cold peace" and "neo-revisionism" to make sense of the emergence of such discourse. By using humiliation narratives and evoking patriotic images, Putin exacerbates a sense of victimhood and historical right in the Russian audience that emphasizes the state's isolationism and historic role to fight against the "Nazified" West and Ukraine. Putin also promotes an image of Russia's superiority, supporting cultural and civilizational pluralism and diversity ending the pre-existing Western universalism. The paper concludes that with these practices, the Russian president manages to not only successfully securitize the West but also spur significantly the public's support for his war.

Keywords: Putin, securitization, discourse analysis, Ukraine, West, United States, invasion, Russia, neorevisionism, Europe.

Introduction

"I spoke about our biggest concerns and worries, and about the fundamental threats which irresponsible Western politicians created for Russia consistently, rudely and unceremoniously from year to year."- said the President of Russia during his speech on the day of the invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 (Kremlin.ru, 2022). This statement is just one of the many instances over the last months where Vladimir Putin has painted a picture of Russia as being the target of a Western and Ukrainian plot-directed war with the ultimate aim of breaking up and destroying the Russian Federation. The frequent use of such imagery in Putin's speeches indicates that it is not another "whatabouism" or just a linguistic gymnastic. Instead, as the paper argues, these are speech acts aiming to depict the West[3] as an existential threat to Russia's security and identity.

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[3] Inspired by the work of Oleksandra Seliverstova (2015) and her concept of Imaginary West, the paper refers to West as the imaginary construction of the West within the discourse of the populist based on geographic, cultural, and socio-political distinctions (e.g., the division Islam-Christianity, South-North, developing and developed countries).

Securitization in International Relations occurs when a state or other influential actors ('securitizing actors') define some issue as a vital interest under existential threat, implying that someone must take forceful action in its defence. The paper argues that by using polemic discourse and humiliation narratives, Putin seeks to securitize the West and "create and bolster the perception that the Russian state is existentially threatened', in order to keep the population in 'survival mode'" (Østbø, 2017: 212-13). In parallel, the Russian leader has employed the ideational state of emergency to either adopt or justify extraordinary policies domestically and externally. To showcase these leitmotifs, the paper proceeds with the discourse analysis of Vladimir Putin's May 9 speech at a military parade in Moscow's Red Square marking the anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

The paper proceeds as follows. First, it presents the theoretical framework and methodology, namely securitization theory and political discourse analysis, which are used to make sense of how the West developed into a security issue and a justification for the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Then, it proceeds with a brief analysis of the historical context behind Russia-Western relations that help understand the emergence of this discourse and its success. Finally, the paper examines Vladimir Putin's statements referring to the West during his speech on 9th of May to test empirically the hypotheses.

Securitization theory and methodology

Securitization in International Relations is the process that describes how state actors transform a specific issue into being a matter of security in order to adopt extraordinary measures in the name of that security. Securitizing actors are successful when they manage to securitize the issue and construct it into an existential threat for a particular audience. In lieu of traditional approaches to security in the fields that treat threats as natural given or inherent in human nature (see; Realism), it claims that security issues become security problems by securitizing actors (Waever 1995: 55; Buzan, Waever & de Wilde 1998: 24-6). Therefore, it is a highly studied concept in Constructivism because of its focus on the ideational factors (which are historically and socially constructed) that enable the securitization and the adoption of extraordinary policies.

Securitization was first introduced by Ole Waever in 1995 to broaden security beyond the narrow concepts of state and military security (Buzan et al. 1998; William 2003: 512-13). Waever was connected with the Copenhagen School, which considers security as an outcome of a special social process or speech acts rather than an objective condition (Williams 2003: 513). For the scholars of this school, speech acts are rhetorical structures that decision-makers use to frame an issue as a security matter (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998: 26). They are central to the securitization theory

as they show that words do not merely describe reality, but constitute reality, which in turn triggers certain responses. As such, threats are not just threats by nature but they are constructed as threats through discourse.

Speech acts require the existence of an audience that collectively agrees on the nature of the threat and supports taking extraordinary measures. Only through this acceptance can the issue transcend beyond normal politics, permitting political elites to break normal procedures and rules to fight for security (Balzacq, 2005: 173). Thereby, the securitizing actors frequently seek to convince the audience by drawing attention and exaggerating the urgency and the gravity of the threat, creating what the German philosopher, Carl Schmitt (2007), refers to as a state of exception. Emotions, policy tools, images, and other means are also mobilized to build feelings and thoughts about the critical vulnerability of a subject (see: Balzacq, 2015). For example, by evoking images from World War II, Putin emphasized Russia's moral quest for the de-Nazification of Ukraine.

Scholars have long highlighted Putin's use of securitization to legitimize his actions domestically and abroad. Indicatively, Edward Bacon et al (2016) have argued that many developments in Russia's domestic politics can be explained by the discourse of "securitization" and Russia leadership's rhetoric of existential threat used to adopt measures increasingly perceived as authoritarian. Similarly, Beril Nygren (2007) pointed out that Putin has securitized Western actions as a threat to the Slavic identity both in Russia and in the near abroad while creating a firm counter identity based on the rejection of the liberal-democratic-centered world order. Other scholars like Håvard Bækken and Johannes Due Enstad (2020) displayed the Russian leader's attempts to securitize national history and identity.

The paper seeks to contribute to the existing debate by analyzing how the West developed into a security issue and a justification for the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Hence, it employs political discourse analysis (PDA) that focuses on the comprehension of the nature and function of political discourse and the role discourse plays in producing, maintaining, abusing, and resisting power in contemporary society (Van Dijk, 1997: 11-15). It assumes that politicians use words to affect political attitudes and opinions, manipulate public opinion, manufacture political consent, or legitimate political power. At the same time, the discourse functions itself as a manifestation of the intentions and beliefs of the politicians and the parties they represent. Within the context of this research, this methodology thus allows the establishment of the rationale, the social context, and the discursive practices used by Vladimir Putin to securitize the West in his speech on 9th May 2022.

Historical background: The emergence of Russia's neo-revisionism and the cold peace

After the end of the Cold War, Russia found itself in unfavourable circumstances. The West had not only established a narrative of superiority emphasizing its victory in the Cold War but also continue to expand its influence in spheres of political influence traditionally belonging to the Soviet Union such as Central European states (Friedan, 1998). Hence, the American commitment to not enlarge NATO "one inch" eastwards, let alone incorporate all former Soviet clients into the Western military alliance, was soon violated with NATO's enlargement in 1999. This "expansionism" led to the accumulation of frustration and the generation of resistance on the part of an excluded country, which became very prominent after the 2008 Western recognition of Kosovo (see: Mullholland, 2007). It became apparent that the traditional perception of Russia as "a country dying to attack Western Europe" remained, and in structural terms, the cold war never really ended (Friedman, 1998).

The political scholar Richard Sakwa (2013, 4) highlights that the structures that characterized the Cold-War period are still in place, but without the realization of its existence as there is no "acceptance of the logic of behavior." He highlights that the post-cold war era is one of a "cold peace": a term he introduces to describe "an unstable geopolitical truce, typically found in inter-war periods, where the 'defeat' of the one side is not accepted as legitimate, while the 'victory' of the other side cannot be consolidated" (Ibid.: 4). Under the new circumstances, the victim status provides motives for conflict for one side, while the victory is bitter and unsatisfying for the other, hence leading to "powerful inherent tensions and endlessly iterated clashes of perceptions and misperceptions" (Ibid.).

The existing "cold peace" prompted Putin to form a neo-revisionist behavior which is "more than mere resentment, reflecting the hurt of the weak and the outcast, but frustration that the international society as constituted at the close of the Cold War had been unable to adapt to the new circumstances (Ibid.: 10). Russia has approached the existing cold peace by neither challenging the international order; instead, it seeks to modify the international system in a way that gives Russia what is perceived to be its due weight (Ibid.: 11-12). That is why regardless of the existing structures, the West and Putin have continued to cooperate on issues like curbing Iran's nuclear ambitions (Hirsh, 2022). Another manifestation of Russia's neo-revisionism is the discourse promoting cultural and civilizational pluralism and diversity ending the pre-existing Western universalism (Ibid.: 10-12). This discourse seeks to criticize the Western hypocrisy and show "the gap between the proclaimed values of the Atlantic order and its practical manifestations" but also "the [Western} negligence of Eastern narrative" (Sakwa, 2014).

Nonetheless, Putin's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 signalizes a new phase in the cold peace between Russia and the West. In lieu of the last years, the Russian leader has confronted directly the West, threatening Western countries and helping Ukraine with missile strikes and nuclear attacks. As the paper shows, by using speech acts and drawing back on its neo-revisionism, Putin has sought to securitize the West to justify Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Analysis: Russia's securitization of the West in his speech on the 9th of May 2022

The examined speech is not the first instance of Vladimir Putin's targeting the West. As Julie Wilhelmsen and Anni R. Hjermann (2022: 8) show, Russia has sought to securitize either the United States as an aggressive and offensive power that is pursuing global dominance and the leader of the Western camp or NATO and the EU as expansive forces that forget their own security at the expense of Russia. Against the "axis of evil", Putin is just reacting adequately and adopting an analog response to what the West first does to Russia. In parallel, the securitization is supported by the re-articulation of Russia's identity to fit its neo-revisionist role in the international system. The Russian state as such is portrayed as a legitimate, proud power, with rich culture, heritage, and traditions of its own and a historical protector of diversity and universal moral principles (Ibid.: 9-11).

Similar leitmotifs are also present on 9th May. Putin starts his speech by promoting a state-centered and patriotic view of Russia's victory in the Great Patriotic War, which has been "enshrined in the world history forever as a triumph of the united Soviet people" (Bloomberg, 2022). As Bækken and Enstad (2020: 344) point out, images of military achievement aim "to rally the nation around a positive and heroic memory - to encourage respect and love for the Russian state, historically and today" (Bloomberg, 2022). Such discourse has also simultaneously another function: it creates an illusion of Russia's historical right to protect not only itself and its citizens but also the global order from forces of evil. For example, following the vivid imagery, Putin states that: "it is our duty to preserve the memory of those who defeated Nazism and (..) thwart the horror of another global war" (Ibid.).

For Putin, it is this historical right that prompts Russia to act as a protector and wage "humanitarian" interventions in its region to protect not only the Russian nationals but also its Ukrainian "brothers" from its Nazi government (see: Putin's speech on the 21st of February). Indicatively, he underlines that despite all the controversies, Russia has "always advocated the establishment of an equal and indivisible security system for the entire international community" – a discourse that goes in line with its neo-revisionist policies. However, although Russia adheres to the rules and seeks open dialogue

with the West, the latter has a total disregard for Russia's interests and instead focuses only on the fulfillment of its "evil" agenda.

In his speeches, Putin exacerbates a sense of victimhood for Russia and promotes an oppressor's image for the West. As Vamik D. Volkan (1988) highlights, the "humiliation" narratives" forge a link between national heritage and "chosen traumas"- the selective remembrance of persecutory events to ascribe them an excessive amount of emotional and historic meaning. He as such exploits Russia's isolationism and the existing "cold peace" structures to spark "entitlement ideologies of restoration and revenge" (Volkan & Fowler, 2009: 214); while simultaneously he omits Russia's expansionism in the region. Yet, the tension that emerges between past and present serves as a political tool that "weaponizes the emotion of nostalgia" (Stanley, 2018: 19–20) and assigns new political meaning to national myths and memories (Kinnvall, 2018: 525). These narratives also help evoke feelings of patriotism and the creation of a sense of historical and continuous threat, thus facilitating the induction of enemy/foe distinction and the securitization of the Other (Schmitt, 2007: 26-28).

A successful securitization consists of three steps: (1) identification of existential threats; (2) emergency action; and (3) effects on inter-unit relations (audience) by breaking free of rules (Buzan et al. 1998: 6). Not surprisingly, following Putin's appeal for victimhood and "chosen traumas," continues his speech by labeling the West as a security issue. To create a sense of existential threat, he states that: "Kiev declared that it could attain nuclear weapons. The NATO bloc launched an active military build-up on the territories adjacent to us" (Bloomberg, 2022). He also draws parallels to the Great Victory Day by identifying the Ukrainian government with "neo-Nazis and Banderites backed by the United States" (Ibid.). By upgrading the West and its ally Ukraine to a security matter, Putin seeks to proceed to the second step—the adoption of emergency action. Therefore, supported by graphic and polemic images, Putin portrays his decision to launch a "pre-emptive strike at the aggression" as a "forced, timely, and the only correct decision" (Ibid.)

To justify the invasion, the Russian leader returns to the pre-existing victimhood narrative to boost the securitizing's move-impact on the audience. Seeking to underline Western hypocrisy and exploit the traumas of the existing "cold peace," he highlights again the double standards guiding the US, NATO, and Europe's policies. Furthermore, he juxtaposes the Western hypocrisy to Russia's patriotic, moral, and pluralistic behavior in the modern system: "The United States began claiming their exceptionalism, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, thus denigrating not just the entire world but also their satellites (..) But we are a different country (..) We will never give up our

love for our Motherland, our faith and traditional values, our ancestors' customs, and respect for all peoples and cultures" (Ibid.).

These statements exemplify narratives that rouse seemingly mismatched emotive reactions—"a deep sense of grievance and a high sense of superiority" (O'Toole, 2018: 2–3). Putin also constructs the members of the target audience as an idealized community of shared origin and destiny, who have been betrayed and humiliated because they represent "love for our Motherland, our faith and traditional values, our ancestors' customs and respect for all peoples and cultures." Meanwhile, he identifies the enemy (the West) with moral degradation: "escalating Russo-phobia, praising traitors, mocking their victims' memory and crossing out the courage of those who won the Victory through suffering" (Bloomberg, 2022). Indicatively, Putin's use of discourse that advances a sense of superiority is visible, especially in the last part of his speech where he praises all soldiers, even those of the allied armies, that fought against Nazism and militarism; while stressing the bravery of the Russian soldiers fighting against the Nazi-government of Ukraine and the suffering of "the old people, women, and children of Donbas who were killed in atrocious and barbaric shelling by neo-Nazis" (Ibid.).

Conclusions

The paper seeks to make sense of how Putin developed the West into a security issue and a justification for the Russian invasion of Ukraine. To do so, the research employed a discourse analysis of Vladimir Putin's May 9 speech at a military parade in Moscow's Red Square marking the anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II. By utilizing the findings of the Copenhagen's School securitization theory, the paper argues that Putin uses speech acts that focus on: (a) the long-standing Western interventionism in Russia's sphere of influence and the exclusion of the state in the post-Cold War era; (b) the Western hypocrisy and double standards against non-Western states; (c) Russia's legitimate right to protect itself from the existential threat that Western expansionism poses; (d) Russia's legal and historical right to protect its citizens against the West and the Western-supported Nazi government of Ukraine; (e) Russia's rich history and culture, and its role as protector of plurality and diversity in the international system.

To boost the securitizing's move effect on the audience, Putin exacerbates a sense of victimhood for Russia through humiliation narratives that highlight the state's isolationism and the remaining cold peace structures; while, at the same time, he evokes images, symbols, and memories of the past to promote the perception that Russia has historic right and role to fight against the "forces of evil" present in the global order. As Volkan (1998, 2009) and O'Toole (2018) highlight, such narratives

prompt not only a sense of superiority and trauma in the audience but also foster feelings of revenge against their source, hence facilitating the adoption of extraordinary measures and the formation of ideational enemy/foe distinction. Furthermore, in line with its neo-revisionism, Putin draws an image of Russia that promotes cultural and civilizational pluralism and diversity ending the pre-existing Western universalism.

While the paper focuses on the securitizing act and Putin's discourse, it is important to look at its effects on the audience. Buzan et.al (1998) argue that an issue becomes securitized when an audience collectively agrees on the nature of the threat and supports taking extraordinary measures. As the latest data suggests, apart from a boost in ratings since the start of the war, more than 80% of Russians support Putin's actions (RFE/RL, 2022). Such high support shows not only that Putin's securitization of the West and Ukraine has been successful but also the difficulty to both de-securitize the issues and return to the pre-existing status quo.

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Strategic Social Media Management in Conflict Zones through the Analysis of the Intelligence Cycle: Lessons Learned from the Russo-Ukrainian Conflict[1]

Zisis Kyrgos[2]

Abstract

Social media have become an important aspect of everyday life, especially in the western world. Through the analysis of the Intelligence Cycle and the social media communication process, it is possible to determine how social media are integrated into the intelligence process, namely during the data collection phase, and what types of intelligence vulnerability emerge, namely SIG.INT. and O.S.INT. type vulnerabilities. The recent events of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict have shown that the uneducated use of social media, by civilians and military personnel alike, poses a serious threat to national security in times of conflict. Educating the general public on matters of operations security could be vital to safeguarding national security, a process which could be aided by social media platforms' moderators and AI technology.

Keywords: social media, Russia, Ukraine, conflict, operations security, intelligence operations, security.

Introduction

The role of social media in conflicts is not a novel field of study. Research has shown that social media played an important role in many major conflicts of the 21st century, such as the Arabic Spring (Comunello & Anzera, 2012) and the subsequent Syrian Civil War (Zeitzoff, 2017). However, most of the published research revolves on the subjects of fake news, misinformation, disinformation, propaganda and influence operations; on how the public and information image of an event are shaped in order to promote a political or otherwise ideological end (Viekerk & Maharaj, 2013; Sacco & Bossio, 2015; Zeitzoff, 2016). In the light of the recent events of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict, a new security threat involving social media has been brought back to the stage, namely the unintentional publication of sensitive military data by the public and its exploitation by the opposing side. This paper examines the issue through the prism of a pragmatic approach and the strategic prospective of national security, defining its parameters, the effects it has on national security and a possible approach on confronting the problem.

Defining the Parameters: Social Media and the Intelligence Cycle

Social media's emergence and evolution is closely related to that of the World Wide Web (University of Michigan, 2021). As defined by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media are *"a group of*

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Internet-based applications […] that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content". This exchange of content is possible to be achieved either as a user-to-user (private) or a user-to-users (public) process. On a global scale, 58.4% of the world's population are social media users, a percentage which amounts to the 93.4% of total internet users, spending an average daily time of 2.5 hours interacting with a social media platform (Chaffey, 2022).

Taking into consideration the wide use of social media, it is only natural that intelligence agencies have shown a great interest in their possible exploitation as a means of achieving their mission. In the context of this research, it is necessary to briefly examine the process through which that is achieved; the process which ultimately connects social media and intelligence.

Western intelligence agencies use a strategically standardized methodology for the collection, analysis and dissemination of information, the *Intelligence Cycle*. The cycle consists of six distinct steps: planning, collection, processing, analysis, dissemination and evaluation. Its purpose is to convert raw collected data into information and finally intelligence products that can be utilized by civilian and military actors in decision-making processes (Phythian, 2013). For the purposes of this research paper, it is not necessary to analyze the entirety of the cycle, but rather focus on the collection step, which is proposed to be the point where social media are integrated into the cycle. There are several collection methods available to intelligence agencies. In this regard, intelligence is categorized into six different types, depending on its source of origin, as explained below (Phythian, 2013):

Geospatial Intelligence or GEO.INT. refers to intelligence secured through data originating from the combination of geographical imagery and other forms of intelligence. *Human Intelligence or HUM.INT.* refer to data collected from various human sources, for example through surveys, or extracted through interrogation. *Imagery Intelligence or IM.INT.* is data produced by electronic means that capture images, such as cameras. *Measurement And Signature Intelligence, or M.A.S.INT.*, is data produced mostly by technical means which are used to define the distinctive characteristics of a specific object. *Open Source Intelligence or O.S.INT.* is data collected through publicly available sources, such as newspapers, television, journals, and others. Finally, *Signals Intelligence or SIG.INT.* is data produced through the interception of signals or other mediums of communications between individuals or machinery.

Through the above analysis of the Intelligence Cycle and the different categories of intelligence, it is possible to determine the way that social media are integrated into the cycle by intelligence agencies. Specifically, it becomes clear that social media can be used as intelligence sources, as they fall within

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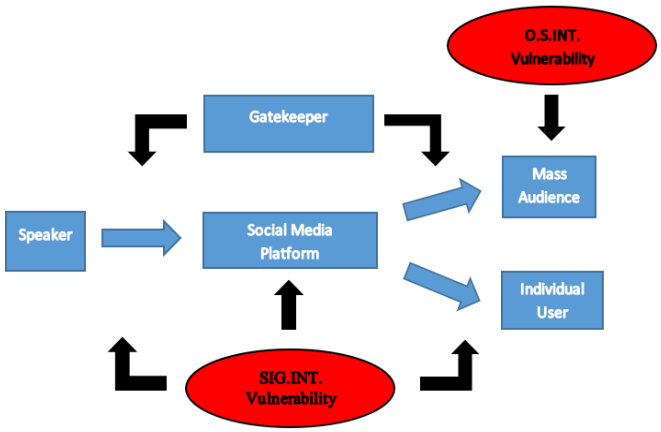
the *O.S.INT.* and *SIG.INT.* categories. Publicly available content which features descriptions or images of military vehicles, installations, troop movement and other similar data would be invaluable for an intelligence officer. On the other hand, a computer or other smart device infected by a malicious software which sends data to a third party involved in the conflict, unbeknownst to the user, could pose a serious threat of intelligence leakage in case the user exchanges information, that could be exploited by a seasoned intelligence officer, through a social media platform.

Having established the point of contact between the Intelligence Cycle and social media, it is possible to analyze the contact process and identify its vulnerabilities. The chosen analysis process is that of a simplified communication procedure, which includes the speaker (which could be either a private individual or content creator), the medium of transmittance (in this case the social media platform), the gatekeeper (the platform's moderators or AI moderating system) and the receiver (which could be either a private individual or the general public), in an amalgamation of the derivative models of the communication process proposed by Fougler (2004).

The flow of information begins from the speaker, who transmits information to the social media platform. The content passes through the platform, where the gatekeeper, or moderator, is able to review it, either before or after its transmittance, on to the receiver. In the communication process mentioned above, it is possible to identify three instances of point-to-point vulnerability regarding intelligence security: speaker-to-medium, medium-to-receiver (as a mass broadcast), medium-to-receiver (as a personal message). The above approach is considered as to the impartiality of both the platform and gatekeeper to either side of the conflict.

Figure 1: Social media communication process and intelligence vulnerabilities. Blue arrows represent the flow of information, while black arrows represent monitoring interference.



Source: own elaboration

The Intelligence Cycle is a process known to be used primarily by the U.S. Intelligence Community and NATO countries. However, for the semantic coherence of this research, it is necessary to establish that the opposite side does in fact use a similar method for intelligence acquisition. It is safe to assume that probably to some extent, Russian intelligence agencies use a similar methodology, which consists of at least three of the above steps; collection, analysis and dissemination. This assumption is made on the basis of these three steps being the minimum requirements for the production of a usable intelligence flow, as proposed by Smith and Brooks (2013). This theoretical reasoning is also confirmed by empirical data which show Russian operatives extracting data from content which is publicly available on social media, as shown in the subsection that follows.

Visualizing the Effects: Social Media in the Russo-Ukrainian Conflict

As a western world country, Ukraine has a significant number of social media users. According to the U.S. Agency for Global Media (2014), 50.9% of its overall population having access to household internet, and a total of 46% reporting using social media on a weekly basis, which is in accordance with the relative 93.4% global average. Since the beginning of the Russian *"Special Military Operation"* on February the 24th, 2022 (Polityuk & Mackenzie, 2022), there have been no reports of major connectivity shutdowns (NetBlocks, 2022), though there were some significant disruptions reported, especially in regions targeted by Russian strikes. It is therefore made clear that the overall availability of the internet and, subsequently, social media was and still is available to the majority of the Ukrainian population, despite the ongoing conflict.

During the conflict so far, there were several cases where Ukrainian civilians and military personnel published content on social media which included images of military operations and other relevant information. That content was then exploited by the Russian forces to strike at Ukrainian targets.

A notable example of this occurring was the targeting of a temporary military installation in Kiev. On the 20th of March, a Russian missile attack targeted Retroville Mall in Kiev, which was at the time reportedly used as a temporary storage and dispersion area for Ukrainian military equipment. The Ukrainian Security Service arrested a Ukrainian national due to the fact that he had publicly posted a video on a social media platform which featured military vehicles in the vicinity of the mall some time before the attack took place. This action was seen as providing intelligence to the Russian side and was justified by the Ukrainian Security Service as ultimately being the reason behind the missile strike (Duvnjak, 2022). The Ukrainian Security Service later released a video of the man admitting to and apologizing for his actions.

Should we exclude the possibility of individuals purposefully transmitting intelligence to the opposite side, it is made apparent that the uneducated use of social media, especially in the case of conflicts, constitutes a threat to national security, as it is also proposed by the U.S. Defense Technical Information Center (Nmah, 2007).

Problem Resolution: A Strategic Approach

Having analyzed the parameters and the significant effects of the problem, it is vital that an effort be made to remedy the issue. Taking into consideration the fact that from the moment the content is made available through social media, it is, in most cases, impossible to control whether it will be viewed and exploited by the opposing side, the best course of action for a state is to educate the populace on the aspect of *operations security*. Operations security, or OP.SEC. is defined as *"a systematic process by which a government, organization or individual can identify, control and protect generally unclassified information about an operation/activity and, thus deny or mitigate an adversary's/competitors ability to compromise or interrupt said operational activity"* (Michnowicz, 2006). However, in order for the process to be complete, it is necessary to educate both civilians and military personnel alike. Taking into consideration that military personnel, by definition, receives a basic OP.SEC. training, special attention should be given on the education of the civilian populace.

Another remediative approach would be to include the moderators of social media platforms into the OP.SEC. process. Through their ability to monitor the content made available on their platforms, either manually by the moderators or using AI technology, it could be possible to prevent intelligence compromisation. However, the involvement of a private, in most cases international, entity into a state matter, especially one as sensitive as national security, requires a special approach, which goes beyond the scope of this research. Furthermore, if any of the points of the communication process, especially the speaker and the platform, were infected by malicious software, a content monitoring process would still not be able to safeguard sensitive information. Despite this fact, it would be highly unlikely that the majority of the populace be infected with such a software without the competent authorities noticing.

Limitations and Further Research

There are several limitations to be taken into account regarding this paper. One of the main limitations is that, despite its theoretical justification, an important part of the reasoning process is based on empirical data and, therefore, requires further research to be completely established, as it is a multivariable topic. Another significant limitation was that due to the language barrier, it was not possible to use any Russian sources. A revisit of the topic, which will include Russian sources, might

provide further details on the part relating to the Russo-Ukrainian conflict. Furthermore, as of the completion of this paper, hostilities between the two parties have not yet ceased. It is possible that reviewing the topic after the completion of the conflict would provide further information and research material.

Conclusions

Taking the above reasoning into consideration, a number of conclusions could be summarized, regarding the topic in question. Firstly, empirical data portray that the Western and their corresponding Russian intelligence processes are similar in principle, as a result of the observed outcomes. Secondly, through the analysis of the social media communication process, it is evident that two types of intelligence vulnerabilities emerge, namely OS.INT. and SIG.INT. type vulnerabilities. Thirdly, in the case of conflict and in relatance to social media, the OP.SEC. process adheres to both civilians and military personnel, as both can compromise national intelligence security through the uneducated use of social media. Finally, in continuation to the previous point, it is in a nation's best interest to invest in the education of the general public on matters of OP.SEC., while a relevant remedial approach could also involve the institutions moderating the platforms' operations, though further research on the issue is necessary to reach any sustainable conclusions.

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Conflict Transformation and Cultural Heritage Use in Cyprus[1]

Nikos Pasamitros[2]

Abstract

Cultural heritage use is often a point of friction between antagonistic groups in intrastate conflict. In other instances, use of heritage may facilitate intergroup contact and provide space for conflict transformation. The Cyprus issue is not an exception to this phenomenon. Although Cyprus is one of the most researched frozen conflict cases, cultural heritage use vis-à-vis conflict transformation is relatively understudied focusing primarily on tangible heritage protection, restoration and museology. This brief examines the degree of influence (be it positive or negative) of cultural heritage activity on conflict transformation between the two Cypriot communities. In specific, it examines bicommunal heritage projects, use of in-group and out-group heritage and, visits to own heritage sites on the other side of the divide. Results show that bicommunal heritage projects foster contact and cooperation, use of tangible heritage becomes the ground for antagonism over neglect and care of in-group and out-group sites, and visits to heritage on the other side provoke questions over use and reuse of neglected heritage of the other. In total, this brief demonstrates that often heritage issues are exploited in order to back ethnocentric positions. Both sides use own, neglected, damaged or lost heritage to support arguments of in-group superiority. Contrarily, the Cypriot communities do not consider intergroup cultural differences a deterring factor to transformation. The dynamic potentials of heritage can be utilised towards conflict transformation through bicommunal heritage activities, ventures attributing local ownership and joint management, and critical notions of heritage that favour intangibility and hybridity.

Keywords: Cyprus, Cultural Heritage, Heritage Use, Unofficial Diplomacy, Stereotypes, Conflict Transformation, Conflict Analysis

Introduction

Contemporary approaches in international relations tend to take into account the role of non-governmental actors in intercommunal conflict, considering them as important elements of conflict preservation, escalation and transformation. According to the Multitrack Diplomacy approach, citizens' activity, research, training and education are important diplomatic tracks that may support social peace building (McDonald, 2003). Like in other frozen conflict cases, in Cyprus, cultural heritage is a dimension that influences the perpetuation and, at the same time, the transformation of the conflict depending on its use by key actors. Given that culture and (social) identity are interrelated (Côté, 1996), and that definition, interpretation and use of heritage is highly political in nature (Pasamitros, 2017), cultural heritage use has the potential to feed both strife and rapprochement.

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Theoretical Framework

In Cyprus, physical and psychological division defines cultural heritage by creating dichotomies in the perception, framing and use of tangible and intangible heritage. Conflict resolution theories claim that stereotypical images of the "other" are preserved by the lack of contact. Therefore, contact between members of communities is considered important for both maintaining and transforming protracted conflict (Coleman, 2006) and for contradicting negative stereotypes in direct interactions (Burgess, 2003).

Sociological theories on the causes of conflict support that contact can improve intergroup relations (Hodson & Hewstone, 2012). In specific, direct contact under non-competitive circumstances, combined with cooperation towards common goals, leads to a decrease in intergroup tension (Sherif et al, 1954/1961, Wedge, 1990). In addition, Contact Theory supports that interpersonal contact is an effective way to reduce prejudice between majority and minority groups under certain preconditions (Allport, 1954/1979/2007, Pettigrew, 1998). At the same time, sociological research also stresses the negative effects of contact, focusing on the generalisation of positive in-group – out-group experiences (Barlow, et al., 2012, Graf, Paolini, & Rubin, 2014), ambiguity of the effect contact has on prejudice (Wilson, 1996), in-group – out-group interaction anxiety (Wright, et al, 1997), and issues of internal and external validity of research (Forbes, 1997).

It is often claimed that intercultural dialogue, support for cultural diversity, and protection of heritage is important for building sustainable solutions. Specifically, culture is seen as an integral element of peacebuilding (Peace Direct, n.d.) that promotes tolerance, understanding and sustainable coexistence (Fukushima, n.d.). Post-modern reality demonstrates that, not only the possession of multiple identities is possible, but also that these multiple identities come to the surface according to the environment and external stimuli. Furthermore, certain theoretical approaches consider hybridity and transculturation as the ongoing condition of all human cultures (Rosaldo, 2005) and perceive cultural structure the result of prior hybridisation (Mac Ginty, 2011). On the opposite side, culture is also considered a source of conflict when ethnic or cultural differences coincide with economic or political interests (Galtung, 1990). Moreover, cultural heritage has been used as a tool for establishing and preserving identity, and heritage sites and practices as points of reference of common group identity. Material culture as heritage is often used to provide a physical representation to the ephemeral and slippery concept of 'identity' (Smith 2006).

According to the aforementioned theoretical approaches, on the one hand, culture is a potential peacebuilding factor, connected to cultural cooperation. On the other, cultural heritage use can

exacerbate real or perceived cultural differences that may deepen conflict. Given that culture and heritage are controversial terms and all individual or group activity happens within a cultural context, the present brief concentrates on cultural heritage activity, joint cultural heritage management, and visiting heritage sites on the other side.

Identities and Culture in Cyprus

In Cyprus, two different cultural realities prevail for each community: 1. a Cypriot and a Greek for the Greek Cypriots (GCs) and 2. a Cypriot and a Turkish for the Turkish Cypriots (TCs). In relation to the Cyprus conflict, for many years the dominant narratives have been those of the motherlands (Greek and Turkish), with the Cypriot cultural identity pushed to the background. Until 1974, the Greek and Turkish cultural identities were linked to the notions of "enosis" and "taksim" respectively. In recent years, there are systematic and non-systematic efforts to prioritise Cypriot culture. From 2004 on, under the Europeanisation process and the domestic political developments, there have been changes in the school curricula towards reconciliation (Hajisoteriou, Neophytou, & Angelides, 2015) and a more Cypriot-centric approach of a common heritage (Charalambous, Charalambous, & Zembylas, 2013, Gillespie, Georgiou, & Insay, 2013, Philippou, 2007). In practice, while there are cultural differences, like language and religion, there are also cultural similarities, like family structure, societal significance of the neighbourhood, localism as self-determination, gossip habits, non-verbal expression, culinary habits and traditional dances (Broome, 2005).

An asset in cultural rapprochement is the rich cultural landscape of Cyprus, which includes hundreds of archaeological sites (Louise & Morgan, 2013), offering the fertile ground for the communities to interact, cooperate, and pursue conflict transformation. Overall, in Cyprus, interconnection of conflict and cultural heritage is fraught with tension over cultural violation, heritage destruction and communal obliteration but at the same time, the restoration of particular sites of cultural heritage has become a tool for rapprochement efforts at the local authority and civil society levels (Constantinou, Demetriou, & Hatay, 2012).

Bicommunal Heritage Management in Cyprus

The most prominent body that facilitates bicommunal cultural heritage cooperation in Cyprus is the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage (TCCH). The TCCH consists of archaeologists, architects, art historians and town planners from both communities and is dedicated to the recognition, promotion and protection of the cultural heritage of the island (Tuncay, 2012, TCCH, 2015). It was formed in 2009 and is supported by the European Commission and the UNDP-ACT programme. The

work of the Committee, not only preserves cultural sites of Byzantines, Greeks, Lusignans, Ottomans, Phoenicians and Venetians, but also stresses the pan-Cypriot nature of heritage. In addition, it promotes cooperation through the work of the bicommunal team of experts. Beyond the TCCH, the ACT programme has invested in planning, implementing and facilitating projects that aim to protect culturally important sites and bring the two communities closer, through collaboration (Louise & Morgan, 2013).

In 1979, an era very close to the division, the first bi-communal cooperation project was formed. The Nicosia Master Plan (NMP), along with the Nicosia Sewerage Project, were led by the two mayors of Nicosia at that time (Lellos Demetriades in the south and Mustafa Akinci in the north), and were planned and implemented by GC and TC professionals (Europa Nostra, 2019). In the context of the NMP, several urban and infrastructural upgrading was realised in both sides of the walled city of Nicosia through the collaboration between technical teams from both communities (UNDP, 2013). In total, the NMP was an important heritage project that attempted, to revitalise the historical centre of Nicosia by focusing on abandoned areas from the time of the division, to preserve and exhibit cultural heritage of all the residents of Nicosia and to get experts from both communities to work together for an extended time.

The Cultural Heritage Preservation Circle in Kontea project is an example of cooperation of both experts and local people. The 6-year project (2007-2013) was implemented by the Kontea Heritage Foundation and the Union of the Chambers of Cyprus Turkish Engineers and Architects and managed to bring together the former GC and the current TC residents of the Kontea village in order to revitalise and rehabilitate it, through grassroots activities and community engagement. Through the project, important cultural heritage sites were restored. Furthermore, the scope of Cultural Heritage Preservation Circle was broader than preserving cultural sites. It experimented with an inclusive approach to public consultation with town meetings, exhibitions, information and feedback networks, and was structured around joint decision-making by parallel, TC and GC management committees. A pioneering, participatory, locally-owned decision-making model was planned to foster conflict transformation. Overall, the Kontea project demonstrates how combining reconciliation and citizen participation in decision-making around tangible assets of common significance can transform conflict dynamics (Louise and Morgan, 2013).

Along with successful cases of bicommunal cooperation in the field of culture, there are also efforts that failed. A representative example is the attempt to make the Kyrenia ship project, bicommunal. The Kyrenia ship is a wreck of a 4th-century BC merchant ship and is exhibited in the Ancient Shipwreck Museum in Kyrenia Castle in the city of Kyrenia, Northern Cyprus. Three full-size

replicas of the ship have been constructed so far. The replicas occasionally travel around the world as a floating ambassador of Cypriot culture. The shipwreck is of ancient Greek origin and the replicas were constructed under GC initiatives. There have been efforts, to rebrand the Kyrenia project in civic rather than ethnic terms but there was little success in this since the only achievement up to now is the inclusion of a TC in the crew-team of a replica ship. (Constantinou, Demetriou, & Hatay, 2012).

Culture and Cultural Heritage as a Factor of Antagonism

Beyond the positive side of contact and cooperation on cultural projects, there are dimensions of heritage use and management that preserve negative perceptions between Cypriot communities. While the Cyprus case is not a cultural or religious conflict, these two elements occasionally fuel strife and enrich ethnocentric narratives. A common claim in both communities is that the in-group protects cultural heritage of the island, while the "other" destroys it by straightforwardly targeting or deliberately neglecting the heritage of the rival group in an effort to perform ethno-cultural cleansing. Preserved heritage of the "other" is used to manifest in-group tolerance and "own" lost heritage is used to reproduce ethnic identity in similar and often more intense ways than the actual possession, access and enjoyment of heritage (Constantinou & Hatay, 2010).

Both communities instrumentalise heritage in order to legitimise claims and support policies concerning the Cyprus problem. In each side, one's own preservation of selected heritage is opposed to the other side's destruction of heritage. The Greek-Cypriot side, that has been comparatively more diligent in protecting and reconstructing the ethno-religious heritage of the TCs, has often communicated preservation in order to emphasise the destruction of GC heritage in the north. Respectively, TCs emphasise the multicultural character of the island and downplay its Greek heritage. This means that while ancient Greek sites and a few historically significant Byzantine churches are preserved, late churches and monasteries have been either neglected or vandalised. The reconstruction of such sites occurs under negative international publicity and pressure. TCs fear that site restoration will facilitate the return of displaced GCs to the north (Constantinou & Hatay, 2010).

When information demonstrate that the "other" respects in-group heritage and opposes established perceptions, the other community is often accused of demonstrating symbolic tolerance for the culture of the other (Constantinou, Demetriou, & Hatay, 2012). Instances where the in-group participates in a reconstruction project in cooperation with the "other", while one would expect them to oppose consolidated perceptions, sometimes work in a reverse manner, confirming the image of a civilised and tolerant "self" vis-à-vis a rarely enlightened "other" (Constantinou & Hatay, 2010). In these instances, cooperation cases function as the exception that proves the rule.

Visiting Heritage Sites on the Other Side

The 2003 opening of the Green Line crossings allowed displaced persons from both sides to visit their former villages and properties. Religious heritage sites were important destinations of private and spiritual visits. These visits were emotionally and politically loaded (Constantinou, Demetriou & Hatay, 2012). Mass media depictions of neglected religious heritage sites on the other side of the divide, stressed in-group self-victimisation while contradicting these images with the care taken by their own community for the preservation of the cultural heritage sites of the "others". What is more, social context dignifies cultural heritage. In the absence of the people for whom religious heritage sites were important, a damaged church, mosque or cemetery could fade into the background, occupying a minimal space in the landscape of everyday life. With the opening of the Green Line crossings, these sites became noticed again, as visitors lit candles in churches or rummaged through broken tombstones looking for the names of relatives. For the TCs, loss of heritage was a bitter experience on the one hand showing that life in the south as it was in the past does not exist anymore and on the other leading to the realisation that in some cases recovery of heritage is practically impossible (Constantinou & Hatay, 2010).

Lastly, tangible heritage also privileges manifestations of cultural wealth of dominant groups in the expense of "ephemeral" and "mutable" cultures. In this way, the two dominant Cypriot communities benefit from this discourse as it favours the construction and enhancement of their ethno-cultural identities and sustains bicommunalism. Such understanding presents cultural hybridity in Cyprus as anomalous and marginalises heritage of smaller, subaltern communities, like the linguistic heritage of the Maronites or the Cyprus Roma travelling traditions (Constantinou & Hatay, 2010).

Conclusions

Research on cultural heritage use vis-à-vis conflict transformation, shows that culture is a field of contact and cooperation. At the same time, there are also indications that there is an antagonistic use of heritage and a dividing perception of culture. The present brief argues that bicommunal contact and activity on a cultural heritage basis in Cyprus can be either supportive, or dissuasive to conflict transformation, according to the framework and present conditions. On the one hand, bicommunal activities aiming to preserve and restore cultural heritage create contact and cooperation that challenges established images. On the other, cases of neglected heritage sites by the "other", serve conflictual narratives of a civilised "self" and an uncivilised "other". Given that heritage is (connected to) identity, heritage use-based cooperation or antagonism reflects either the different identities (Greek and Turkish) narrative or the Cypriotness narrative. Furthermore, non-ethnic or cross-ethnic

heritage is downplayed and hybridity is marginalised since they are not exploitable by ethnocentric narratives. As a result, strictly communal or bicommunal use does not reinforce cultural tolerance and long-term, conflict transformation-oriented solutions.

Cultural Heritage use in Cyprus suggests that:

(a) Cultural heritage issues are used to back ethnocentric positions and confirm established images of the "other".

(b) Both sides exploit own, neglected, damaged or lost heritage of the conflict to support arguments of in-group superiority.

(c) The two communities do not understand ethnic, religious, and cultural differences as inseparable and rigid elements for the perpetuation of conflict.

Proposed paths for utilising the dynamic potentials of heritage as a factor of conflict transformation are to:

(i) Sustain, prolong, and create new bicommunal heritage activities. Cooperation of experts offers the Cypriot communities a chance to appreciate their diverse heritage and to gain direct experience of how bicommunal cooperation can build interpersonal trust.

(ii) Support projects that actively involve local communities in the process. Through restoration and reconstruction projects, communities have the opportunity to re-imagine physical spaces around them, to pursue contact with the "other", and to claim and exercise local ownership of the (re)use of heritage and the conflict transformation processes.

(iii) Bring to the fore the notion that individuals and societies are not passive recipients of heritage but rather active producers and consumers of it. Stress the importance of intangible heritage, practices, traditions and the ways people give meaning to them. Thus, acknowledge intangible heritage in parallel to tangible in order to soothe ethnic competition fuelled by heritage sites and heritage practices use.

(iv) Let heritage and identities of smaller communities and marginalised groups come to prominence. Support multiculturalism and cultural hybridity based on the rich history and diverse past of Cyprus.

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Permafrost: A Frozen Minefield in the Northern Hemisphere[1]

Chadoula Evangelia Nikitaki[2] & Areti Moustou[3]

Abstract

Some of the world's biggest countries have areas covered by permafrost, among them Russia, the United States, Canada and China. Permafrost, the soil that was once considered permanently frozen, has been thawing fast while releasing carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere. This paper explains what permafrost is and analyses the impact of its subsidence. Official reports from governments and prestigious international organisations were examined along with resources from scientific journals. Notably global warming is amplified, economy is at risk by infrastructure failure and human health is endangered by the hidden diseases inside permafrost. Furthermore, this paper, apart from identifying the significance of the problem, provides possible solutions to counter permafrost thawing and ensure the safety of the people. Suggestions are being proposed, among them, the establishment and funding of permafrost scientific networks and permafrost insurance for the directly affected people.

Keywords: Permafrost, Climate Change, Carbon Dioxide, Global Warming, Northern Hemisphere.

Introduction

Permafrost or permafrost soil is widely considered as the soil that stays at or below the freezing point of water for at least two years (Krugger et al., 2009). However, many also consider that permafrost is something more of an iced, deserted, mainly unproductive land area that largely extends in the northern hemisphere. The truth is that permafrost is neither permanent nor frozen (Huissteden, 2020) and its soil extension is far greater than that of the northern hemisphere. To be more exact, permafrost stretches through the North-American and Eurasia continents and stores around 1672 gigatones of carbon (United Nations Environment Programme, 2012). For example, China has 23% of its land covered in permafrost (Zhang, 2013). Approximately 65% of Russia is covered in permafrost (Streletskiy et al., 2019). Alaska's permafrost covers more than 80% of its soil (National Snow and Ice Center, 2021). In addition, it can be seen, that large areas, coming across as forests or oriented for agricultural activity, are in fact, based on permafrost soil (Huissteden, 2020). Although, the most shocking fact is that even whole cities are built and function efficiently, onto this type of ground (Huissteden, 2020).

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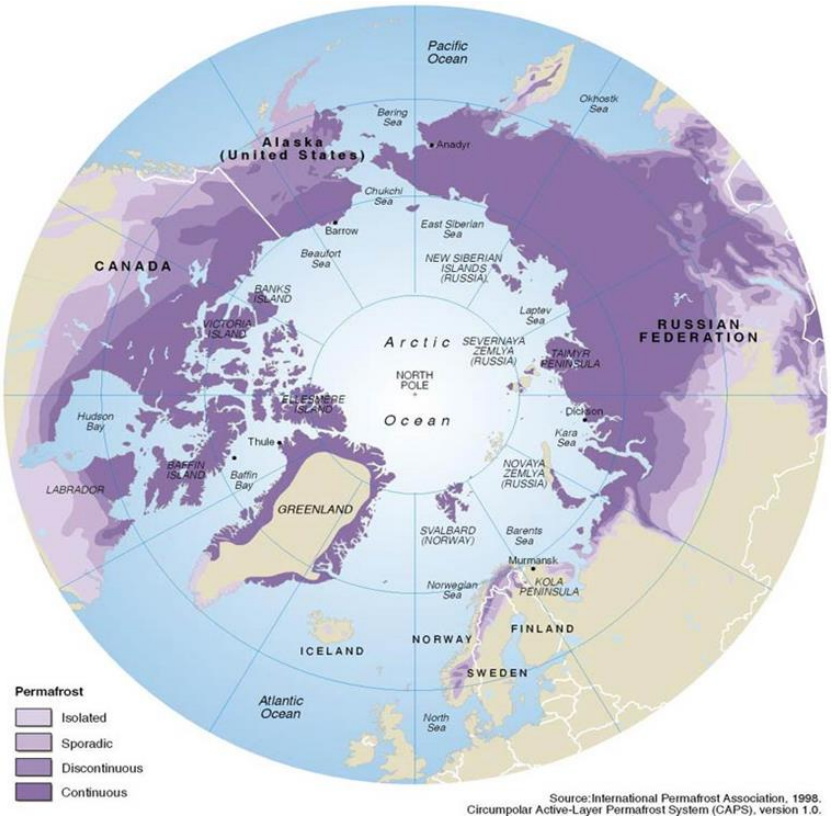
Map: Permafrost in the Northern Hemisphere



As it can be perceived, permafrost mainly occurs in colder regions in the north and south, or even at high altitudes, such as the Alps (Huissteden, 2020). Permafrost can also be detected at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean. At the soil surface of permafrost soils, the top layer, which is mainly referred as the “active layer”, thaws in summer and refreezes in winter every year. The base of the active layer is called “permafrost table”. The active layer is thinner in colder regions and thicker in the warmer climates of its zone.

However, it is not only the temperatures to increase above the permafrost that determines the temperature of the soil itself. Factors such as vegetation, topography, winter snow cover and soil properties, play an important role in the temperature regime of permafrost. The active layer and how thick it is, is considered an important state variable for permafrost soils. Global warming is affecting the active layer thickness and by extension the carbon and nutrient cycle of permafrost soils.

Scientific interest on permafrost is being drawn more and more intensively than before and the main reason is the potential carbon dioxide and methane emissions to the atmosphere. They estimate that inside the Arctic permafrost, around 1,500 billion metric tons of carbon, is trapped in and that approximately 5%-15% of this greenhouse gas will be emitted by 2100, which will be more than

enough for the global temperatures to be increased at the point of 0.3 - 0.4 degrees of Celsius (Mittelman, 2020).

This paper examines the ways in which permafrost affects the environment, the economy and humanity in general. The analysis begins by taking into account and analyzing some of permafrost greatest consequences. It continues by suggesting ways to counter down permafrost's impacts in some of humanity's most important aspects of life and last but not least, the conclusions are being reported.

Research Methods

From the perspective of data collection, the method which is followed is literature review and the information has been derived from books, scientific journals, surveys and reports of national and international organizations or institutes and articles from the internet press. Some of the secondary data analysed come from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior, the National Snow and Ice Data Center, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United States Arctic Research Commission. Furthermore Polar Science, the Arctic Yearbook 2020 and Physical Geography are among the scientific journals studied.

Impact of permafrost thawing

i) On the Environment

To begin with, permafrost thawing has impacts on natural resources. Among them we can notice the disappearance of lakes and changes in the movement of animal populations. In Russia, polar bears and reindeers move to different places which affect the food chains in the new habitats they enter, as well as birds change their migration routes which can introduce new animal diseases (Doloiso & Vanderlinden, 2020). Additionally degrading permafrost, results in the erosion of land which comprises landslides and rock falls, because the ground is no longer stable and can be cut off more easily. Alaska and Siberia have higher erosion rates in their ice-rich coastlines than the rocky coastlines in Greenland and eastern Canada (United Nations Environment Programme, 2012). Furthermore, one phenomenon related to permafrost thawing are the "drunken forests" in which the trees lean in random directions (United States National Park Service, 2019). From all these issues we can understand the dangers of permafrost degradation to the ecosystem, which can be completely damaged and altered.

Specifically, permafrost soils contain twice as much the quantity of carbon that already exists in the atmosphere (United Nations Environment Programme, 2012). Accordingly, if it continues to thaw climate change will be accelerated. The released CO2 and methane from permafrost combined with the greenhouse gases from human activities will amplify global warming to an unprecedented extent (NASA, 2018). The vicious cycle of melting permafrost is evident since, as we have already mentioned, global warming is also the cause of permafrost thawing and its consequence.

Considering the environment we have to mention that the world's largest oil spill on land in 1994, Russia was directly associated with permafrost thawing. Around 160.000 tons of oil were spilled in the Vozei oilfield while the pipeline broke because of the degrading permafrost it was going through (United Nations Environment Programme, 2012). Such events of infrastructure failure are increasingly notable and we will explore them more while talking about the impacts of permafrost loss on economy.

ii) On the Economy

To continue, the animal populations which move to new places, since their old habitats become unfriendly, are a danger to small towns and villages and to indigenous animal populations in the Arctic. Wolves intruding Russian villages have become a common problem. They attack the reindeer on which people base their income and food (Doloiso & Vanderlinden, 2020). Likewise the environmental changes, for instance the shifting herds and livestock population, impact on native communities' revenue.

It should be noted that unstable permafrost leads to infrastructure failure. When the permafrost becomes weak it can no longer be a stable ground for the houses, roads, bridges that exist above it. As a result, the human infrastructure can be damaged or be completely destroyed by the changes that occur due to permafrost thawing. Road breakings, destruction of buildings, failure of transportation and water and sewer systems have been observed and continue to occur. Especially over the last two decades there has been a rise in the destruction of infrastructure in Russia (Streletskiy, 2019). Specifically many highways (like the Dalton Highway in Alaska, the Dempster Highway in Canada), roads and railways (in central Siberia, China and Mongolia) traverse vulnerable permafrost areas (U.S. Arctic Research Commission, 2003). Consequently, transportation systems are at high risk.

All countries with permafrost face a great economic risk. The economic costs will rise in order to repair, maintain or rebuild the damaged facilities. The Russian economy depends notably on the contributions from permafrost covered regions (Streletskiy, 2019). Expensive engineering projects are required to provide a sustainable infrastructure in such vulnerable areas. In Alaska it is predicted

that the damage to public infrastructure will mean extra 1 billion dollars expenditure by 2030 (United Nations Environment Programme, 2012).

Particularly, there is a significant difference between Russia's infrastructure on the one side and North America's and Scandinavian countries' on the other. In Alaska, Canada and Scandinavia there are usually small houses and facilities while in the Russian Arctic exist mostly big buildings and industries. Moreover, around more than 5 million people live in permafrost areas in Russia in comparison to 0.9 million residents in permafrost regions in the Arctic in North America (Streletskiy, 2019). Therefore, the impacts of permafrost reduction will affect Russia to a higher extent.

To summarise, we can explain what permafrost degradation means by comparing it to constant and unexpected earthquakes. The impacts of an earthquake are similar to the impacts of permafrost thawing in the Northern Hemisphere. Earthquakes can also cause floods and landslides like permafrost but provoke huge damage to properties as well. Consequently, their impacts on economy are notable, among them the enormous cost to repair and reconstruct the ruined infrastructure. But what is the biggest difference between these two phenomena? Earthquakes are familiar to the people and cannot be averted unlike permafrost thawing which is unknown to most people despite being a serious problem the cause of which is already known, the global warming, but little is done to prevent it.

iii) On Humans

A great danger exists since viruses are able to survive for thousands of years inside permafrost (NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, 2021). Therefore, when it melts the viruses inside it are released to the atmosphere and can result in exposure to humans. In 2016 in Siberia a young boy at the age of 12 died because of anthrax, a disease thought to have been extinct (BBC News, 2016). Anthrax infection was because of permafrost degradation and it resulted in the death of a young boy and of more than 2000 reindeer. This constitutes an extremely dangerous situation for humanity. We can give an example of the covid-19, when humanity finally manages to have this virus extinct, it will exist in the permafrost since many infected people have been buried in these regions. And while the permafrost keeps thawing, it will reappear and measures to have it contained fast, should have been already planned.

Human health is also at high risk from failures of the water and sewage systems due to thawing permafrost (United States Arctic Research Commission, 2015). In vulnerable areas, it is possible the quality of the drinking water will be decreased, leading to serious health problems. Water pipelines

could break and other complications can occur to the systems, endangering the lives of the native people.

In 2016 the families in the Siberian region, where their reindeer died because of anthrax, had to be displaced for fear of their health. However, considering that these people relied on reindeer for their income, they had to find a new source of revenue, so they were forced to leave their home. Communities in the Arctic are facing climate migration (Kieval, 2020). Climate migration from villages and cities in Siberia, Alaska and Canada as well as Scandinavia or even in China and Mongolia is a serious problem. People because of unstable permafrost can no longer have a safe residence, are susceptible to health dangers and may not be able to practice their professions. Shifting animal populations or disappearing lakes render people unable to hunt and fish. Consequently, native people need to search for a new place to live and their governments have to be prepared to provide help and solutions.

Suggestions

First and foremost, as very little research is being conducted on this issue, the funding for further investigation is considered crucial. By further investments in research teams and investigation centers, ways to counter this phenomenon can be gradually discovered. Research is being done but it is still in experimental stages. For example, Total, Gaz de France and the French Petroleum Institute are collaborating with the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) to start experimenting with the process of extracting methane from ice, mainly with injections of hot water into its deep layers (Geo, 2021). In this way methane can be used as an opportunity for alternative electricity or heating source (Geo, 2021). Permafrost scientists believe that the development of data archives and free exchange of information can be extremely beneficial (Barry, 1988; Barry and Brennan, 1993). Arctic science nowadays demands a more intensive collaboration and that is why some scientific foundations (e.g. the U.S. National Science Foundation) give no funding for research unless all the data is accessible to all interested parties (U.S. Arctic Research Commission Permafrost Task Force, 2003).

Economically wise, as this topic is extremely unpredictable, the establishment of networks with long-term monitoring actions on permafrost is essential. In this way, all of the costs that permafrost's sudden changes cause, can be minimized to a satisfying and effective degree (Streletskiy et al., 2019). Meanwhile, for the industries and municipalities on permafrost ground, the same monitoring networks should be interwoven with their plans and operations in order to avoid excessive damage.

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In addition, the governments should bear in mind that they can apply and follow policies that ensure the greatest wellbeing possible of their citizens. Sometimes, damages can not be prevented and this is the reason why essential insurances to the victims must be available. It is vital for the citizens to continue their everyday lives without the constant unnecessary fear of repair or relocation. However, this option should not just stay in governmental rhetoric. Permafrost insurance, whether it is private or public, should be accessible and more importantly affordable. Governments should back up poor families and individuals by either paying or subsidizing a proportion of their costs. The same policy can be followed in order to boost the healthcare field in combination with plans to prevent the spreading of diseases.

Furthermore, according to research conducted by the University of Edinburgh in 2019, plants in permafrost environments play a major role in the control of the temperature of the soil (University of Edinburgh, 2019). Plants and trees have the ability to shade the ground and protect it from the warmth of sunlight, and at the same time, their roots are extracting the water from the soil, drying it out and making it a better insulator (University of Edinburgh, 2019). In addition, plants, even after they die, affect permafrost positively. They contribute to the creation of dry organic soils that are excellent insulators (University of Edinburgh, 2019). That being said, a rewilding project together with the reforestations and the protection of the flora in these regions should be one of the basic steps to counter permafrost thawing.

In a similar tone, the fauna can also play a significant role in this rewilding project. It has been shown that by removing the woody vegetation and enhancing the grassland in arctic climates, permafrost thawing can be delayed (University of Oxford, 2020). In order for that to be achieved, large herbivore mammals would be needed, such as bisons or horses. These animals can work as a means of reducing the woody vegetation and restore the grassland, which can capture more easily the carbon dioxide emissions. The rewilding is one of the “nature-based solutions” of climate change and it can offer a smooth transition to a satisfying regularity (University of Oxford, 2020).

Conclusions

Therefore, permafrost thawing leads to multiple complications and the significance of the problem should not be underestimated. The interconnected environmental, economic and health consequences pose a great threat not only to the countries covered by permafrost but to the whole international community. Notably the carbon dioxide and methane emissions from permafrost soils to the atmosphere, will generate an irreversible impact on climate and environment. Apart from ecosystem disturbances and contribution to global warming, degrading permafrost threatens the economy and

infrastructure. Houses, buildings, roads, pipelines are at risk because of the unstable ground in combination with the rising economic costs to rebuild or repair them.

Consequently, we can understand that permafrost thawing is a tangible problem which cannot be neglected anymore. Strong cooperation at international level is required to ensure an effective strategy to battle this problem. Especially funding needs to be allocated so that monitoring and scientific permafrost networks can be created which will contribute to the reduction of infrastructure failure costs and the protection of natural resources. Above all, the safety of the people directly associated with permafrost land must be a priority, by a permafrost insurance policy which will emphasize on reimbursement or other help for permafrost related damages. To conclude, it is highly important to pay attention to the prevention and efficient management of permafrost thawing immediately, so as to secure a safer future for everyone.

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Cultural Diplomacy: The Case of France[1]

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Abstract

Cultural diplomacy has been evolved as a powerful and effective tool in order to ameliorate a country's image to the international audience. Consequently, it gives the opportunity for countries to promote foreign policy's goals and to achieve a standing in the international system. The present paper, after attempting to define the notion of cultural diplomacy, focuses on the case of France. In fact, some important actors that are part of the French cultural network are mentioned. In particular, actors related to the fields of language, education, cinema and media are explored in this policy brief. It is concluded that France has followed a successful cultural diplomacy policy that can inspire other countries.

Keywords: Cultural diplomacy, soft power, French language, Francophonie, culture, media, cinema, French cultural network.

Introduction

Culture can be used as a foreign policy tool in the context of soft power and in fact it can be proven to be an effective one. This is the reason why in the past few decades, more and more countries understand that cultural diplomacy can play a vital role. This means that with the spread of their culture and their values, they have the opportunity to influence others, improve their image, achieve foreign policy goals, expand their presence in the international arena and increase their prestige (Eschapasse, 2017). Although the term "cultural diplomacy" is considered to be a new one that emerged in the 1990s (Ang et al., 2015), evidence of its practice can be traced back to antiquity, through the exchange of gifts between rulers for example (Auwers, 2013). The case of China is a striking example of the power of cultural diplomacy. China has managed to reintroduce itself to the global audience and advance its foreign policy goals by promoting its rich culture (Papachristou, 2021).

France is a country that has long understood the power and the benefits cultural diplomacy can bring, especially for countries with a long history and rich cultural heritage. Moreover, France, in order not to lose its influence after its withdrawal from its former colonies, sought to contrast its cultural influence. For this reason, the French Republic seeks to highlight the greatness of its glorious past, its contribution to the arts and its humanitarian values. It has indeed achieved to cultivate influence

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with effectiveness. Thus, the increase of French language and culture has become a priority and this can be proved by the large cultural network the country has created (Turbet Delof, 2018).

The aim of this paper is to analyze France's cultural diplomacy and the network the country has built, focusing particularly on the fields of education, language and cinema. First of all, some basic definitions will be given for a better understanding. Secondly, the actions and missions of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and other players that are part of this broad network and support this type of diplomacy, will be mentioned. Lastly, an overall evaluation of France's cultural diplomacy is presented.

Basic Definitions

Firstly, before analyzing the case of France, it is vital to explore cultural diplomacy in general. Although, there is no commonly accepted definition on this term (Zamorano, 2016), some definitions will be given in order to understand its meaning, its substance and its characteristics. We can simply define cultural diplomacy as the exercise of diplomacy through culture. But, in order to fully comprehend the term, it is necessary to examine the definitions of the notions that constitute it.

According to UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) "culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and belief".

As far as the second term of cultural diplomacy is concerned, Hedley Bull (1977: 156) defines diplomacy as "the conduct of relations between states and other entities with standing in world politics by official agents and by peaceful means". It can also be added that diplomacy is a way of conducting foreign policy.

In advance, speaking of cultural diplomacy, it is useful to mention the work of Joseph Nye, who is the founder of the concept of "soft power". Nye (2004) makes the distinction between hard and soft power. On the one hand, hard power relies basically on military and economic power factors and uses instruments of constraint and coercion. It is considered to be the more traditional and historically accepted form of power for international relations, since military and economic might often get others to change their position. It can also be added that hard power is a command power that rests on inducements (economic carrots) or threats (military sticks) (Simon, 2009). On the other hand, a country can obtain the outcomes it desires using soft power. This type of power is the ability of a country to shape others' preferences in a more indirect way (Nye, 2004). It is often called co-optive

power since it rests on the attractiveness of a country's culture and values or the ability to shape the agenda of political choices. It is developed using positive means of persuasion for the achievement of foreign policy goals and it has three resources, culture, political values and foreign policies. Thus, in a globalized world, soft power can be very useful for a country since it can get what it desires just because others admire it and are influenced by it. This is the reason why, in the context of soft power, cultural diplomacy is very important.

French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs' policy

France gives great importance to cultural diplomacy. The French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) has adopted a policy with the aim to strengthen the cultural scope of France and increase the country's attractiveness (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2021). Its main goal is to achieve to promote France's cultural model by the spreading of work in different areas such as cinema, music, fashion, performing arts, literature and others. These actions are supported by the cultural agency of this Ministry but also by local Instituts Français and Alliances Françaises, entities that will be mentioned below. At the same time, MEAE's policy tries to prioritize cultural and creative industries and organizations dedicated to exporting cultural sectors, as they constitute vital sectors for the French economy, they create jobs and they "advertise" French expertise. This analyzed policy of the Ministry is completely in line with priorities of soft diplomacy in general and economic diplomacy as well.

Players in French cultural action abroad in the fields of Culture, Education and French language

A. French broadcast media

The presence of French broadcasting and media is aligned with priorities related to soft diplomacy. For this reason, France Médias Monde and its subsidiary Canal France International (CFI) play a central role and are essential for the global diplomacy of France. Among others, France Médias Monde's objectives include the promotion of French language and Francophonie while having a presence globally.

France Médias Monde consists of the news channel France 24, the international radio station Radio France Internationale and the Arabic-language radio station Monte Carlo Doualiya (France Médias Monde, n.d.). France 24, which broadcasts 24/7 in four languages, French, Arabic, English and Spanish, gives a French perspective on global affairs. RFI (Radio France Internationale) is a French news and current affairs public radio station that broadcasts worldwide in 16 languages, including

French, on different FM frequencies, and also on the internet and apps. Monte Carlo Doualiya is a French radio station that broadcasts in Arabic on FM but it is also accessible via its website. It provides news bulletins and magazines, while having a focus on culture, live broadcasts, conviviality and interaction. The three media combined attract millions of viewers and listeners and furthermore millions of followers on their social media accounts. It is important to mention that with their digital platforms, they have the capacity to reach a wider audience.

CFI was founded in 1989 with the cultural aim to supply for free foreign television stations with French television programs (CFI Media Development, n.d.). Its role is to actively promote the development of the media in the countries of Africa, the Arab world and South-East Asia. It is funded primarily by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs which tasked CFI to assist with the coordination of French media professionals involved in cooperation initiatives. In advance, CFI works with media organizations and the civil society in order to support the former (TV, radio, print media, online media) and to promote objectives of sustainable development.

TV5Monde Group is also a media promoting Francophonie. It aims to allow users to discover French content online with its digital platform and to promote French-speaking culture and creation in all its forms (TV5 Monde, n.d.). It has 8 general, cultural, French-speaking channels and two thematic channels (children and art of living). TV5MONDE is the official operator of the International Organization of La Francophonie (OIF). Its distribution is thus guaranteed in the Member States.

B. French cultural network

France has developed one of the richest and most extensive cultural networks in the world thanks to which the country can maintain and strengthen its influence. This network consists of many players, and most specifically of 137 cooperation and cultural action services, 96 French institutes with 135 branches, more than 800 Alliances Françaises and also French schools around the world (France Diplomacy, 2021). The network that France has created contributes positively to the image of the country and its culture. This is the reason why it plays a vital role in French diplomacy.

Institut Français

French institutes as cultural centers were introduced from the beginning of the 20th century. However, the Institut Français was created as a public institution on January 1st, 2011 with the aim to promote French culture and be a main contributor to France's cultural diplomacy (France Diplomacy, 2015). It acts under the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) and the Ministry of Culture. Its mission is to project the country's soft power, broaden its influence and encourage the dialogue between countries (France Diplomacy, 2019). Among its initiatives, it organizes Festivals, it spreads

French films and it shares the work of French creators. The French Institutes and their actions are directly attached to French embassies. The coordination of the various French cultural institutes around the world until 2011 was possible thanks to an association called "CulturesFrance" (Le point, 2017).

Alliance Française

The Alliance Française was founded in Paris in 1883 in order to make French language and literature popular abroad, mainly in the colonies. The first board of directors that was set up in 1884, consisted of prominent personalities, such as Louis Pasteur and Jules Verne (Fondation des Alliances Françaises, n.d.).

It is now present in 137 countries across the world (France Diplomacy, 2021). It has three important missions: offer French language lessons, spread French and Francophone cultures and promote cultural diversity (Fondation des Alliances Françaises, n.d.). In 2007 the Fondation Alliance Française was created in order to coordinate better and support the activities of all the Alliances that are part of the network (Fondation des Alliances Françaises, n.d.). The Fondation des Alliances Françaises ensures the granting and withdrawal of the Alliance Française label to associations that promote French and Francophone cultures, as well as the protection and promotion of the Alliance Française brand. It also provides expertise and advice by sending experts to different countries. Although the foundation is subsidized by the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE), it is not dependent on the Ministry. The Alliances rest independent local associations.

C. Agency for French Education Abroad (AEFE)

Education can become an asset and contribute to a country's attractiveness. France has long understood this potential and has achieved to create the largest educational network in the world with 552 schools in 138 countries (AEFE, n.d.). AEFE is a public institution supervised by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs that was founded in 1990 with the mission to monitor the French schools abroad. It is subsidized by public funds and tuition fees. The Agency manages all resources that the government provides for the French schools abroad and recruits, pays, provides training and reviews the performance of the teachers. It also gives the opportunity for financial assistance and scholarships in order to aid families fund their kids' tuition (France Diplomacy, 2019). Finally, AEFE created in 2012 the seal "LabelFrancÉducation" given to public and private foreign schools that promote French language and culture.

Schools that belong to the AEFE network provide a high-quality education to French children that live outside France and promote French language and culture while respecting the culture of the host

country and cultural diversity as well. The teaching complies with the rules set by the French educational system but tries to adapt to the realities of the host country (AEFE, n.d.). France has achieved, since the schools accept children from other nationalities as well, to expand the influence of its culture and its language and improve the appeal of French education and France's image in general. In this way, the AEFE network supports the mission of French diplomacy.

D. Campus France

Campus France is the agency which promotes French higher education to foreign students and facilitates international mobility (Campus France, n.d.). It is supervised by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation. Campus France has 256 offices with representatives of the agency, situated in 125 countries. Its mission is to support foreign students and researchers before their departure for France and during their stays, organize promotional events and manage scholarships from the French and foreign governments. It is also responsible for the France Alumni platform, which is managed by embassies and helps foreign alumni to maintain ties with France and consult job offers (France Diplomacy, 2019).

In addition, the AEFE network has certainly achieved to enhance the appeal of French higher education institutions as well.

E. Francophonie

The spread of the French language constitutes a top priority for French diplomacy, which tries to popularize the language and make French one of the main world languages (France Diplomacy, 2021). In fact, French is the fifth most spoken language in the world, the second most used in diplomacy and the fourth most used on the Internet. France also advocates the use of French in international institutions, especially in the European Union. Besides, French is used by international organizations such as the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee. On 20 March 2018, International Day of the Francophonie, President Emmanuel Macron presented France's international strategy for the French language and multilingualism and characterized French language as "a language world, a language archipelago". Thus, it is obvious that for France the promotion of its language and Francophonie is a vehicle for diplomacy to broaden the country's influence (France Diplomacy, 2021).

Moreover, it is an undeniable fact that the term "Francophonie" is widely known. Francophonie has two meanings. First of all, it refers to all the people who use the French language. According to the last report of the Observatory of the French language published in 2018, there are 300 million French speakers across the world (Organisation International de la Francophonie, n.d.). This Observatory

publishes every four years its report concerning the French language, a real tool when it comes to learn precise information about French's usages and the language's presence in different areas such as economy, media and culture. But Francophonie is also an institution and political community. The International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF) which was created in 1970, brings together 88 states and governments, either as members or as observers. Its missions are to promote French language and cultural diversity, to contribute to peace, democracy and human rights, to support education, training and research and to boost economic cooperation in the context of sustainable development (Organisation International de la Francophonie, n.d.). OIF implements its projects with the help of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Francophonie and four other agencies: TV5MONDE, the University Agency for Francophonie, the International Association of Francophone Mayors and Senghor University in Alexandria (France Diplomacy, 2021).

Cultural Diplomacy and Cinema

Cinema can serve cultural diplomacy as it is characterized as a means with influence and accessibility to the masses, since it can reach a wide audience. Films have the power to educate and break stereotypes and they play an important role in how a country and its people are perceived abroad (Academy for Cultural Diplomacy, n.d.). France is famous for its contribution to the seventh art and the country is one of the biggest film exporters (Unifrance, n.d.). It is also known for famous award ceremonies such as the Cannes Film Festival, renowned directors and actors. Furthermore, festivals of French cinema are organized every year in different countries, including Greece.

The French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs also supports organizations that export cultural sectors and support soft diplomacy. The Unifrance association, which is responsible for promoting French cinema and audiovisual content throughout the world, is one of the organizations that the ministry subsidizes (France Diplomacy, 2021). The association that was created in 1949, initially named AFDEC (Association Française de Diffusion et d'Expansion Cinematographique), has nearly 1000 members from the film industry, from producers and exporters to actors and authors. Unifrance has carried out studies of international markets, offer expertise, accompanies French films abroad, organizes events and is part of many international festivals (Unifrance, n.d.).

The case of France as an example for other countries

As it was explained above, France has given importance on developing its cultural diplomacy policy. Other countries should take France's case as an example and an inspiration in order to create a network of active players that support this effective type of diplomacy. They have to take into

consideration that in the modern, globalized world, cultural diplomacy can have a dynamic role. It contributes to the development of a positive attitude towards the country and to a broader appeal of its values. Thus, globalization is a factor that countries can take advantage of, since it permits the flow of people, information and ideas. To be more specific, some recommendations will be given to countries to reinforce their cultural diplomacy, based on the French model.

As seen in the case of France, the government has the forefront role to organize its cultural diplomacy and coordinate the action of all the actors, most of which are public. Cultural diplomacy is traditionally state-driven, since its primary goal is the promotion of national interests. Thus, counties should be responsible to develop, support, administrate and finance cultural diplomacy's policy. Moreover, they have to build an active network that can support this type of policy and engage a wide range of non-governmental actors, such as teachers, students, actors and journalists.

Cultural Institutes abroad also have a considerable role. Everyone is familiar with the British Council, the French Institute, the German Goethe Institute and the Italian Institute Dante Alighieri. Other countries should imitate this effort in order to promote their language, their values and their image abroad by organizing film festivals, language courses and a number of events. Of course, there are countries, such as Greece, with difficulty in learning the language but with a long history and a rich civilization. In this case, institutes should focus on highlighting culture. Also, rising forces must seize the opportunity offered by the institutes, which have been transformed to a form of national representation. For example, since its foundation in 2004, the Confucius Institute has contributed greatly to the impressive rise of Chinese learning internationally. In addition, supporting foreign language learning can enhance the world's cultural diversity, build understanding of other cultures and assist international cooperation and dialogue.

Finally, following the example of the French Republic, countries should invest in education. Since it is not easy to change the mindset of people, education can foster a generation with favorable opinions towards a country and its population. For this reason, it can be fruitful to attract foreign students to higher education institutions, to arrange educational exchange programmes or even fund scholarships. Also, countries with expatriate communities outside their national space, can create schools in order for them not to lose touch with their country and their language.

Conclusions

France has indeed given a great importance into the development of its cultural diplomacy that is perceived to be a vehicle to outreach its influence. Its culture, its values, its language and the network it has created affect the country's position and permit it to still play an important role at an

international level. According to the report "Soft Power 30" that took into consideration many factors, such as culture, language, cooking, education and art, France was the most influential country in terms of soft power (USC Center on Public Diplomacy, 2019). As a consequence, the attractiveness of the French Republic is undeniable. Millions of tourists visit the country every year to taste its culture, lifestyle and cuisine, its museums are some of the most visited in the world and French is a language that many people want to learn.

However, in order to maintain its position, France has to be very strategic in how it manages its cultural network. It is of course a challenge, that includes - among others - economic factors, to coordinate all the organizations and initiatives that promote and publicize the culture abroad (France Muséums, n.d.). Moreover, the sanitary crisis has had some serious consequences. French Institutes and Alliances Françaises around the world had ceased their activity and consequently there was a decrease in the number of French language students (Sénat, 2020). Also, competition in the area of cultural diplomacy will forever exist, either from historic actors such as the United States, Italy and the United Kingdom or by new actors such as South Korea. For instance, Hollywood is by far a giant cinematic force compared to the French film industry.

Lastly, it is always possible for France to evolve its soft power through cultural diplomacy. For example, with Brexit the role of the French language within the European Union can increase. Also, France can take advantage of the new technology and diffuse its culture through new mediums. This was largely achieved since the institutes managed to hold online events and continue their language courses online.

In conclusion, culture plays a vital role in the exercise of foreign policy and in international relations. The French Republic has achieved to cultivate its cultural diplomacy and as a consequence the policy it follows can be characterized as successful.

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An 'Arctic Strategy' for Greece? Paving the Way from the Mediterranean to the Pole[1]

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Abstract

The Arctic region stands at the threshold of unprecedented changes with profound socioecological and geopolitical ramifications throughout the region and beyond. Previously local challenges have nowadays become global, and non-Arctic stakeholders demonstrate an ever-expanding interest in engaging with Arctic affairs, much driven by the consequences of global warming and emerging geopolitical realities. This policy brief aims at articulating Greece's established relationship to the Arctic and investigates the main motives that may drive the shaping of a potential Greek Arctic policy in the future. After illuminating the status quo of the existing Greek Arctic engagement, the brief explores strategic pathways to overcome ongoing barriers and secure the state's interests in the region.

Keywords: Greece; Arctic strategy; Arctic Council; Arctic Ocean; international relations; international law; climate change.

Μια «Αρκτική Στρατηγική» για την Ελλάδα; Χαράσσοντας το Μονοπάτι από τη Μεσόγειο στον Πόλο[3]

Απόστολος Τσιουβαλάς

Περίληψη

Το εάν η Ελλάδα επηρεάζεται από τις αλλαγές που συμβαίνουν στην Αρκτική παραμένει πέρα από κάθε αμφισβήτηση. Το ερώτημα έγκειται στο εάν η Ελλάδα θα πρέπει σταδιακά να αυξήσει την εμπλοκή της στις υποθέσεις της Αρκτικής και τελικά να αναπτύξει μια σχετική στρατηγική πολιτική για την περιοχή. Η επί του παρόντος Σύνοψη Πολιτικής στοχεύει στη διατύπωση της υπάρχουσας σχέσης της Ελλάδας με την Αρκτική πραγματικότητα και διερευνά τα κύρια κίνητρα που μπορεί να οδηγήσουν στη διαμόρφωση μιας πιθανής ελληνικής πολιτικής για την Αρκτική στο μέλλον. Αφού αναπτύξει το υπάρχων καθεστώς του ενδιαφέροντος της Ελληνικής Δημοκρατίας για την Αρκτική, η σύντομη αυτή έρευνα αναζητά στρατηγικές οδούς για την υπέρβαση των συνεχιζόμενων φραγμών και τη διασφάλιση των συμφερόντων της χώρας στην περιοχή.

Keywords: Ελλάδα; Αρκτική στρατηγική; Αρκτικό Συμβούλιο; Αρκτικός Ωκεανός; Διεθνείς σχέσεις; Διεθνές δίκαιο; Κλιματική αλλαγή

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[3] **Ευχαριστίες**: Οι απόψεις που εκφράζονται σε αυτή τη Σύνοψη Πολιτικής ανήκουν αποκλειστικά στον συγγραφέα και δεν αντικατοπτρίζουν απαραίτητα τις επίσημες απόψεις του ελληνικού κράτους. Η έρευνα που διεξήχθη για το άρθρο χρηματοδοτήθηκε εν μέρει από το ερευνητικό πρόγραμμα The Geopolitics and Geoeconomics of Maritime Spatial Disputes in the Arctic (GEOSEAS) του Ερευνητικού Συμβουλίου της Νορβηγίας (Norges forskningsråd) αρ. 302176.

Εισαγωγή

Η περιοχή της Αρκτικής βρίσκεται στο κατώφλι πρωτοφανών εξελίξεων με σημαντικές κοινωνικό-οικολογικές και γεωπολιτικές προεκτάσεις για την περιοχή καθώς και πέρα από αυτήν. Τα προηγουμένως τοπικά ζητήματα για τις αρκτικές χώρες έχουν πλέον παγκόσμια βαρύτητα και αρκετοί φορείς εκτός Αρκτικής επιδεικνύουν ένα διαρκώς διευρυνόμενο ενδιαφέρον για την ενασχόληση με αρκτικά ζητήματα, πρωταρχικά καθοδηγούμενοι από τις συνέπειες της υπερθέρμανσης του πλανήτη και τις σχετικές αναδυόμενες γεωπολιτικές ευκαιρίες.

Το εάν η Ελλάδα επηρεάζεται από τις αλλαγές που συμβαίνουν στην Αρκτική παραμένει πέρα από κάθε αμφισβήτηση. Το ερώτημα έγκειται στο εάν η Ελλάδα θα πρέπει σταδιακά να αυξήσει την εμπλοκή της στις υποθέσεις της Αρκτικής και τελικά να αναπτύξει μια σχετική στρατηγική πολιτική για την περιοχή. Η επί του παρόντος Σύνοψη Πολιτικής στοχεύει στη διατύπωση της υπάρχουσας σχέσης της Ελλάδας με την Αρκτική πραγματικότητα και διερευνά τα κύρια κίνητρα που μπορεί να οδηγήσουν στη διαμόρφωση μιας πιθανής ελληνικής πολιτικής για την Αρκτική στο μέλλον. Αφού αναπτύξει το υπάρχων καθεστώς του ενδιαφέροντος της Ελληνικής Δημοκρατίας για την Αρκτική, η σύντομη αυτή έρευνα αναζητά στρατηγικές οδούς για την υπέρβαση των συνεχιζόμενων φραγμών και τη διασφάλιση των συμφερόντων της χώρας στην περιοχή.

Ελλάδα και Αρκτική – *status quo* και Ιστορική Ανασκόπηση

Αν και ο βορειότερος ελληνικός οικισμός, το χωριό Ορμένιο, βρίσκεται περίπου 1.700 μίλια νότια του Αρκτικού κύκλου, το ενδιαφέρον των Ελλήνων για την περιοχή έχει εκφραστεί για περισσότερο από δύο χιλιετίες. Ήταν ο Πυθέας της Μασσαλίας, ο αρχαίος γεωγράφος, που έγινε ο πρώτος ερευνητής από τη Μεσόγειο που πραγματοποίησε μια επιστημονική αποστολή στον Βόρειο Ατλαντικό Ωκεανό, και πιθανότατα έφτασε μέχρι τη βόρεια Ισλανδία και τον Αρκτικό κύκλο (Kaplan, 2019). Μετά το ταξίδι του Πυθέα στον Βορρά, αρκετοί πρώιμοι Έλληνες στοχαστές έγραψαν εκτενώς για την περιοχή που αργότερα επρόκειτο να ονομαστεί «Αρκτική», προερχόμενη από την ελληνική λέξη ἄρκτος (άρκτος) εμπνευσμένη από τους ομώνυμους αστερισμούς.

Αν παραβλέψει κανείς αυτό το πρώιμο ιστορικό ενδιαφέρον για την εξερεύνηση της περιοχής, θα μπορούσε να αξιολογηθεί ότι στη σύγχρονη πολιτική ιστορία της Ελλάδας, το ενδιαφέρον για την Αρκτική κατέχει ρόλο ελάσσονας βαρύτητας αν όχι μηδαμινό. Η εμπλοκή της σύγχρονης Ελλάδας στα πολικά ζητήματα είναι περιορισμένη και η χώρα στερείται στρατηγικού πλάνου που να σκιαγραφεί τα εθνικά συμφέροντα στην περιοχή ή την προθυμία να συνεισφέρει στην αρκτική

έρευνα. Η Ελλάδα δεν διέθετε ποτέ ερευνητικό σταθμό στην Αρκτική (ούτε στο γεωγραφικό της αντίθετο), ούτε ηγήθηκε ποτέ συστηματοποιημένων πολικών αποστολών.

Υπό τις συνεχιζόμενες γεωπολιτικές εξελίξεις και δεδομένων των σημαντικότερων συνεπειών των δραματικών αλλαγών στην Αρκτική στον έξω κόσμο, το κράτος έχει εκφράσει πιο πρόσφατα μια διαρκώς αυξανόμενη εστίαση στα ζητήματα της Αρκτικής (και της Ανταρκτικής). Η Ελλάδα είναι μέρος της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, η οποία έχει πλέον καθιερωθεί ως αναπόσπαστος γεωπολιτικός παράγοντας στο Βορρά, και πολλά από τα κράτη μέλη της έχουν ήδη επιδείξει ατομικές στρατηγικές ανησυχίες στην περιοχή (Chuffart and Timonina, 2020). Σε αυτή τη λίστα κρατών, περιλαμβάνονται οι μεσογειακοί γείτονες της Ελλάδας, Ισπανία, Ιταλία και Γαλλία, οι οποίες διατηρούν μακρά ιστορική παρουσία στην Αρκτική έρευνα και εξερεύνηση και επί του παρόντος έχουν καθεστώς παρατηρητή στο Αρκτικό Συμβούλιο (Arctic Council), το πιο σημαντικό διακυβερνητικό φόρουμ για την προώθηση της συνεργασίας, του συντονισμού και της αλληλεπίδρασης μεταξύ των κυρίαρχων κρατών της Αρκτικής (Arctic Council, 2022).

Η Ελλάδα, την ίδια περίοδο με την Ελβετία, την Τουρκία και τη Μογγολία, προηγουμένως υπέβαλε αίτηση για Καθεστώς Παρατηρητή στο Αρκτικό Συμβούλιο (Knecht, 2015), σθεναρώς υποκινούμενη από την Ένωση Ελλήνων Εφοπλιστών (ΕΕΕ), η οποία αναγνώρισε την αυξανόμενη αξία των πολικών ναυτιλιακών διαδρομών για την παγκόσμια θαλάσσια οικονομία (Veniamis, 2014). Αν και η αίτηση του κράτους για καθεστώς παρατηρητή απορρίφθηκε (Stephen & Stephen, 2020), σε συνάντηση με τον πρόεδρο της Ρωσικής Δημοκρατίας το 2016, ο τέως Έλληνας πρωθυπουργός Αλέξης Τσίπρας έκανε αισθητό το εκ νέου ενδιαφέρον της χώρας να αποκτήσει καθεστώς παρατηρητή στο Αρκτικό Συμβούλιο, με την τελευταία φιλοδοξία να ενθαρρύνεται από τη Ρωσία (Tsipras, 2016). Το 2017, ο Έλληνας Υπουργός Εξωτερικών επανεπιβεβαίωσε την πρόθεση της Ελλάδας να λάβει θέση παρατηρητή στο Συμβούλιο στον Φινλανδό ομόλογο του, αλλά μέχρι τώρα δεν έχει ακόμη πραγματοποιηθεί επίσημη υποβολή αίτησης (MFA, 2017). Ωστόσο, η ΕΕΕ κατάφερε να εξασφαλίσει το 2018 ιδιότητα μέλους στο Οικονομικό Συμβούλιο της Αρκτικής (Arctic Economic Council), ανεξάρτητου οργανισμού που ενεργεί ως το βασικό φόρουμ επικοινωνίας και συνεργασίας μεταξύ του Αρκτικού Συμβουλίου και των ευρύτερων επιχειρηματικών κοινοτήτων της Αρκτικής αλλά και περιοχών εκτός αυτής, ανοίγοντας το δρόμο προς τη βαθύτερη εμπλοκή της χώρας στα Αρκτικά ζητήματα (UGS, 2018).

Κλιματική Αλλαγή - Από τους Πόλους στη Μεσόγειο

Υπάρχει ένα ευρύ φάσμα παραγόντων που συνδέουν την Ελλάδα με τις πολικές ζώνες, εκ των οποίων ο πιο σημαντικός είναι η κλιματική αλλαγή. Η ανθρωπογενής κλιματική αλλαγή είναι άμεσα

υπεύθυνη για την κατάρρευση θαλάσσιων και κρυοσφαιρικών οικοσυστημάτων στην Αρκτική, με τη σταδιακή συρρίκνωση του θαλάσσιου πάγου και την τήξη των Αρκτικών παγετώνων να αποτελούν από τις πιο σοβαρές εκδηλώσεις του φαινομένου. Όπως και στην Αρκτική, στην περιοχή της Μεσογείου παρατηρούνται υψηλά επίπεδα ευπάθειας στις παγκόσμιες κλιματικές αλλαγές. Οι αυξανόμενες θερμοκρασίες στην Αρκτική έχουν επηρεάσει μέχρι στιγμής ολόκληρη την Ευρώπη και η περιοχή της Μεσογείου είναι μία από τις περιοχές που μαστίζονται περισσότερο από την υπερθέρμανση του πλανήτη, καθώς θερμαίνεται 20% ταχύτερα από τον παγκόσμιο μέσο όρο (UNEP, 2022). Η Μεσόγειος Θάλασσα θεωρείται hotspot βιοποικιλότητας και η υπερθέρμανση του κλίματος αναμένεται να επηρεάσει περαιτέρω τα θαλάσσια οικοσυστήματα της. Κατά τις τελευταίες δεκαετίες, αρκετά ενδημικά και ιθαγενή ψάρια της Μεσογείου έχουν αρχίσει να μετακινούνται προς τα βόρεια λόγω της αυξανόμενης θαλάσσιας θερμοκρασίας, ενώ ξενικά είδη έχουν εισέλθει στην περιοχή μέσω της Διώρυγας του Σουέζ και αποδειχθεί καταστροφικά για τα τοπικά οικοσυστήματα (WWF, 2021).

Με πάνω από 16.000 χλμ. ακτογραμμή και μόνο 130.647 τ.χλμ χερσαία έκταση, η Ελλάδα είναι επί της ουσίας της ένα παράκτιο έθνος, του οποίου το ένα τρίτο περίπου κατοικεί σε απόσταση έως και 2 χλμ. από την ακτή (Georgiopoulos and Papadimas, 2021). Το 90% των τουριστικών υποδομών της χώρας βρίσκεται επίσης σε παράκτιες περιοχές. Στην ετήσια έκθεσή της για το 2019, η Διακυβερνητική Επιτροπή για την Αλλαγή του Κλίματος (IPCC) προέβλεψε 0,6 έως 1,1 μ. παγκόσμια άνοδο της στάθμης της θάλασσας έως το 2100, σε περίπτωση που οι εκπομπές αερίων του θερμοκηπίου παραμείνουν σε υψηλά ποσοστά (IPCC, 2019). Ως εκ τούτου, μεγάλο μέρος των ελληνικών παράκτιων υποδομών θα βρεθεί αντιμέτωπο με διάβρωση των ακτών τις επόμενες δεκαετίες, με πρωτόγνωρες περιβαλλοντικές, οικονομικές και κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις για τις τοπικές κοινωνίες. Η παγκόσμια διάβρωση των ακτών οφείλεται κυρίως στις αλλαγές στους πόλους, με τη συνεχιζόμενη απώλεια του στρώματος πάγου της Γροιλανδίας και το λιώσιμο των παγετώνων της Ανταρκτικής να αποτελούν σημαντικούς παράγοντες. Ως επιπρόσθετα παράγωγα του μεταβαλλόμενου κλίματος, οι ημέρες καύσωνα έχουν αυξηθεί στην Ελλάδα, μαζί με δασικές πυρκαγιές και άλλα ακραία καιρικά φαινόμενα (π.χ. καταιγίδες, πλημμύρες) που, σε συνδυασμό με την έλλειψη απαραίτητων υποδομών, έχουν κατά καιρούς επισφαλείς επιπτώσεις για τους πολίτες και την άγρια ζωή της χώρας. Το ολοένα και περισσότερο ξηρό κλίμα στη Μεσόγειο εκτιμάται ότι θα επηρεάσει αρνητικά την ελληνική οικονομία στην ηπειρωτική χώρα, ιδιαίτερα τη γεωργική παραγωγή σε βασικές περιοχές όπως η Θεσσαλία και η Κεντρική Μακεδονία, δικαιολογώντας περαιτέρω την ανάγκη της Ελλάδας να συνεχίσει να κερδίζει έδαφος στις διεθνείς συζητήσεις για την υπερθέρμανση του πλανήτη και τις συναφείς αλλαγές στους πόλους (Georgiopoulos and Papadimas, 2021).

Προς μια Αρκτική Στρατηγική για την Ελληνική Δημοκρατία

Ενόσω η Αρκτική αντιμετωπίζει ραγδαίες αλλαγές και δημιουργείται μια αυξανόμενη ανάγκη για διεθνή συνεργασία, πολλοί μη-αρκτικοί ενδιαφερόμενοι παράγοντες έχουν καταφέρει σταδιακά να εδραιώσουν την παρουσία τους στην περιοχή και να γίνουν αναπόσπαστα μέρη των Αρκτικών ζητημάτων και διαλόγων. Εάν η Ελλάδα αποφασίσει να επισημοποιήσει τη βούλησή της να ασχοληθεί με τα θέματα της Αρκτικής, πρέπει πρώτα να εκπληρώσει ορισμένες προϋποθέσεις. Σύμφωνα με τις θεμελιώδεις αξίες των κρατών της Αρκτικής, όπως αναφέρονται στη Διακήρυξη της Οτάβα του 1996 για τη δημιουργία του Αρκτικού Συμβουλίου (Arctic Council, 1996), η προσέγγιση ενός κράτους στην Αρκτική πρέπει να συμμορφώνεται με πολλές βασικές αρχές, όπως ο πρωταρχικός σεβασμός της εθνικής κυριαρχίας των κρατών της Αρκτικής, η υποστήριξη των παραδόσεων και των πολιτισμών των τοπικών και αυτόχθονων πληθυσμών, και η συμβολή στην οικονομική ανάπτυξη της Αρκτικής και συμμόρφωση με τα κορυφαία πρότυπα προστασίας του περιβάλλοντος και αρχές αειφόρου ανάπτυξης. Πρέπει να σημειωθεί ωστόσο ότι η επίδειξη ενδιαφέροντος για τις υποθέσεις της Αρκτικής και η ουσιαστική εφαρμογή του συνιστούν δύο διαφορετικές δεσμεύσεις. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο, η παρούσα Σύνοψη Πολιτικής προτείνει τρεις κύριους τομείς ενδιαφέροντος ως πλέον υποσχόμενους υπό το πρίσμα μιας επικείμενης Ελληνικής Στρατηγικής για την Αρκτική: 1) *Συμμετοχή σε Αρκτικά Φόρα 2) Έρευνα και Καινοτομία 3) Ειρήνη και Συνεργασία στη Θάλασσα*

1. Συμμετοχή σε Αρκτικά Φόρα

Υπάρχουν πολλά διεθνή μονοπάτια προς την περιοχή της Αρκτικής και διεθνή νομικά όργανα, όπως η Σύμβαση των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για το Δίκαιο της Θάλασσας (UNCLOS), ο Οργανισμός Τροφίμων και Γεωργίας (FAO), ο Διεθνής Ναυτιλιακός Οργανισμός (IMO) και η Συνθήκη του Σβάλμπαρντ, οι οποίες παρέχουν ποικίλες ευκαιρίες και ισχυρές πλατφόρμες για την εξασφάλιση της συμμετοχής μη-αρκτικών κρατών στη διακυβέρνηση της Αρκτικής. Η Ελλάδα υπέγραψε τη Συνθήκη του Σβάλμπαρντ ήδη το 1925, ενώ το 1995 υιοθέτησε την UNCLOS χωρίς καμία επιφύλαξη (UN Division for Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea, 2022). Ως μέρος της ΕΕ, η Ελλάδα δεσμεύεται περαιτέρω από τη Συμφωνία του 2018 για την Αποτροπή της Άναρχης Αλιείας Ανοικτής Θάλασσας στον Κεντρικό Αρκτικό Ωκεανό (CAOFA, 2018), ενώ θα δεσμεύεται επίσης από την επικείμενη διεθνή νομική πράξη στα πλαίσια της UNCLOS για τη διατήρηση και τη βιώσιμη χρήση της θαλάσσιας βιοποικιλότητας σε περιοχές εκτός εθνικής δικαιοδοσίας (BBNJ Agreement), η οποία, μεταξύ άλλων, θα κωδικοποιεί τον τρόπο συμπεριφοράς των κρατών στην ανοιχτή θάλασσα της Αρκτικής.

Εξίσου σημαντική για την απόκτηση ερείσματος στα Αρκτικά φόρα είναι η προσέγγιση ενός κυρίαρχου κράτους προς τους αυτόχθονες πληθυσμούς της περιοχής. Χωρίς να έχει προηγουμένως αναγνωριστεί καμία ομάδα αυτοχθόνων πληθυσμών εντός της εθνικής της επικράτειας, η Ελλάδα ψήφισε υπέρ της Διακήρυξης των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τα Δικαιώματα των Ιθαγενών Πληθυσμών (UNDRIP) το 2007. Το κράτος θα μπορούσε περαιτέρω να εξασφαλίσει την υποστήριξή του προς τα δικαιώματα των αυτόχθονων πληθυσμών της Αρκτικής επικυρώνοντας τη Σύμβαση της ΔΟΕ αριθ. 169 για τους αυτόχθονες πληθυσμούς. Άλλα κράτη της ΕΕ, όπως η Δανία, η Ισπανία, το Λουξεμβούργο και πιο πρόσφατα η Γερμανία, έχουν ήδη επικυρώσει τη Σύμβαση (ILO, 2022), ενώ άλλα έχουν υποστηρίξει σθεναρά τον λαό των Σαάμι, τον μοναδικό αναγνωρισμένο αυτόχθονα πληθυσμό εντός της επικράτειας της ΕΕ (European Commission, 2021).

Τελικώς, η απόκτηση θέσης παρατηρητή στο Αρκτικό Συμβούλιο θα ήταν η ιδανική κίνηση για την εξασφάλιση της εκπροσώπησης ελληνικών συμφερόντων στην περιοχή της Αρκτικής. Προτού όμως επιστρέψει με μια ενημερωμένη αίτηση, η Ελλάδα πρέπει να επιδείξει πολιτική προθυμία καθώς και οικονομική ικανότητα να συνεισφέρει στο έργο του Αρκτικού Συμβουλίου και των αυτόχθονων ομάδων που συμμετέχουν στις διαβουλεύσεις του (Permanent Participants). Αν και η ομαλή λειτουργία του Αρκτικού Συμβουλίου έχει προσωρινά επηρεαστεί από τη εξελισσόμενη κατάσταση στην Ουκρανία, θα μπορούσε με επισφάλεια να εικαστεί ότι, στη μεταπολεμική περίοδο, η επιτακτική ανάγκη για διαιώνιση της ειρήνης και της συνεργασίας στον Βορρά μπορεί να δημιουργήσει περεταίρω χώρο στην Αρκτικό Συμβούλιο για πρόσθετα κράτη παρατηρητές με εκδηλωμένο ενδιαφέρον για τον αρκτικό διάλογο.

2. Έρευνα και Καινοτομία

Τα επιστημονικά στοιχεία ότι τα Αρκτικά κοινωνικό-οικολογικά συστήματα μετασχηματίζονται λόγω ανθρωπογενών δραστηριοτήτων στην περιοχή αλλά και πέρα από αυτή είναι εκτεταμένα. Λόγω της σημασίας των αλλαγών τόσο για την ίδια την περιοχή όσο και για τους κατοίκους της, αλλά και προς όφελος της παγκόσμιας κοινότητας, τις τελευταίες δεκαετίες, η Αρκτική αποτελεί περιοχή υψίστης σημασίας για την παγκόσμια επιστημονική κοινότητα. Καθώς η Αρκτική υφίσταται ραγδαίες αλλαγές με άμεσες επιπτώσεις στο μεσογειακό κλίμα και οικοσυστήματα, ένας κατάλληλος τρόπος προσέγγισης της περιοχής από το ελληνικό κράτος θα ήταν η ανάληψη επιστημονικής έρευνας στην Αρκτική. Τα έργα έρευνας για το κλίμα είναι ζωτικής σημασίας για τον αγώνα για την αντιμετώπιση των επιπτώσεων της κλιματικής αλλαγής και κυριαρχούν στις στρατηγικές ατζέντες τόσο των αρκτικών όσο και των μη-αρκτικών κρατών. Ελλείψει ενός ερευνητικού ιδρύματος στον σταθμό Ny-Ålesund ή σε άλλες βασικές περιοχές της Αρκτικής, το ελληνικό κράτος θα χρειαστεί σημαντικές προπαρασκευαστικές διεργασίες, καθώς και πολιτική δέσμευση για συμμετοχή σε ερευνητικά

προγράμματα και επιστημονικούς διαλόγους. Η διακρατική συνεργασία για την προστασία του θαλάσσιου περιβάλλοντος, η ασφάλεια της ζωής στη θάλασσα και η παροχή τεχνογνωσίας που σχετίζεται με τις εργασίες του Αρκτικού Συμβουλίου, βρίσκονται μεταξύ των πρωταρχικών ερευνητικών θεματικών των αρκτικών κρατών, η ανάπτυξη των οποίων θα μπορούσε να αυξήσει περαιτέρω την αξιοπιστία της Ελλάδας στους αρκτικούς διαλόγους, εάν η τελευταία επισημοποιήσει το ενδιαφέρον της να εδραιώσει την παρουσία της στην περιοχή.

Η έρευνα στην Αρκτική είναι ωστόσο εξαιρετικά δαπανηρή, λόγω των σκληρών κλιματικών συνθηκών και των τεράστιων γεωγραφικών αποστάσεων που χαρακτηρίζουν την περιοχή, επιβαρυμένη από το κόστος των σύγχρονων τεχνολογιών που απαιτούνται για τη διεξαγωγή έρευνας σε συμφωνία με τις ανάγκες των ευαίσθητων οικοσυστημάτων της περιοχής. Στον απόηχο μιας οικονομικής κρίσης που έχει διαρκέσει για περισσότερο από μια δεκαετία και επηρέασε δραστικά τη συνολική συμμετοχή της Ελλάδας στη διεθνή επιστημονική συνεργασία, τέτοιες πρωτοβουλίες απαιτούν σχεδιασμό με τον πλέον συνετό τρόπο. Αρκετοί μεμονωμένοι Έλληνες ερευνητές δραστηριοποιούνται στην Αρκτική και την πολική επιστημονική έρευνα γενικότερα, ενώ μερικά ιδρύματα όπως το Ερευνητικό Κέντρο “Αθηνά” έχουν κατά διαστήματα συμμετέχει σε διακρατικά ερευνητικά δίκτυα που δραστηριοποιούνται στην περιοχή (Arctic Portal, 2022). Ωστόσο, συνεκτικές και θεσμοθετημένες ερευνητικές προσπάθειες από τις Ελληνικές κρατικές αρχές με αντικείμενο την Αρκτική παραμένουν μέχρι στιγμής ανεπαρκώς ανεπτυγμένες και πέρα από την τρέχουσα ατζέντα του αρμόδιου υπουργείου.

3. Ειρήνη και Συνεργασία στη Θάλασσα

Ένας άλλος βασικός τομέας που θα μπορούσε η Ελλάδα να χρησιμοποιήσει περαιτέρω για να εδραιώσει την παρουσία της στην Αρκτική, είναι η τεράστια θαλάσσια ισχύς της. Η Ελλάδα παραμένει παραδοσιακά παγκόσμια δύναμη στον τομέα της ναυτιλίας, με μακροχρόνια παράδοση στο εμπόριο και τη ναυσιπλοΐα, ενώ Έλληνες πλοιοκτήτες ελέγχουν ένα μεγάλο ποσοστό του παγκόσμιου στόλου σε όρους χωρητικότητας. Στην τριακοστή δεύτερη σύνοδο της συνέλευσης των μελών του Διεθνή Οργανισμού Ναυσιπλοΐας (IMO) το 2021, η Ελλάδα κατατάχθηκε στην Κατηγορία (α), μεταξύ των 10 κρατών του κόσμου με το μεγαλύτερο ενδιαφέρον για την παροχή διεθνών ναυτιλιακών υπηρεσιών (IMO, 2021). Ως κορυφαίος παγκόσμιος ναυτιλιακός φορέας, η Ελλάδα θα πρέπει αδιαμφισβήτητα να επιδιώξει μερίδιο στην Αρκτική, πιθανώς την πιο αναδυόμενη περιοχή του κόσμου για το μελλοντικό θαλάσσιο εμπόριο, χάρη στο άνοιγμα διαπολικών διαδρομών που συνδέουν τον Ατλαντικό και τον Ειρηνικό Ωκεανό και τα τεράστια αποθέματα φυσικών πόρων που εντοπίζονται στην περιοχή.

Ενώ το τεράστιο ενδιαφέρον της Ελλάδας για την παγκόσμια διακυβέρνηση των ωκεανών και το θαλάσσιο εμπόριο είναι αδιαμφισβήτητο, όπως επιβεβαιώθηκε στη Διακήρυξη του Ιλούλισσατ το 2008 μεταξύ των πέντε παράκτιων κρατών της Αρκτικής, η διακυβέρνηση της Αρκτικής και η ενασχόληση με τα θέματα της περιοχής πρωτίστως απαιτεί την ειρηνική συνεργασία των κρατών σύμφωνα με τα πρότυπα του διεθνούς δικαίου για την προστασία και διατήρηση του εύθραυστου θαλάσσιου περιβάλλοντος του Αρκτικού Ωκεανού (Arctic Ocean Conference, 2018). Η γεωπολιτική πραγματικότητα όμως στην ανατολική Μεσόγειο αποκαλύπτει υπάρχοντες φραγμούς που αντιμετωπίζει η Ελλάδα όσον αφορά την αρμονική συνεργασία στη θάλασσα, την ασφάλεια και διακυβέρνηση των ωκεανών, και την εξωτερική πολιτική. Η επίλυση των διαρκών πολύπλευρων διαφορών στο Αιγαίο με τη γειτονική Τουρκία θα ήταν το πρώτο ορόσημο για την ελληνική (καθώς και την τουρκική) κυβέρνηση ώστε να διασφαλίσει αξιοπιστία σε διεθνείς διαλόγους σχετικούς με τα αρκτικά ζητήματα και να επιδείξει ισχυρά διπλωματικά προσόντα υπό το φως του διεθνούς δικαίου θάλασσας. Πράγματι, ένα πρώτο σημαντικό βήμα προς την ειρηνική επίλυση των θαλάσσιων διαφορών στη Μεσόγειο επιτεύχθηκε με την Ελληνοϊταλική συμφωνία οριοθέτησης ΑΟΖ, αποκρυσταλλώνοντας τα σύνορα της μεταξύ των δύο χωρών και επιλύοντας μακροχρόνια ζητήματα σχετικά όσον αφορά τα αλιευτικά δικαιώματα στο Ιόνιο Πέλαγος (ΦΕΚ 163/Α/28-8-2020).

Συμπεράσματα

Ενώ εκ πρώτης όψεως θα μπορούσε κανείς να υποστηρίξει ότι η Ελλάδα δεν έχει καμία σχέση με τις πολικές ζώνες λόγω της γεωγραφικής της απόστασης, η πλέον δημοφιλής παροιμία «ό,τι συμβαίνει στην Αρκτική δεν μένει στην περιοχή» γίνεται όλο και πιο επίκαιρη για μη-αρκτικά κράτη τα τελευταία χρόνια. Μετά τους πόλους, η Μεσόγειος παραμένει μια από τις περιοχές που θα επηρεαστούν περισσότερο από την κλιματική αλλαγή τις επόμενες δεκαετίες, όπως πολλές ερευνητικές εκθέσεις τονίζουν. Με τις τοπικές προκλήσεις της Αρκτικής να γίνονται παγκόσμιες, η Ελλάδα θα αποκόμιζε πολλά οφέλη αν επισημοποιούσε το ενδιαφέρον της να ασχοληθεί της με καίριες υποθέσεις εντός του Αρκτικού κύκλου. Προς το επίπονο έργο της οικοδόμησης μιας πολιτικής για την Αρκτική, έχουν γίνει ήδη κάποια πρώτα βήματα. Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση δεσμεύεται από τις παγκόσμιες πρωτοβουλίες για την καταπολέμηση της κλιματικής αλλαγής (ΦΕΚ-Β-4893-2019), και απηχεί τη φιλοδοξία της ΕΕ για μια «Πράσινη Συμφωνία», που πλέον βρίσκεται στον πυρήνα του οράματός της ΕΕ για την Αρκτική (European Commission, 2021). Σε συνδυασμό με την υποστήριξη της εφαρμογής της Ευρωπαϊκής στρατηγικής για την Αρκτική, τα κράτη μέλη θα πρέπει ωστόσο να επιδείξουν ατομικά προθυμία να συμπεριλάβουν την περιοχή στις δικές τους

εθνικές πολιτικές και να εντοπίσουν καινοτόμες διαφοροποιήσεις που θα μπορούσαν να τα καταστήσουν σημαντικούς παράγοντες στο Βορρά.

Η ύψιστη προσοχή στις ιδιαίτερες κοινωνικό-οικολογικές συνθήκες της περιοχής, η υποστήριξη των αυτόχθονων πληθυσμών της Αρκτικής και η συνεχής δέσμευση για την έρευνα και την καινοτομία στην περιοχή είναι απαραίτητες προϋποθέσεις για την ανάπτυξη μιας στρατηγικής για την Αρκτική. Για ένα κράτος όπως η Ελλάδα χωρίς πολική παράδοση και υπό ελλείψεως μιας θεσμοθετημένης ενιαίας προσέγγισης των ζητημάτων της Αρκτικής, η επιβεβαίωση της ελληνικής συμμετοχής στην αρκτική αρένα απαιτεί στρατηγικό σχεδιασμό, οικονομικές επενδύσεις και εποικοδομητική συνεργασία με φορείς που έχουν ήδη εδραιωθεί στην περιοχή. Το διεθνές δίκαιο, η θαλάσσια ναυσιπλοΐα, η επιστημονική έρευνα και συνεργασία, και η υποστήριξη των λαών και των οικοσυστημάτων της περιοχής θα πρέπει επομένως να αποτελέσουν βασικά στοιχεία για τη διατύπωση μιας μελλοντικής «Ελληνικής Αρκτικής ατζέντας».

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Energy Diplomacy in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Cases of EuroAsia and EuroAfrica Interconnector Pipelines of Electricity Interconnection[1]

Olga Tsoukala[2]

Abstract

The amount of the energy market's dependence on Russian natural resources, such as natural gas, was discussed during the recent and ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine. The present study will attempt to document the four-membered energy collaborations in the energy sector between Greece, Israel, Egypt, and Cyprus. This project aims to study the advantages of the interconnection pipelines, "EuroAsia Interconnector" and "EuroAfrica Interconnector" together with the framework of energy diplomacy, which is being built in the Eastern Mediterranean. The present analysis will examine the possible political choices of the already structured relations of the above states, concluding with how they can be the central pillar for the gradual and de facto consolidation of energy autonomy in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

Keywords: Eastern Mediterranean, energy diplomacy, pipelines.

Ενεργειακή Διπλωματία στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο: Οι Περιπτώσεις των Αγωγών Ηλεκτρικής Διασύνδεσης EuroAsia και EuroAfrica Interconnector

Όλγα Τσουκαλά[3]

Περίληψη

Επ' αφορμής της πρόσφατης και εν εξελίξει ρωσικής εισβολής κατά της Ουκρανίας, τέθηκε στο τραπέζι των διαπραγματεύσεων η συζήτηση για το μέγεθος της εξάρτησης της αγοράς ενέργειας από τους ρωσικούς φυσικούς πόρους, όπως λ.χ. το φυσικό αέριο. Στην παρούσα μελέτη θα γίνει μια προσπάθεια να καταγραφούν οι διακρατικές συνεργασίες στον ενεργειακό τομέα μεταξύ της Ελλάδος, του Ισραήλ, της Αιγύπτου και της Κύπρου. Σκοπός του παρόντος εγχειρήματος είναι να μελετήσει τα προτερήματα των διασυνδετήριων αγωγών "EuroAsia Interconnector" και "EuroAfrica Interconnector" από κοινού με το πλαίσιο ενεργειακής διπλωματίας, το οποίο οικοδομείται στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο. Η παρούσα ανάλυση θα προβεί σε μία εξέταση των πιθανών πολιτικών επιλογών των ήδη δομημένων σχέσεων των ανωτέρω κρατών, καταλήγοντας στον τρόπο με τον οποίο αυτές μπορούν να αποτελέσουν το βασικό πυλώνα για την σταδιακή και εν τοις πράγμασι εδραίωση της ενεργειακής αυτονομίας στην περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου.

Λέξεις-Κλειδιά: Ανατολική Μεσόγειος, ενεργειακή διπλωματία, αγωγοί

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Εισαγωγή

Παρατηρώντας τα τεκταινόμενα στην ενεργειακή διπλωματία, διαπιστώνει κανείς ότι από το έτος 2019 έχουν λάβει χώρα σημαντικές πρωτοβουλίες και συνεργασίες, ιδίως στην περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου (Tsoukala, 2021). Πρωταγωνιστές στην διαμόρφωση μίας νέας ενεργειακής πραγματικότητας στην περιοχή είναι η Ελλάδα, η Κύπρος, η Αίγυπτος και το κράτος του Ισραήλ. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψιν τις διακρατικές συνεργασίες σε τριμερείς σχηματισμούς, τα ανωτέρω κράτη προέβησαν στην υπογραφή τριμερών συμφωνιών επί τη βάσει της περαιτέρω συνεργασίας τους στον ενεργειακό τομέα. Ως εκ τούτων, προέκυψαν οι συμφωνίες-μνημόνια συνεργασίας για τους αγωγούς ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης Ισραήλ-Κύπρου-Ελλάδος "EuroAsia Interconnector" και Αιγύπτου-Κύπρου-Ελλάδος "EuroAfrica Interconnector". Κατά γενική ομολογία, η ενέργεια αποτελεί καταλυτικό παράγοντα άσκησης διπλωματίας τόσο για τα κράτη, τα οποία «διψούν» ενεργειακά, όσο και για τα κράτη, τα οποία είναι πλούσια σε φυσικούς πόρους (Φίλης, 2012).

Ο αγωγός ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης "EuroAsia Interconnector" (Ισραήλ-Κύπρος-Ελλάδα)

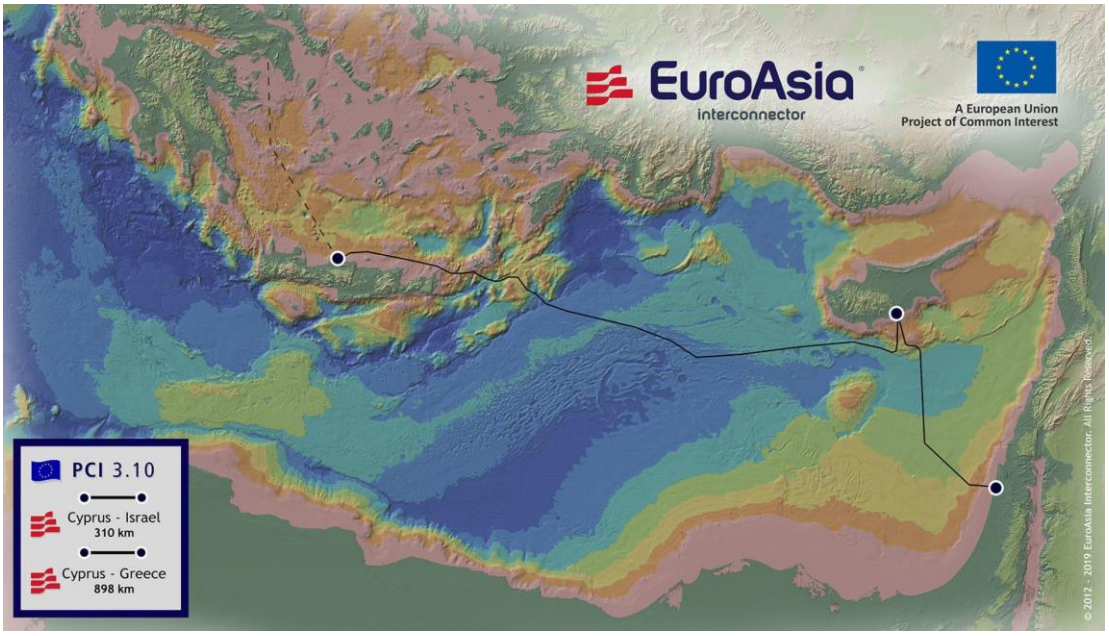
Οι συζητήσεις για το μεγαλόπνοο εγχείρημα του αγωγού ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης Ισραήλ-Κύπρου-Ελλάδος, γνωστός και ως EuroAsia Interconnector, εκκινούν το έτος 2012 με την μελέτη των δυνατοτήτων διασύνδεσης των ανωτέρω κρατών με γνώμονα την ενεργειακή αυτονομία και ανεξαρτησία (EuroAsia Interconnector, 2012). Επί της ουσίας, η Κύπρος θα αποτελεί τη γέφυρα ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης μεταξύ Ευρώπης και Ασίας.

Προτού αναλυθούν τα επιμέρους προτερήματά του, κρίνεται απαραίτητο να περιγραφεί το πλαίσιο διακρατικών συνομιλιών των ενδιαφερόμενων κρατών σε επίπεδο της επιδιωκόμενης ενεργειακής διπλωματίας. Ελλάδα, Κύπρος και Ισραήλ έχουν αναβαθμίσει τη στρατηγική τους συνεργασία μέσω διμερών και τριμερών συμφωνιών σε επίπεδο ασφάλειας, τεχνολογίας, άμυνας και ενέργειας. Ιδίως στον ενεργειακό τομέα, οι εν λόγω συμφωνίες έχουν δημιουργήσει ένα ικανό πλαίσιο μείωσης της εξάρτησης από φυσικούς πόρους κακόβουλων καθεστώτων (Rayman, 2021).

Η ενδυνάμωση των σχέσεων των κρατών αναδεικνύεται με ενάργεια ηδη από το 2019, όταν ανακοινώθηκε η Κοινή Διακήρυξη Ελλάδος, Ισραήλ, Κύπρου και Η.Π.Α., όπου μεταξύ άλλων υπογραμμίστηκε το κοινό όραμα στην ενεργειακή αυτονομία και ασφάλεια στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο (Η Αμερικανική Πρεσβεία και το Προξενείο στην Ελλάδα, 2019). Εν ολίγοις, διατυπώθηκε η εκπεφρασμένη βούληση των μερών, ήδη από την 5η τριμερή σύνοδο κορυφής στη Μπερ Σεβά, το 2018, σύμφωνα με την οποία επισημάνθηκε η προσήλωση στο έργο του αγωγού και στα αποτελέσματα της μελέτης του όλου εγχειρήματος (Greece in Israel, 2018).

Καθοριστικό χρονικό σημείο αναφοράς αποτελεί το έτος 2021 για τις σχέσεις μεταξύ των κρατών. Επιβεβαιώνοντας τα όσα δομήθηκαν με διπλωματικό τρόπο τα παρελθόντα έτη, οι ηγέτες της Ελλάδος, του Ισραήλ και της Κύπρου ανέδειξαν τον ενεργειακό τομέα, τόσο τους φυσικούς πόρους, όπως το φυσικό αέριο, όσο και τις ανανεώσιμες πηγές, όπως ο ηλεκτρισμός, ως ένα εκ των σημαντικότερων πεδίων σύγκλισης συμφερόντων και διακρατικής συνεργασίας (Nedos, 2021). Ακολούθως, οι ανωτέρω κοινές ενεργειακές επιδιώξεις των κρατών οδήγησαν στην προώθηση του project με την ονομασία "EuroAsia Interconnector". Προς επίρρωση τούτων, την 8η Μαρτίου του έτους 2021, η Ελλάδα από κοινού με το Ισραήλ και την Κύπρο υπογράφει μνημόνιο συνεργασίας για το εγχείρημα του διασυνδετήριου αγωγού (Ajdin, 2021). Σε αδρές γραμμές, πρόκειται για τον αγωγό ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης της Ευρώπης με την Ασία, με σημεία μεταφοράς της ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας το Ισραήλ, ως σημείο εκκίνησης, την Κύπρο, ως γέφυρα, με τερματικό σταθμό την Ελλάδα για την προμήθεια της ευρωπαϊκής αγοράς ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας. Ο αγωγός χωρίζεται σε δύο τμήματα[4] υποθαλάσσιων καλωδίων, το τμήμα Ισραήλ-Κύπρος απόστασης 310 χλμ. και το τμήμα Κύπρος-Ελλάδα απόστασης 898 χλμ., σύμφωνα με τον χάρτη, κάτωθεν (Χάρτης 1).

Χάρτης 1: Ο διασυνδετήριος αγωγός ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας Ισραήλ-Κύπρου-Ελλάδος "EuroAsia Interconnector"



Πηγή: EuroAsia Interconnector, n.d. b

[4] Ο εναρκτήριος σταθμός από όπου θα εκκινεί η παροχή ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας θα είναι η περιοχή Hadera (Ισραήλ), ενδιάμεσο σταθμό θα αποτελεί το σημείο Κοφίνου (Κύπρος) και θα καταλήγει στο σημείο Κορακιά (Κρήτη) με προορισμό την Αττική και την Ευρώπη, εν συνεχεία (EuroAsia Interconnector, n.d. b).

Η πρώτη φάση του project θα είναι πλήρως λειτουργική το έτος 2025, ενώ τα 898 χλμ. υποθαλάσσιων καλωδίων θα φτάνουν τα 3.000 μέτρα βάθος[5] από την επιφάνεια της θάλασσας, χαρακτηριστικά, τα οποία θέτουν ένα νέο παγκόσμιο ρεκόρ για έργα τέτοιου είδους και συναφούς βελησνεκούς (EuroAsia Interconnector, n.d. b & Habibic, 2022). Αξιοσημείωτο είναι το γεγονός ότι, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ενέκρινε την εκταμίευση ποσού 657 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ για την χρηματοδότηση του υποθαλάσσιου καλωδίου, το οποίο θα συνδέει την Κύπρο με την ευρωπαϊκή ήπειρο (Euractiv, 2022 & Todorović, 2022). Πρόκειται για το μεγαλύτερο ποσό, το οποίο δίδεται σε έργο κοινού ενδιαφέροντος (Project of Common Interest) του προγράμματος «Μηχανισμός Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη» (Connecting Europe Facility), συνολικού ύψους 1,037 δις ευρώ (Habibic, 2022). Μέσω του εν λόγω μηχανισμού, η Ε.Ε. επιδιώκει να χρηματοδοτεί έργα και εγκαταστάσεις πράσινης ανάπτυξης ακολουθώντας την Ευρωπαϊκή Πράσινη Συμφωνία (Todorović, 2020).

Εξετάζοντας το εγχείρημα του εν λόγω αγωγού αξίζει να επικεντρωθεί κανείς σε ορισμένα χαρακτηριστικά, τα οποία τον καθιστούν αρκετά ελκυστικό μέσο διαλόγου κατ' ενάσκηση της ενεργειακής διπλωματίας των εμπλεκόμενων κρατών. Αρχικά, η απόσταση, η οποία θα καλύπτεται μέσω του διασυνδετήριου αγωγού, θα είναι 1.208 χλμ. ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας τάσης 2GW (2.000MW), η οποία θα μεταφέρεται μέσω ηλεκτρικού καλωδίου Συνεχούς Ρεύματος Υψηλής Τάσης (High Voltage Direct Current) (EuroAsia Interconnector, n.d. a). Η υλοποίηση του εγχειρήματος θα καταστήσει απτή πραγματικότητα την πρώτη μερική υποθαλάσσια διηπειρωτική διασύνδεση ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας σε βάθος 3.000 μέτρων (Brinkerink, M., et. al., 2019). Προς επίρρωση των ανωτέρω, κρίνεται αναγκαίο να επισημανθεί ότι η πραγματοποίηση του όλου εγχειρήματος δημιουργεί την κατάλληλη ευκαιρία για την έξοδο της Κύπρου από την ενεργειακή απομόνωσή της, ως του μόνου κράτους μέλους της Ε.Ε., το οποίο δεν είναι διασυνδεμένο ηλεκτρικά (FM, 2021 & Jaradat, 2021).

Ο αγωγός ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης "EuroAfrica Interconnector" (Αίγυπτος-Κύπρος-Ελλάδα)

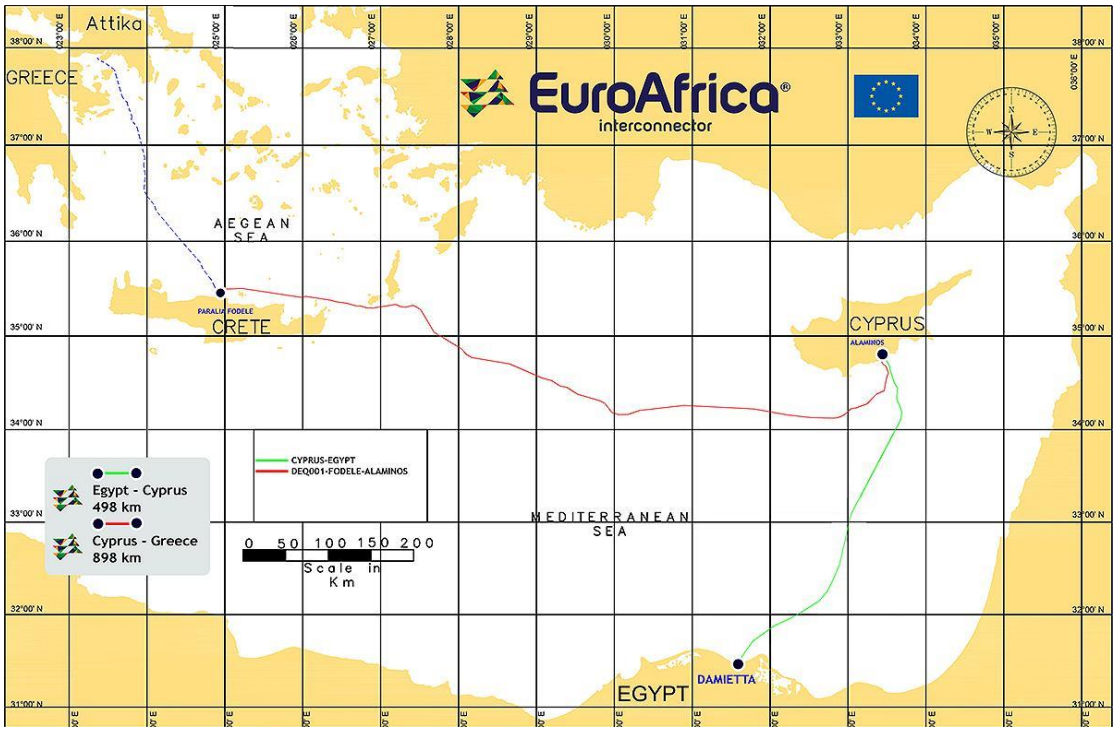
Παράλληλα, στο ψηφιδωτό της ενεργειακής διπλωματίας στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο ήρθε να προστεθεί η ανακοίνωση της υλοποίησης ενός έτερου αγωγού ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης. Ο λόγος γίνεται για τον αγωγό ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης Αιγύπτου-Κύπρου-Ελλάδος, γνωστό ως "EuroAfrica Interconnector". Μέσω του εν λόγω αγωγού, πλέον, πέραν της μεταφοράς ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας από Ανανεώσιμες Πηγές Ενέργειας από την Ασία, η Ευρώπη θα έχει τη δυνατότητα προμήθειας ενέργειας από την Βόρειο Αφρική, μέσω της Αιγύπτου. Ομοιοτρόπως, η Κύπρος θα καταστεί γέφυρα μεταφοράς επιτυγχάνοντας και ενισχύοντας την προοπτική εξόδου της από την ενεργειακή

[5] Πρόκειται για βάθος το οποίο είναι ίσο με το 8πλάσιο του ύψους του Empire State και το 9πλάσιο του Πύργου του Άιφελ (EuroAsia Interconnector, n.d. c)

απομόνωση, στην οποία είχε περιέλθει αρκετές δεκαετίες, ιδίως μετά την ένταξή της στην Ε.Ε. το έτος 2004.

Το εναρκτήριο λάκτισμα της πραγματοποίησης του εν λόγω εγχειρήματος έλαβε χώρα την 14η Οκτωβρίου του έτους 2021, στην Αθήνα, όταν οι Υπουργοί Ενέργειας της Αιγύπτου και της Ελλάδος υπέγραψαν μνημόνιο συνεργασίας για την έναρξη των διαπραγματεύσεων για μια διακυβερνητική συμφωνία και τη χρηματοδότηση του έργου με τη συμμετοχή από κοινού αξιωματούχων, διαχειριστών πηγών ενέργειας και ρυθμιστικών αρχών ενέργειας (Szymczak, 2021). Δύο ημέρες αργότερα, ήτοι την 16η Οκτωβρίου του ίδιου έτους, υπεγράφη αντίστοιχο μνημόνιο συνεργασίας μεταξύ των Υπουργών Ενέργειας Κύπρου και Αιγύπτου. Υπενθυμίζεται ότι, η Ελλάδα έχει οριοθετήσει μερικώς την A.O.Z. της με την Αίγυπτο[6], την 6η Αυγούστου του έτους 2020, η πρώτη μερική διμερής οριοθέτηση A.O.Z. της Ελλάδος γεγονός, το οποίο δημιουργεί ευλόγως αισιοδοξία για την πλήρη αποπεράτωση της οριοθέτησής της (Tsoukala, 2021).

Χάρτης 2: Ο διασυνδετήριος αγωγός ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας Αιγύπτου-Κύπρου-Ελλάδος "EuroAfrica Interconnector"



Πηγή: EuroAfrica Interconnector, n.d. b

[6] Η μερική διμερής οριοθέτηση της A.O.Z. Ελλάδος-Αιγύπτου αποτελεί την απάντηση από την ηγεσία της ελληνικής διπλωματίας και εξωτερικής πολιτικής απέναντι στο νομικώς ανυπόστατο Τουρκολιβυκό Μνημόνιο της 27ης Νοεμβρίου του έτους 2019 (Παυλόπουλος, 2020).

Σύμφωνα με τον ανωτέρω χάρτη, ο αγωγός "EuroAfrica Interconnector" θα καλύπτει απόσταση μήκους 1.396 χλμ.[7], ο οποίος θα χωρίζεται τμηματικά στο τμήμα Αίγυπτος-Κύπρος απόστασης 498 χλμ. και το τμήμα Κύπρος-Ελλάδα απόστασης 898 χλμ. (EuroAfrica Interconnector, n.d. b). Ομοίως με τον διασυνδετήριο αγωγό "EuroAsia Interconnector", ο αγωγός διασύνδεσης της Ευρώπης με την Β. Αφρική θα μεταφέρει ηλεκτρική ενέργεια στην ευρωπαϊκή αγορά μέσω καλωδίου Άμεσου Ρεύματος Υψηλής Τάσης (HVDC) 2 GW[8] με το χαμηλότερο σημείο υπό της θάλασσας να αγγίζει τα 3.000 μέτρα (Skopljak, 2022a). Αναφορικά με το χρονοδιάγραμμα του παρόντος εγχειρήματος, προβλέπεται ότι το τμήμα Αιγύπτου-Κύπρου (498 χλμ.) θα αποπερατωθεί τον Δεκέμβριο τ.ε., ενώ το τμήμα Ελλάδος-Κύπρου (898 χλμ.) θα ακολουθήσει με την πλήρη αποπεράτωση του πρώτου σταδίου του αγωγού, κόστους 2.5 δις Ευρώ, να τοποθετείται τον Δεκέμβριο του έτους 2023 (EuroAfrica Interconnector, n.d. a).

Με την συμφωνία, η οποία υπεγράφη την 19 Οκτωβρίου του έτους 2021, οι ηγέτες της Αιγύπτου, της Ελλάδος και της Κύπρου επισφράγισαν τις ήδη δομημένες και στενές διακρατικές σχέσεις σε διπλωματικό επίπεδο (Hendawi, 2021). Με τον εν λόγω διασυνδετήριο αγωγό, η Αίγυπτος θα προμηθεύει την αγορά της Ευρώπης με ηλεκτρικής ενέργεια, η οποία θα προέρχεται πλειοψηφικά από ηλιακή ενέργεια (AFP, 2021). Εν ολίγοις, με την ανωτέρω συμφωνία και την πραγματοποίηση του αγωγού "EuroAfrica Interconnector" επιτυγχάνεται η ενδυνάμωση της συνεργασίας στην ενεργειακή ασφάλεια τόσο μεταξύ των συμβαλλομένων κρατών-μερών όσο και της ίδιας της Ευρώπης, εν συνόλω.

Τα οφέλη της «διπλωματίας των αγωγών» στην υφιστάμενη πραγματικότητα

Σταχυολογώντας τα όσα εκτέθηκαν εξάγονται ορισμένες σκέψεις για την αξιοποίηση της επονομαζόμενης «διπλωματίας των αγωγών», τόσο σε επίπεδο συνεργασιών των ανωτέρω κρατών όσο και σε επίπεδο πράσινης ανάπτυξης στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο. Είναι γνωστό ότι, τα κοιτάσματα υδρογονανθράκων και το φυσικό αέριο ήδη έχουν δημιουργήσει ένα δυναμικό πεδίο ενεργειακής διπλωματίας μεταξύ Ελλάδος, Κύπρου, Ισραήλ και Αιγύπτου. Παρόλα αυτά, το φυσικό αέριο έχει χαρακτηριστεί από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, ως μεταβατική πηγή ενέργειας, ως «γέφυρα», η οποία θα συνδράμει στην ενεργειακή μετάβαση προς τις ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας (Stergiou, 2019).

Με την σταδιακή υλοποίηση των εγχειρημάτων των διασυνδετήριων αγωγών "EuroAsia Interconnector" και "EuroAfrica Interconnector" η Κύπρος τίθεται σε τροχιά εξόδου από το

[7] Ο εναρκτήριος σταθμός από όπου θα εκκινεί η παροχή ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας θα είναι η περιοχή Damietta (Αίγυπτος), ενδιάμεσο σταθμό θα αποτελεί το σημείο Κοφίνου (Κύπρος) και θα καταλήγει στο σημείο Κορακιά (Κρήτη) με προορισμό την Αττική και την Ευρώπη, εν συνεχεία (EuroAfrica Interconnector, n.d. b).
[8] Τα 2.000 MW (2GW) είναι αρκετά για να ηλεκτροδοτήσουν επαρκώς από κοινού τη Μαδρίτη και το Βερολίνο (EuroAfrica Interconnector, n.d. c).

καθεστώς ενεργειακής απομόνωσης, στο οποίο βρίσκεται ακόμη, καθώς επίσης θα βελτιωθεί η ανταγωνιστικότητα της εγχώριας ηλεκτρικής αγοράς (WEC, 2021). Με τα πλούσια κοιτάσματα στην Α.Ο.Ζ. της και τη γεωπολιτική της θέση, δικαίως η Κύπρος έχει χαρακτηριστεί ως «ενεργειακό νησί» (Westphal, K. et al., 2022). Συνεκδοχικά, το Ισραήλ έχει ήδη θέσει ως στόχο τη μείωση των εκπομπών, οι οποίες προκαλούν το φαινόμενο του θερμοκηπίου, σε ποσοστο 80% συνολικά και 75%-80% στον ηλεκτρικό τομέα, με χρονικό άξονα το έτος 2050, ενώ, παράλληλα, επιδιώκει στο εγγύς μέλλον τη μείωση των εν λόγω εκπομπών σε ποσοστό 30% έως το 2030, αποφάσεις και πολιτικές, οι οποίες θα πρέπει να τηρήσουν το συγκεκριμένο χρονοδιάγραμμα αποφασιστικά (WEC, 2021c).

Έτι περαιτέρω, η υλοποίηση -τουλάχιστον σε πρώτο στάδιο- των διασυνδετήριων αγωγών στα προβλεπόμενα χρονοδιαγράμματα, ήτοι το έτος 2025 για τον αγωγό "EuroAsia Interconnector" και το έτος 2023 για τον αγωγό "EuroAfrica Interconnector θα συνδράμει στην προμήθεια και την ενεργειακή ασφάλεια της Ευρωπαϊκής Εσωτερικής Αγοράς. Χρησιμοποιώντας το ήδη διαθέσιμο φυσικό αέριο καθώς και τις ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας της Κύπρου, της Αιγύπτου και του Ισραήλ θα δημιουργηθεί ένας διάδρομος ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας προς την Ευρώπη συνεπικουρώντας στην επίτευξη τουλάχιστον 15% ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης μεταξύ των κρατών μελών της Ε.Ε. στόχος, ο οποίος έχει τεθεί για το διάστημα έως το 2030 (European Commission, Directorate-General for Energy, 2019).

Συνακόλουθα, η αξιοποίηση των ως άνω περιγραφόμενων εγχειρημάτων ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης από τα εμπλεκόμενα κράτη θα ενισχύσει την ενεργειακή αυτονομία και ασφάλεια εφοδιασμού των επιμέρους συστημάτων τους. Κατόπιν όσων προαναφέρθηκαν, γίνεται εύληπτο ότι η ηλεκτρική διασύνδεση της Ευρώπης με την Β. Αφρική, μέσω της Αιγύπτου και με την Μέση Ανατολή, μέσω του Ισραήλ θα δημιουργήσει αυτόνομα και πράσινα δίκτυα ενεργειακής ροής πολλών κατευθύνσεων. Άλλωστε, ήδη από το 2019, η Αίγυπτος έχει επιτύχει την ενεργειακή της αυτονομία σε φυσικό αέριο και ηλεκτρική ενέργεια καθιστώντας την ως κράτος έναν αμιγώς ενεργειακό εξαγωγέα (Tanchum, 2021 & WEC, 2021b). Λαμβάνοντας υπ'όψιν το γεγονός αυτό, γίνεται ευλόγως αντιληπτό ότι ο προσανατολισμός της ενεργειακής διπλωματίας της Αιγύπτου αποτελεί ζήτημα μείζονος σημασίας κατ΄ενάσκηση της εξωτερικής πολιτικής από πλευράς της Ε.Ε. (Tanchum, 2020).

Στο σημείο αυτό χρήζει ιδιαίτερης μνείας η ευρύτερη προσπάθεια και απόφαση της Ε.Ε. για τη σταδιακή και αποφασιστική απεξάρτηση της ευρωπαϊκής αγοράς ενέργειας από τα ορυκτά καύσιμα και το φυσικό αέριο της Ρωσικής Ομοσπονδίας. Αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή έχει παρουσιάσει την 18η Μαΐου 2022 το στρατηγικό σχέδιό της για την επίτευξη της ανωτέρω προσπάθειας, το οποίο τιτλοφορείται "REPowerEU". Η νέα ευρωπαϊκή στρατηγική έχει διττό σκοπό, αφενός την ενεργειακή απεξάρτηση από τη Ρωσία και αφετέρου την αντιμετώπιση της κλιματικής

κρίσης (European Commission, 2022). Τόσο ο διασυνδετήριος αγωγός της Ευρώπης με το Ισραήλ όσο και εκείνος με την Αίγυπτο αποτελούν έργα, τα οποία θα συνεπικουρήσουν στην εν λόγω ενεργειακή στρατηγική της Ε.Ε.. Προς επίρρωση τούτου, δια στόματος της Προέδρου της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, Ursula von der Layen, υπογραμμίστηκε χαρακτηριστικά η σημασία του έργου του "EuroAsia Interconnector", ο οποίος έλαβε χρηματοδότηση -για το τμήμα σύνδεσης της Κύπρου με την Κρήτη- ύψους 657 δις Ευρώ, ως υποδομή κοινής ωφέλειας της Ε.Ε. (Project of Common Interest) για την πραγμάτωση της ενεργειακής αυτονομίας της (Skopljak, 2022b). Ως εκ τούτου, γίνεται αντιληπτό ότι η υλοποίηση των διασυνδετήριων αγωγών έχει εξέχουσα σημασία για την ευρύτερη στρατηγική προς την επίτευξη της ενεργειακής αυτονομίας της Ε.Ε. από τους ενεργειακούς πόρους (λ.χ. πετρέλαιο, φυσικό αέριο) της Ρωσικής Ομοσπονδίας.

Συνακόλουθα, εν όψει της επερχόμενης συνόδου των Η.Ε. για την Κλιματική Αλλαγή (UNFCCC COP 27), η οποία θα φιλοξενηθεί στο Sharm El-Sheikh (7-11.11.2022), της Αιγύπτου, δημιουργείται η κατάλληλη ευκαιρία για την Ελλάδα και την Κύπρο να εκμεταλλευθούν το διάλογο με μία χώρα, η οποία έχει επιτύχει τη συνέργεια μεταξύ της ανάπτυξης των υποδομών φυσικού αερίου και της πράσινης ενεργειακής μετάβασης (Tanchum, 2022). Με αναβαθμισμένο ρόλο στην πράσινη μετάβαση με την χρήση φυσικού αέριου, η Αίγυπτος αποτελεί τον κατάλληλο ενεργειακό εταίρο για την Ελλάδα και την Κύπρο, οι οποίες θα πρέπει να στρέψουν την εξωτερική πολιτική τους και την ενεργειακή διπλωματία προς την ενδυνάμωση των σχέσεών τους.

Τέλος, εκτός της γεωπολιτικής και ενεργειακής αναβάθμισης της Ελλάδος και της Κύπρου, η υλοποίηση των αγωγών θα έχει ως αποτέλεσμα την επίλυση και την επικουρική αρωγή στην κοινωνία, το περιβάλλον και την οικονομία των εμπλεκόμενων κρατών. Με γνώμονα την Εταιρική Κοινωνική Υπευθυνότητα, η επιδίωξη των φορέων και των εμπλεκόμενων εταιριών μέσα από το εγχείρημα των διασυνδετήριων αγωγών είναι και η αντιμετώπιση ζητημάτων σε επίπεδο περιβάλλοντος, οικονομίας και κοινωνικής αρωγής, όπως λ.χ. η προστασία του περιβάλλοντος και η προώθηση της πράσινης ενέργειας, μέσω της παραγωγής ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας από ΑΠΕ (Ανανεώσιμες Πηγές Ενέργειας), καθώς και η στήριξη και ανάπτυξη των τοπικών κοινωνιών μέσα από την σταδιακή αποπεράτωση των εργασιών. Ως εκ τούτου, η αξιοποίηση και η εκμετάλλευση των δυνατοτήτων τους θα αναβαθμίσει τα εμπλεκόμενα κράτη εκτός από εθνικό και σε τοπικό επίπεδο.

Προτάσεις πολιτικής

Ολοκληρώνοντας, υπό το πρίσμα των τελευταίων εξελίξεων στις σχέσεις των εν λόγω κρατών κρίνεται αναγκαία η προσήλωση στην αποπεράτωση των εγχειρημάτων των διασυνδετήριων αγωγών "EuroAsia Interconnector" και "EuroAfrica Interconnector". Αναφορικά με την υλοποίηση του

"EuroAfrica Interconnector", λαμβάνοντας υπόψιν τη συμφωνία μερικής οριοθέτησης της ελληνοαιγυπτιακής Α.Ο.Ζ. (Tsoukala, 2021), η ελληνική εξωτερική πολιτική θα πρέπει να επικεντρωθεί στην άσκηση της ενεργειακής διπλωματίας επί τη βάσει της γεωπολιτικής θέσης της Ελλάδος προκειμένου να ολοκληρώσει την οριοθέτηση της Α.Ο.Ζ. με την Αίγυπτο. Παρά το γεγονός ότι η συμφωνία εξασφαλίζει σε μεγάλο βαθμό τα συμφέροντα αμφότερων των κρατών, εντούτοις η μη ολοκλήρωση της οριοθετημένης περιοχής δύναται να δημιουργήσει κωλύματα στην πραγμάτωση του διασυνδετήριου αγωγού με την Αίγυπτο. Το όλο εγχείρημα του αγωγού ηλεκτρικής διασύνδεσης, Ελλάδος-Κύπρου-Αιγύπτου αποτελεί απτή επιβεβαίωση ότι τα τρία κράτη έχουν κοινά συμφέροντα και στον ενεργειακό τομέα, τα οποία μπορούν να προβάλλουν και να προεκτείνουν στο τραπέζι των διαπραγματεύσεων για την ολοκλήρωση της ελληνοαιγυπτιακής Α.Ο.Ζ.. Επί τη βάσει ενός τέτοιου διαλόγου και πολιτικής θα έχει γίνει ένα πολύ σημαντικό και δυναμικό βήμα για την οριοθέτηση της Α.Ο.Ζ. Ελλάδος-Κύπρου.

Συνεκδοχικά, όσον αφορά στην υλοποίηση του διασυνδετήριου αγωγού "EuroAsia Interconnector", δημιουργείται ικανό πεδίο διαλόγου και πολιτικών επιλογών προς την οδό του αγωγού φυσικού αερίου EastMed (Ισραήλ-Κύπρος-Ελλάδα-Ιταλία). Ο προσανατολισμός στον EastMed θα επιφέρει πολλαπλά οφέλη για τα εμπλεκόμενα μέρη στην περιοχή, δεδομένου του γεγονότος ότι η Α.Ο.Ζ. της Κύπρου και του Ισραήλ είναι πλούσιες σε κοιτάσματα φυσικού αερίου. Μέσα από τον μηχανισμό «3+1», στον οποίο συμμετέχουν οι Η.Π.Α. από κοινού με την Ελλάδα, την Κύπρο και το Ισραήλ, δημιουργείται πρόσφορο έδαφος άσκησης της ενεργειακής διπλωματίας για την αποπεράτωση στο εγγύς μέλλον του μεγαλόπνοου έργου του αγωγού. Σε κάθε περίπτωση η Ε.Ε. και οι Η.Π.Α. εφόσον επιθυμούν την απεξάρτηση της πρώτης από το ρωσικό φυσικό αέριο θα πρέπει να θέσουν τον διάλογο για τον αγωγό σε προτεραιότητα.

Με σημείο αναφοράς την αναβάθμιση του ενεργειακού ρόλου της Ελλάδος και της Κύπρου και της απτής εδραίωσης των τριμερών σχηματισμών Ισραήλ-Κύπρου-Ελλάδος και Αιγύπτου-Κύπρου-Ελλάδος, η υλοποίηση των διασυνδετήριων αγωγών ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας αποτελεί ευκαιρία δυναμικής παρουσίας των κρατών απέναντι στις μαξιμαλιστικές επιδιώξεις της γείτονος Τουρκίας. Εν κατακλείδι, η ενεργειακή διπλωματία και ειδικότερα η «διπλωματία των αγωγών» αναδεικνύεται σε κομβικής σημασίας άσκηση εξωτερικής πολιτικής στην περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου, ιδίως σε μία περίοδο έντονου κλυδωνισμού της ενεργειακής ασφάλειας στη διεθνή κοινότητα.

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Sub-Saharan Migrants in Morocco in an Era of Pandemics[1]

Wafae Lahrech[2]

Abstract

This study focuses on the socio-economic issues of the COVID-19 pandemic on the situation of sub-Saharan migrants (in great vulnerability) in Morocco. It also examines the effectiveness of the humanitarian responses of national and international institutions to the needs felt and expressed by migrants, and particularly sub-Saharan migrants. Migration dynamics are being challenged by the unprecedented - beyond borders - extension of the pandemic that are difficult to measure or prevent. This conditions the situation of sub-Saharans in Morocco between returning to their countries and experiencing an uncertain future in the country of stay.

Keywords: migration, sub-Saharans, migration management, humanitarian actions.

Les Migrants Subsahariens au Maroc à l'ère des Pandémies

Wafae Lahrech

Résumé

Cette étude s'intéresse aux enjeux socio-économiques de la pandémie du Covid-19 sur la situation des migrants subsahariens (en grande vulnérabilité) au Maroc. Elle permet, en outre, d'examiner l'efficacité des réponses, humanitaires des institutions nationales et internationales, aux besoins ressentis et exprimés par les migrants notamment subsahariens. La dynamique migratoire est remise en question, par l'extension inédite hors frontières, des pandémies de portée mondiales difficiles à mesurer ou à prévenir. Ceci conditionne la situation des subsahariens au Maroc entre le retour à leurs pays ou un avenir incertain dans le pays de séjour.

Mots clés: migrations, subsahariens, gestion migratoire, actions humanitaires.

Introduction

Le Maroc, pays d'émigration par excellence, est devenu depuis le début de ce siècle une terre de transit voire d'accueil pour des ressortissants de différentes nationalités, notamment les subsahariens. La transition migratoire et la recomposition des migrations contemporaines ont été à la base des flux de migrants subsahariens qui préfèrent y séjourner temporairement ou définitivement. Les facteurs déterminants dans l'immigration des subsahariens au Maroc résident particulièrement dans:

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- Sa position géographique stratégique, étant donné que le royaume marocain est un pays africain à proximité de l'Espagne/l'Europe. En outre, l'accès à son territoire, n'est pas soumis aux conditions de visas pour la majorité des pays subsahariens.
- La stabilité politique et socio-économique par rapport à la région africaine est la caractéristique essentielle du Maroc durant et après l'avènement du printemps arabe, et les violations des principes démocratiques accompagnées de guerres civiles dans le reste de l'Afrique.
- La coopération sud-sud sur les questions migratoires, qui est fondée sur un partenariat de solidarité, et de la promotion des droits de l'homme dans le cadre d'intégration régionale.

Etant ainsi, le territoire marocain est caractérisé par des mouvements de subsahariens volontaires et forcés, régulières et irrégulières. Dans ce contexte, le Maroc bien qu'il n'ait pas un statut de pays traditionnel d'immigration, a adopté en 2013 une stratégie d'immigration et d'asile, compte tenu de l'importance de la question migratoire qui s'est imposé sur la scène politique et médiatique marocaine.

Ainsi, le royaume du Maroc a opté pour une approche globale et humaniste de la gestion migratoire reposant sur le respect des droits humains, en introduisant des possibilités de régularisation des subsahariens en situation irrégulière. En conséquence, il a entrepris des mesures structurelles visant l'intégration des migrants subsahariens résidant temporairement ou définitivement au Maroc.

Toutefois, la déclaration de l'organisation mondiale de la santé d'une pandémie de portée internationale en mars 2020, a amené le Maroc à initier un processus de prévention de la propagation du Covid-19. La fermeture des frontières terrestres, aériennes et maritimes s'est imposée en mars 2020, ainsi qu'un confinement progressif de la population.

Ces conditions sanitaires sans précédent, ont mis à l'épreuve la gouvernance migratoire du pays pendant une période d'incertitude. Cela dit, L'action humanitaire des acteurs œuvrant dans le domaine migratoire a été perturbée par l'immobilité qui a entravé l'aide à la communauté étrangère en détresse notamment les subsahariens.

Partant de là, nous nous interrogeons sur les réponses de la politique migratoire du Maroc au nouveau contexte mondial de la mobilité humaine en cas des pandémies. Est-ce que les actions menées par les acteurs concernés répondent aux besoins ressentis et exprimés par les migrants et réfugiés durant la pandémie? Nous nous sommes basés dans cette étude, sur les rapports des instances nationales et internationales compétentes pour se procurer les données sur la situation des subsahariens au Maroc.

Les enjeux des restrictions sanitaires sur le séjour des migrants subsahariens

La pandémie du Covid-19 a créé une situation exceptionnelle dans le monde entier. Le processus de riposte au Covid-19 a été presque unanime à l'échelle internationale. Un ralentissement des mouvements migratoires a été opéré dans la plupart des pays du monde. La dynamique migratoire a été influencée, dans la mesure où des conditions drastiques à la liberté de circulation interne et internationale ont été mises en place, pour éviter l'expansion de la pandémie.

De ce fait, Le Maroc a développé un plan national anti-covid qui s'est traduit par l'état d'urgence sanitaire toujours en vigueur. Les liaisons aériennes, maritimes et terrestres ont été saturé, et un isolement des habitants du royaume marocain. L'arrêt des activités professionnelles ou le travail à distance (la fermeture des établissements scolaires, des restaurants, des entreprises…) a eu un impact sur les conditions de vie des migrants subsahariens installés au Marc, qui présentent différentes catégories[3]. La plupart sont dans les secteurs de commerce et des services (formels et informels) influencés par les mesures sanitaires.

Tableau 1: Les principales activités de la population subsahariennes au Maroc

Secteur d'activités les plus communs chez les migrants subsahariens au Maroc		Pourcentage %
Commerce (secteur formel)	1,93	
Commerce (secteur informel)	28,59	30,52
Services (secteur formel)	17,01	
Services (secteur informel)	37,39	54,40
BTP		8,81
Total		93,73

Source: Mourji. F, Ferrié. J.N, Radi. S, Alioua. M. 2016.

La population subsaharienne varie entre travailleurs qualifiés et peu qualifiés (les tâches manuelles ne permettant pas de travailler à distance comme le BTP). Elle est surreprésentée en fonction de téléopérateur dans des centres d'appel (salariés). De ce fait, elle a été moins en mesure de travailler à

[3] On y trouve des étudiants, des jeunes professionnels, des mineurs isolés, des demandeurs d'asile, des réfugiés, et des personnes en situation irrégulière soit dès l'accès au pays, ou très souvent, durant leur séjour prolongé après l'expiration de la validité de leurs documents.

distance et donc, susceptible d'être exposés au virus, eu égard que les centres d'appel au Maroc ont continué à assurer ‘’le service client’’ malgré le strict confinement (TelQuel, 2020).

D'autre part, les moins qualifiés pratiquent des métiers indépendants et instables avec des bas salaires et exclus du système de protection sociale (une situation socio-économique critique). Autrement dit, ces migrants, soit encourent le risque d'une contamination sérieuse, soit privés de ressources financières et manquent d'un environnement d'hygiène adapté.

L'accès aux aides caritatives et sociales qui assurent les services de base de certains subsahariens, s'est avéré difficile durant la période du confinement généralisé, outre la perturbation des canaux de distribution. Environ 20.000 migrants essentiellement des subsahariens, en situation d'urgence humanitaire, ont été recensés en 2020 (journal le Monde, 14 mai 2020)

En outre, la communauté subsaharienne se caractérise par la particularité de recevoir de l'aide financière étrangère dont 13,3% de leurs pays d'origine et 1,4% d'organisations étrangères, au lieu d'être une source de contribution au développement de leurs pays d'origine par les transferts de fonds à l'instar des diasporas des pays d'émigration. L'aide financière étrangère a atteint 32,3% parmi les maliens, 29 ,5% parmi les centrafricains, et 15,1% parmi les ivoiriens. Seulement 12,5 des ressortissants subsahariens ont transféré de l'argent à l'étranger (HCP, 2021)[4].

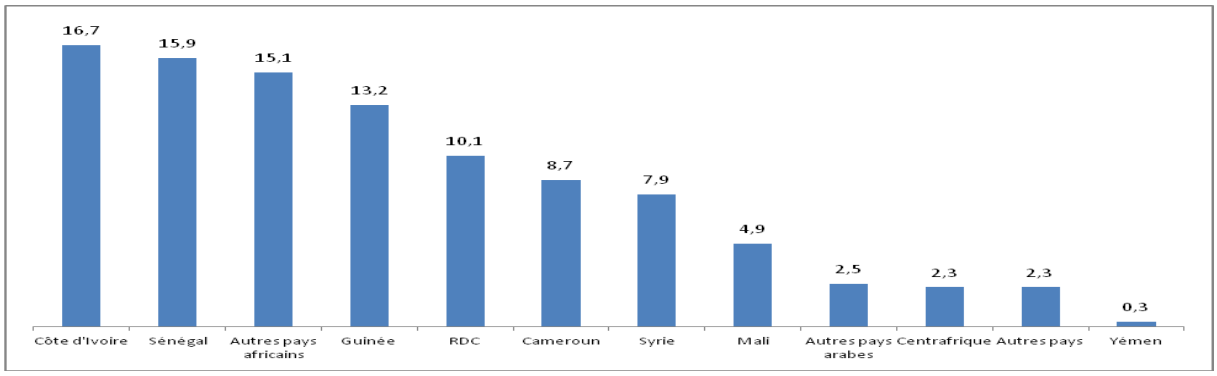
Par ailleurs, les logements occupés par les migrants subsahariens (95,7% en location, HCP, 2021) connaissent un surpeuplement rendant impossible le respect des mesures anti- Covid-19, et la distanciation sociale. La majorité se regroupe en chambre collective. Alors que les ménages subsahariens habitent une seule pièce.

La situation des sans-papiers est critique, puisqu'ils se réunissent dans des campements sans équipements ni produits de première nécessité, faute de moyens d'un logement, et nécessitant en plus des garanties, et un contrat de bail.

Les données de l'enquête du haut-commissariat au plan marocain (HCP) sur la migration, démontrent que la plupart des personnes en situation irrégulière ou régularisées sont des subsahariens. Cela dit, l'accès au processus sanitaire en cas de pandémie est inaccessible à tous en raison de la difficulté d'un chiffrage exact de leur nombre, et de leur situation de détresse.

[4] Une enquête sur la migration forcée, du Haut-commissariat au plan (HCP) en 2021, a ciblé les migrants subsahariens en situation administrative irrégulière, ceux régularisés lors deux campagnes de régularisations, les réfugiés et les demandeurs d'asile (conformément à l'approche méthodologique programme de coopération statistique Euro-méditerranéen (MEDSTAT).

Graphique 1: Migrants régularisés ou en situation irrégulière selon le pays d'origine (%)



Source: HCP (2021)

Malgré la crise sanitaire, le nombre des réfugiés et demandeurs d'asile a augmenté pour passer de 6,6 mille en 2019 à 8,2 mille en 2020 (Haut-commissariat pour les réfugiés : HCR).

Tableau 2: Nationalités des demandeurs d'asile et réfugiés subsahariens au Maroc (UNHCR, septembre 2020)

Pays	Demandeurs d'asile	Réfugiés	Total
République centrafricaine	0	754	754
Côte d'Ivoire	625	351	976
République démocratique du Congo	149	179	328
Cameroun	885	135	1020
Guinée	1251	96	1347

Source: UNHCR (2020)

Par ailleurs, il est à relever que la levée des restrictions sanitaires a été partielle et progressive. Nonobstant le renforcement et l'extension des dépistages, la vaccination, et la délivrance des documents de santé numériques en l'occurrence ''le passeport sanitaire'', le contrôle sanitaire lié à certaines formes de déplacement des personnes, est toujours en vigueur, en réponse à l'évolution des défis de santé publique. Un ralentissement de la mobilité à l'extérieur du pays est constaté, et le retour au rythme migratoire pré-pandémie n'est pas inscrit à l'ordre du jour des pouvoirs publics.

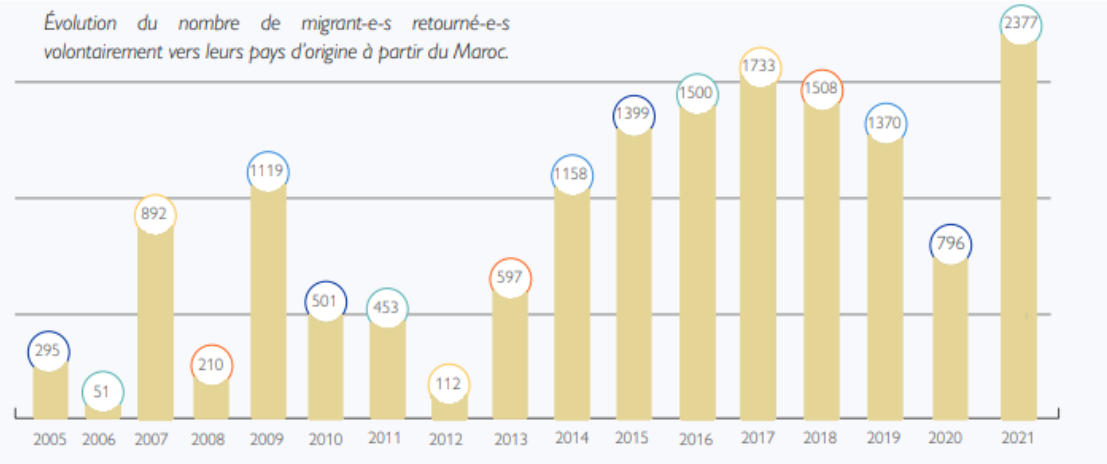
La portée des actions humanitaires dans le cadre de la gouvernance des migrations au Maroc

Le confinement sanitaire a eu des répercussions néfastes sur l'état psychologique des migrants (l'anxiété, la dépression et la peur ou le sentiment d'insécurité). Cependant, l'influence de la

pandémie du Covid-19 sur le projet migratoire est nuancée selon les catégories de migrants. Les réfugiés notamment arabes considèrent à (75,7%) que la crise sanitaire est sans grand impact sur leur projet migratoire, contrairement aux migrants irréguliers qui sont à (66,3%). Ils sont généralement des subsahariens à éprouver des difficultés à poursuivre ledit projet, surtout chez les maliens (38,4%) (HCP, 2021).

Dans ce contexte, l'Organisation internationale pour les migrations au Maroc (OIM) avec la coopération des entités spécialisées, a invité les migrants exprimant leur volonté de retourner dans leurs pays, de les assister dans le cadre du programme d'Aide au Retour Volontaire et à la Réintégration (AVRR)[5]. A ce titre, le nombre de migrants manifestant leur intention de rentrer, a augmenté en 2021, eu égard à l'aggravation de leur situation suite aux conséquences de la pandémie (comme illustré ci-après).

Graphique 2: bénéficiaires AVRR



Source: OIM (2021)

Ces retours peuvent être à titre individuel, collectif, ou communautaire. D'après le rapport de l'OIM (2021) les ressortissants subsahariens (entre 19 et 35 ans) sont les plus nombreux à demander l'aide au retour. En 2021, 2,377 migrants (dont 1,767 hommes et 610 femmes) ont bénéficié du retour vers leurs pays (22 pays d'origine). Presque 95% de ces retours, ont été opérés depuis le Maroc vers les pays subsahariens.

[5] Il s'agit d'un programme mis en œuvre au Maroc depuis 2005, par l'OIM en étroite collaboration avec le Ministère de l'Intérieur, le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, de la Coopération Africaine et des Marocains Résidants à l'Etranger, et les représentations diplomatiques des pays d'origine ou d'accueil des migrants assistés. Il est destiné à accompagner les migrants en situation de vulnérabilité et en détresse en leur apportant une assistance humanitaire, administrative, logistique et financière tout au long de la procédure de retour volontaire

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Cette possibilité contribue à une réintégration éventuellement durable du fait qu'elle permet aux migrants d'atteindre un seuil d'autonomie économique, et de stabilité sociale dans les pays d'origine des migrants, et de ce fait écarter la possibilité d'émigrer par nécessité.

Sur un autre volet, la moitié des migrants séjournant au Maroc pendant le confinement sanitaire ont reçu un appui matériel dont 67,9% ont estimé insuffisant par rapport à leurs besoins (HCP, 2021). Le nombre de migrants bénéficiant du soutien d'instances gouvernementales s'élève à 18,3% (HCP, 2021) que ce soit de façon permanente ou discontinue. Les bénéficiaires sont essentiellement des réfugiés (en raison de l'impossibilité du retour aux pays d'origine) et des femmes migrantes (eu égard aux vulnérabilités et violences liées à l'approche genre). Ces subventions reçues par les migrants sont en espèce, en nourriture, en soins de santé, ou sous forme d'études pour les migrants ou leurs enfants.

Tableau 3: Migrants (%) selon les aides reçues des instances gouvernementales au Maroc et le pays d'origine

Pays d'origine du migrant	Non	Oui, régulièrement	Oui, parfois	Total
Syrie	72,9	14,2	12,8	100,0
Côte d'Ivoire	88,1	3,5	8,4	100,0
Sénégal	89,0	1,4	9,6	100,0
Guinée	89,7	1,5	8,8	100,0
RDC	82,6	1,4	16,0	100,0
Cameroun	87,1	1,7	11,3	100,0
Centrafrique	78,9	10,6	10,5	100,0
Mali	81,1	6,0	12,9	100,0
Yémen	59,1	26,3	14,6	100,0
Autres africains	78,3	8,9	12,7	100,0
Autres arabes	80,9	12,7	6,4	100,0
Autres pays	94,7	-	5,3	100,0
Ensemble	81,8	7,0	11,2	100,0

Source: HCP (2021)

D'autre part, l'appui financier des entités non gouvernementales, des institutions étrangères et des personnes impliquées dans le devoir humain a constitué un grand soulagement pour la communauté des migrants au Maroc (nationalités confondues). En effet, Près de la moitié des migrants ont reçu une aide d'une personne, d'un ménage ou d'une ONG au Maroc, ces aides ont profité beaucoup plus aux réfugiés, aux personnes âgées et aux syriens (HCP, 2021).

Tableau 4: Migrants (%) selon les aides reçues des ménages ou des ONG au Maroc, le sexe et l'âge

Variables	Modalité	ONG / Association internationale	ONG/ Association marocaine	Ménages	Autres entités	Ensemble
Sexe	Masculin	20,8	13,2	10,4	0,7	45,1
	Féminin	18,8	17,9	13,1	1,0	50,8
Age	15-29	19,5	15,7	10,1	0,9	46,2
	30-44	18,5	14,2	12,3	0,7	45,7
	45-59	25,2	16,1	12,1	0,8	54,2
	60 et plus	30,7	20,2	18,3	1,6	70,8
Total		20,0	15,1	11,5	0,8	47,4

Source: HCP (2021)

A ce titre, l'OIM, en coordination avec les acteurs locaux œuvrant dans le domaine migratoire, a mis en œuvre un programme ''protection et résilience Maroc'' financé par l'union européenne afin de répondre aux demandes d'aides qui ont augmenté pendant et après le confinement sanitaire chez la population migrante au royaume marocain.

Conclusion

La pandémie du Covid a eu des retombées très ressenties sur le séjour de la communauté subsaharienne au Maroc. Ces migrants qui se distinguent par la diversité des formes de migration au Maroc (volontaire, forcée, légale et irrégulière) ont tous souffert des restrictions sanitaires inédites, particulièrement chez les groupes en grande vulnérabilités tels les migrants en situation administrative irrégulière et les réfugiés, et bien évidemment chez les femmes plus que chez les hommes, compte tenu du sexisme. En général, les barrières linguistiques et l'isolement ont entravé l'accès à l'information et aux prestations de service. Les réponses apportées par des actions humanitaires des acteurs nationaux et internationaux pour la couverture de certains besoins d'une partie de cette population s'avèrent peu adaptées à la particularité de la pandémie. Les solutions doivent être durables dans le sens d'une inclusion socio-économique et culturelle à l'ère de l'intelligence artificielle, et d'une assistance socio-psychologique considérant la migration comme un choix profitant à tous (pays d'origine, pays d'accueil, et migrants) et non pas une nécessité subie par les conditions précaires des migrants que ce soit dans le pays de départ ou de séjour.

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Topic 6
Internal and External Affairs of the European Union

EU Searching for Gatekeepers: Lebanon in European Externalized Migration Management [1]

Angeliki Anna Andreou[2]

Abstract

Today 1 per 5 people in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee. Lebanon, largely impacted by the Syrian-refugee crisis, followed a "non-policy" and later confining policy for refugees-management. Based on the EU Global Strategy of 2016, migration is identified as principal threat for European security. Recently, EU has exerted its external migration governance in refugee-hosting countries like Lebanon. Having the Union implemented a resilience-building approach, which ended up ignoring the Lebanese system's structural deficiencies and not accomplishing the desired outcomes, this Policy Brief recommends:

- Establishment of legal binding EU-Lebanon refugee governance agreement
- Further EIDHR funding conditional to human rights and good governance alignment
- Incentives to Lebanese private sector for refugees' recruitment

Keywords: Lebanon, European Union, refugee crisis, Externalization of migration, EU-Lebanon Compact, Migration Policy, resilience, Non-policy Policy.

Introduction

In 2011, the Civil War in belligerent Syria caused one of the greatest crises in EU's history. Refugee flows started arriving tumultuously on European coasts, transferring terrorists, their ideas and menacing its peace. Being undoubtedly the aftermath of Arab uprisings, refugee crisis got Europe vulnerable to external destabilization.

Unfortunately, the European response to the crisis, was incoherent, lacking a solid legal framework of solidarity and mutual action among the member-states. The most prominent strategy, that EU adopted and realizes till nowadays, is the "externalization of migration". This strategy, also reflected on the 2020-introduced "New Pact on Migration and Asylum", is conceived as expanding the EU border control policies and management to the hosting third countries of the neighborhood. Attempting to adapt to the new geopolitical and socioeconomic challenges, the Union followed a "resilience-building" approach through fueling third-countries as Lebanon with developmental and humanitarian aid, to address the continuous refugee waves to its external borders and ensure refugees' right of protection.

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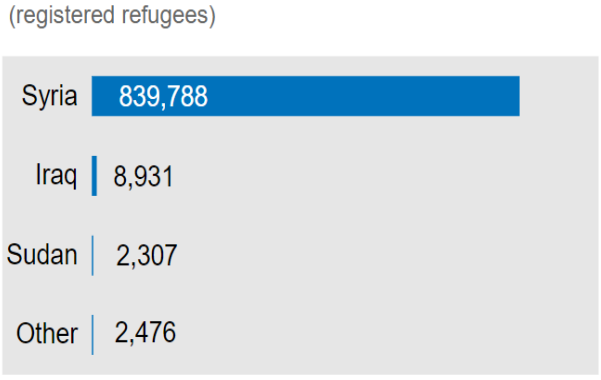
Lebanon has been extremely affected by the Syrian War and its displacement consequences. Recently Lebanon underwent internal instability, paralyzing the country and its state-apparatus. The country hosts the highest number of Syrian refugees, which represents the 25% of Lebanon's total population, putting in danger the state's consistency and well-functioning. Except of the absence of specific legislation concerning refugee governance, the initial welcoming Lebanese approach was finally replaced by a securitized policy towards the displaced Syrians which led to illegal returns and social exclusion.

Under these circumstances, EU pursues to contain Syrian refugees in Lebanon. This is why it upgraded Lebanon to a strategic partner in ENP framework and prioritized their cooperation, by providing specialized funding for state/capacity-building (Pelayo, 2021). The Association Agreement, EU-Lebanon Compact and Partnership Priorities are documents that spell that. However, the Union seems to be stuck in its resilience-based approach, ignoring the Lebanese government's violations of refugees' rights, setting European interest above principles.

Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

Lebanon, bordering Syria, is at the forefront of refugees' massive influx, being the largest refugee-hosting country. The government claims that the Syrian refugees reach at 1.5 million, among them only 840,000 have been registered by the UNHCR, while the Lebanese are approximately 5.5 million (UNHCR, 2022). The numerical gap arises from the relevant 2015 decision, UNHCR to shut down the registration of Syrian refugees.

Figure 1: Registered Refugees in Lebanon 2022



* *Registration figures as of 31 January 2022*

Source: UNHCR, 2022

Lebanese Response

Since the dawn of Syrian war, Lebanon has embraced a "non-policy" policy. In fact, substantial domestic legislation for refugees' governance and asylum procedures is absent. That case worsens the reception, integration and protection of the "newcomers", which thus are regulated by immigration laws, like the 1962 Law (Parisoli, 2018). At the beginning, Lebanon maintained an "open-door" policy, permitting the unimpeded access of displaced Syrians across its territory. Such a thing is interpreted through the bilateral agreements between Syria and Lebanon for free movement of people back in 1990s (Facon, 2020). Although the state is not signatory of the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol relating to refugee status, it outsourced RSD responsibilities in

UNHCR, after the 2003 MoU (Fakhoury, 2020). The MoU along with the "non-encampment" Lebanese policy reaffirmed the perception of temporariness of refugees stay, by denying the establishment of refugee camps, contrary to Turkey and Jordan (Seeberg, 2018).

What changed?

Nevertheless, in 2014 Lebanon proceeded with a U-turn by exerting rigorous rhetoric towards refugees, imposing restrictive measures in cross-border mobility from Syria and retaking the primary authority on RSD activities from UNHCR. The government inaugurated a strict framework for acquiring refugees' legal residency, which now was based on "entry categories" (e.g. tourism, shopping, extreme humanitarian cases etc.) (De Bel-Air, 2017).

The shift in Lebanese policy is the inevitable result of securitization of refugees. Since then, refugees constitute a direct threat to Lebanese societal and political stability and welfare. In 2015, the government rejected the term "refugee" used by the international community and endorsed the term "temporarily displaced Syrians" declaring its hostile attitude. Refugees got marginalized and blamed for a myriad of domestic problems.

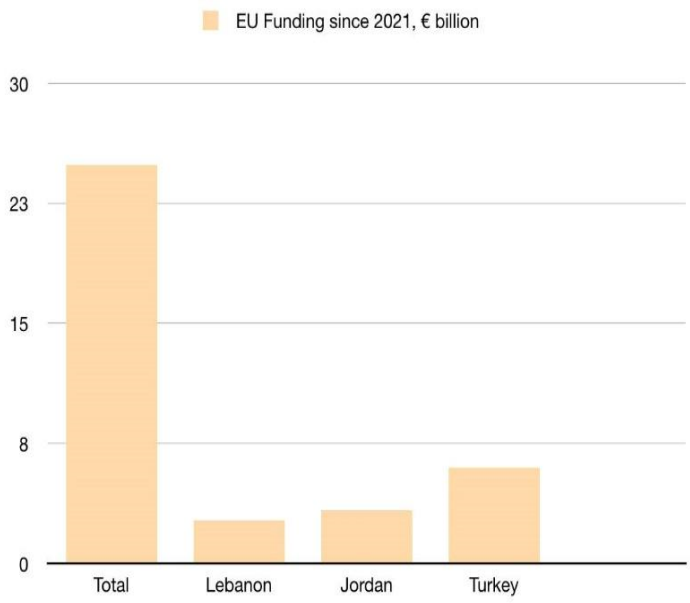
After all, the Lebanese Civil War, attributed to the Palestinian refugee crisis, was still vivid on locals' memories. In 2015, the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) was launched. The Lebanese government insisted on the temporary nature of refugees' stay and later in 2016 moved to illegal repatriations despite the ongoing war in Syria and the absence of safe conditions, under the umbrella of "voluntary returns" (Facon, 2020).

EU External Migration Policy

The European scheme concerning migration and asylum was largely regulated by the Dublin Convention and its reforms. Nevertheless, that was not efficient enough, owing to the widespread fragmentation and lack of alignment among the distinct migration policies of member-states. In the last six-year period, EU emphasized the external dimension of the refugee flows' European governance, by responsibilizing the hosting-countries of its Southern-neighborhood (Fakhoury & Stel, 2022). The aim is one; the elimination of refugees' arrivals in EU, by absorbing them in local societies of safe-third-countries. EU offers financial and operational aid and trade facilitations aspiring for resilience-building in exchange for "refugee containment" by third-countries (Pelayo, 2021).

Resilience-building in Lebanon

Figure 2: EU Funding towards hosting countries



Source: Commission, 2020

In the case of Lebanon, EU very early recognized its vital role in "keeping migrants out" of Europe, being the No1 donor. The ENP scheme facilitated funding and capacity-building under the auspices of the 2006 "Association Agreement" and high-level meetings of the Association Council for mutually addressing the crisis. Therefore, since 2011 EU has channeled significant funding to consolidate Lebanese statal resilience and ameliorate the living conditions of refugees and vulnerable Lebanese, triggering growth and employment. Out of the total contribution of €24.9 billion to hosting-states for tackling the crisis, EU has allocated till nowadays €2.4 billion in Lebanon (Commission, 2020). That funding was offered under the guise of humanitarian aid, mirroring the amount of €722 million. At first sight, EU was criticized for unfairly focusing on refugees, passing over the depraved Lebanese whose lives got importantly affected by the crisis. Consequently, the assistance targeted both Syrians and vulnerable locals.

Figure 3: EU Funding activities towards

Source: EEAS, 2021

The resilience-driven European intervention in Lebanon seeks to form a stable state, capable of absorbing the Syrian displacement and its deficiencies and not diffusing them to the Western world. The attention is given in overcoming the sectarian conflicts, enhancing the state-apparatus (by transferring know-how and equipment), reducing poverty levels and especially making refugees economically "self-reliant". How?

1. Access in Lebanese labor market
2. Integration in local communities (Anholt & Sinatti, 2020)

EU-Lebanon Compact

In 2016, the Lebanon-EU Partnership Priorities were introduced as part of the Revised ENP, including "security and countering terrorism, governance and the rule of law, fostering growth and job opportunities, and migration and mobility" (Association Council, 2016). It was incorporated to the PPs as an annex was the EU-Lebanon Compact, which foresees the management procedures of refugee situation for the next four years and constitutes the written verification for bilateral commitments of the two partners. Additional to the bilateral funds, the Compact allocates particularly more than €400 million and further funds in Lebanon (Association Council, 2016). Actually, it captures accurately the aforesaid resilience-building with the goal to strengthen refugee protection, create jobs and ensure political/economic stability.

Lebanese government committed to:

- facilitate legal residence procedures for Syrian refugees
- smooth their integration to labor market and society
- remove the $200 fee
- simplify documentation

Evaluation

Notwithstanding, the EU policy undeniably delivers temporary remedies to the problem and clearly acknowledges, along with Lebanon, the "conditional readmission" of refugees ("safe, dignified, voluntary") as the only durable solution (Fakhoury & Stel, 2022). The Compact has no legal power, which means that it does not produce legally binding results. It seems more like a "letter of intent" having only declaratory value. In spite of framing refugees' presence as unique opportunity for country's development, the EU resilience-based approach for refugee containment is unable to prevent the ongoing instability and extreme poverty in Lebanon, intensified after the 2019 financial crackdown, "thawra" wave and Beirut blasts in 2020. The Union selected a realistic policy towards Lebanon, being silent in refugees' rights consecutive violations and illegal push-backs and abandoning its former normative approach (Fakhoury, 2020).

Recommendations

Taking all into account, the need of an improved European migration management in Lebanon is inarguable. Hence, the Union shall carefully estimate the potential of sustainable solutions. Firstly, the two partners should sign a new agreement on migration and refugees for 2021-2025, founded upon the provisions of the EU-Lebanon Compact of 2016. The innovation will be the legally-binding character of the document, which will regulate and limit the action of each signatory. To be more specific, since a legal framework will be present, the two parties will be obliged, not just encouraged to undertake and respect their commitments. The document will also enumerate specific sanctions for noncompliance or the establishment of ad hoc arbitral committees, responsible for determining the penalties. Strict binding framework will lead to the maximization of the outcome.

Secondly, EU must rethink upon its interest-driven approach in Lebanon, while the government proceeds with illegal refugee returns in Syria, despite the inappropriate conditions, and discriminative behavior against Syrians in the society, its public goods and workplace. So, the Union may offer double funding through "European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights", only if the Lebanese authorities abandon their corruptive practices and implement refugees' rights. Ad hoc European Observation Missions will examine the conformation with good governance and HR provisions.

Finally, EU should grant incentives also to the private sector, such as preferential access to the EU markets or financial support, in return to the recruitment of refugees. That movement will bring three critical benefits: gradual integration and self-reliance of refugees, boosting the local companies with renewed workforce and deeper bonds between EU and Lebanese individuals. That is simultaneously an efficient way to autonomize refugees from the European cash-receipt, to motivate them to become part of the local communities and not to look for a European future.

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Farm to Fork: EU's Strategy for a Sustainable Food System[1]

Christina Giannou[2]

Abstract

The interrelationship of EU's answer to the question of sustainable food systems is a pertinent issue when it comes to recognising the intrinsic relation amidst healthy people, societies, and a healthy planet. It is a strategy that is central in the EU Commission's agenda, to reach the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. It is paramount to understand the overall matrix of an agricultural and economic sustainable future, present and future goals calling out to members states for immediate need to help reshape sustainable solutions that will impact future generations. An outline of EU's previous environmental framework will be examined comparatively to the current which pledges climate neutrality by 2050 binding this into Climate law. US President, Jo Biden in his first days in office ratified the Paris Agreement for a carbon free grid by 2035 and net zero emissions by 2050 reconvening US's meaningful participation in the global climate network and, economic growth. Focus on key areas of study, environment, food, economy, future generations, and areas of reassessment will be viewed within the scope of shaping a perspective that the Green Deal and food sustainability is not only a call to reform previous economic models, but to address the elephant in the room; Can technologies guide us to a better future? Can they create new jobs? Provide better work opportunities? Support local farmers? Decrease food waste? Solve hunger? Save the planet? Is the Green Deal and Farm to Fork a utopia, a dream, or a sustainable reality?

Keywords: environment, food, economy, future generations, Green Deal, Farm to Fork, transition, GMO's, health, sustainability.

Introduction

The Farm to Fork strategy is the core of the Green Deal which thoroughly addresses the question of sustainable food systems while recognizing the intrinsic relation amidst healthy people, societies, and a healthy planet. It is a strategy that is central in the Commission's agenda to reach the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

On 21 April 2021, the European Commission welcomed the provisional agreement between the co-legislators on the European Climate Law. As one of the key elements of the European Green Deal, the European Climate Law entrenches the EU's pledge to reach climate neutrality by 2050 setting its long-term target of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030. The EU Parliament committed itself to make Europe the first climate neutral continent, binding its pledge into EU law. Moreover, US President Jo Biden in his first day in office reconvened the Paris climate

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agreement with an ambitious agenda for a carbon free grid by 2035 and net zero emissions by 2050, (Kaufman, 2021). The question is, Does the Green Deal by way of Farm to Fork address the challenges of a sustainable food system or, is it just another characteristic of EU's current economic model?

1. F2F A Solution for a Sustainable Food System

The conception of sustainability firstly needs to be examined by addressing the question, what is a green economy? A green economy is perceived differently by different individuals, groups, societies. An explanation by the UNEP is, "a green economy is one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. In its simplest expression, a green economy can be thought of as one which is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive." (UNEP, 2011). Alternatively, civic society movements view green economy as, "just another facet of the current financial phase of capitalism, which also makes use of old and new mechanisms, such as the deepening of the public-private debt, the hyperstimulation of consumption, the concentration of ownership of new technologies, carbon and biodiversity markets, land grabbing, increased foreign ownership of land, and public-private partnerships, among others." (Declaration of the People's Summit at Rio+20, 2012).

In the last few years discussion around sustainability has become an integral part of the global agenda. This is mostly due to recent scientific findings, narratives and experiences of environmental degradation and climate change that elucidate the need for new economic models.

1.1. A Closer Look at Farm to Fork Strategy

Farm to Fork strategy, according to the Commission's Family Farming Knowledge Platform is outlined as, 'A sustainable food strategy key to achieving the goals of the EU's Green Deal. This strategy sets out the regulatory and non-regulatory measures needed to create more efficient, climate-smart systems that provide healthy food, while securing a decent living for EU farmers and fishermen,' (Nations, 2020). Key areas which give rise to both consensus and debate of EU's Farm to Fork Strategy through its Green Deal could be analyzed through the debate of its economic targets, energy and environment. When it comes to economic trade the means of measuring economic growth and prosperity impacts global trade, consumption patterns and production, therefore raising questions of deepening globalization, growth and environmental sustainability. By mobilizing trade policy through EU's Green Deal and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), together these could sustain trade asymmetry, human-up development, individual rights. For instance, support for local producers, specifically, locally based food systems, which are an integral component for

sustainable agriculture, provide for local economies and sustainable livelihoods to prosper while protecting the environment. Notably, with the support of F2F strategy local food systems based on small scale rural production make domestic markets more accessible for family farmers. This allows farmers to maximize their economic growth while producing food within the framework of sustainable strategies outlined in F2F and the European Green Deal. Sustainable locally based rural economies are contributing factors in promoting healthy people, healthy societies, and a healthy planet. Moreover, energy distribution shapes how our societies and economies operate. If all global partners appreciate the need to further increase energy efficiency, promote energy conservation, transform the industrial structure, diversify energy supply this in turn, could increase the world's consumption of renewable energy sources by 20%. When going deeper into the question of environment, conceptions that recognize nature's true value have profoundly changed how governments, societies, lawmakers, policymakers protect the environment, within the scope of safeguarding it for future generations.

1.2. Food, Technology & Investment

EU's Green Deal shifts from the traditional economic model, specifically in 2019 the world witnessed a series of natural disasters, where among many, the flooding of 100,000 rivers in Milan, and 40,000 in Paris, gave way to grave concerns among civic societies worldwide who shared their worries on cardboard signs that read, "THERE IS NO PLANET B! DON'T BURN OUR FUTURE. THE HOUSE IS ON FIRE!" (Klein, 2019). This called for the urgent need to transform foregoing economies and policies into those that would protect the future of our planet.

The Green Deal sharply moves from previous environmental approaches which were aimed towards reducing consumption that, in effect resulted in degrowth. Within this reason, despite warnings, environmental practices were unpopular among governments and business communities alike particularly when it came to weighing their economic growth. However, one of the largest sources of certainty in the European Green Deal is that sustainable farming practices are supported by Research and Innovation (R&I) which receive funding from Horizons 2020, a multiannual EU funding programme aimed to stimulate research projects. Interestingly, for the period 2014-2020 H2020 invested an estimated sum of 80 billion euros (EMDESK, 2020), while for the period 2021-2027 funding is estimated to reach a staggering 100€ billion (Commission, Horizon Europe, the Next EU Research & Innovation Investment Programme (2021-2027), 2019). Significantly, the H2020 covered three initiatives, the 7th Research Framework Programme (FF7), the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) all dedicated to working with local regions which together with the F2F would help launch rural products

while solving crosscutting problems with synergies previously developed under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Together, these procedures will be promoted in alignment with other EU programs to maximize projected outcomes of the F2F strategy (Commission, What is Horizon Europe? 2019).

Moreover, public support for human nutrition research has increased over the past several decades. Thus, there is ample data to promote the list of objectives outlined in the EC's policy to support a realistic case of certainty. Horizon 2020 program aimed to bridge the gap between nanotechnology research and markets. Moreover, by implementing nanotechnology this increases potential contribution for sustainable growth, competitiveness, environment, and livelihood that together develop an undisputable bond between sustainable growth and R&I. However, it needs to be underlined that a number of barriers do still need to be addressed in order to leverage large scale market introduction of innovative, safe and sustainable nano enabled products (Commission, European Commission Programs, 2020). Should nanotechnology become a more popular process, food fortification, specifically, nanoencapsulation (Jiwan Singh, 2017) could create a narrative that sustainable farming does in fact leverage sustainable economic growth. Should this be the case, it could essentially stimulate biofortification in EU rural products by means of agronomic practices, conventional plant breeding, and modern biotechnology that will then increase nutrient levels in crops during plant growth as for instance iron biofortification in sweet potatoes and zinc biofortification in wheat (Programme, 2020). Therefore, through R&I, the main components of F2F strategy become an even more realistic and, most importantly, the subject of food waste will be sustained while simultaneously growing economic opportunities. Moreover, upscaling is a cost-effective response that has gained footage in R&I, especially when looking at the successful case of Greek yogurt and its entrance into the food market. Specifically, it has earned its popularity in light of its lucrative process, resource efficiency and sustainability management. Upscaling is a technology that is functional, accessible and that works well for farmers, consumers, and the environment.

1.3. The Question of GMO's

What are the GMOs? Are they harmful to people and the planet, or could they serve as a guide to a better future? To begin with, many people feel confused or reluctant when it comes to the topic of Genetically Modified Organisms. Environment contamination caused by toxic chemicals was an immediate signal for the need to discover sustainable technologies to protect the environment and human health. Many physicochemical technologies that are currently applied to decontaminate and safeguard the environment as well as human health are technologies that are costly and chemical-consuming, which in effect cause secondary pollution and, as a result are not environmental-friendly.

An alternative solution is bioremediation technologies which use microbes and, plants together with their enzymes are viewed as eco-friendly and more sustainable technologies in light of their self-sustainable and cost effect nature. When it comes to agriculture genetic modification this process is expediated through the process of a scientific techniques that gives plants a specific desired trait. A common example is BT corn that has been genetically modified to release a toxin that helps resist pests which consequently has reduced the use of harmful pesticides by 37%. The largest source of uncertainty is in the 2050 climate-neutral Green Deal and F2F strategy with reference to the reduction of the use of pesticides and fertilizers. Notably, the EC targets to reduce the use of pesticides and antimicrobials by 50%, fertilizers 20%, and organic by 5% no later than 2030. Moreover, GMO's have been technical modified to survive harsh weather conditions, diseases, that have resulted in a higher yield for farmers, which in turn bring down the cost for both consumer and farmer (Ryan Raman, 2020) while sustaining the environment.

On the other hand, global grassroots organizations namely, Slow Food movement, (Food, 2015) supports that Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) present a serious threat to food sovereignty, farmers livelihoods, the environment and biodiversity. According to this grassroots movement, although GMOs are often demonstrated as the answer to hunger and food security, the problem remains yet to be solved. In fact, Slow Food perceives GMO's development and production, as many civic society movements already do, as a green economy which satisfies the economic interests of multinational corporations which contribute to the increase of corporate control, rather than to the need to feed increasingly expanding populations. Slow Food has expressed their deep concern about GMO's being included in the F2F strategy, in that the subject of food sustainability has polarized civic society, governments, groups, on a social, economic and political level, while in the field of science GMOs have developed a space for biology and technology to explore food sustainability through biotechnology (Agapakis, 2020).

1.4. Food Waste

The EC's model is very effective in its underlining points of food waste. Indeed, if this is not addressed, a sustainable rural economy is doomed to a "boom and bust" scenario. When it comes to food waste, EU's third largest country in terms of population before Brexit, the UK, which counts 67,886,011 inhabitants (Meter, 2021), food guru and activist Jamie Oliver had to say that the average British family tosses £680 worth of food annually which adds up to a staggering £12 billion nationwide (Oliver, 2020)! This is the equivalent of 86 million chickens alone wasted away every year in the UK. Sigismondi reported to the World Economic Forum in 2014 that on a global scale approximately 1.3 billion tons of local food gets wasted or lost annually (Sigismondi, 2014)!

Minimizing food waste is vital to maintaining a responsible and sustainable food system. Reducing maximal surplus unquestionably allows for better distribution for healthy food which in turn sustains the enormous strain of the planet's resources. If, however Europe wants to continue this path more detailed attention is required in sustaining the rural economy and small-scale farmers.

1.5. A resilient, healthy, equitable, ecological, and overall sustainable food system

There are points in the Farm to Fork strategy that perhaps call for reassessment. Particularly, the current plan does not refer to past strategies that could perhaps be viewed as slightly problematic. Namely, labor exploitation and, marginalized local farmers are broadly linked to the industrial food system. This needs to be examined further if, the European Green Deal and sustainable farming is to uphold a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system. Moreover, The F2F strategy seems limited in recognizing agroecology's role in the potential European food system. This immediately restricts support of small-scale producers which could add to farm concentration accelerating even further the vaporization of small-scale farmers who notable are the heart of agroecology and the sustainable food system. Subsequently, sustainable food production, specifically in the context of the pandemic, perhaps requires an even more ambitious target. A possible suggestion could be to increase biodiversity and soil fertility, which in turn would reduce erosion, contamination of soils, water, and air. If such a proposal were to be applied it would in effect support its adaptation to climate change, which in turn would decrease energy consumption. While the approach by F2F strategy does highlight this, and indeed does go that extra mile to appreciate the potential of organic farming, especially in relation to the new and young generation of farmers, still, it falls short in defining organic agriculture, and next to no attention is paid to farm renewal, access to land, and extensive livestock farming.

Significantly, F2F strategy supports job creation in the food and agriculture sector however, without outlining job description and, for whom the job will be created. Here, a clearer vision and leadership is required in that, if the EC wants the Green Deal and sustainable farming initiative to be viewed through a lens of a sustainable strategy. This will not only protect the environment, but additionally create a new green economic model that considers and defines work opportunities within the rural sector, develops gender equality, secures and dignifies working conditions and living wages, which are all are paramount if this policy is to work. Within this scope, F2F again needs a slight revision when it comes to legal rights and legal safe channels, which both need to be integrated into the strategy so as to secure third-country workers, migration and asylum policies, like those outlined in the Dublin Regulation. Most importantly these provisions need to become conditionalities on CAP payments (Euractiv, 2020) on the bases of respect for labor rights. Moreover, the 2017 Dublin

Regulation on migration cooperates with EU member states so as to facilitate the regularization of all migrants (European Commission, 2020).

Consequently, F2F creates an efficient, healthy, and climate-smart agri-food system where the EC ensures new initiatives and targets coherent with EU legislation. Specifically, Geraldine Kutas, Director General at CropLife Europe, expressed that those businesses understand the need for pesticide reductions and are open to discussions that encompass more "realistic" targets, stating that, "a reduction rate of 50% by 2030 is not realistic and will not have the desired effect of having a more sustainable food production model in Europe. The objectives presented today should be taking the farming industry on a journey to transform, not without sacrifices, but in collaboration with all parties involved in producing our food" (European Commission launches Farm to Fork strategy, 2020). In this respect, perhaps the EC needs to sustain a consensus strategy with EU representatives before presenting F2F strategies to the rural sector.

Conclusions

The European Green Deal and F2F strategy do promote a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system. While these strategies present a food system approach from a primary production consumer, still, they are welcomed from the long-standing need to tackle food matters and challenges. The food-environment nexus in relation to cost efficiency reflect real costs in terms of limited resources, pollution, Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and other externalities. The F2F's pledge to develop shorter food supply chains, to reduce long-haul transportation of produce, and to also regulate unsustainable crops in the hyper intensive food chain, take EC's sustainability policy to the next level. Ergo, the European Green Deal and F2F strategy fortify the concept of "think locally act globally" in that their strategy actively supports and strengthens local networks along with their economies which in turn are sure to help improve small scale farmers, consumers and the environment.

When it comes to GMO's and the level of sustainable genetically modified organisms, it is solely not a question of technology. Interestingly, when creating food through science, otherwise referred to as artistic engineering, according to Professor Agapakis, the renowned, robust synthetic biologist explains that synthetic biology is in fact an integral part of us and, what we eat. Therefore, by developing a fusion between biology and technology what can be achieved? A future that is open to choices which in turn will create awareness that could modify the way we eat (Agapakis, 2020). Professor Agapakis has been known to create controversy to the already much controversial concept of GMO food production, but does she? Or does she prove that technology through biology can develop a synthesis that can cultivate food. Although robust, sceptics from the environmental and

farming communities who question alternative methods of food cultivation could perhaps contemplate the conception. The underlining question here is, should they? When examined through the lens of the pandemic, in its wake COVID-19 sent unpresented shockwaves which spiraled the food system out of control in its first 100 days. Within this perspective, when weighing the nature of genetically modified food to that of global starvation feeding the earth's population and people's livelihood without question takes precedence.

Finally, the EC has created the F2F strategy that is targeted to sustain health and prosperity through a series of ambitious strategies. Moreover, why consider Farm to Fork strategy? If the EC succeeds this could well mean that the challenge for sustainable farming and a green economy could be achieved while safeguarding the environment, this in turn could set the precedent for the green economic model based on EC and UN values and initiatives that may be adopted on a global level leaving present pressing issues of sustainability in the past.

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Barriers to EU mobility: Facilitating mobility of workers in the EU[1]

Anxhela Shkembi[2]

Abstract

Free movement of workers within the European Union is the second fundamental principle of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and one of the four freedoms enjoyed by the European citizens. Its main objective is to enhance the living standard of each individual but also of European society in general. However, even though the free movement of European workers provides citizens with plenty of opportunities, mobility rates are particularly low. By all the EU citizens of working age in 2020, only 3.3% resided in an EU country apart from that of their own citizenship in accordance with Eurostat. Under those circumstances, a few policy ideas are provided in order to boost the mobility of EU workers:

- Access to extended and more valid information
- More effective response by the Commission when it comes to the breach of the Directive
- More effective management of petitions
- Reinforcement of SOLVIT
- Adaptation of national legislation to the Directive
- Removal of unnecessary hurdles
- New framework of cooperation between member states

The scope of this policy paper is to delve deeper into the factors that hinder the movement of European citizens and to provide some policy ideas which could facilitate this procedure.

Keywords: free movement, workers, internal market, European Union.

Introduction

The European single or internal market is one of the EU's paramount achievements as it sustains economic growth and has facilitated to the utmost the daily lives of European businesses, consumers and employees. According to the 2nd paragraph of Article 26 of the TFEU, the term 'internal market' indicates an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital is settled according to the provisions of the Treaties. Particularly, free movement of European workers is enshrined in Article 45 of the TFEU, whereas its legal basis lays down in Article 3(2) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU); Articles 4(2)(a), 20, 26 and 45-48 of the TFEU.

Free movement of employed and self-employed persons allows European citizens to seek better living and working conditions within the Union by those provided by their region of origin. In other terms, European citizens have the ability to search for a job in any European country but also in the countries of the European Economic Area (Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway) in which free movement of

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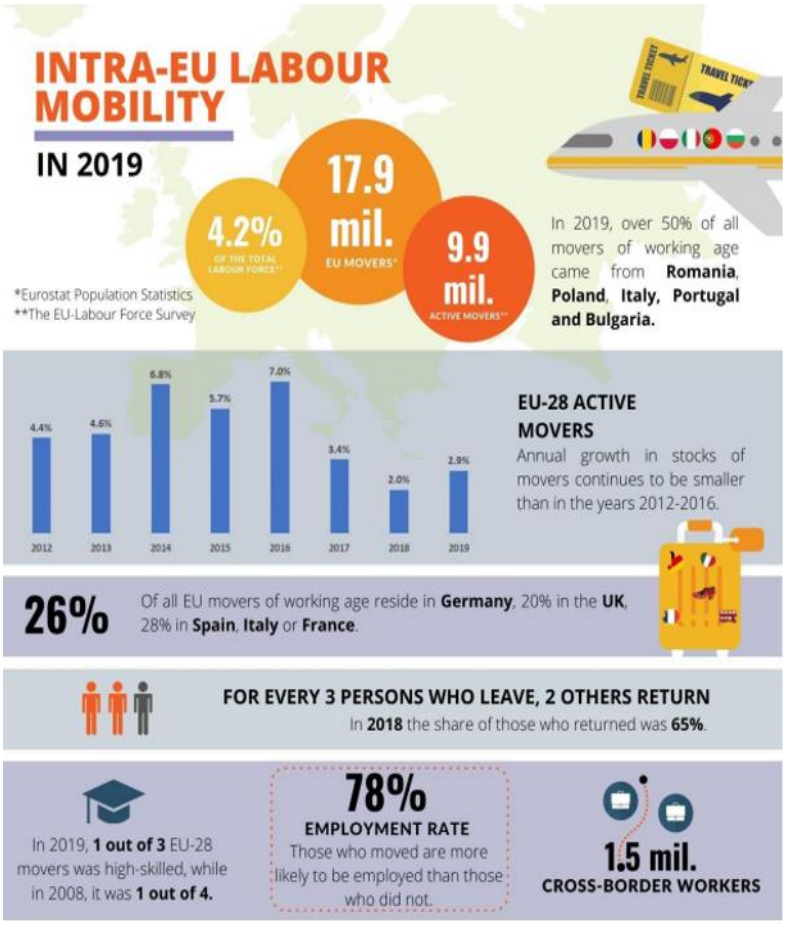
workers is also applicable. Moreover, European citizens can work in these countries without the need of a work permit, reside there for as long they want, even after their employment has finished and enjoy equal treatment with nationals in terms of access to employment, working conditions and all other social and fiscal benefits.

Furthermore, free movement diminishes social pressures in the poorest countries and regions of the EU and improves the living conditions of the rest of the population. In general, within the EU it facilitates the adaptation of labour supply to changes in business demand and allows for more relevant and effective cyclical policies at a European level. Therefore, free movement of workers implies boosting the internal market, plugging knowledge gaps and ameliorating the living standards of Europeans. Last but not least, free mobility of workers means cultural exchange which enhances the creation of a single European identity.

However, despite the benefits of free movement for both citizens and the Union itself, mobility rates do not reflect an optimistic picture. According to the European Commission's annual report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2020, mobility within the EU continued to grow in 2019, but at a much slower pace than in 2018. In other words, in 2019 the number of working-age movers grew up by 1.2% – 17.9 million EU-28 movers in total – essentially less than in 2018 when the increase reached 3.8%. What is more, it was observed that for every three persons who chose to leave their country, two others returned to their hometown. There are many factors that hinder the movement of European citizens for employment reasons and the EU must tackle them immediately in order for all Europeans to have equal access to this right.



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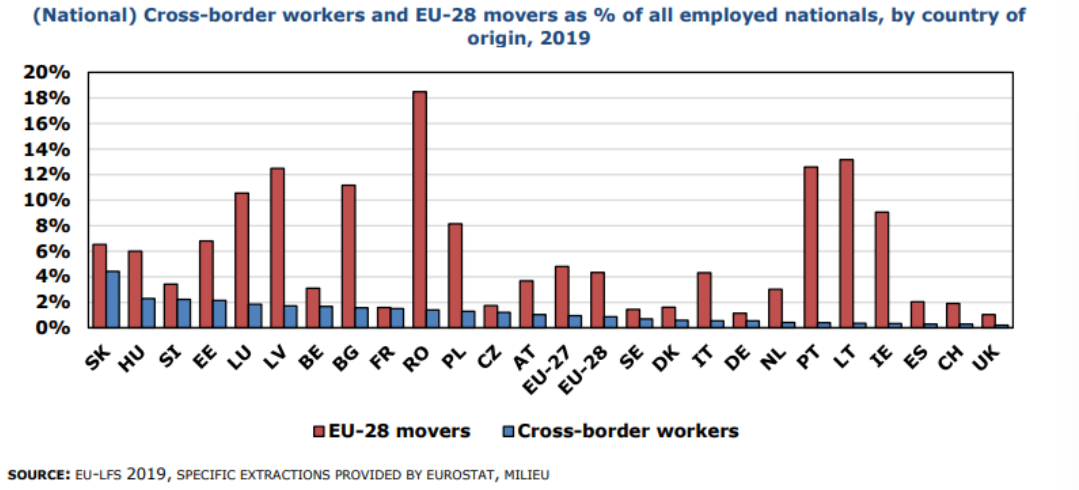

Policy Analysis

Obstacles to free movement

1. United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU

One event that had a major effect on the way intra-EU labour mobility is shaped in the last years was the UK's decision to withdraw from the EU. As the UK was the second country to welcome the more mobile EU workers, with up to 2.6 million mobile workers, mobility has regularly decreased since its decision to leave the EU in 2016. The tip of the iceberg was the fact that on 31 December 2020 the freedom of movement of workers between the UK and the EU was ceased once and for all.

2. Primary barriers to the right to entry

Besides the reality that was shaped after Britain's withdrawal from the EU, there have always been obstacles to the right to free movement stemming from the existing European and national legislation. The main obstacle that European citizens face when it comes to their right of entry to some EU member states is the obligation to announce their presence to the country's authority within an unjustifiable period of time. This pratique has been observed up to now in Romania and Lithuania with both countries requiring by individuals to report their presence on their territory within 15 and 7 days respectively.

Furthermore, another obstacle that occurred while EU citizens were exercising their right of entry was their identification document. Despite Article 5(1) of the Directive, according to which EU citizens can enter a member state with a valid identity card or passport, the UK authorities had consequently refused to recognize identity cards from other member states, such as Greece, and used to accept only passports (European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, 2016).

3. Primary barriers to the right to residence

Barriers to the right to residence are encountered mainly by citizens who are no longer workers or self-employed and seek employment in another EU member state. In this case, the person may be required by the welcoming State to leave the territory if they have not found employment there after a period of six months unless they provide evidence that they are intensively seeking employment or that they are being engaged.

Besides that, the most common types of obstacles that citizens face are:

- exaggerated documentation requirements so as to exercise the right of residence in at least twelve member states,
- disapproval of the right of residence on certain groups such as EU pensioners when applying for additional pension benefits in at least nine member states,
- inadequate or inconsistent information regarding the right of residence in at least six member states, and
- limitative interpretation of the proof of health insurance required to obtain a residence card in the case of Croatia and Italy.

4. Primary barriers to social security

EU citizens trying to settle in another member state have faced various obstacles in terms of their social security. These hurdles have been distinguished in four major categories in accordance with the social benefit in question each time and are referred to old-age pensions, healthcare, family benefits and unemployment benefits. Access to social benefits such as old-age pensions is the most reported problem in at least eight member states which stems from the absence of coordination between national authorities and the nescience of the aggregation rules for old-aged pensions. When it comes to healthcare, problems regarding the recognition of the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) have occurred in at least nine member states either because they do not accept the EHIC or because they do not have access to a system identifying the cards' authenticity. Last but not least, in at least nine member states European citizens have faced problems related to family or unemployed benefits due to lack of knowledge of the applicable rules and bureaucratic reasons (European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, 2016).

5. Other barriers

Generally, there are many other factors that hinder the free movement of European citizens. One of them is the language barrier. Even though there are 24 official and equal languages in the EU, most

workplaces recognize only English or even French. Another hurdle that employers might face is the non-recognition of their professional qualifications and academic diplomas obtained from another EU member state. This issue has been reported in at least eight member states and it arises from the fact that the EU has yet to adopt legislation concerning the mutual recognition of academic diplomas[3]. Last but definitely not least, obstacles have also been observed while citizens have tried to register to vote in some member states and exercise their electoral rights (European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Directorate-General for Internal Policies, 2020). Even though the TFEU and the Charter of Fundamental Rights give citizens the right to vote in any EU member state, there are some member states such as Latvia and Italy that seek additional administrative requirements. In fact, in Italy citizens were denied the right to vote in the European elections.

Recommendations

1. Recommendation for the European Commission

In order for the EU to be able to take effective action, it must ensure access to extended and more valid information. This is why the European Commission shall demand from member states to gather more systematic information and provide data and statistics regarding the number of refusals of entry and residence but also the reasons why the refusals were made. In this way, the Commission will be able to monitor more easily whether the states comply with the Directive or not. Moreover, the Commission shall act more efficiently when it comes to member states violating the Directive. Even though it has initiated 29 proceedings since 2008 regarding many issues occurring from the transposition process, none of them reached the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), proving that the whole process is problematic. Furthermore, the Commission should seek closer cooperation with the European Parliament Petitions Committee in order to better monitor and address the petitions linked with the free movement rights.

In this context, the SOLVIT service, which is an online EU platform connecting citizens with the national administration in each member state, should be reinforced. Not only do Europeans need to be informed about the existence of this website, but access to it should be greatly simplified and further enriched with hotline support, available anytime to inform and support EU citizens.

[3] Obstacles to the right of free movement and residence for EU citizens and their families, same as above.

2. Recommendation for the member states

First and foremost, member states shall immediately ensure that their national legislation is compatible with the Directive 2004/38/EC. Moreover, regarding the problems mentioned above with respect to the right to entry, to residence and to social security, member states should seek ways to abolish redundant barriers and unnecessary bureaucracy that discourage citizens. Additionally, national authorities should be fully aware of the Directive's rights and obligations. This could be achieved through continuous and proper training of national authority personnel. Last but not least, all member states shall, as in all cases, pursue deeper and closer cooperation, especially as regards the recognition of academic diplomas and professional qualifications. In other words, they must pursue the creation of a new framework under which the reliability and the authenticity of a degree will be recognized and verified by all EU member state.

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explained/index.php?title=EU_citizens_living_in_another_Member_State_-_statistical_overview (27/02/2022).

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The Ageing Population of the European Union: Challenges and Prospects[1]

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Abstract

During the last few decades, the shape of Europe's population pyramid has transformed substantially, due to a considerably older population structure, with fewer working-age people and more pensioners. This paper examines the EU's demographic problem which involves an increasing ageing population as a result of low birth rates and longer life expectancies, leading to the so called "greying of Europe". Therefore, certain recommendations are suggested in order to mitigate the negative economic, social and geopolitical effects of this demographic phenomenon. It is concluded that the EU's ageing population should not be regarded solely as a threat, as it has also the potential to provide opportunities for societies through intergenerational solidarity and the rapidly emerging silver economy.

Keywords: Ageing population; fertility rates; life expectancy; silver economy; intergenerational solidarity.

Introduction

Demographic trends differ among regions, within regions and within countries (The World Bank, 2021). Over the last few decades there has been an increase in the population of the EU-27 Member-States. It has been increased from approximately 350 million in 1960 to 450 million in 2019. However, this figure only represented a shrinking proportion of the global population, which has been growing sharply (United Nations, 2019).

Even though Europeans accounted for around 15% of the global population in the 19th century, it is predicted that by 2050 they will only make up 5% (European Parliament, 2008). On the contrary, in 2070 the population of Sub-Saharan Africa is predicted to be seven times that of Europe. It is evident that such trends will have a profound impact on shaping the world of tomorrow. Nonetheless, demographic projects with a 50-year horizon can prove to be inaccurate due to unexpected factors such as diseases, migration flows and conflicts (Borell, 2020).

It should be noted that the rise in the EU population is mainly the result of an increase in the life expectancy, rather than higher birth rates (European Parliament, 2021). Throughout most of human history, populations were young, and lives were short, whereas nowadays people are living longer than ever before, and the population's average age is increasing. The consequences of this trend on

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people's daily lives are significant, influencing the economic, social and health sector (European Commission, 2021). Active policies, with a special focus on employment and health are required in order to better support the older people, lessen the burden on the working-age population, and eliminate inequalities across the Union's most affected regions.

The problem: A strongly ageing population

Even though population ageing constitutes a global issue, the EU presents a distinctive picture, since the process is more advanced here. Birth rates are declining, and family sizes are reducing rapidly throughout Europe (Grant et al., 2005). In other words, its population is getting older, making a substantial portion of European citizens reliant on others. According to Eurostat, some of the highest old-age dependency ratios are observed in rural and remote areas of southern Europe, such as Greece,

Italy, Spain and Portugal, but also Germany and Finland. In fact, the EU's ageing population is projected to increase even further within the next few decades, indicating that the old-age dependency ratio will rise as well. For instance, in 2050 people aged over 65 are expected to comprise around one third of Europe's population (Eurostat,2020). By that time, Europe will have the highest proportion of elderly people in the world, indicating that the region is in the midst of a severe demographic crisis (ISSA, 2022).

Key drivers of population ageing in the EU

Declining fertility rates[3]

A country's fertility rate needs to be at least 2.1 to maintain its population size without immigration.

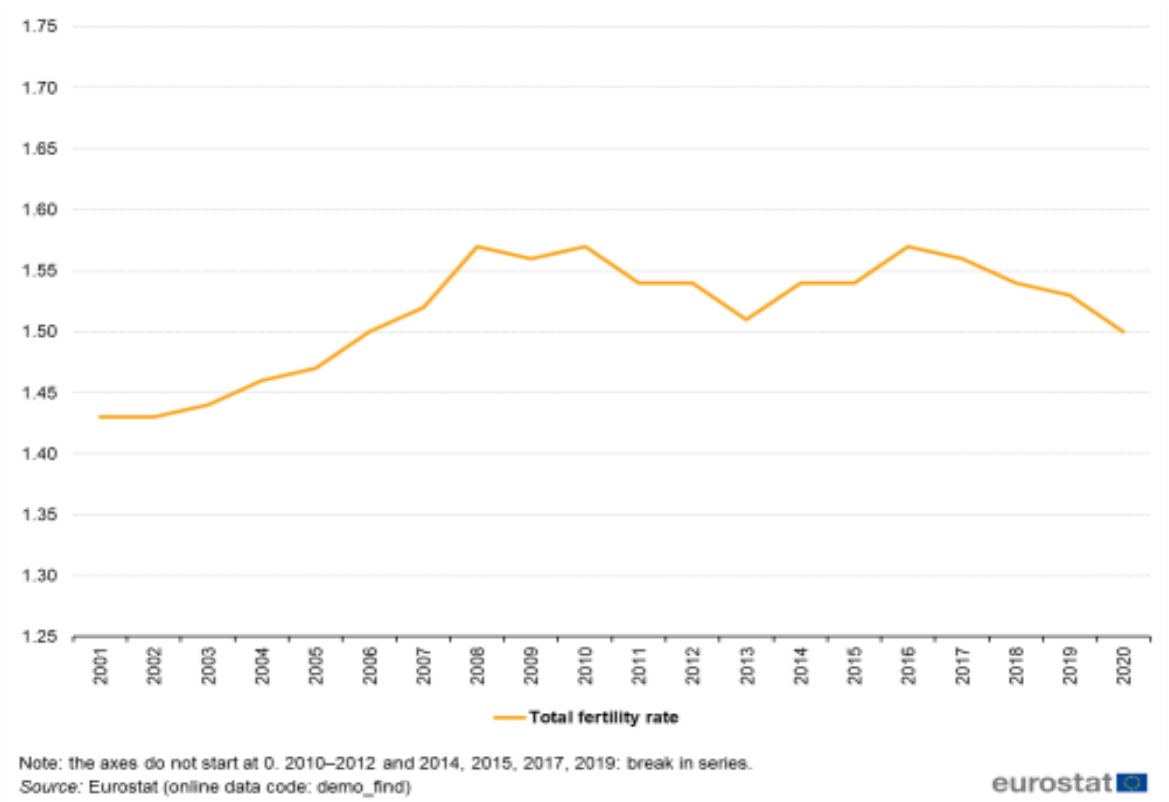
In other words, it establishes a threshold that enables population replacement. However, the EU's average fertility rate is currently 1.50 (Eurostat, 2020). This means that the births are fewer than required to prevent population decline. In fact, according to statistical evidence, the number of people who have died in the EU-27 since 2012 has outnumbered those who have been born. The lowest fertility rates were mostly observed in the southern EU countries, while the highest in the North (Eurostat, 2021).

Generally, Europe's demographic decline is more profound than in other parts of the world. Such reduced fertility rates comprise the outcome of long-standing socio-economic developments in European societies (Strategic Comments, 2020). The main reason for such a decline over time is the

[3] A country's fertility rate is the average number of children to which women give birth (World Population Review).

desire of women to have fewer children, as well as several incentives to delay childbearing, such as the increase of women in higher education and their respective participation in the labour force. In other words, nowadays, more and more couples choose not to have children after their first or second child, and many women decide not to have any children at all. On parallel, pandemic accelerated this trend, as a result of the job losses and the economic insecurity, which prevented family enlargement (Walker, 2021).

Figure 1: Total fertility rate, EU, 2001-2020



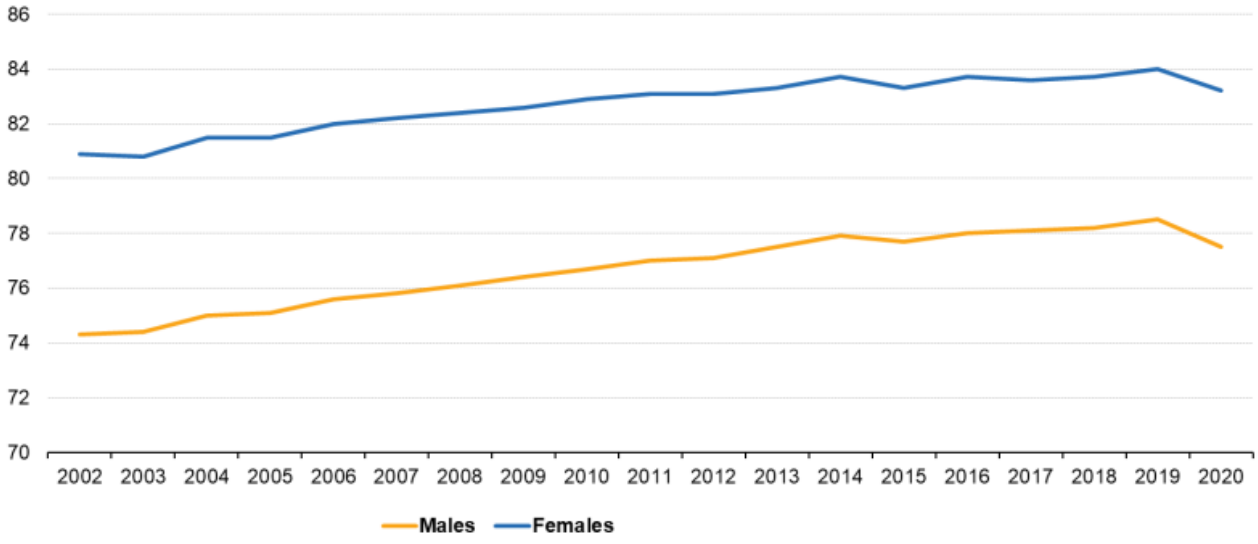
Increasing life expectancy

The average European is living longer than ever. Women can expect 64.2 years of healthy life and men 63.7. This is due to the fact that the welfare and healthcare systems of Europe are the most developed globally. Infant mortality has clearly decreased over the years, while disease treatment has substantially improved. On parallel, more and more people tend to adopt a healthy lifestyle, while the number of those occupied in heavy labour is diminishing (Eurostat 2022).

As a result, across Europe, life expectancy at birth has increased substantially in recent years, rising to 80.4 years in 2020 from 77.6 years in 2002, and is projected to grow even further in the future. It should be noted that life expectancy varies throughout the EU. For instance, while the French island

of Corsica, Spain's Balearic Islands and Greece's Epirus region all have an average age of 84 years, the trend is different in countries like Bulgaria with around 75 years (Eurostat, 2020).

Figure 2: Life expectancy at birth in the EU, 2002-2020 (in years)



Note: The y-axis is broken. 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017 and 2019: breaks in series.
2018, 2019 and 2020: estimate, provisional.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: demo_mlexpec)

eurostat

Consequences

I. Labour Market

The employment rate of older workers in the EU remains below average, owing to challenges in recruitment, training opportunities and job transitions. As a result of demographic ageing, the EU's working-age population, which is vital for the generation of tax revenue, is shrinking. Thus, this demographic trend will result in reduced government revenues. On parallel, a supply shortage of qualified workers will lead to lower productivity, inadequate service provision, delayed corporate expansion and decreased international competitiveness. Consequently, the overall prosperity and well-being of European societies will be questioned (European Commission, 2021).

II. Healthcare and Pensions Systems

As the population of the elderly increases, so does the cost of the health system, and the number of pensioners. Chronic physical and mental health problems are more common within an ageing population, which will require more healthcare and long-term care services (European Commission, 2021). If healthcare and social costs rise significantly, government expenditure will increase and a relatively small working population will be forced to contribute more funds through the tax system,

while also taking care of each pensioner (Council of Europe Development Bank, 2020). Notably, this issue raises questions of intergenerational fairness.

III. EU's position in the world

Even though the importance of a political entity is not solely determined by its demographic weight, it is evident that the EU's demographic change influences its position in the world. This is due to the fact that population and economic size play a significant role in the world's power structures. To be more specific, population size matters as much as it has always mattered in international politics, if not more, given the growing role of economic statecraft. Interestingly, according to "offensive realism" the size of population and wealth of a state constitute the most significant elements for the creation of a military power (Mearsheimer, 2007). Fortunately, a country's power is no longer primarily determined by its ability to line up vast numbers of troops on the battlefields (Borell, 2020).

Recommendations

Even though demographic issues used to be neglected by politicians, and despite the fact that Member States have primary responsibility for dealing with the effects of ageing, the European Commission has recently put demography high on the EU policy agenda. In 2019, it assigned to Dubravka Suica, one of its incoming vice-presidents, a new portfolio focusing on "democracy and demography". However, decisive steps should be taken in order to reduce the negative impact of the aforementioned demographic trend (ECR group, 2020).

i. Work longer and start receiving pension later

It is apparent that as people live longer, they have to work more years before retiring. Thus, several EU member states are raising the state pension age in order to improve the financial well-being of their older workers, while also reducing the total financial burden of state pensions (Eurostat, 2020). However, this is generally not acceptable by the working population. For instance, in 2019, French President Emmanuel Macron proposed a raise of the retirement age from 62 to 64 years in order to reduce future tax burdens, but this sparked protests and harsh criticism from the French public.

ii. Labour-force participation of the native population

The EU member-states can provide incentives to bring more people onto the labour market. Different ways to do so is by boosting the employment rate of women, opening up the labour market to people with disabilities and investing in the qualifications of people with low educational levels. When it comes to older employees, emphasis should be given on senior entrepreneurship, as it would reduce significantly old-age unemployment and improve social inclusion while also increasing innovation

through start-ups. Thus, public policy can assist senior entrepreneurs by offering well-targeted guidance and assuring access to funding (European Commission, 2021).

iii. Replacement migration[4]

Between 2000 and 2018, immigration contributed for 80 percent of population growth in Europe (Peri, 2020). As the EU's working-age population grows, immigration will provide a solution to skill shortages, and thus contribute to the countries' economic growth. However, immigrants will reverse the trend of the lack of labour supply, only if they are employed and integrated to the labour market (Muysken, 2008). In short, if integration is successful, immigration will boost the economy's potential in the short term (Segendorf & Theobald, 2019). On the other hand, high immigration numbers combined with inadequate education and integration will exacerbate economic dependency (Marois et al., 2020).

iv. Affordable childcare and support to working mothers

Policies for child support will increase the number of working mothers. It is true that even though women's participation into the labour market has increased significantly, they continue to do more in terms of childcare work compared to men (Doepke & Kindermann, 2016). As a result, the number of women working part-time is almost fourfold than that of men, while women receive a lower pay than men for the same amount of work. Consequently, women face difficulties in reconciling work and family life, a problem that should be dealt at the EU level by providing more flexible working opportunities to women, as well as better availability of quality and affordable childcare (European Commission, 2020). The EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 has already set out a number of important steps in this direction.

v. New birth policies

Several European countries provide financial incentives to couples in order to have more children. This is mostly observed in Central European countries, which highlight that family policies should be under national jurisdiction, and that immigration will not solve the demographic problem (REUTERS, 2021). For instance, over the last few years, Hungary has offered a package of incentives to improve the national birth rates. These include, among other measures, a three-year parental leave, subsidized childcare and housing subsidies per child up to tens of thousands of euros. However, it

[4] It refers to the international migration that a country requires in order to counteract population decline and ageing caused by fertility rates that are below the replacement level (United Nations).

appears that such policies do not mitigate the demographic problem in the long run. On the contrary, extensive social policies are needed, following the example of Scandinavian countries.

Turning ageing into an opportunity

Silver Economy

Ageing can open up new possibilities, such as the creation of new jobs and enhanced social fairness and prosperity. In other words, there can be a significant growth in the EU through the emphasis on the "Silver Economy". This refers to a shift in demand for products and services that cater to the requirements and preferences of the older people. Thus, new job opportunities could emerge, particularly in the fields of tourism, assistive technology, service robotics, wellness, cosmetics and fashion, personal and automated mobility and banking. Furthermore, technology developers as well as highly skilled health workers and caretakers will be required in order to achieve scientific and medical innovation. As a result of a developed market of products and services for healthy and active ageing, the overall efficiency of health and social care systems will significantly increase (European Commission, 2021). In this regard, ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observation Network) has proposed a "Silver Deal" similar to the "Green Deal" in order to make European cities more agefriendly and promote healthy and inclusive ageing (ESPON, 2021).

Intergenerational solidarity

Older people can provide mentoring and experience sharing to younger generations, contributing to intergenerational learning. Transmitting their cognitive skills is beneficial not only to their mental health, but it also constitutes an opportunity for the community. In addition, a good idea would be the promotion of multigenerational workforces, since inclusive companies not only provide positive workplace experiences, but also business growth. In fact, synergies between older and younger employees can improve productivity, through mentoring and institutional knowledge transfer (AARP, 2020). It should be also mentioned that many older people, particularly women, help the workingage generation balance employment and family life by acting as unpaid carers, such as in the case of looking after grandchildren. Finally, retirees' contribution in voluntary services is significant, leading to increased self-esteem and societal economic value.

Conclusions

Although EU's demographic ageing is unavoidable, the negative consequences of this trend can be mitigated by a variety of methods. Working longer and retiring later, increased labour-force

participation, particularly among vulnerable social groups, legal migration, as well as incentives to childbirths, such as affordable childcare, are just a few of the policy instruments recommended to minimize the negative effects of an ageing population.

It is obvious that these measures should complement one another since none of them can tackle the demographic problem on their own. On parallel, what works in one country might not work in another. Policies' impact is also driven by social, economic, and political settings. Handling the opportunities and challenges of ageing constitutes therefore both an individual and a collective responsibility.

However, it is important to stress that reducing the consequences of ageing on our societies and improving social protection for the elderly should not come at the expense of the shrinking workingage population; thus, intergenerational fairness should be at the heart of any policy responses. Lastly, since population policies take a long time to pay dividends, they are generally politically unattractive, and their implementation is avoided. As a result, a solution will necessitate long-term planning and political courage (Grant et al, 2005).

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The European Integration Method After the Eurozone Debt Crisis 2010-2017: Problems and Perspectives[1]

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Abstract

This paper highlights specific perspectives on European integration using theoretical approaches and views on the process of integration in the light of the experience of the Eurozone debt crisis management in 2010-2017. An attempt is made to link the broader political and theoretical debate regarding this issue, the process of European integration, as well as related legitimacy issues. This attempt to link, on the one hand, the debate between decision-makers in the policy field and on the other, European integration theorists, attempts to formulate the context of the prospects, current problems and opportunities regarding European integration.

Keywords: European integration, Eurozone crisis, legitimacy.

Η Μέθοδος Ευρωπαϊκής Ολοκλήρωσης Μετά την Κρίση Χρέους στην Ευρωζώνη 2010-2017: Προβλήματα και Προοπτικές

Νεκτάριος (Άρης) Αλεξόπουλος

Περίληψη

Το παρόν άρθρο αναδεικνύει συγκεκριμένες προοπτικές για την ευρωπαϊκή ολοκλήρωση χρησιμοποιώντας θεωρητικές προσεγγίσεις και απόψεις για την διαδικασία της ενοποίησης υπό το πρίσμα της εμπειρίας της διαχείρισης της κρίσης χρέους της Ευρωζώνης την περίοδο 2010-2017. Πραγματοποιείται μια προσπάθεια σύνδεσης της ευρύτερης πολιτικής και θεωρητικής συζήτησης αναφορικά με το ζήτημα αυτό, την πορεία της ευρωπαϊκής ενοποίησης, καθώς και των σχετιζόμενων ζητημάτων νομιμοποίησης. Η εν λόγω προσπάθεια διασύνδεσης της συζήτησης από τη μια πλευρά, των ληπτών απόφασης στο πεδίο της πολιτικής και από την άλλη, των θεωρητικών της ευρωπαϊκή ολοκλήρωσης, επιχειρεί να διαμορφώσει ένα σκαρίφημα για την προοπτική, τα υφιστάμενα προβλήματα και τις ευκαιρίες ως προς την ευρωπαϊκή ολοκλήρωση.

Λέξεις κλειδιά: ευρωπαϊκή ολοκλήρωση, κρίση της Ευρωζώνης, νομιμοποίηση

Εισαγωγή

Με το παρόν άρθρο κατατίθενται σκέψεις πάνω στην μέθοδο της ευρωπαϊκής ολοκλήρωσης αξιοποιώντας την εμπειρία από τη διαχείριση της κρίσης χρέους στην Ευρωζώνη την περίοδο 2010-

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2017. Επιχειρείται η σύνδεση με την ευρύτερη συζήτηση[3] που διεξάγεται πάνω στο θέμα όχι μόνο από τους λήπτες απόφασης στο πεδίο της πολιτικής[4] αλλά και από τους θεωρητικούς της ευρωπαϊκής ολοκλήρωσης.

Η συζήτηση που διεξάγεται γύρω από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και το θεσμικό της οικοδόμημα συχνά έχει έντονα δεοντολογικό περιεχόμενο. Οι συμμετέχοντες τοποθετούνται ανάλογα με την άποψη τους για το μέλλον της ολοκλήρωσης, για τον ρόλο που πρέπει να παίξουν οι ευρωπαϊκοί θεσμοί (Tzagkarakis, 2021). Η επιστημονική κοινότητα συμμετέχει συχνά σε αυτή τη συζήτηση επιχειρώντας να την εφοδιάσει και συχνά να την καθοδηγήσει στο πολιτικό επίπεδο. Δεν πρέπει όμως να διαφεύγει της προσοχής ότι για να απαντηθούν αποτελεσματικά τα όποια «πρέπει», η επιστημονική έρευνα καλείται να αποκωδικοποιήσει την πραγματικότητα, έτσι ώστε να αποκαλυφθούν τα «είναι και πως» που την διέπουν. Είναι δύο διακριτές[5] νοητικές λειτουργίες που πρέπει έτσι να θεραπεύονται, σαφώς όμως συνδεδεμένες και αλληλοτροφοδοτούμενες.

Με αυτό στο πνεύμα θα επιχειρηθεί η εξέταση των νέων δεδομένων που δημιούργησε η κρίση χρέους στην Ευρωζώνη την περίοδο 2010-2017 στην αναζήτηση ενός αποτελεσματικού τρόπου προώθησης της ευρωπαϊκής οικοδόμησης, του εγχειρήματος που εξελίσσεται ανελλιπώς με κυμαινόμενη επιτυχία από το 1958.

Η αφετηριακή διαπίστωση της ανάλυσης μας είναι ότι η κρίση χρέους του 2010 έφερε στην επιφάνεια τις δομικές αδυναμίες των θεσμικών διευθετήσεων -στόχοι και μέσα πολιτικής της Ευρωζώνης- αλλά και της μεθόδου με την οποία επιχειρείται η ευρωπαϊκή ολοκλήρωση. Προσχωρώντας στα ευρήματα της ανάλυσης του Majone (2012), δύο είναι τα μεγάλα προς διερεύνηση ζητήματα που ανέδειξε η κρίση: ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση ως σύστημα διακυβέρνησης επιδιώκει κυρίως την συμμόρφωση των κρατών μελών με προεπιλεγμένες διαδικασίες και την εκπλήρωση ενδιάμεσων στόχων πολιτικής, όπως ο οδικός χάρτης των κριτηρίων της «Συνθήκης του Μάαστριχτ» για την Οικονομική και Νομισματική Ένωση (ONE), υποβαθμίζοντας αν όχι αγνοώντας την αξιολόγηση των πολιτικών ώστε να εντοπιστεί ο βαθμός επίτευξης των απώτερων στόχων για τους οποίους αυτές θεσπίστηκαν. Το δεύτερο εύρημα που εντοπίζεται για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση είναι ότι σε αντίθεση με την χρήση από το 1986 και εντεύθεν της πετυχημένης αρχής της αμοιβαίας αναγνώρισης ως μεθόδου προώθησης του προγράμματος της Εσωτερικής Αγοράς, εμφανίζεται στην προώθηση της ONE να έχει προσχωρήσει στην μέθοδο εναρμόνισης «μια πολιτική για όλους». Η διερεύνηση των παραπάνω

[3] Χαρακτηριστικές είναι οι θεωρητικές παρεμβάσεις των Majone (2012), Scharpf (2011) με τις οποίες επιχειρεί να συνομιλήσει το παρόν κείμενο.
[4] Βλέπε προτάσεις Μακρόν για το μέλλον της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης
[5] Να θυμηθούμε εδώ την γκιλοτίνα του David Hume “one cannot deduce ought from is” στο κλασικό έργο του The Treatise of Human Nature (βλέπε: Blaug, M 1992: 112-114)

συνδέεται με την απάντηση στα βασικά ερωτήματα που θα μας απασχολήσουν με το παρόν, αυτό της δυνατότητας εντοπισμού των ορίων μιας ενιαίας βέλτιστης πολιτικής για όλα τα κράτη μέλη, και αυτό του βαθμού αποτελεσματικότητας των υπερεθνικών θεσμών στην επίλυση προβλημάτων και της σύνδεσης της με την νομιμοποιητική τους βάση.

Αξιολόγηση διαδικασιών ή αξιολόγηση αποτελεσμάτων

Όπως πρώτος εντοπίζει ο Majone (2012) από τους βασικούς εισηγητές της σημασίας της αξιολόγησης στην παραγωγή δημοσίας πολιτικής,[6] η αξιολόγηση επιδόσεων και αποτελεσμάτων των ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών, όπως στον τομέα της παραγωγικότητας και της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης, παρέμεινε συστηματικά απούσα με την κυρία δικαιολογία ότι η άσκηση της μακροοικονομικής πολιτικής, πλην της νομισματικής, ανήκει στην αποκλειστική ευθύνη των κρατών μελών. Είναι εντυπωσιακό ότι η αξιολόγηση των ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών στην μεγάλη της πλειονότητα περιορίζονταν στην αξιολόγηση διαδικασιών - βαθμός έκδοσης νομοθετικών διατάξεων, τρόπος νομοθέτησης.[7] Η βασική φροντίδα των σημαντικότερων θεωρητικών και πολιτικών της Ευρωπαϊκής ολοκλήρωσης, μετά το 1986 και την εκκίνηση του «Προγράμματος της Εσωτερικής Αγοράς», ήταν να μας πείσουν ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή ολοκλήρωση είναι ένα παίγνιο θετικού αθροίσματος για όλους[8]. Η κρίση χρέους έφερε την αξιολόγηση αποτελεσμάτων με δραματικό τρόπο στο τραπέζι της επιστημονικής και πολιτικής συζήτησης για το μέλλον της ΕΕ. Από τις γενικολογίες για άνοδο του βιοτικού επιπέδου και τον βαθμό εκπλήρωσης των κριτήριων του Μάαστριχτ, ως μηχανισμό διασφάλισης της οικονομικής σύγκλισης περνάμε σιγά-σιγά και επώδυνα με το ξέσπασμα της κρίσης το 2010 στη συζήτηση για συγκεκριμένα αποτελέσματα που σχετίζονται με δείκτες όπως οι ρυθμοί αύξησης του ΑΕΠ, η αύξηση της παραγωγικότητας, το επίπεδο απασχόλησης, η τεχνολογική καινοτομία. Έτσι, με οδυνηρό τρόπο ανακαλύπτουμε ότι δεν ταυτίζεται η αξιολόγηση διαδικασιών με την αξιολόγηση αποτελεσμάτων και ξαναθυμούμαστε ότι το ζητούμενο δεν είναι η σύγκλιση των οικονομικών πολιτικών, αλλά των οικονομιών των κρατών μελών.

Η αξιολόγηση αποτελεσμάτων είναι συνώνυμη με την χρήση του κριτηρίου της αποτελεσματικότητας. Το κριτήριο της αποτελεσματικότητας των δημοσίων πολιτικών είναι κεντρικό στην αξιολόγηση των πολιτών - αποδεκτών αυτών των πολιτικών - και σχετίζεται άμεσα με την ποιότητα της Δημοκρατίας. Πράγματι, οι πολιτικοί επιστήμονες, αλλά και οι πολίτες εν γένει, αναγνωρίζουν ότι στις δημοκρατίες οι κυβερνήσεις εξαρτώνται από την εμπιστοσύνη που τους

[6] Δες Majone 1989
[7] Δες Commission 2001
[8] Δες χαρακτηριστικά Commission 1990, 2001, DeGraw 2004

δείχνουν οι εκλογείς. Εμπιστοσύνη που αρχίζει να εκφράζεται με την ψήφιση και την ανάδειξη μιας κυβέρνησης και διαρκεί όσο η κυβέρνηση εκφράζει με τις πράξεις της την βούληση της πλειοψηφίας των εκλογέων. Όμως μια δημοκρατικά εκλεγμένη κυβέρνηση που συστηματικά αποτυγχάνει στην υλοποίηση του προγράμματος της χάνει και την αρχική της νομιμοποίηση. Η διατήρηση αυτής της εμπιστοσύνης συνδέεται με την ικανότητα που έχουν οι κυβερνώντες να επιλύουν τα προβλήματα των πολιτών. Αυτό συνδέεται με το επόμενο κρίσιμο ερώτημα που ανέδειξε η κρίση, αυτό του δημοκρατικό ελλείμματος στο επίπεδο της Ένωσης.

Από την κρίση της ευρωζώνης στην κρίση νομιμοποίησης;

Ο βασικός ισχυρισμός είναι ότι στα περισσότερα ζητήματα πολιτικής που απασχολούν το θεσμικό οικοδόμημα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, η πληροφόρηση της κοινής γνώμης των κρατών μελών είναι περιορισμένη. Από τα πρώτα χρόνια των Ευρωπαϊκών Κοινοτήτων, διαχρονικά, η κοινή γνώμη εμφανίζεται να αγνοεί σε μεγάλο βαθμό τα τεκταινόμενα στις Βρυξέλες. Αυτό ανιχνεύεται από τους μελετητές της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης αλλά και τους πολιτικούς ακτιβιστές ως έλλειμα νομιμοποίησης. Ας δούμε σε ποιο βαθμό αυτό το διαχρονικό έλλειμα αναβαθμίζεται με την κρίση της ευρωζώνης σε κρίση νομιμοποίησης.

Η διάγνωση θα στηριχθεί στο ότι το δημοκρατικό έλλειμα συνδέεται με το είδος των παραγόμενων δημόσιων πολιτικών και το πολύπλοκο της διαδικασίας λήψης απόφασης στο ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο. Οδηγούμαστε εκεί με τη βοήθεια αναλυτικών εργαλείων από τις θεωρίες παραγωγής δημόσιων πολιτικών και τις θεωρίες ευρωπαϊκής ολοκλήρωσης. Η πρώτη διαπίστωση από την επισκόπηση των ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών αναδεικνύει ότι η πλειονότητά τους είναι ρυθμιστικού χαρακτήρα. Αυτό μάλιστα οδήγησε μελετητές[9] της Ένωσης να την χαρακτηρίσουν ως ρυθμιστικό κράτος. Απουσιάζουν δηλαδή οι διανεμητικού και αναδιανεμητικού χαρακτήρα πολιτικές, που παραμένουν το προνομιακό πεδίο των κρατών μελών. Ξέρουμε ότι τεχνικά ζητήματα, όπως η εναρμόνιση προδιαγραφών προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών, ο προσδιορισμός των ρυπογόνων δραστηριοτήτων και η επιλογή τεχνολογιών αντιστροφής της υποβάθμισης του περιβάλλοντος, και ο εντοπισμός ολιγοπωλιακών συμπεριφορών στην αγορά, απαιτούν εξειδικευμένη γνώση και χρόνο ώστε κάποιος «outsider» να πληροφορηθεί και να διαμορφώσει άποψη. Η αδυναμία της κοινής γνώμης να τοποθετηθεί στα τεχνικού χαρακτήρα ζητήματα πολιτικής προκύπτει ως εγγενής. Τα ζητήματα αυτά ενσκήπτουν κυρίως στην φάση της υλοποίησης πολιτικών, αλλά και στην φάση της ανάδειξης της ατζέντας των προβλημάτων μέσα από τον προσδιορισμό τους. Έτσι, μπορούμε με ασφάλεια να ισχυριστούμε ότι οι τεχνικές πλευρές της παραγωγής των δημοσίων πολιτικών προσδιορίζονται πίσω

[9] Majone (1993,1997)

από τις κουρτίνες στη σκιά της κοινής γνώμης μακριά από την άμεση επιρροή των εκλογέων. Εκεί οι αποφάσεις λαμβάνονται χωρίς τον αρχικό περιορισμό της βούλησης του εκλογικού σώματος το οποίο είτε αγνοεί παντελώς το διαπραγματευόμενο θέμα, είτε δεν έχει διαμορφωμένη άποψη για τις τεχνικές του διαστάσεις με προφανείς επιπτώσεις στο μηχανισμό νομιμοποίησης των επιλεγόμενων ρυθμιστικών πολιτικών.

Για να έχουμε πληρέστερη εικόνα από τις πραγματικές συνθήκες που παράγονται οι πολιτικές της Ένωσης, ας εισάγουμε στην ανάλυση μας το μηχανισμό της πολυεπίπεδης λήψης αποφάσεων που χαρακτηρίζει την λειτουργία της. Μετά από εβδομήντα χρόνια θεωριών ευρωπαϊκής ολοκλήρωσης, είναι πλέον αποδεκτό[10] ότι καμία δεν μπορεί να εξηγήσει όλες τις πλευρές της ευρωπαϊκής οικοδόμησης. Χρειάζονται διαρκώς καινούργια εργαλεία για την ανάλυση και κατανόηση του φαινομένου. Για τις ανάγκες της παρούσας συζήτησης που αφορά την παραγωγή ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών τεχνικού περιεχομένου και έντασης γνώσης, όπως είναι οι ρυθμιστικές πολιτικές σε ένα πολυεπίπεδο πλαίσιο λήψης απόφασης, προτείνεται να υιοθετηθεί το αναλυτικό σχήμα των εμφωλευμένων παιγνίων (nested games) όπως το εισηγήθηκε ο Tsebelis (1991) προσαρμοσμένο στην λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (Alexopoulos, 2000)[11].

Η διαδικασία λήψης αποφάσεων στο πολυεπίπεδο σχήμα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης γίνεται αντιληπτή ως ένα παίγνιο που διεξάγεται από τις ηγεσίες και τους λαούς ταυτόχρονα σε δύο συνδεδεμένες αρένες, την ευρωπαϊκή και τις εγχώριες αρένες των κρατών μελών. Σ αυτό το σχήμα οι εκλεγμένοι εκπρόσωποι των κρατών μελών στην ευρωπαϊκή αρένα διαπραγματεύονται όχι μόνο ως εκπρόσωποι της βούλησης των εκλογέων τους αλλά και σύμφωνα με την ατομική τους επιθυμία συνυπολογίζοντας και τις επιπτώσεις που αυτή μπορεί να έχει στην σχέση τους με το εκλογικό σώμα στην εγχώρια αρένα πολιτικής. Με άλλα λόγια, η εγχώρια αρένα και ο βαθμός ύπαρξης διαφοροποιημένης προτίμησης από την εκλογική βάση για τα υπό διαπραγμάτευση θέματα στην ευρωπαϊκή αρένα, λειτουργεί ως περιορισμός στην ελευθερία των εκλεγμένων αντιπροσώπων να δράσουν διαφορετικά, σύμφωνα με τις δικές τους προτιμήσεις για το επιδιωκόμενο αποτέλεσμα.

Το κλειδί στο προτεινόμενο ερμηνευτικό σχήμα των εμφωλευμένων παιγνίων είναι ότι οι προτιμήσεις του εκλογικού σώματος για τις διάφορες ευρωπαϊκές πολιτικές, δεν ταυτίζονται με τις

[10] Βλέπε ενδεικτικά Hix, 1999.

[11] Αυτή η αναλυτική προσέγγιση αποτελεί εμπλουτισμό της θεωρίας του Φιλελεύθερου Διακυβερνητισμού (Liberal Intergovernmentalism) (Moravcick, 1993), του κυρίαρχου αναλυτικού σχήματος από την δεκαετία του 1990, ώστε να δίνεται η δυνατότητα ένταξης στην ανάλυση α) του ενεργητικού ρόλου των υπερεθνικών θεσμικών παικτών οπως η Επιτροπή, το Δικαστήριο της ΕΕ, και η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα που ο διακυβερνητισμός εμπρόθετα αγνοούσε ως παράγοντες οριακής επιρροής και β) τις διαδραστικής δυναμικής σχέσης ανάμεσα τις εγχώριες αρένες πολιτικής (domestic politics) και τις ευρωπαϊκές αρένες (European Union politics) λήψης αποφάσεων, που ο διακυβερνητισμός έβλεπε στατικά, δηλαδή ότι απλά αυτοί υιοθετούν στη βάση του ελάχιστου κοινού παρανομαστή τις εγχώριες πολιτικές προτιμήσεις.

προτιμήσεις των ηγετών τους. Το ζητούμενο σε αυτή την αμφίδρομη σχέση ανάμεσα στις ηγεσίες και τη βάση τους είναι ο βαθμός στον οποίο οι πρώτες μπορούν να διαμορφώσουν τις προτιμήσεις των δεύτερων. Κάτω από ποιες συνθήκες είναι δυνατόν οι ηγεσίες των κρατών μελών να οδηγηθούν σε συμφωνίες για κοινές ευρωπαϊκές πολιτικές, όταν οι εγχώριες βάσεις τους δεν συμφωνούν προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση; Σε αυτή την περίπτωση οι ευρωπαϊκές πολιτικές που υιοθετούνται είναι προϊόν του ελάχιστου κοινού παρονομαστή των προτιμήσεων των ελίτ χωρίς ισχυρή νομιμοποίηση στην βάση εισροών (input legitimacy). Ο μόνος τρόπος για να μακροημερεύσουν οι συγκεκριμένες πολιτικές χωρίς να οδηγήσουν σε γενικευμένη κρίση νομιμοποίησης είναι να γίνουν αποδεκτές από τις εγχώριες εκλογικές βάσεις εκ του αποτελέσματος που παράγουν (output legitimacy)[12]

Με βάση το παραπάνω σχήμα ας επιχειρήσουμε να συνδέσουμε τις παραγόμενες ευρωπαϊκές πολιτικές με την νομιμοποιητική τους βάση, έχοντας πάντα στο μυαλό το παρατηρούμενο έλλειμμα νομιμοποίησης. Όπως αναπτύχθηκε παραπάνω για τις ρυθμιστικού χαρακτήρα δημόσιες πολιτικές, είναι η εγγενής ασυμμετρία στην γνώση και στην πληροφόρηση σε βάρος των εκλογέων, η οποία καθιστά προβληματική τη νομιμοποίηση τους στη βάση των εισροών. Στο επίπεδο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης οι τεχνικές πλευρές των ζητημάτων, κυρίως στα θέματα του πρώην πρώτου πυλώνα έχουν μεγαλύτερη πολυπλοκότητα, τόσο από πλευράς παραγωγής νέας γνώσης αλλά και συλλογής πληροφοριών από όλα τα κράτη μέλη, ώστε να προσδιοριστούν οι συνέργειες και οι πιθανές επιπτώσεις των σχεδιαζόμενων πολιτικών. Ο τρόπος λειτουργίας του θεσμικού οικοδομήματος της Ένωσης με τα πολλά στάδια προετοιμασίας και διαπραγμάτευσης πριν την απόφαση σε συνδυασμό με τον συχνά τεχνικό χαρακτήρα των συζητήσεων, καθιστά την κοινή γνώμη ουσιαστικά απούσα. Έτσι, οι εγχώριες αρένες έχουν μεγαλύτερη δυσκολία να καθορίσουν τα τεκταινόμενα στην ευρωπαϊκή αρένα παραγωγής πολιτικής. Ως εκ τούτου, οι εθνικές ηγεσίες κατά τις διακυβερνητικές διαπραγματεύσεις και οι ευρωπαϊκοί θεσμικοί παίκτες αυτονομούνται από τα εγχώρια εκλογικά σώματα και μπορούν να προωθούν πολιτικές σύμφωνα με τις δικές τους προτιμήσεις. Συνεπώς, παρατηρείται το φαινόμενο οι ρυθμιστικές πολιτικές της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, που αποτελούν την πλειοψηφία των ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών, να έχουν χαμηλή εκ των προτέρων νομιμοποίηση (input legitimacy).

Ας εξετάσουμε τι γίνεται με τις πολιτικές που ασκούνται στο πλαίσιο της Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Ένωσης. Με την ΟΝΕ υπονομεύτηκε σε μεγάλο βαθμό η εκ του αποτελέσματος νομιμοποίηση, από το γεγονός ότι η οικονομική κρίση, πέρα από τα ενδογενή δομικά προβλήματα

[12] Ο διαχωρισμός της νομιμοποίησης σε δύο κατηγορίες ανάλογα με τον τρόπο που αυτή προκύπτει με την εκ των προτέρων η εκ των υστέρων έγκριση και την χρήση των όρων των input legitimacy, output legitimacy κατά την παράδοση εισροών - εκροών της συστημικής θεωρίας του Easton (1965) έγινε από τον Fritz Scharpf (Scharpf 1997, 1999)

της εγχώριας πραγματικότητας των κρατών μελών, όπως η Ελλάδα, οφειλόταν και στην ανολοκλήρωτη αρχιτεκτονική της ΟΝΕ, όπως έγκαιρα είχε επισημανθεί από την μεγάλη πλειοψηφία των οικονομολόγων του τομέα των διεθνών οικονομικών.[13] Με αφορμή την υιοθέτηση του Ευρώ και τη δημιουργία της Ευρωζώνης με την συνθήκη του Μάαστριχτ οι εμπειρικές αναλύσεις για τις ευρωπαϊκές οικονομίες έδειχναν ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση δεν είναι μια άριστη συναλλαγματική ζώνη,[14] ώστε η υιοθέτηση ενός κοινού νομίσματος να αποτελεί την βέλτιστη επιλογή για την οικονομία της. Αντίθετα, οι μελέτες εντόπιζαν ως άριστη συναλλαγματική περιοχή τις οικονομίες του πυρήνα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, χωρίς τις οικονομίες του Ευρωπαϊκού Νότου. Παρόλα αυτά, τα εμπειρικά δεδομένα δεν καταφέραν να αποτρέψουν τους αισιόδοξους να προχωρήσουν στο εγχείρημα του ευρώ.

Η κρίση της ευρωζώνης το 2010, μόλις μια δεκαετία μετά την υιοθέτηση του Ευρώ, οδήγησε στην υιοθέτηση σκληρών μέτρων λιτότητας και περιοριστικών δημοσιονομικών πολιτικών για τις χώρες του Νότου (Τζαγκαράκης, Παππάς & Κρήτας, 2021), ώστε να επανέλθουν στις πρόνοιες των κριτηρίων του Μάαστριχτ ως προς τα ελλείμματα και το χρέος. Γνωρίζουμε από την πολιτική οικονομία των μακροοικονομικών πολιτικών ότι οι πολιτικές περικοπής μισθών ή αύξησης της φορολογίας αλλά και μέτρων νομισματικού χαρακτήρα, όπως η άνοδος των επιτοκίων, είναι μέτρα υψηλής, εύκολης και άμεσης αναγνωρισιμότητας από τους πολίτες με μεγαλύτερες πιθανότητες να τους κινητοποιήσουν. Εφόσον θίγουν πλειοψηφικές ομάδες εύκολα, πολιτικοποιούνται και οδηγούν σε απονομιμοποίηση της ακολουθούμενης πολιτικής, που μπορεί να μετατραπεί σε απόσυρση της εκλογικής υποστήριξης στο κυβερνόν κόμμα.[15] Όσο η λύση δεν προωθείται σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο τα κράτη μέλη παραμένουν ανήμπορα να δράσουν από μόνα τους.

Έτσι, συνολικά με την κρίση της Ευρωζώνης, τόσο ευρωπαϊκά όσο και εγχώρια, το πολιτικό σύστημα παρουσιάζει εκτεταμένα συμπτώματα απονομιμοποίησης και στο επίπεδο της ικανοποίησης της εκφρασμένης βούλησης των πολιτών (input legitimacy) και στο επίπεδο της αποτελεσματικής διακυβέρνησης (output legitimacy). Πράγματι, ο βαθμός ικανοποίησης και αποδοχής των πεπραγμένων της Ένωσης άρχισε να υποχωρεί, όπως χαρακτηριστικά επισημαίνει ο Majone (2011), καθώς αυξάνονταν οι αρμοδιότητες των υπερεθνικών οργάνων (κυρίως η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή, και η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα) μετά την Ενιαία Ευρωπαϊκή Πράξη και τη Συνθήκη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Η κρίση της μη ομόφωνης υπογραφής της Συνθήκης της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και η μη συμμετοχή του Ηνωμένου Βασιλείου και της Δανίας στην ΟΝΕ στις αρχές του 1990 ήταν

[13] Δες De Grauwe, P. 2004, Eichengreen, J. and Frieden, J.A. 1995
[14] Δες Hix 1999: 320-323, Eichengreen 1990; Feldstein 1992
[15] Για μια ενδελεχή συζήτηση για την πολιτική οικονομία των μακροοικονομικών πολιτικών δες Scharpf 1999, 2011,

ηχηρά μηνύματα προβληματισμού για το ενδεδειγμένο της ακολουθούμενης διαδικασίας ολοκλήρωσης. Το πρόβλημα εντοπίζεται στην δυσαρμονία ανάμεσα στις διευρυνόμενες υπερεθνικές αρμοδιότητες και την διαρκώς συρρικνούμενη δημοφιλία τους. Οι θιασώτες της ευρωπαϊκής ολοκλήρωσης μέσω της νεολειτουργικής διάχυσης στήριξαν την αισιοδοξία τους στην υπεροχή των υπερεθνικών θεσμών να επιλύουν προβλήματα. Θεωρήθηκε ότι αυτό θα αποτελέσει την νομιμοποιητική βάση και άρα την ατμομηχανή της προοδευτικής μεταφοράς πολιτικών από το εθνικό στο ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο. Όμως, οι Βρυξέλλες όλο και περισσότερο θεωρούνται πλέον ως η αιτία του προβλήματος και όχι η λύση. Η αβεβαιότητα και οι καθυστερήσεις στην αντιμετώπιση της κρίσης χρέους αύξησαν ακόμα περισσότερο την δυσαρέσκεια απέναντι στους ευρωπαϊκούς θεσμούς. Η πρόβλεψη είναι ότι αν μέτρα δημοσιονομικής ολοκλήρωσης προωθηθούν με την τρέχουσα θεσμική οργάνωση της ευρωπαϊκής αρένας σε αποφάσεις όπως η φορολογική πολιτική και οι συντάξεις, χωρίς την ενίσχυση του μηχανισμού νομιμοποίησης σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, θα παγιωθεί και το δημοκρατικό έλλειμα.

Μια ευρωπαϊκή πολιτική για όλους;

Το δεύτερο που ανέδειξε η κρίση είναι η ανάγκη της επανεξέτασης του τρόπου που επιχειρείται ο εξευρωπαϊσμός των κρατών μελών. Όπως αναφέρθηκε εισαγωγικά, διαχρονικά η μέθοδος εναρμόνισης πολιτικών στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση κινήθηκε από την πλήρη εναρμόνιση προδιαγραφών υπηρεσιών και προϊόντων της δεκαετίας του 1960 στην εθελοντική και ελάχιστα απαιτούμενη εναρμόνιση και την αμοιβαία αναγνώριση μετά την δεκαετία του 1980. Ωστόσο στα θέματα της οικοδόμησης της Ευρωζώνης ακολουθήθηκε η μέθοδος της πλήρους εναρμόνισης.

Ήδη από τη δεκαετία του 1970 θεωρητικοί όπως ο Fritz Sharpf, εντόπισαν την αδυναμία της Ένωσης να παράγει βέλτιστες ευρωπαϊκές πολιτικές εφόσον αυτές θα ήταν ενιαίες για όλους, ονομάζοντάς την παγίδα συναπόφασης.[16] Σύμφωνα με τον Scharpf, ενώ η ευρωπαϊκή λύση δεν είναι βέλτιστη λόγω συμβιβασμών για τα κράτη μέλη, αυτά παραμένουν παγιδευμένα και υποχρεούνται να την εφαρμόσουν. Υπάρχει βέβαια και η περίπτωση της αδυναμίας λήψης απόφασης λόγω άσκησης βέτο, οπότε η ευρωπαϊκή λύση απουσιάζει εντελώς. Σε αυτή την περίπτωση, αναδεικνύεται η ανάγκη διεθνών λύσεων σε εθνικά προβλήματα που όσο αυτές δεν έρχονται, τόσο απονομιμοποιούνται όλες οι εμπλεκόμενες εθνικές κυβερνήσεις – και των δανειστών και των δανειζόμενων στην περίπτωση της κρίσης της Ευρωζώνης - αλλά και των υπερεθνικών θεσμών, όπως η Επιτροπή και η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα. Να σημειωθεί εδώ ότι το πρόγραμμα της Εσωτερικής Αγοράς προχώρησε μέσα από την αρχή της αμοιβαίας αναγνώρισης και της μίνιμουμ εναρμόνισης που έδινε ταυτόχρονα την

[16] Βλέπε Scharpf 1988, 2006

δυνατότητα και ευρωπαϊκής δράσης αλλά ευελιξίας για την ικανοποίηση των επιμέρους αναγκών σε εθνικό επίπεδο. Παραμένει παράδοξο το γεγονός ότι επιλέχθηκε, κατά την εποχή της διεύρυνσης και της πανσπερμίας διαφοροποιημένων αναγκών, να προωθηθεί το πιο φιλόδοξο πρόγραμμα συνολικής εναρμόνισης, που ήταν το πρόγραμμα της ONE.

Συμπερασματικά σχόλια

Με το παρόν επιχειρήθηκε η εξέταση των νέων δεδομένων που δημιούργησε η κρίση χρέους στην Ευρωζώνη την περίοδο 2010-2017 προς την αναζήτηση ενός πιο αποτελεσματικού τρόπου προώθησης της ευρωπαϊκής οικοδόμησης. Επιχειρήθηκε η διερεύνηση των όριων της παραγωγής ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών ως προς την αποτελεσματικότητά τους αναφορικά με την επίλυση των προβλημάτων των κρατών μελών και της σύνδεσής τους με την νομιμοποιητική τους βάση. Διαπιστώθηκε ότι η έκρηξη, τα τελευταία 30 χρόνια, των ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών ρυθμιστικού χαρακτήρα αύξησε την απονομιμοποίησή τους στη βάση των εκ των προτέρων εισροών (input legitimacy). Η κρίση της ευρωζώνης πρόσθεσε την απονομιμιμοποίηση των ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών στη βάση της χαμηλής αποτελεσματικότητας (output legitimacy) και οδήγησε σε εκτεταμένη πλέον απονομιμοποίηση των ευρωπαϊκών θεσμών ως μηχανισμών επίλυσης προβλημάτων. Διαπιστώθηκε ότι αυτή η χαμηλή αποτελεσματικότητα των θεσμών στο πλαίσιο της ONE επιβεβαιώνει την προειδοποίηση των ειδικών ότι η ευρωζώνη δεν είναι άριστη συναλλαγματική ζώνη και δεν ενδείκνυται η υιοθέτηση του Ευρώ ως ενιαίου νομίσματος. Η σύνδεση της γενικευμένης εναρμόνισης με την αύξηση της απονομιμοποίησης των ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών αναδεικνύει το προβληματικό της υιοθέτησης της πλήρους εναρμόνισης ως ενδεδειγμένης μεθόδου ευρωπαϊκής ολοκλήρωσης. Είναι η διαφοροποιημένη ολοκλήρωση η ενδεδειγμένη λύση; Πράγματι πιθανόν το ερώτημα να είναι περιττό γιατί τα πράγματα έχουν προχωρήσει από μόνα τους. Αντί της υλοποίησης του σλόγκαν της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής «One Market, One Money, One Law»[17], σήμερα έχουμε την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση διαιρεμένη σε τρεις ομάδες, τα κράτη της ευρωζώνης, τα ντε φάκτο απέχοντα κράτη και τα κράτη που περιμένουν. Αυτό μας οδηγεί στον συμπερασματικό προβληματισμό του Majone (2012) για το επίκαιρο της παλιάς συζήτησης της δεκαετίας του ‘70 για μια Ευρώπη πολλών ταχυτήτων. Η σύγχρονη εκδοχή της θα μπορούσε να είναι μια μέθοδος διαφοροποιημένης ολοκλήρωσης με βάση το κριτήριο της επικουρικότητας, δηλαδή της αναζήτησης του βέλτιστού επιπέδου για να παράγονται ευρωπαϊκές πολιτικές που επιλύουν προβλήματα.

[17] Βλέπε Commission (1990).

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Political Responsiveness in Crisis Period, Sustainability and ESG in EU: The Initiatives of Next Generation EU and the Potentials for Programming Period 2021-2027[1]

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Abstract

Crisis in Europe used to generate significant socioeconomic and political changes in institutions and states cooperation, especially in post war period. During the last decade, the financial crisis, in combination with climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged significantly EU, while at the same time, the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 provided solutions as well as the political will of "being together is better". The EU Green Deal indicated that cooperation is a prerequisite for EU as a whole and at the same time, it is a fact in combination with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Moreover, Covid-19 has indicated the need for an effective policy response in order to deal with this health crisis. The main issue for EU is how to inspire and provide a sustainable, fair and social inclusive future for the member states and next generation. The EU via the "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" booklet analyzes its international position in sustainable development issues, while the Next Generation EU is an important policy and financial tool in order to improve the common policies in new programming period 2021-2027.

Keywords: European Union, Cohesion Policy, Sustainable Development.

Introduction

The recent and ongoing crises (climate change and Covid-19) affected EU and its member states to expand and improve their institutional framework in order to cooperate more effectively and efficiently. This cooperation within EU among state and non-state actors (e.g. the business sector) is a prerequisite in parallel with states sovereignty in high political issues (e.g. foreign policy, defense), indicating the complexity and the challenges from a political and institutional perspective (Heywood, 2014). Common goods and risks especially under a democratic institutional and multinational framework such as the EU, require advanced synergies with social and development stakeholders such as the business sector.

Climate change issue is a topic where the EU Green Deal indicated that cooperation is a prerequisite for EU as a whole and at the same time, it is a fact in combination with the Sustainable Development

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Goals (SDGs) (European Commission, 2016; 2019). Moreover, Covid-19 has indicated the need for an effective policy response in order to deal with this common health crisis. Health issues such as Covid-19 utilize the institutional tools and settings for common political response from EU at the top, to member states and non-state actors as well such as business sector.

Yet, the EU is not a federation and this highlights the fact that it doesn't respond as fast as that type of institutional framework in common risks and international threats. EU has a unique institutional framework and it is difficult to be compared with federations and states in terms of political responsiveness homogeneity and decision speed. Therefore, the effectiveness of crises management within the EU should be compared before and after the Lisbon Treaty, which was empowered institutionally in order to deal with common risks, such as the recent financial crisis. Especially during Covid-19, the EU political responsiveness was relatively fast, while at the same time, it underlined the significance of common European identity and institutional tradition (e.g. European Social Model), which became more viable and engaged business sector as well. The latter in EU in terms of financial impact, employment generation and environmental impact have an important role to play via SDG 17. This Goal indicates the significance of multistakeholder synergies towards the fulfillment of SDGs' indicators. In this context, one of the most important steps that have been undertaken politically by EU is the Next EU Generation recovery plan and programming period 2021-2027.

The common policy framework against common risks

Since the treaty of Rome in 1957, the optimal goal of common Europe was to deal issues in economy and trade under a common political framework, which was different from the ones that federations have and more holistic and internationalized as sovereign states have. The political evolution of EU especially after the Maastricht Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty indicated the potentials of common policy and political responsiveness in other policy realms. The economic crisis in the EU was a significant milestone for its member states and institutions, accelerating the understanding and realization that common policy solutions in common financial risks and national debts were both national and European issues at the same time. Furthermore, the development of mechanisms (such as the European Stability Mechanism and European Financial Stability Facility) was a significant step towards a strong crisis co-management in between EU institutions, member states etc. Hence, J. Junker said "the creation of the EFSF and ESM was thanks to an unprecedented show of political will and innovation" (ESM, 2019).

The fact that EU is not a federation underlined at first the absence of a common policy framework on how the member states will deal Covid-19 in terms of vaccinations, therapy as well as investments in National Health Systems and economy. Hence in few months the political experience and the institutional setting from economic crisis, was the factor for the institutional tradition of EU in Covid-19, despite the need for states sovereignty in that high policy issue. Some significant examples towards that are the common Covid-19 response was based on the development of a common strategy regarding the Covid-19 vaccination, safety protocols and assistance (e.g. protective equipment); as well as the socioeconomic pillar for jobs protection and support via SURE[4] (Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency) (€100 billion, 31 million people and 2.5 million businesses in 2020, 3 million people and over 400,000 firms in 2021).

Another remarkable policy topic is climate change and Sustainable Development. The Green Deal and the European actions towards SDGs are important steps in order EU to be set as an international pole of excellence in these topics. In political terms, the SDGs influence global sustainability issues regarding the development of a common policy framework via international organizations such as United Nations. Despite the fact that a contested global governance framework is a goal, the process already is significant especially in EU because a common policy framework in combination with a multi-stakeholder platform operate (European Commission 2016; 2019). The political discourse for sustainability highlights the general concern about the role of governments and its synergies with non state actors such as business sector. Furthermore, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) political dimensions in EU pictures the institutional tradition and the CSR made in EU approach in norms, political initiatives at member states level and business practices (Williams and Aguilera, 2006; Albareda et al. 2007; 2008; Taliouris and Manasakis, 2021). Therefore, CSR is policy realm since the first definition in 2001 and the redefinition in 2011, while the main goal since 2002 is to engage European business sector with SD and to promote responsible entrepreneurship (European Commission 2001; 2002; 2003; 2011). From a business case perspective, political CSR is “a new conception of political CSR as an extended model of governance with business firms contributing to global regulation and providing public goods” (Scherer and Palazzo in 2011: cited at Scherer 2017: 3).

Another political response beyond political and institutional level was the introduction of hybrid policy tools in order EU to deal more successfully the future challenges via the Next Generation EU[5]

[4]See: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/financial-assistance-eu/funding-mechanisms-and-facilities/sure_en
[5]See: https://europa.eu/next-generation-eu/index_en

(NGEU) recovery plan (806,9 billion €). The latter is more than a recovery plan, rather it is a once in a great chance for EU to emerge stronger from the pandemic by transforming European economies and societies towards a common and sustainable Europe for everyone. The NGEU budget will work on top of the EU long-term budget of €1.074 trillion for the programming period 2021-2027 and it is divided in policy realms: Make It Green, Make it Digital, Make it Healthy, Make it Strong, Make it Equal. Finally, a total of €2.018 trillion in current prices will help to rebuild a resilient post-COVID-19 Europe. That type of budget will increase flexibility mechanisms to guarantee the capacity to address unforeseen needs during the period 2021-2027 in order to meet today's realities with future's uncertainties under policy realms.[6] The EU long-term budget will be financed through existing revenue sources (e.g. custom duties, member states' contributions based on VAT and GNI and non-recycled plastic packaging waste), NGEU green bonds, SURE social bonds. Consequently, in 2021 EU Commission proposed three more sources for EU overall budget in order to support financial the grants part of NGEU Social Climate Fund: 1) the EU emissions trading system; 2) the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and; 3) the reallocation of Member States' taxing rights on a share of residual profits of the largest multinational companies.

Environmental, Social and Governance disclosure and corporate citizenship

The CSR concept is moving beyond philanthropy and internal dimensions (e.g. total quality management), becoming an innovative and risk assessment process towards corporate contribution to sustainable development. Since the 2001 Green Paper about CSR, responsible entrepreneurship towards sustainability and CSR as policy realm are dynamic fields in the EU as well as in its member states. The policy models for CSR in regional categories indicate the fact that institutional traditions, socioeconomic and environmental concerns differ among business sectors, sizes and origin (Albareda et al., 2007; 2008). During the 21st century, CSR became a widely implemented business and management approach in all kinds of sectors and industries (e.g. shipping, transportation) and as a policy realm in member states via implicit and explicit public policies (e.g. public procurement, SMEs) (Taliouris, 2018; 2019). Therefore responsible entrepreneurship set up hybrid policy tools (e.g. legal and informative together, or financial and partnering) for member states and EU (EU, 2011). This had influenced European business sector to adopt responsible business practices either domestically (e.g. EMAS) or in their international supply chain (e.g. human rights, eco-label).

[6] Single Market, Innovation and Digital 149.5 (+ 11.5 from NGEU) Cohesion, Resilience and Values 426.7 (+ 776.5 from NGEU) Natural Resources and Environment 401 (+ 18.9 from NGEU) Migration and Border Management 25.7 Security and Defence 14.9 Neighbourhood and the World 110.6 European Public Administration 82.

Environmental, social and governance (ESG)[7] considerations are important in order to set up responsible investments and decision making process in financial sector, economic activities and projects in the EU. ESG as process is also crucial for the period 2021-2027 for state and non-state actors (e.g. business sector) in order to be eligible in the above development programmes and funding opportunities[8]. The environmental pillar is based on climate change adaptation, circular economy and environmental capital sustainability. Social considerations could refer to European Social Model institutional tradition and practices in both private and public sector. The governance dimension is crucial due to the fact that it refers to both public and private institutions (as well as partnerships) because it ensures the inclusion of social and environmental aspects and discourse in decision-making process. Moreover, from a neo-institutional perspective and within a comparative policy analysis context, governance setting for SD and CSR is an important aspect so as to understand corporate citizenship and shift it towards sustainability at the level of a state (Alibašić 2017). Governance, as a pillar for SD and its policy implication, is strongly associated with the evolution of a multilevel governance perspective in dealing with common goods. Therefore, EU has developed a disclosure of climate-related information[9], which provides information to private sector on how to report from the one hand the impacts of their business to climate change and from the other hand the impacts of climate change on their business activities. This political initiative is linked with Non-Financial Reporting Directive (a milestone in EU), in combination with non-binding guidelines on non-financial reporting and the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (European Commission, 2021).

In 2014 a Directive launched Non-Financial Reporting and rules about the disclosure of non-financial and diversity information by companies. According to Richard Howitt (2014) this Directive was debatable since 1999 and the consensus finally derived through delegations and cohesion. This Directive refers solely to large corporations over 500 employees[10] approximately 11.700 companies) (European Commission, 2014a; 2014b). In 2014, Commissioner M. Barnier said for this Directive that "Companies, investors and society at large will benefit from this increased transparency" (European Commission, 2014a: 1) (e.g. anti-corruption and bribery, environmental and social issues such as employees, human rights, diversity). In 2017, Commission has proposed more guidelines and

[7]See: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance/eu-climate-benchmarks-and-benchmarks-esg-disclosures_el
[8]See: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance_en
[9]See: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance/corporate-disclosure-climate-related-information_el
[10] Listed companies, banks, insurance companies, other companies designated by national authorities as public-interest entities

in 2020 a revision towards Green Deal objectives by 2050 is necessary because the legal framework don't always provide relevant or adequate information for stakeholders such as investors, whose awareness has increased about sustainability issues that might create future risks to businesses. Furthermore, the growing investment rate and interest in sustainability standards and objectives from investee companies is a trent in international markets; a fact that it is also affected by Covid-19 and the demand for non financial reporting and information in the negative socioeconomic impacts in Human Resrourse and the reslience of supply chains. Summing up, the revision of this Directive is necessary because EU goal is a worldwide harmonization of EU sustainability reporting standards for the minimization of systemic risks to European economy and the accountability as well of European business sector domestically and internationally too.

EU Commission sets a target for an emissions reduction by 55% in 2030 compared to the beginning of '90s[11]. More specifically, EU will invest approximately 350 billion euro per year in order to meet these optimistic SD targets by 2030. The challenges towards these responsible investments are based on co-management perspective and synergies from public, private and third pillar of economy (e.g. social economy). In order to make sustainability work an EU taxonomy[12] is developed and it is based on objectives (climate change mitigation, adaptation, sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources, transition to a circular economy, pollution prevention and control, protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems). Moreover EU is part of International Platform on Sustainable Finance[13], which is a forum in between policymakers in order to increase the amount of capital and investments in responsible and environmentally friendly investments. The members of IPSF promote and exchange ideas in best practices, to benchmark sustainable initiatives, to tackle barriers and promote opportunities in sustainable finance by incorporating local regulations.

Conclusions

Since the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 and the EU institutional empower in order to deal politically issues domestically and internationally many things have changed, the perception of EU at the international community. The crisis factor became the main trigger from EU, its member states and citizens to discover the limitations and the opportunities of European Community and Institutions. The financial crisis was the first and lasted for long, while Covid-19 and climate change nowadays tests the

[11]See: https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/european-green-deal/2030-climate-target-plan_en
[12]See: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance/eu-taxonomy-sustainable-activities_el
[13]See: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance/international-platform-sustainable-finance_el

institutional setting and political capability to respond in crisis and uncertain risks such the war now in Ukraine. The traditional role of the state has been challenged and changed towards to a more inclusive approach in international organizations and social stakeholders. Especially for sustainability and human development issues, the collaboration and co-management approach in common goods and risks is a prerequisite even for developed economies and states such as the ones in EU. For sustainable development issues (e.g. climate change, health, peace) and in particular SDGs 2030 the stakeholders engagement and business sector is necessary under a specific policy framework that respects regulation, social norms, ethics and private sector activities at regional level. The latter is the main obstacle and challenge of EU in order to deal with the programming period 2021-2027 and through the use on NGEU recovery plan. The institutional setting of EU wasn't as effective and efficient as EU citizens, member states and stakeholders such (e.g. business sector) wanted, due to the absence of leadership in crisis times and vision towards a common policy enforcement of EU ideals for peace, social security, environmental sustainability and competitiveness.

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Topic 7
Health Politics and Policies

COVID-19 Pandemic Management Policy: Different Approaches[1]

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Abstract

The rapid spread of SarsCoV-2 virus has challenged the sustainability of health systems worldwide, in terms of infection prevention, emergency management and effective strategies to protect public health. The present study aims to review and compose the existing international literature, which lists the different approaches of policy management of COVID-19 pandemic. The methodology included literature and research data review, which were collected through Google Scholar, Pub-med online database, articles, journals and books. This study makes evident that the analysis of all different approaches of the pandemic policy management will contribute significantly to its holistic treatment, by integrating best practices, in order to implement appropriate consultation programs as well as to reduce the negative consequences.

Keywords: pandemic, protection measures, coping strategies.

Η Πολιτική Διαχείριση της Πανδημίας COVID-19: Διαφορετικές Προσεγγίσεις

Σταματίνα Δούκη & Νίκη Χριστίνα Δούκη

Εισαγωγή

Η ταχεία εξάπλωση του ιού SarsCoV-2, αποτέλεσε πρόκληση για τη βιωσιμότητα των συστημάτων υγείας, παγκόσμια, σχετικά με την πρόληψη των λοιμώξεων, τη διαχείριση επειγουσών καταστάσεων και τη διασφάλιση αποτελεσματικών στρατηγικών προκειμένου να προστατευθεί η δημόσια υγεία. Η παρούσα ερευνητική μελέτη στοχεύει στην ανασκόπηση και στη σύνθεση της διεθνούς υπάρχουσας βιβλιογραφίας, στην οποία καταγράφονται οι διαφορετικές προσεγγίσεις διαχείρισης της πανδημίας COVID-19. 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 και βιβλία. Η μελέτη καθιστά ξεκάθαρο ότι η σύνθεση όλων των διαφορετικών προσεγγίσεων, αναφορικά με τη διαχείριση της πανδημίας, θα συμβάλλει σημαντικά στην ολιστική αντιμετώπισή της, με την ενσωμάτωσή τους στα κατάλληλα προγράμματα για τον περιορισμό των σοβαρών συνεπειών της.

Keywords: πανδημία, μέτρα προστασίας, στρατηγικές αντιμετώπισης.

Εισαγωγή

Η φύση των μολυσματικών ασθενειών, (όπως η ιογενής λοίμωξη covid-19), οι επιπτώσεις στους ανθρώπους, στην οικονομία και στην κοινωνία διαφέρουν και συναρτώνται από τις κοινωνικές και

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περιβαλλοντικές συνθήκες, τις σχέσεις και τις αξίες της χρονικής περιόδου που εκδηλώνονται, καθώς δεν συσχετίζονται μόνο με τη λειτουργία των υγειονομικών συστημάτων και υποδομών. Εξάλλου, η συνθήκη αυτή ενισχύθηκε από τις επαναλαμβανόμενες αποτυχίες των προγραμμάτων υγείας στις αναπτυσσόμενες χώρες, καθώς και τις δυσκολίες αποτελεσματικής παροχής υπηρεσιών υγείας στις πολυπολιτισμικές κοινωνίες της Δύσης, με αποτέλεσμα την εστίαση στους κοινωνικούς και πολιτισμικούς παράγοντες που επηρεάζουν την εμφάνιση των νοσημάτων (Lambert, 2002).

Με χρονική αφετηρία την «ισπανική γρίπη», που θεωρείται η μεγαλύτερη πανδημία της ανθρωπότητας, η οποία εκδηλώθηκε με τη λήξη του Α΄ Παγκοσμίου Πολέμου και εξαπλώθηκε με τις μετακινήσεις των στρατευμάτων και των αιχμαλώτων (Oxford et al., 2002), έγινε αντιληπτό ότι η εξέλιξη μιας πανδημίας καθορίζεται από το επίπεδο των διακρατικών σχέσεων. Συνεπώς, αντί για εθνικούς ανταγωνιστικούς ρυθμούς ανάπτυξης, αναδεικνύεται η αναγκαιότητα επικέντρωσης σε μία ισόρροπη παγκόσμια ανάπτυξη, από την οποία θα επωφελούνται όλοι (Pawar, 2020). Η πανδημία της COVID-19 αποτελεί ενδεχομένως μία ιδανική αφετηρία για την ανάδειξη της αναγκαιότητας για την υιοθέτηση και την εφαρμογή ενός νέου διεθνούς νομικού πλαισίου για την παγκόσμια υγεία, υπό το οποίο θα διέπονται οι σχέσεις μεταξύ των δρώντων και οι επεμβάσεις μεγαλύτερης κλίμακας (Batakis et al., 2020). Ταυτόχρονα, αναδεικνύει την αναγκαιότητα των κοινωνικών κρατών ως φορέων εφαρμογής πολιτικών υγείας που προάγουν την καθολικότητα πρόσβασης, προς όφελος του κοινωνικού συνόλου (Tzagkarakis, Pappas, Kritas, 2020).

Το χρονικό της πανδημίας COVID-19

Οι υγειονομικές αρχές της Κίνας, το Δεκέμβριο του 2019, ανακοίνωσαν την εμφάνιση ενός άγνωστου έως τότε οξέος αναπνευστικού συνδρόμου, στην πόλη Wuhan της επαρχίας Hubei, ενώ στις 9 Ιανουαρίου του 2020, δήλωσαν ότι επρόκειτο για νέο στέλεχος του κορονοϊού 2019-nCoV (Νέος κορονοϊός Covid-19-Οδηγίες ΕΟΔΥ, 2020). Τα επιβεβαιωμένα κρούσματα στην Κίνα αυξήθηκαν ραγδαία, από 41 που είχαν καταγραφεί, αρχικά, έφθασαν να είναι άνω των 3 εκατομμυρίων, ενώ οι θάνατοι υπερέβησαν τα 210.000 άτομα (Spotlight, 2020).

Το επίκεντρο της μολυσματικής λοίμωξης μετατοπίστηκε από την Κίνα στις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες προκαλώντας καταστρεπτικές επιπτώσεις, όπως: θανάτους και οικονομικά προβλήματα ευρείας κλίμακας. Το πρώτο τεκμηριωμένο κρούσμα κορονοϊού στις Η.Π.Α., καταγράφτηκε στις 20 Ιανουάριου 2020 στην πολιτεία της Ουάσινγκτον. Η κυβέρνηση αποφάσισε άμεσα να κλείσει τα σύνορα, αλλά η μολυσματική λοίμωξη μεταδόθηκε από τη Δυτική Ακτή των ΗΠΑ στις Ανατολικές περιοχές και εξαπλώθηκε ταχύτατα σε όλη τη χώρα (Seligman, 2020).

Στην Ευρώπη, η Ιταλία που αποτέλεσε την πρώτη χώρα εμφάνισης της ιογενούς λοίμωξης, δεν είναι γνωστό εάν είχε εκτιμήσει με ακρίβεια την αυξημένη της ευπάθεια, που συσχετιζόταν με το συγκεκριμένο βιολογικό κίνδυνο (Cereda et al., 2020). Ωστόσο, αυτό που έγινε αμέσως εμφανές ήταν η ανεπάρκεια των διαθέσιμων πόρων προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστεί η επερχόμενη κρίση υγείας. Στις 23 Φεβρουαρίου 2020, η κυβέρνηση ανακοίνωσε μία σειρά αυστηρών περιοριστικών μέτρων, όπως: απαγόρευση εξόδου, αναστολή όλων των εκδηλώσεων και των δραστηριοτήτων (εκπαιδευτικές, εργασιακές/επιχειρηματικές, μουσεία, σχολεία, δημόσιες υπηρεσίες κ. ά), με εξαίρεση εκείνες που παρείχαν βασικές υπηρεσίες. Στις 8 Μαρτίου 2020, εξαγγέλθηκαν πιο αυστηρά μέτρα περιορισμού στους κατοίκους της περιφέρειας της Λομβαρδίας και σε άλλες 14 επαρχίες της βόρειας Ιταλίας, γεγονός που προκάλεσε πανικό με αποτέλεσμα πολλά άτομα που εργάζονταν ή σπούδαζαν στο Βορρά, να φύγουν για να μεταβούν στις νότιες περιοχές, όπου διέμεναν οι οικογένειές τους. Τα νοσοκομεία στη Βόρεια Ιταλία, από τον Μάρτιο του 2020, ανέφεραν κορεσμό του συστήματος υγείας, λόγω του μεγάλου αριθμού ασθενών που χρειάζονταν εντατική θεραπεία, της έλλειψης κλινών, αναπνευστήρων και επαγγελματιών υγείας (Nacoti et al., 2020).

Η Ινδία στις 3 Ιουνίου 2020, είχε 216.824 επιβεβαιωμένα κρούσματα και 6.088 θανάτους. Παρά το γεγονός, ότι ελήφθησαν αυστηρά περιοριστικά μέτρα και locked-down (κλείδωμα), ο αριθμός των ενεργών κρουσμάτων και των θανάτων αυξάνονταν, ενώ το ποσοστό θνησιμότητας παρέμενε, σταθερά, σε ποσοστό 2,8%. Ωστόσο, το μέγεθος των ανισοτήτων υγείας στην Ινδία, κατέστησε ανεπαρκή και μη εφαρμόσιμα τα περιοριστικά μέτρα (Das, 2020). Διαπιστώθηκε ότι η αναστολή όλων των δραστηριοτήτων, έπληττε κυρίως τους φτωχούς, οι οποίοι στερούνταν εισοδήματος, διέμεναν πολλοί μαζί, είχαν ανεπαρκή πρόσβαση σε νερό και αποχέτευση και δεν ήταν δυνατόν να τηρήσουν τους κανόνες υγιεινής και την κοινωνική απόσταση (Corburn et al., 2020).

Ακολούθως, ο ιός εξαπλώθηκε παγκόσμια, έπληξε όλες τις χώρες, άλλες σε μεγαλύτερο βαθμό και άλλες σε μικρότερο, επιφέροντας διακοπή στις εξαγωγές προϊόντων, διακοπή της λειτουργίας των υπηρεσιών, αναστολή της βιομηχανίας, του τουρισμού και των σχολείων (Seligman, 2020).

Διαφορετικές προσεγγίσεις πολιτικής διαχείρισης της πανδημίας COVID-19

Η πανδημία COVID-19 υποστηριζόμενη από τις διαδικασίες της παγκοσμιοποίησης, όπως: η πληροφορία, η επικοινωνία, η ψηφιακή τεχνολογία και η τεχνητή νοημοσύνη, συνέβαλλε στη δημιουργία ενός παγκόσμιου χωριού, που όλοι φάνηκε να βιώνουν την ίδια εμπειρία (Pawar, 2020; Efthymiou et al., 2020). Τα μέτρα περιορισμού που ελήφθησαν σε επίπεδο κρατών, μεμονωμένα, αμφισβητήθηκαν από κάποιους ερευνητές, όσον αφορά την αποτελεσματικότητά τους και θεωρήθηκαν απαρχαιωμένες και ακατέργαστες μέθοδοι που χρησιμοποιούνταν αιώνες πριν, παρά

την πρόοδο της ιατρικής επιστήμης, αντιπροτείνοντας την παγκόσμια καταπολέμηση της πανδημίας, προς όφελος όλων, μέσα σε ένα πλαίσιο παγκόσμιας διακυβέρνησης. Σύμφωνα με τους μελετητές, μία τέτοια προσέγγιση παγκόσμιας ιθαγένειας για την καταπολέμηση της πανδημίας, προϋπέθετε την αμοιβαία ανταλλαγή, την μεταφορά τεχνολογίας, την ανταλλαγή πόρων, το ανθρώπινο δυναμικό, την κατάλληλη κοινωνική δικτύωση, τα προστατευτικά εργαλεία πρόληψης και θεραπείας, τη διαθεσιμότητα νοσηλευτικών κλινών και αναπνευστήρων, καθώς και τα μέτρα προστασίας, ώστε να διασφαλιστεί ο έλεγχος της πανδημίας και η αποτροπή της από κάθε χώρα, η ενίσχυση του αισθήματος ασφάλειας και η ελεύθερη διακίνηση των πολιτών. Η διαχείριση αυτή, της παγκόσμιας προσέγγισης υπηκοότητας, θα βοηθούσε στην κάλυψη ειδικών πληθυσμιακών ομάδων, ιδιαίτερα εκείνων των ατόμων που πέφτουν στα «δίχτυα» των προσεγγίσεων εθνικής ιθαγένειας, όπως είναι: οι διεθνείς μετανάστες, οι εργαζόμενοι στη Νότια Αφρική και σε άλλες χώρες, οι διεθνείς φοιτητές, οι πρόσφυγες, οι αιτούντες άσυλο και όσοι πολίτες εξαιρούνται από υγειονομική κάλυψη στις Η.Π.Α. και σε άλλες χώρες, γιατί η παγκόσμια ανάπτυξη θα έπρεπε να έχει παγκόσμια κατανομή (Pawar, 2020).

Άλλοι ερευνητές, υποστήριξαν ότι ταυτόχρονα με την πανδημία COVID-19, συνυπήρχαν δύο ακόμη ιοί: α) η άπληστη δημιουργία και η συγκέντρωση πλούτου, καθώς και β) οι διάφορες εκφάνσεις ρατσισμού, όπως: οι διακρίσεις και η υπονόμευση της αξιοπρέπειας συγκεκριμένων κοινωνικών ομάδων. Σύμφωνα με αυτές τις προσεγγίσεις, η εμφάνιση της πανδημίας έδωσε το έναυσμα σε ορισμένα άτομα να δραστηριοποιηθούν οικονομικά, παραβλέποντας την ανθρωποκεντρικά επικεντρωμένη κοινωνική ανάπτυξη, η οποία συνδέεται άρρηκτα με την οικονομία και θα πρέπει να προϋπάρχει αυτής (Midgley & Pawar, 2017). Εξάλλου, οι μειονεκτούσες πληθυσμιακές ομάδες (μετανάστες, φτωχοί, άστεγοι κ. ά), συχνά, δεν έχουν πρόσβαση στο διαδίκτυο και γενικότερα στη ψηφιακή τεχνολογία, που αποτελεί μέσο επικοινωνίας με τις κυβερνητικές υπηρεσίες (υποβολή αίτησης για ανεργία, διαδικτυακή εκπαίδευση κ.ά.) και σημαντικό μέτρο κοινωνικής ισότητας. Ωστόσο, αυτοί οι κίνδυνοι μετριάζονται με κυβερνητικές παροχές, όπως: η προσωρινή διαμονή σε ξενοδοχεία (Pawar, 2020). Ιδίως για μετανάστες και πρόσφυγες, οι οποίοι αφενός έχουν διαφορετικό επιδημιολογικό προφίλ, αφετέρου διαβιούν σε επισφαλείς συνθήκες είναι σημαντικό να υπάρξει μία προσεκτική διαχείριση του εν λόγω πληθυσμού και πολιτικές αποσυμπίεσης των δομών φιλοξενίας, για την αποφυγή ταχύτερης εξάπλωσης της νόσου (Kyrgos & Pantazis, 2021; Vozikis et al., 2021). Συνεπώς, σύμφωνα με τους ίδιους μελετητές η αντιμετώπιση της πανδημίας, σε επίπεδο κυβερνητικού σχεδιασμού των χωρών, χρειαζόταν να εστιάσει στις ανάγκες (υγειονομικές, οικονομικές, εκπαιδευτικές, ψηφιακές κ.ά.) των ευάλωτων πληθυσμιακών ομάδων, δίνοντάς τους προτεραιότητα, καθότι είχαν επηρεαστεί δυσανάλογα, σε σχέση με άλλες κοινωνικές ομάδες και θα

δυσκολεύονταν να ανακάμψουν (Midgley & Pawar, 2017). Σε πολλές περιπτώσεις κρατών, μεταξύ των οποίων και στην Ελλάδα, σημαντικό ρόλο στην αντιμετώπιση της πανδημίας και της υποστήριξης ευάλωτων πληθυσμιακών ομάδων, έπαιξε ο ενεργός ρόλος της κοινωνίας των πολιτών, της αλληλεγγύης και της εταιρικής κοινωνικής ευθύνης (Kritas et al., 2020).

Ο Cash και Patel υποστήριξαν τη σημαντικότητα των περιοριστικών μέτρων, στο πλαίσιο πολιτικού σχεδιασμού των κρατών, για την καταπολέμηση της νόσου και την αναχαίτιση της μετάδοσης, αλλά υποστηριζόμενα από τα απαραίτητα μέτρα πρόνοιας για τα ασθενή κοινωνικο-οικονομικά στρώματα, σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, προκειμένου να είναι επαρκή και αποτελεσματικά (Cash & Patel, 2020). Κομβικός για τα παραπάνω είναι ο ρόλος των διεθνών αλλά και τοπικών μη κυβερνητικών οργανισμών, οι οποίοι αποτελούν βασικό κρίκο της αρχιτεκτονικής της παγκόσμιας υγείας (Sidiropoulos et al., 2021).

Ο όρος κοινωνική αποστασιοποίηση ανέσυρε ανησυχίες για πιθανή απώλεια της αλληλεγγύης και της υποστήριξης της κοινότητας, που απαιτείται σε δύσκολες συνθήκες. Ο Macqueen συναινώντας με τις προαναφερθείσες ανησυχίες, πρότεινε: «η δημόσια υγεία να προωθεί τη χωρική απόσταση μαζί με την κοινωνική εγγύτητα, προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστεί η πανδημία» (Vieira et al., 2020). Επιπρόσθετα, ο Larsson υποστήριξε ότι η πανδημία covid-19, οδήγησε σε μία τάση αντιμετώπισης των ηλικιωμένων ως ομοιογενή ηλικιακή ομάδα, παρόλο που αποτελείται από διαφορετικά άτομα, με διαφορετικές ανάγκες, μέσα στην κοινωνία (Larsson, 2020).

Στην Αυστραλία, ο πολυεθνικός και πολύγλωσσος φορέας SBS, διαπιστώνοντας ότι τα άτομα από διαφορετικά πολιτιστικά υπόβαθρα επηρεάζονταν και υιοθετούσαν τεχνικές αντιμετώπισης διαφορετικές από τις ενδεδειγμένες, κατά τη διάρκεια της πανδημίας, παραπλανημένοι από φημολογούμενες θεραπείες αμφιβόλου και μη αποδεδειγμένου αποτελέσματος, υποστήριξε ότι η εκστρατεία κατά του covid-19 και οι πληροφορίες που παρέχονταν δημόσια στα αγγλικά, αποδείχτηκαν ανεπαρκείς. Ως εκ τούτου, πρότεινε μία καλύτερη, πολιτιστικά στοχευμένη εκστρατεία, που οι δημόσιες πληροφορίες σχετικά με την υγιεινή και τη φυσική απόσταση, θα παρέχονταν σε διάφορες γλώσσες (SBS, 2020).

Στη Νέα Ζηλανδία, σύμφωνα με σχολιασμό του BBC, εφαρμόστηκαν εξαρχής μέτρα αποτελεσματικά για την αντιμετώπιση του covid-19, όπως: έκλεισαν άμεσα τα σύνορα (σε μη υπηκόους) και εφαρμόστηκε locked-down με σαφείς κατευθύνσεις, που επέτρεπε την κοινωνική συναναστροφή με συγκεκριμένα άτομα του περιβάλλοντος (φούσκα). Χρησιμοποιήθηκε ο όρος «σωματική» και όχι «κοινωνική» απομόνωση», στις πληροφορίες που παρέχονταν στο γενικό πληθυσμό, εκλαϊκευμένα, αναγνωρίζοντας ότι η ασφαλής κοινωνικοποίηση ήταν ένας ουσιαστικός

τρόπος για να εξασφαλιστεί η εμπιστοσύνη και η συνεργασία των πολιτών, παρόλο που γενικότερα επιβλήθηκαν απαγορεύσεις των δημόσιων και ψυχαγωγικών συγκεντρώσεων (βιβλιοθήκες, θέατρα κ. ά) και αναστολή των δραστηριοτήτων (BBC News, 2020). Ως εκ τούτου, η χώρα κατάφερε επιτυχώς να μετρά μόνο 1132 επιβεβαιωμένα κρούσματα και μόνο 22 θανάτους. Επιπλέον, παρείχε πακέτο οικονομικής υποστήριξης 5,3 δισεκατομμυρίων που περιλάμβανε: υποστήριξη έως και στο 80% του μισθού των εργαζομένων, που είχαν απολυθεί ή βρίσκονταν σε αναστολή, φοροελαφρύνσεις, ενίσχυση των επιχειρήσεων που είχαν πληγεί και ως ένδειξη αλληλεγγύης προς τους πολίτες, τα κυβερνητικά στελέχη μείωσαν εθελοντικά, κατά 20% τις αμοιβές τους για 6 μήνες (Carroll, 2020).

Η Σουηδία σε σύγκριση με άλλες χώρες και σε αντίθεση με την παγκόσμια τάση, ακολούθησε μια διαφορετική προσέγγιση για την καταπολέμηση του ιού, αν και με το υψηλότερο ποσοστό θανάτου (Pawar, 2020). Δεν εφάρμοσε αυστηρούς κανόνες και locked-down (κλείδωμα), αλλά η κυβέρνηση επέλεξε να συμβουλεύσει τους πολίτες, βασιζόμενη στην κοινή λογική και επικαλούμενη την ατομική ευθύνη, να ακολουθήσουν τις συστάσεις του Οργανισμού Υγείας της χώρας (PHA). Συγκεκριμένα, κατά τη διάρκεια της πανδημίας, το PHA ενθάρρυνε τα άτομα όλων των ηλικιών στη Σουηδία, να βγαίνουν έξω για να περπατήσουν ή να τρέξουν, καθώς και να διατηρήσουν μία καλή φυσική κατάσταση, αρκεί να μην έχουν συμπτώματα κρυολογήματος ή γρίπης, ακολουθώντας με σεβασμό τις συστάσεις για την «κοινωνική απόσταση». Επίσης, διεξήγαγε ένα ενδιαφέρον πείραμα, ακολουθώντας ένα στοχευμένο μοντέλο μέτρων αντιμετώπισης του κορονοϊού, το οποίο δεν περιλάμβανε περιορισμούς για τους υγιείς ενήλικες και τα υγιή παιδιά, ενώ επέβαλλε συγκεκριμένα περιοριστικά μέτρα για ορισμένες κοινωνικές ομάδες, όπως: στους υπερήλικες >70+, στις ομάδες υψηλού κινδύνου (επαγγελματίες υγείας, άτομα με χρόνια οργανικά και ψυχικά νοσήματα, ευάλωτα και περιθωριοποιημένα κοινωνικά άτομα), καθώς και σε όσους είχαν μολυνθεί από τον ιό. Η χώρα επέδειξε ιδιαίτερη προσοχή, επικεντρώθηκε στην υποστήριξη των ηλικιωμένων και των ευάλωτων περιθωριοποιημένων κοινοτήτων (παρείχε υγειονομικές συστάσεις στη διαφορετική γλώσσα των κοινοτήτων, εκτός της Σουηδικής), δίνοντας έμφαση στην κοινωνική ανάπτυξη (Rambaree & Nässén, 2020). Ωστόσο, είναι σημαντικό να επισημανθεί, ότι η Σουηδία διαχρονικά στόχευε στην κοινωνική ανάπτυξη (ευημερία όλων των κοινωνικών ομάδων) και η διαχείριση αντιμετώπισης του κορονοϊού ήταν προσαρμοσμένη στο θεσμικό πλαίσιο της χώρας, όπου οι δημόσιες υπηρεσίες είναι ανεξάρτητες από την κυβέρνηση και συνεπώς, οι υπουργοί δεν μπορούν να επηρεάσουν τη λήψη αποφάσεων του Σουηδικού Οργανισμού υγείας, ο οποίος διατηρεί την αυτοτέλειά του (σύμφωνα με το εθνικό Σύνταγμα της Σουηδίας) (Edwards, 2020).

Συμπεράσματα

Από την ενδελεχή ανασκόπηση της διεθνούς βιβλιογραφίας, αναδύθηκαν τα προβλήματα που συσχετίζονται με την παγκόσμια υγειονομική κρίση και διαφάνηκαν οι ιδιαίτερες ανάγκες των πληθυσμιακών ομάδων. Ενισχύθηκε η άποψη για μία συνολικότερη αντιμετώπιση του φαινομένου των πανδημιών και των προεκτάσεών τους, επικεντρωμένη στο άτομο και στην αλληλεπίδρασή του με το ευρύτερο κοινωνικό πλαίσιο στο οποίο εντάσσεται. Επιπρόσθετα, η σύνθεση όλων των διαφορετικών προσεγγίσεων, αναφορικά με τη διαχείριση της πανδημίας και η ενσωμάτωσή τους στα κατάλληλα προγράμματα θα συμβάλλει σημαντικά στον περιορισμό των σοβαρών συνεπειών της.

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The Responses of the World Health Organization to Pandemics and Dangerous Epidemics[1]

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Abstract

Pandemics are major threats to human life and have occurred throughout human history. It should be made clear that the term epidemic refers to disease outbreaks that occur in a human population over a given period of time to a greater than expected extent. It may be geographically confined to a place or an entire country. In the event that the epidemic spreads outside the geographical boundaries of a country, it is defined as a pandemic. This study focuses on the contribution of the World Health Organisation in preventing and responding to major pandemic crises. A focus will be placed on the management of pandemic crises or risks, namely HIV, cholera (in Yugoslavia in the 1970s), SARS-CoV, H1N1, Ebola and SARS-CoV2.

Keywords: pandemic, WHO, epidemic, healthcare, health policy.

Οι Πολιτικές του Παγκόσμιου Οργανισμού Υγείας για την Αντιμετώπιση Πανδημιών και Επικίνδυνων Επιδημιών

Στυλιανός Ιωάννης Τζαγκαράκης, Σταματίνα Δούκη

Περίληψη

Οι πανδημίες συνιστούν σημαντικές απειλές για την ανθρώπινη ζωή και εκδηλώνονται καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια της ανθρώπινης ιστορίας. Θα πρέπει να καταστεί σαφές ότι ο όρος επιδημία αναφέρεται στις εξάρσεις ασθενειών που εμφανίζονται σε έναν ανθρώπινο πληθυσμό μια δεδομένη χρονική περίοδο, σε βαθμό μεγαλύτερο του αναμενόμενου. Μπορεί να περιορίζεται γεωγραφικά σε ένα τόπο ή μια ολόκληρη χώρα. Στην περίπτωση που η επιδημία εξαπλωθεί και εκτός των γεωγραφικών ορίων μιας χώρας, ορίζεται ως πανδημία. Στη συγκεκριμένη μελέτη θα πραγματοποιηθεί εστίαση στη συμβολή του Παγκόσμιου Οργανισμού Υγείας στην πρόληψη και αντιμετώπιση μεγάλων πανδημικών κρίσεων. Θα πραγματοποιηθεί εστίαση στη διαχείριση πανδημικών κρίσεων ή κινδύνων και συγκεκριμένα στους HIV, χολέρα (στη Γιουγκοσλαβία τη δεκαετία του 1970), SARS-CoV, H1N1, Ebola και SARS-CoV2.

Keywords: πανδημία, ΠΟΥ, επιδημία, υγειονομική περίθαλψη, πολιτικές υγείας.

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Εισαγωγή

Μετά τον όλεθρο του Β'ΠΠ και την παύση λειτουργίας της διεθνούς υγειονομικής συνεργασίας και ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών, ιδρύεται το 1948 ο Παγκόσμιος Οργανισμός Υγείας (ΠΟΥ). Στηριζόμενος στην εμπειρία τόσο από τις πανδημίες του παρελθόντος και τις πρακτικές της καραντίνας, της ανοσοποίησης και της υγιεινής, όσο και από το θεσμικό πλαίσιο συνεργασίας που είχε δημιουργηθεί μέσω της LNHO που είχε καθιερωθεί από την Κοινωνία των Εθνών-πρόδρομο του ΟΗΕ, ο ΠΟΥ δημιουργήθηκε με σκοπό την ενίσχυση της διεθνούς συνεργασίας για την εμπέδωση της υγειονομικής ασφάλειας σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο (Sidiropoulos et al., 2021).

Από την ίδρυσή του μέχρι και σήμερα ο ΠΟΥ έπαιξε σημαίνοντα ρόλο τόσο ως προς την πρόληψη όσο και ως προς την εξάλειψη ασθενειών που απείλησαν την υγεία και την ζωή εκατομμυρίων πολιτών σε όλο τον πλανήτη. Τέτοιες ήταν η ηπατίτιδα, ο κίτρινος πυρετός αλλά και ο HIV, ο καρκίνος και αρκετοί άλλοι υιοί, χρόνια νοσήματα και επιβλαβείς συμπεριφορές που καταπονούν ή/και απειλούν την υγεία.

Θα πρέπει να επισημανθεί ότι ήδη τρία χρόνια μετά την ίδρυση του ΠΟΥ υιοθετήθηκαν οι διεθνείς υγειονομικοί κανονισμοί που είχαν εγκριθεί το 1892 και οι οποίοι επικεντρώνονταν στον περιορισμό της χολέρας, της πανούκλας, της ευλογιάς του τυφοειδούς πυρετού και του κίτρινου πυρετού. Βέβαια, οι κανονισμοί αυτοί βασίζονταν κατά κύριο λόγο σε αντιλήψεις του 19ου αιώνα που θεωρούσαν ότι οι έλεγχοι και οι διασυνοριακοί περιορισμοί μπορούσαν να περιορίσουν από μόνοι τους μεταδοτικές ασθένειες. Ακριβώς γι' αυτόν τον λόγο, αναθεωρήθηκαν το 1969 όταν αποφασίστηκε ότι κάθε κράτος θα πρέπει να αναφέρει οποιοδήποτε ξέσπασμα ασθένειας. Ο Διεθνής Υγειονομικός Κανονισμός (ΔΥΚ) του 2005, για τον οποίο θα γίνει αναλυτική αναφορά παρακάτω καθώς ισχύει μέχρι σήμερα, όρισε ξεκάθαρα ότι τα μέτρα που λαμβάνονται θα πρέπει να βασίζονται σε επιδημιολογικά δεδομένα και όχι σε προκαθορισμένες πολιτικές εστιασμένες κυρίως στο διασυνοριακό έλεγχο (International Health Regulations, 2005).

Η σημασία του ΠΟΥ στην αντιμετώπιση πανδημικών κρίσεων ή επικίνδυνων επιδημιών

Ο ΠΟΥ εκτός από τις προτεραιότητες που εισήγαγε για την αντιμετώπιση σημαντικών ασθενειών, δημιούργησε ένα σύστημα κατηγοριοποίησής τους με βάση την επικινδυνότητά τους (International Classification of Disease - ICD). Το συγκεκριμένο σύστημα χρησιμοποιείται ακόμα και σήμερα τόσο σε κλινικό όσο και σε επιδημιολογικό επίπεδο. Ειδικά σε περιπτώσεις όπως η επανεμφάνιση της επιδημίας της χολέρας το 1972 στη Γιουγκοσλαβία, η δράση του ΠΟΥ ήταν καθοριστική. Χαρακτηριστικό της, όπως και της μεταγενέστερης επιδημίας χολέρας το 1990 (WHO, 2016), ήταν

η απροθυμία των κρατών να αναγνωρίσουν ή να γνωστοποιήσουν την ύπαρξη πανδημίας παρά το γεγονός ότι ήταν βασική υποχρέωσή τους με βάση τους ισχύοντες κανονισμούς (Μπρεδήμας, 2020). Έτσι, ο ΠΟΥ στο ξέσπασμα της χολέρας του 1972 αναγκάστηκε να δημοσιεύσει επίσημες εκθέσεις ώστε να καταστήσει γνωστή την εμφάνιση επιδημίας και να φέρει προ των ευθυνών τους τα ενδιαφερόμενα κράτη (Tomasewski, 1990). Μέσα από τις συντονισμένες προσπάθειες που περιλάμβαναν την πραγματοποίηση μαζικών εμβολιασμών στη Γιουγκοσλαβία, η χολέρα περιορίστηκε δύο μήνες μετά την εμφάνισή της (Ilic & Ilic, 2017).

Ο ιός HIV/AIDS εμφανίστηκε τη δεκαετία του 1980 στις ΗΠΑ και σταδιακά μεταβλήθηκε σε πανδημία, καθώς επεκτάθηκε σε όλο τον κόσμο. Ο HIV οδηγεί στον θάνατο 1 εκατομμύριο ανθρώπους παγκοσμίως κάθε έτος, ειδικότερα σε χώρες της Αφρικής και σε πληθυσμούς με χαμηλό εκπαιδευτικό επίπεδο (Wang et al., 2016). Η ανακάλυψη φαρμακευτικής αγωγής έχει μεν μετατρέψει τη νόσο σε χρόνια όμως οι διαφορές είναι τεράστιες ανάμεσα στις χώρες σε οικονομικό, κοινωνικό και υγειονομικό επίπεδο. Λόγω του ότι ο HIV δεν περιλαμβανόταν στους κανονισμούς πριν το 2005 ο ΠΟΥ προσπάθησε να εφαρμόσει συντονισμένες ενέργειες για την πρόληψη και την αντιμετώπισή του. Οι σημαντικότερες ήταν η Διακήρυξη του Λονδίνου το 1988 (Alfredsson & Tomasewski, 1998), η Συμβουλευτική για την μόλυνση και την νόσηση με HIV (WHO, 1988), η Δήλωση για την επιδημιολογία του HIV και τις ιερόδουλες του 1989 (WHO, 1989) και η Διακήρυξη της Συνόδου των Παρισίων 42 Κρατών σχετικά με το AIDS το 1994 (WHO, 1994). Ο ΟΗΕ διαπίστωσε ότι η αντιμετώπιση του HIV από τον ΠΟΥ δεν ήταν αποτελεσματική και έτσι συνέστησε το Κοινό Πρόγραμμα για τον HIV/AIDS ως μια προσπάθεια κοινής αντιμετώπισης σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο. Η διαπίστωση ότι ο ΠΟΥ απέτυχε στην αντιμετώπιση του HIV οδήγησε σε προσπάθειες για εκσυγχρονισμό του δικτύου των συνεργασιών και στην ενίσχυση του διακυβερνητικού ρόλου του, απολήγοντας εντέλει στην υιοθέτηση του ανανεωμένου ΔΥΚ το 2005 που δημιούργησε ένα διαφορετικό πλαίσιο αντιμετώπισης των μετέπειτα πανδημικών κρίσεων (Μπρεδήμας, 2020).

Το 2002 ένας νέος ιός εμφανίζεται και λαμβάνει πανδημικές διαστάσεις. Ονομάστηκε Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), ήταν η πρώτη πανδημία του 21ου αιώνα και εμφανίστηκε στην Κίνα. Θα πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι παρότι οι διαδικασίες για την υιοθέτηση των κανονισμών του 2005 δεν είχαν ολοκληρωθεί και συνεπώς ο SARS δεν συμπεριλαμβανόταν στον κατάλογο, στην ουσία εφαρμόστηκαν de facto (Fidler, 2016). Η διαχείριση από την Κίνα αποτέλεσε τον κύριο λόγο που υιοθετήθηκαν οι προτάσεις του ΠΟΥ για τον ΔΥΚ του 2005 κι αυτό γιατί η Κίνα στην αρχή προσπάθησε να αποκρύψει την ύπαρξη κρουσμάτων και να μην ενημερώσει τον ΠΟΥ (Μπρεδήμας, 2020). Το αποτέλεσμα αυτής της διαχείρισης ήταν ο SARS να δημιουργήσει τεράστια οικονομικά προβλήματα ιδίως στο Χονγκ Κονγκ και έξαρση θανάτων (Fidler, 2016), επιταχύνοντας τις

διαδικασίες από την πλευρά του ΠΟΥ για υιοθέτηση του νέου ΔΥΚ. Λόγω αυτών των γεγονότων αρκετές χώρες κατέστησαν την δημόσια υγεία σε ζήτημα εθνικής προτεραιότητας (National Intelligence Council, 2003), ασφαλειοποιώντας στην ουσία σε σημαντικό βαθμό το πεδίο της δημόσιας υγείας (Davies, 2008; Kelle, 2007; McInnes & Lee, 2006). Στην πράξη ο SARS επιτάχυνε την αναθεώρηση των ΔΥΚ δίνοντας στον Διευθυντή (Kamradt-Scott, 2010) του ΠΟΥ υπερεθνικές εξουσίες ενώ δέσμευσε τα κράτη στην αναβάθμιση των επιστημονικών και ιατρικών δυνατοτήτων τους (WHO, 2007).

Η εμφάνιση το 2009 της επονομαζόμενης «γρίπης των χοίρων» ή αλλιώς πανδημίας του ιού H1N1, οδήγησε τον ΠΟΥ στην κήρυξη της πρώτης κατάστασης έκτακτης ανάγκης διεθνούς ενδιαφέροντος για τη δημόσια υγεία, εφαρμόζοντας στην ουσία τον ΔΥΚ που συνάφθηκε το 2005 (WHO, 2009). Μέσα από αυτό, ο ΠΟΥ συμβούλευε για τη λήψη αυστηρών μέτρων για τις ταξιδιωτικές μετακινήσεις και το εμπόριο ενώ προέβη στον συντονισμό επιστημονικών, ιατρικών και επικοινωνιακών δραστηριοτήτων. Ο ΠΟΥ προσπάθησε να διατηρήσει άμεση επαφή με τα κράτη για την ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών, καθώς και για την επιδημιολογική επιτήρηση, ιδιαίτερα σε εκείνα που ήταν πιο αδύναμα και αντιμετώπιζαν προβλήματα ως προς τη διατήρηση της πανδημίας (WHO, 2009). Για την αντιμετώπιση των αδυναμιών που προέκυψαν ο ΠΟΥ συγκρότησε μια επιτροπή εξέτασης του ΔΥΚ, η οποία περιλάμβανε και δράσεις επίβλεψης και απάντησης του ΠΟΥ για την επίτευξη της διεθνούς ασφάλειας υγείας (WHO, 2009). Εντούτοις, θα πρέπει να αναφερθεί ότι η οικονομική κρίση επέδρασε καθοριστικά στις δράσεις του ΠΟΥ, διότι οι πόροι για όλες τις παραπάνω δραστηριότητες διεθνούς υγειονομικού ενδιαφέροντος περιορίστηκαν (WHO, 2011).

Ο περιορισμός των πόρων, η μείωση του ενδιαφέροντος για τήρηση των συστάσεων από πλευράς των επιμέρους κρατών και φυσικά η απραξία του ΠΟΥ για την προώθηση της διεθνούς υγειονομικής ασφάλειας, έγιναν φανερά κατά το ξέσπασμα της επιδημίας του Ebola στη Δυτική Αφρική το 2014, με την αργή αντίδραση του Οργανισμού. Η καθυστέρηση του ΠΟΥ να κηρύξει την επιδημία του Ebola «επείγον περιστατικό διεθνούς εμβέλειας» έγινε με χαρακτηριστική καθυστέρηση, με συνέπεια και τα ενδιαφερόμενα κράτη να καθυστερήσουν στην τήρηση των υγειονομικών πρωτοκόλλων που απορρέουν από τον ΔΥΚ του 2005 (WHO, 2016). Ταυτόχρονα, αρκετές κυβερνήσεις αμφισβήτησαν τις συστάσεις του ΠΟΥ και οι αναλύσεις μετά την κρίση άσκησαν κριτική στην συνολική απόδοσή του συνιστώντας την ανάληψη ηγετικών πρωτοβουλιών στο πλαίσιο του ΔΥΚ, καθώς και την ενίσχυση της ικανότητας απόκρισης σε μεγάλης κλίμακας γεγονότα υγειονομικού ενδιαφέροντος (WHO, 2015). Θα πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι η επανεμφάνιση του Ebola στα τέλη του 2018 στο Κονγκό, ανέδειξε ότι ο ΠΟΥ ενίσχυσε καθοριστικά τις λειτουργικές του ικανότητες, καθώς με την παρέμβασή του το Κονγκό μπόρεσε το 2019 να θέσει υπό έλεγχο την

επιδημία. Ωστόσο, ο ΠΟΥ αντιμετώπισε αντιστάσεις στο να κηρύξει καθεστώς έκτακτης δημοσιοϋγειονομικής ανάγκης διεθνούς ενδιαφέροντος στο πλαίσιο του ΔΥΚ, καθώς η Επιτροπή Έκτακτης Ανάγκης δήλωνε πως η κλιμάκωση της κρίσης δεν πληρούσε τις προϋποθέσεις κήρυξης τέτοιου καθεστώτος (Villareal, 2019). Ο Γενικός Διευθυντής τελικά κήρυξε καθεστώς έκτακτης ανάγκης διεθνούς ενδιαφέροντος, μόνο όταν το ξέσπασμα της επιδημίας έλαβε επικίνδυνες διαστάσεις. Αυτό που μένει ως βασικό θετικό στοιχείο όμως, παρά τα όποια προβλήματα, είναι ότι η υιοθέτηση ενός επείγοντος περιστατικού από τον ΠΟΥ αποτελεί την βασική προϋπόθεση για την κινητοποίηση της διεθνούς χρηματοδοτικής βοήθειας (Villareal, 2019).

Το ξέσπασμα των παραπάνω υγειονομικών κρίσεων αναδεικνύει τη σημασία του ΔΥΚ για τη διεθνή υγειονομική ασφάλεια, καθώς είναι το μόνο σύνολο νομικά δεσμευτικών διατάξεων για τις προϋποθέσεις που πρέπει να πληρούν τα κράτη για την αναγνώριση και την αντιμετώπιση των απειλών στη δημόσια υγεία. Ο σκοπός και το πεδίο εφαρμογής του είναι η πρόληψη, η προστασία, ο έλεγχος και η απόκριση σε συμβάντα διεθνούς υγειονομικού ενδιαφέροντος με κίνδυνο παγκόσμιας διασποράς (άρθρο 2), ενώ η μεθοδολογία του αφορά τους περιορισμούς για τον έλεγχο κινδύνων στη δημόσια υγεία με ταυτόχρονη αποφυγή παρεμβάσεων στις διεθνείς μετακινήσεις και το εμπόριο. Κύριος στόχος είναι η αύξηση των πιθανοτήτων έγκαιρης αναγνώρισης και δήλωσης στον ΠΟΥ όλων των εν δυνάμει σοβαρών διασυνοριακών απειλών από τα κράτη-μέλη του, καλύπτοντας όλους τους κινδύνους υγείας (βιολογικούς, χημικούς, ραδιολογικούς) και υποχρεώνοντας τα κράτη να έχουν την κατάλληλη υποδομή μέσω ενός καλά εδραιωμένου εθνικού συστήματος επιτήρησης και παρέμβασης. Από τα ως άνω, γίνεται αντιληπτό πως η εδραίωση ενός σταθερού και διεθνούς νομικού πλαισίου αποτελεί απαραίτητη προϋπόθεση για την ασφαλέστερη διαχείριση πανδημικών κρίσεων (Batakis et al., 2020). Ως προς την ελληνική περίπτωση, θα πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι ο ΔΥΚ ενσωματώθηκε στην Ελληνική νομοθεσία το 2011 (Ν.3991/2011), ωστόσο, εκκρεμεί η υλοποίηση αρκετών προϋποθέσεων εφαρμογής του, με κυριότερες την αναβάθμιση του εθνικού σημείου επαφής, τον ορισμό των πυλών εισόδου, τη δημιουργία και βελτίωση των απαραίτητων υποδομών, την ολοκλήρωση της αυτό-αξιολόγησης της εφαρμογής του ΔΥΚ στην Ελλάδα, με τη χρήση των διαθέσιμων εργαλείων του ΠΟΥ και στη συνέχεια την εξωτερική αξιολόγηση.

Η τελευταία και εν εξελίξει μεγάλη υγειονομική πανδημική κρίση είναι αυτή που προέκυψε από τον ιό SARS-CoV2 τον Δεκέμβριο του 2019. Ο SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome - Corona Virus-2) είναι ο κορωνοϊός ο οποίος ευθύνεται για την ασθένεια COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019), η οποία έχει προκαλέσει την πανδημία COVID-19. Το πρώτο περιστατικό COVID-19 εντοπίστηκε στην πόλη Wuhan, πρωτεύουσα της επαρχίας Hubei, στην κεντρική Κίνα, την 1η Δεκεμβρίου 2019. Στις 24 Δεκεμβρίου 2019 απομονώθηκε ο ιός και αναγνωρίστηκε ότι πρόκειται

για ένα νέο στέλεχος, που ανήκει στην οικογένεια των κορωνοϊών. Στις 30 Δεκεμβρίου 2019 υπήρξε η πρώτη διεθνής αναγνώριση του προβλήματος. Στις 9 Ιανουαρίου 2020 καταγράφεται ο πρώτος θάνατος στην Κίνα ενώ στις 13 Ιανουαρίου 2020 εντοπίστηκε το πρώτο περιστατικό έξω από την Κίνα, στην Ταϊλάνδη. Στις 15 Ιανουαρίου υπήρξε το πρώτο κρούσμα στις Η.Π.Α. από ταξιδιώτη στην πόλη Wuhan. Στις 20 Ιανουαρίου 2020 επιβεβαιώθηκε ότι η μετάδοση του ιού συμβαίνει από άνθρωπο σε άνθρωπο και στις 11 Μαρτίου 2020 ο ΠΟΥ χαρακτήρισε το πρόβλημα με τον συγκεκριμένο ιό ως πανδημία.

Στο παραπάνω πλαίσιο, ο ΠΟΥ κήρυξε τη νόσο COVID-19 ως ένα επείγον περιστατικό δημόσιας υγείας διεθνούς εμβέλειας στις 30 Ιανουαρίου 2020. Εν συνεχεία, προέβη σε κλιμακωτές παρεμβάσεις, καθώς προετοίμασε το Σχέδιο Στρατηγικής Ετοιμότητας και Απάντησης για την COVID-19, δίνοντας και επιχειρησιακές συμβουλές για την διαχείρισή της (WHO, 2020). Ακολούθησαν συστάσεις για την στρατηγική εργαστηριακού ελέγχου της COVID-19, καθώς και τη συνεργασία με άλλους διεθνείς φορείς.

Θα πρέπει να σημειωθεί όμως ότι ο ΠΟΥ δέχθηκε δριμεία κριτική για το γεγονός ότι αφενός καθυστέρησε να δράσει και αφετέρου «έπαιξε» το παιχνίδι της Κίνας (Agartan et al., 2020). Αυτό βέβαια δε σημαίνει ότι τα κράτη δεν υιοθέτησαν τις συστάσεις του ΠΟΥ και δεν προέβησαν στη λήψη μέτρων για την αντιμετώπιση της πανδημίας, όμως το βασικό επιχείρημα ήταν ότι μια πιο άμεση παρέμβαση, ιδίως στα πρώτα στάδια της επιδημίας σε επίπεδο Κίνας, θα μπορούσε να αποτρέψει τα χειρότερα για την ανθρωπότητα. Σαφώς, τα κλειστά σύνορα και η απαγόρευση μετακινήσεων των πληθυσμών θεωρείται αδύνατο σενάριο σε ένα απόλυτα παγκοσμιοποιημένο περιβάλλον και σε μία περίοδο όπου οι μεταναστευτικές-προσφυγικές ροές βρίσκονται σε έξαρση, λόγω εμπόλεμων περιοχών, αυταρχικών καθεστώτων, κλιματικής αλλαγής ή/και φτώχειας. Δεδομένο που εγείρει νέα ζητήματα ασφάλειας στην υγεία, αφού προκύπτουν προκλήσεις στην διαχείριση του εγχώριου και εισαγόμενου πληθυσμού (Vozikis et al., 2021).

Η πανδημία της COVID-19 έλαβε εν συνεχεία τρομακτικές διαστάσεις με αποτέλεσμα, μέχρι τις 8 Ιουλίου 2021, να έχουν πεθάνει πάνω από 4 εκατομμύρια άνθρωποι παγκοσμίως (WHO, 2021). Με την ανακάλυψη των εμβολίων φάνηκε μια χαραμάδα εξόδου από την πανδημία, όμως τα προβλήματα πρόσβασης σε αυτά παραμένουν. Αρκετές φτωχές χώρες δεν έχουν την οικονομική δυνατότητα πρόσβασης στα εμβόλια, με συνέπεια ο ΠΟΥ να αναλάβει δράση μέσω της υιοθέτησης του μηχανισμού COVAX ο οποίος στοχεύει στην ενθάρρυνση και δίκαιη κατανομή των εμβολίων σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, με σκοπό την αποτελεσματική αντιμετώπιση της πανδημίας (McAdams et al., 2020). Παρά τα πρώτα αισιόδοξα μηνύματα η ανταπόκριση των κρατών και των σχετιζόμενων οργανισμών στα καλέσματα του COVAX δεν ήταν η αναμενόμενη, με συνέπεια να διαμορφώνεται

μια σημαντική ανισότητα ανάμεσα στα ανεπτυγμένα και τα λιγότερο αναπτυγμένα κράτη ως προς τη διανομή των εμβολίων (Herzog, 2021).

Συμπεράσματα

Η παραπάνω ανάλυση αναδεικνύει ότι η διεθνής συνεργασία για την αντιμετώπιση των υγειονομικών προκλήσεων είναι παραπάνω από απαραίτητη, στο πλαίσιο του ολοένα πιο αλληλεξαρτώμενου κόσμου μέσα στον οποίο ζούμε. Καμία χώρα δεν μπορεί μόνη της να αντιμετωπίσει τις τεράστιες και απρόβλεπτες προκλήσεις στον τομέα της υγείας, καθώς ο σύγχρονος αλληλοσυνδεόμενος κόσμος ενέχει τον κίνδυνο για πιο συχνή μετάδοση μεταδοτικών ασθενειών (Murray & Lopez, 1996). Παρότι το 2003 κατά το ξέσπασμα της πανδημίας του ιού SARS δόθηκε έμφαση στο γεγονός ότι τα κράτη έδωσαν στον ΠΟΥ υπερεθνικές αρμοδιότητες και εξουσίες που περιόριζαν τη δική τους κυριαρχία, η πανδημία της COVID-19 αναδεικνύει το γεγονός ότι ισχυρά κράτη, όπως η Κίνα και οι ΗΠΑ, συνεχίζουν να καθορίζουν και να επηρεάζουν την εξέλιξη της προστασίας της παγκόσμιας υγείας. Ο ΠΟΥ συνεχίζει να μάχεται ενάντια στην άρνηση για διεθνή συνεργασία, όμως δεν έχει τις δυνατότητες να αντιμετωπίσει πλήρως το πρόβλημα. Τα κράτη απομακρύνονται από τους διεθνείς θεσμούς και κάποια εξακολουθούν να αγνοούν τις οδηγίες του, με ενδεικτικότερο παράδειγμα την αρχική επιλογή της Μεγάλης Βρετανίας να επιδιώξει «ανοσία της αγέλης».

Η ανάλυση που προηγήθηκε κατέδειξε ότι τα τελευταία εκατό χρόνια η διεθνής συνεργασία για την αντιμετώπιση και πρόληψη των πανδημικών και επιδημικών κρίσεων αναπτύχθηκε σημαντικά. Παρότι ασκείται κριτική για τη διαχείριση της παρούσας πανδημίας από τον ΠΟΥ δεν θα πρέπει να παραβλέπουμε το γεγονός ότι από την LNHO που έθεσε τις βάσεις, έως και σήμερα έχουν αναπτυχθεί πολλά εργαλεία, συνεργασίες, πληροφόρηση, ενημέρωση, ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών, υιοθέτηση ιατρικής τεχνολογίας, υγειονομικών κανονισμών και πολλά άλλα. Αυτό βέβαια δεν σημαίνει ότι λύθηκαν τα προβλήματα. Αντιθέτως, ενυπάρχουν και μετασχηματίζονται συνεχώς. Συνεπώς, η ανάλυση των πανδημικών κρίσεων αναδεικνύει ότι ο ΠΟΥ, λόγω και των πολιτικών πιέσεων που συχνά υπάρχουν, επιλέγει να δρα στις παγκόσμιες υποθέσεις υγειονομικού ενδιαφέροντος κυρίως μέσα από τις επιστημονικές του δυνατότητες, παρά μέσω της εξουσίας που διαθέτει να προκαλέσει πολιτικά τα κράτη στο πλαίσιο των αρμοδιοτήτων και εξουσιών που του παρέχει ο ΔΥΚ. Εντούτοις, με το τέλος της τρέχουσας πανδημικής κρίσης η παγκόσμια κοινότητα θα αξιολογήσει το μέγεθος της καταστροφής και θα καταστεί περισσότερο ευδιάκριτο το επίπεδο στο οποίο οι σημαντικές συνεισφορές του ΠΟΥ στη μάχη κατά της COVID-19 θα καταφέρουν να τον προστατέψουν από τις κατηγορίες που ενίοτε εξαπολύονται. Οι κριτικές που έχουν εκφραστεί κατά τις πρόσφατες

πανδημικές κρίσεις και ιδιαίτερα κατά την τρέχουσα της COVID-19, είναι προάγγελοι των όσων θα αντιμετωπίσει ο ΠΟΥ για να καταφέρει να επιβιώσει την δεκαετία που μόλις ξεκίνησε.

Σε κάθε περίπτωση, η πορεία της διεθνούς συνεργασίας στην αντιμετώπιση πανδημικών ή σημαντικών επιδημικών κρίσεων μέσω του ΠΟΥ αναδεικνύει δύο βασικά στοιχεία. Αφενός ότι τίποτα δεν είναι βέβαιο και αφετέρου ότι είμαστε όλοι μαζί ευάλωτοι απέναντι σε απρόβλεπτους κινδύνους. Η αβεβαιότητα και η ευαλωτότητά μας όμως μπορούν να μετριαστούν, μέσω της συνεργασίας και της επιστημονικής εξέλιξης. Τα εργαλεία, όπως φάνηκε και από την παραπάνω ανάλυση, υπάρχουν και πρέπει να εξελιχθούν προς την κατεύθυνση της περαιτέρω ενίσχυσης της συνεργασίας αλλά και της μείωσης των ανισοτήτων. Πρωτοβουλίες του ΠΟΥ, όπως ο COVAX, είναι εξαιρετικά σημαντικές όμως χρειάζονται και την ανάλογη στήριξη από τα επιμέρους κράτη. Προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση θα πρέπει να κινηθεί η διεθνής κοινότητα αν θέλει να είναι περισσότερο έτοιμη για την επόμενη πανδημία, που αναπόφευκτα κάποια στιγμή θα ξαναχτυπήσει την πόρτα της ανθρωπότητας.

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