

Eastern Review

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EASTERN REVIEW 2019, T. 8

Introduction

Dear Readers,

We are presenting you the 8th issue of *Eastern Review*. This issue is published in a changed formula – entirely in English. Our journal has received funding from the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education under the Support for Scientific Journals Program, which aims to strengthen the level of internationalization of both the published content and the editorial team itself.

Accordingly, in this volume, the absolute majority of authors are from abroad: Belarus, China, Norway, Russia, Ukraine. The journal's Program Council and its editors have also been internationalized. From now on, the burden of the editorial process rests largely on the employees of the Chair of Political Systems of the Faculty of International and Political Studies, University of Lodz, accompanied by other members of the Faculty, as well as researchers from Lithuania and Ukraine. The journal is still published by the Lodz University's International Center for East European Research (ICEER) in cooperation with the Committee for the Study of Integration of Europe of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Lodz.

The scientific profile of the magazine remains unchanged. *Easter Review* is devoted to publishing cutting-edge research on the regions of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as post-Soviet area, viewed from political, social, economic, and cultural perspectives.

The volume focuses, first and foremost, on issues related to socio-political and cultural processes taking place in contemporary Belarus, in terms of educational, social and family policies (Larissa G. Titarenko, *Vectors of development in higher education of Russia and Belarus: A comparative approach*; Victor Laputsky, *The adaptation of students during academic mobility processes: The case of Belarus*; Ekaterina Rezanova, *The social policy of Belarus and the development of human potential: Problems and solutions*; Alena Artsiomenka, *The transformation of family values in Belarus: Social and demographic factors*).

Economic issues have also been highly relevant: foreign investment and economic activity in the region of Central and Eastern Europe (Ivana Jolović, Lošonc Alpar, *The impact of foreign direct investment and venture capital investment on entrepreneurship in the Republic of Serbia*); China's cooperation with countries of the region at the local level (Hongfei Gu, *Subnational actors in the relations*

between China and Central and Eastern European countries); as well as the impact of economic freedom on the political stability of the region (Artem Karateev, *Stability and economic freedom in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe: Quantitative analysis*).

The issue also covers the problems of international and national security, in the field of digital security (Pavlo Katerynychuk, *Challenges for Ukraine's cyber security: National dimensions*), as well as – the climate change and attempts to counteract it (Olena Shevchenko, *The role of traditional and new international relations actors in addressing climate change*). No less interesting are the analyses of the evolution of the political regime of modern Uzbekistan by Krystian Pachucki-Włosek (*Old and New Uzbekistan – A comparative essay on the last years of Islam Karimov's reign and Shavkat Mirziyoyev's presidency*), and of the impact of the doping scandal on the international image of Russia by Anna Kobierecka and Michał Marcin Kobierecki.

In the light of current global and local political problems raised in the volume, Sabrina P. Ramet's article on Immanuel Kant's reflection on ethics and politics is of exceptional value.

We wish you a pleasant reading
Editorial team

EASTERN REVIEW 2019, T. 8

Larissa G. Titarenko

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5729-1430>

Belarusian State University, Minsk, Belarus
Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences
Department of Sociology
e-mail: larisa166@mail.ru

Vectors of development in higher education of Russia and Belarus: A comparative approach

Abstract. The article is devoted to the sphere of higher education in two former Soviet countries: Russia and Belarus. It is aimed to compare the systems of higher education in these countries under the angle of global and regional challenges. The article is based on national statistics from both states and survey data. The author analyses the ways that each of the countries' practices to increase its educational competitiveness on the global level and adapt to the market conditions. It is described that both countries use such mechanisms in the sphere of higher education as an educational service for foreign students and membership in the educational associations (European and Eurasian). The scale of the systems of higher education and their potential are described to explain the similarities and differences between the two countries. Three types of educational integration are described. The article concludes that the system of higher education in Belarus is currently developing in a way that differs from Russia and its achievements are much smaller; at the same time, regardless of the declarations on the necessity of internationalisation, current development leads Belarus further away from the European education system, while also not make it closer to Russia. A lack of resources and political dominance over the educational goals make the Belarusian system of higher education not as attractive for students as the Russian one.

Keywords: higher education system, Russian Federation, Republic of Belarus, internationalization, Bologna principles.

Introduction

The Republic of Belarus is a borderland country which lies between the two big powers of the European Union in the west and the Russian Federation in the east. Due to this geographical fact, it might be natural that Belarus has something in common with both neighbours, in terms of culture; and yet at the same time not want to be dependent on them. Education is an important part of culture. The sphere of higher education is topical everywhere: currently, the economic success of a state depends, among many other factors, on the level of education of its citizens.

Belarus has made some steps forward in both directions, east and west. On the one hand, Belarus has been in a Union with Russia since 1999 (The Union State of Belarus and Russia or simply Union State): there is no visa requirement between these two countries, and according to these agreements young people from both states can study at the institutions of higher education (HEI) in either Belarus or Russia. If young people successfully meet the formal requirements and selection process they can be accepted for free study. If they do not want to pass exams according to the rules of the specific state (these rules differ), they can study with payment: as foreigners. On the other hand, Belarus (as well as Russia) signed the Bologna Agreement; therefore, Belarus has to follow Bologna principles in the sphere of higher education, including academic mobility. Belarusian students can go to particular universities in the EU for a semester (sometimes a year) on the basis of the Bologna principles or another program: Erasmus plus. Although this is not so easy, and the available number of exchanges is not big, this option exists. So, formally, Belarus is “looking East and West” simultaneously. Now, after 20 years of the Union between Belarus and Russia, it makes sense to examine the similarities and differences between the higher education systems (HES) of Russia and Belarus.

The research question is whether Belarus is really getting closer to the East or to the West in the sphere of higher education; i.e. accepts their common approaches and shares their values. The further question arises of which of the two sides Belarus has more similarities within this area. In what follows we will show how Belarus is developing educational cooperation with Russia and EU countries, and what the current results of this process are. We will explain why the Belarusian system of higher education does not resemble any foreign system. The primary goal of this article is to compare the spheres of higher education of Belarus and Russia. The main research instruments include the methods of analysis, comparative and historical approaches. On the basis of a comparison of the national statistical data and surveys results in both countries¹ we will

¹ Our research included expert interviews and students' survey. In total, there were 15 interviews made with the university and Ministry officials, professors and scholars from different

describe the trends in the process of the internationalisation of higher education in Belarus and Russia; show the commonality and differences in their scale and the directions of their efforts to increase competitiveness on a global level of the educational market.

General characteristics of systems of higher education

Higher education is an important institution in modern society. Under the current influence of global challenges, it is experiencing important changes everywhere. In the post-Soviet region, unlike at previous times, the HES has to meet new demands and serve more functions. Modern universities have to provide knowledge and competences, run innovative research, get profits, orient youth in the market, and educate good citizens for the state.

Systems of higher education in Russia and Belarus are based on Soviet heritage. During the post-soviet decades, they experienced some changes, but still, regardless of the national peculiarities, they have more features in common. They practice similar basic approaches to higher education (centralised control, educational standards, a combination of educating and raising the youth), with various differences in grades, exams, tuition fees, and placement of graduates.

Both states follow similar educational policy and establish similar strategic targets. The national governments are well aware of the new global challenges and understand that, in the conditions of the digital revolution, global competition has significantly increased in the fields of science, technology and education. Therefore, both states developed a strategy for their scientific and technological development that has been adopted. In both countries, there is an active search for ways and mechanisms of change that would preserve national priorities and combine them with the tasks dictated by the global challenges. Thus, both countries emphasise that higher education institutions should train modern specialists who will work effectively in new digitalised sectors of the economy (Putin, 2019; BELTA, 2018b). It is obvious that there are no differences, at the level of strategies and goals of the higher education system, between the two countries.

The admission processes differ in Belarus and Russia, however, due to the Union State, it became possible for their citizens to ease the process of admission and study in each of these countries. This strategy did not become dominant in the educational sphere of two countries. Both systems of higher education (as well as political systems) differ, and there are no plans to make them closer to each other. Theoretically speaking, the reason might be connected to the fact

universities of Belarus. The size of the survey was 620 persons. Other survey results were taken from scientific journals.

that Belarus is a borderland state situated between the two civilisations (eastern and western, orthodox and catholic), and its foreign policy differs from Russia, sometimes significantly. Politically speaking, Belarusian elites are afraid of becoming more dependent on Russia and lose the real power to make decisions in this sphere. Russia assumes itself as a superpower and tries to dominate in the ex-soviet region, while Belarus plays a multi-vector policy card, trying to “be good” for all neighbours.

There are lots of articles and books on the higher education systems in both states. Still, there are few comparative studies that cover these two systems entirely. A large comparative study of HES in ex-soviet states, that was made some years ago by the Higher School of Economics (Huisman *et al.*, eds., 2017), provided a vivid picture of the development of higher education in each country of this region, while their comprehensive comparison (including a comparison of higher education systems in Russia and Belarus) was less detailed.

The differences in political regime and social-economic policy have caused some peculiarities in the ideology of education. At the beginning of the post-soviet era, the population of both countries was under the influence of liberalism, and shared common transitional expectations. At the same time, Belarusian elites always kept conservative ideas and experienced nostalgia for the Soviet past; therefore, liberal ideas coexisted here with attempts to preserve the “best practices” of the former Soviet system (Batjushko, Vetokhin, 2005). The first post-soviet *Law on Education* authorised the creation of private higher education institutions (HEIs) and the introduction of fees in state-owned public HEIs. This, in turn, granted more freedom in the choice of programs and disciplines offered by each HEI and replaced the nomination of university rectors with elections (*Zakon...*, 1991). It does not mean that market principles did not exist here. As in Russia, in the 1990s private education was introduced. Many Belarusian academic actors started private HEIs (since 1994), and new faculties and specialities in the state HEIs were opened. The HES grew fast, trying to meet the increased public demands for expansion. Nevertheless, the system stayed under strong centralised administrative control. Both states stimulated the introduction of private institutions of higher education and the enlargement of state HEIs: it was a tool to shift the youth activities from the economic sphere, which suffered from unemployment, to the sphere of education for several years.

In the early 2000s, the number of private HEIs started to decline. The reasons were numerous. According to some assessments, the main reason for these changes was political and related to the logic of the consolidation of authoritarian power: searching to strengthen its ideological control over higher education and prevent potential students’ involvement in political initiatives (Gille-Belova, 2015). Other authors believe that the major reasons were economic and related to the market demands of the public universities to keep a higher level of enrolment (Gaisenk,

2018). The state HEIs gradually increased the number of students who paid for education and therefore contributed to the state budget.

Later in the second decade of the 21st century, liberal ideas in Belarusian education were critically assessed (Kirvel, 2018) and almost disappeared in the Code on Education (*Kodeks...*, 2011). Instead, several non-democratic changes were introduced. First of all, the election of rectors that existed for a short period of time was replaced by their appointment. The awarding of bachelor degrees, introduced in the late 1990s, was stopped. In general, according to the assessment of the Independent Bologna Committee, by the end of the 2000s, the HES in Belarus was experiencing a significant lack of academic freedom and university autonomy (Independent..., 2014). At the same time, in one of the expert interviews made by the author in 2018, a high ranking university official expressed an opinion, shared by some other administrative officials, that “the appointment method is better than the free election of rectors because there is no need to decide who is better, and therefore there are no conflicts and competition among the scholars” (Titarenko, Zaslavskaya eds., 2019: 76). This is not common practice: in Russia, some national universities got the right to elect a rector. However, since 2009 the Russian president appoints rectors of the two most famous universities: Moscow State and Saint-Petersburg State; however, their rectors consider this process as being democratic anyway (Viktor Sadovnichii, 2019) because the very term, democracy, is interpreted differently than in the Western countries.

Currently, the private HEIs in both countries are somewhat smaller in size than the state HEIs. Private universities are mainly focusing on social-economic disciplines: economics, political science, languages, or business studies. They are often deemed to have a worse reputation due to lower funding and ranking. However, there are some important exclusions in Russia where some private schools are very popular and more attractive for those who lost trust in the public HEIs – for example, the European University in Saint Petersburg.

Although political alliances usually stimulate a kind of unification in HES, this is not the case for the Union of Russia and Belarus. Both countries keep their full independence and in principle do not want to be unified in any aspect of educational activities. Whilst legally, any young citizen of Russia can ask for admission to a university in Belarus and vice versa; in reality, young people have to pass the entrance procedures that are specific to Russia or Belarus. In Russia, graduates of high school have to pass the so-called Unified State Exam and submit the results to a particular HEI. This can also be used during the process of submitting an application to other HEIs. The Russian Ministry of Education and Science² often discusses the issue of how many institutions a young graduate can

² The Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation is a ministry established in May 2018 as a result of splitting the Ministry of Education and Science, which existed

apply to simultaneously (in some years the number was 3, in some others 5), but nevertheless, the procedure is simple, and no additional documents are required.

In Belarus, there are two independent processes: graduation from high school with traditional exams, and the admission to the institutions of higher education. For the latter at least 3 (and sometimes 4) recent results of the Centralised Tests (CT) on a particular discipline are required. Centralised testing is the main stage of the admission process in Belarus: applicants pass tests in selected subjects in June. With certificates on the passage of CT, they then submit documents to the selection committee of a particular university. For those young people who do not plan to continue education, the CTs are not necessary. Testing is organised throughout the country each spring. For each speciality, specific subjects are required. Also, some faculties of “creative professions” (painting, music, journalism) ask for additional materials or arrange a “creative competition” for applicants. Usually, the results of the CT are valid for one year, so, those who failed the CT or were not accepted during the competition, have to pass similar CT exams again the following year. A young Russian high school graduate cannot be accepted without such results for free education, as a citizen of the Union; however, they can apply as a foreigner and pay for education. And the same problem occurs with a young applicant from Belarus in Russia. For this very reason, most Belarusians study in Russia as foreigners, and Russians also pay the fees in Belarusian HEIs.

Belarusian university graduates who have been educated on a budget basis receive state distribution and their first employment, which is not the case in Russia. This is a significant difference between the two countries which is negatively estimated as a relic of the Soviet past by the supporters of the liberal approach (*Belaya kniga*, 2018).

The scale of the higher education and number of students in Russia and Belarus

A modern approach to the assessment of the countries focuses on the comparison of their human capital and their ability to save and expand it. Therefore, we will start with a comparison of Russia and Belarus by this factor.

If we look at the Human Development Indices and Indicators (*Human...*, 2018), in 2018 Russia had a higher rank of HDI (49) than Belarus (53), out of 189 countries. The main indicator that determined a higher rank for Russia was income: Russian gross national income (GNI) *per capita* is \$ 24,233 while

from March 2004, into the two agencies. The second agency which simultaneously emerged is the Ministry of Education.

Belarus has only \$ 16,323. At the same time, such an educational indicator as “mean years of schooling” is slightly higher in Belarus (12.3 years vs. 12.0 years), and a second indicator, “expected years of schooling”, is equal in both countries (15.5 years). In general, Belarus and Russia have similar ratings and educational potential in the sphere of human development. If we compare them with the HDI in Poland, the latter is higher: the Polish rating is 33, with 16.4 “expected years of education” and 12.3 “mean years of schooling”. However, these formal indicators do not provide a whole picture of the situation in higher education.

The important indicator of educational success is the number of students. This factor depends on the demographic development of a country. In general, demographic trends in Russia and Belarus are similar, but not exactly the same: the size of the population of the two countries is not comparable; nor is their ethnic composition, which also influences the birth rate and, indirectly, the sphere of higher education.

The educational level of youth is important for comparison. In the European Union, the proportion of the population that reached the third stage of education (according to the international classification system of education, levels 5–6) in the population of 30–34 years is often considered. This group includes specialists who completed special secondary and higher education. In the European Union (EU), this share averages 35.8%. In Belarus, national statistics do not use this indicator. According to some calculations, this share is extremely high: around 59% (Bogdan, 2018: 582). However, the share of the state expenses for this level in the structure of all expenses for education in Belarus steadily decreases. In relation to GDP per capita, this share of expenditures in Russia and Belarus is 0.9%, which is significantly lower than in EU countries (on average, 1.3%) or other highly developed countries of the world. Russia spends a third more financial resources for training one third-level student than Belarus, although the percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) spent on higher education in Russia and Belarus is almost identical: 14% and 15%. In 2018, according to calculations, the cost per third-level student in Belarus was \$ 2,763, in Russia – \$ 3,900 (Bogdan, 2018: 583). Both countries fund higher education to a lower degree than the EU. Meanwhile, the inadequate funding for higher education at this level leads to a decrease in its quality and a possible outflow of promising young people to study abroad. Indeed, many Russian students study abroad, especially in the US and the EU. For example, only in 2016, there were 10,000 students from Russia in Germany; more than 5,000 in the US; more than 4,000 in the UK; and 3,600 in France (*Obrazovanie v tsifrah*, 2018: 47). The official statistics of this kind are not available for Belarus, although many young people study in Poland and Lithuania.

Due to the huge difference in the population of Russia and Belarus, the number of students is also in favour of Russia. For example, in the 2016/2017 academic year, according to the published statistics, 4,399 million people studied in Russia at two levels of higher education, and the state financing on education in total

reached 3.6% of GDP. More than 30% of the population aged 25–64 had full higher education. The government spending on higher education accounted for 1.6% of total government spending, or 0.6% of GDP (*Obrazovanie v tsifrah*, 2018: 11–12, 16, 22–23). At the beginning of the 2016/2017 academic year, there were 818 universities in Russia, of which 316 were non-state (almost 39%) (*Obrazovanie v tsifrah*, 2018: 33). At the beginning of the same year, 3,263 million people were studying under the bachelor's program, 0,689 million people were studying under the specialist program, and 0,447 million people – under master's program (*Obrazovanie v tsifrah*, 2018: 44).

In Belarus, the number of students among the young people of this age group is 91.5% (higher than in Russia). Practically, all the school graduates, wherever they live, have no admission barriers to entering universities. It is not by chance that, according to the latest data of the World Bank, the rate of school graduates enrolled in Belarusian universities reaches 87%. Higher education has become publicly available (Spasjuk, 2014). However, mass education has led to a decrease in the quality of education and its social status. The level of knowledge of the applicants decreased, as well as their learning outcomes in high school. Many cannot pass CTs with good grades and therefore have to pay for HEIs or go to private HEIs where admission is easier (Gaysenok, 2018).

As the number of young people graduating from high school declined, several private schools were closed (they could not get new state licenses). In order to keep the high level of students, the state has increased the number of budget places in the state universities: from 2010 to 2018 it increased from 33.8% to 43.8% (*Obrazovanie v tsifrah*, 2018: 40). Several inefficient universities were closed due to poor results of accreditation. Currently, there are 51 HEIs (42 state and 9 private). According to a decision of the Ministry of Education, this number will not be reduced in the nearest future in order to ensure access to HEIs throughout the territory of Belarus. At the same time, 28 out of 51 HEIs are located in Minsk, therefore half of students study in the capital and try to stay there after graduation.

Study programs differ, as well as the number of students in each program. In Belarus most students graduate as specialists (MCKO 6) – 96.3%, and much less go on to master's level (ISCE 7) – 2.3% or PhD level (ISCE 8) – 1.3% (*Belaya kniga*, 2018: 11). This disproportion means that the lower level of higher education is much more available in Belarus than the other two. The drive to make higher education available to the masses had led to the cancellation of special programs in order to give admission preferences to rural students in Belarus. This, in turn, has caused a general decrease in the knowledge of applicants (Gaisenok, 2018).

Other changes include the assessment systems (5-grades in Russia and 10-grades in Belarus), and degrees. The bachelor degree does not exist in Belarus, however, the specialist study program is only for 4 years, unlike in Russia where bachelors study 4 years and specialists – 5 years.

Still, due to a high level of centralisation, HES have preserved the procedure of the state approval of educational standards and study programs in both state and private HEIs, as well as state accreditation for them.

Internationalisation in higher education

An important feature of the educational activity initiated by the market economy is selling the educational service to foreign students. In the USSR it was common to invite young people from developing countries to study in the Soviet institutions of higher education for free. It was a kind of foreign policy of the internationalisation that was in line with Marxist ideology. Now everything can be done on a commercial basis – with payment, although some additional agreements between countries, that reflect their preferences in the foreign policy, also exist. We will describe the scope of the process of internationalisation in both countries, and its major directions.

Under conditions of the new global challenges and regional tasks, facing the field of higher education in the ex-soviet region, there is an active search for ways to increase the level of the competitiveness of the systems of higher education in Russia and Belarus.

Both countries try to attract foreign students to their HEIs; however, with different results that reflect their different economic and political roles in the region and the world. Russia ranks seventh in the world in the global education market. According to the data for the 2016/2017 academic year, the number of foreign students exceeded 313,000 people, which amounted to 5.7% of the total number of students in Russia. Of course, Russia cannot be compared with the leader in the global education market: the USA, with a share of foreign students of about 20% (Aref'ev, 2018: 305). But in the Eastern European region, no country can compete with Russia. The average annual rate of increase in the number of foreign students over the past 10 years, according to the same source of information, was 9.6%. The fact that the first four main countries (both post-Soviet and others) sending students to Russian universities are located in the Asian region means that the Asian direction has become dominant in Russia's foreign education policy. Judging by the development trends of educational regionalism, this direction is unlikely to change in the coming years.

Until recently, the increase in foreign students in Russia came mainly from post-Soviet countries. During the period from the academic years of 2004/2005 to 2016/2017, these countries accounted for three-quarters of the total growth of full-time foreign students and 100% part-time foreign students in Russia. The leaders in this group were Kazakhstan (more than 20% of all foreign students) and Turkmenistan (under 9% of foreign students), and Belarus was in the seventh

place in this row (4.2%). Some changes in this hierarchy are possible because the number of Ukrainian students in Russia has been recently declining (in Belarus the number of Ukrainian students has never been significant). Currently, the total number of foreign students is 5.7% of all students in Russia.

The main source countries outside the post-Soviet region are China (8.7% of all students in the 2016/2017 academic year) and India (3.1%) (Aref'ev, 2018: 313). Most foreign students study at bachelor and specialist levels. A significant proportion of foreign students in Russia are studying engineering and medicine. Their common problem, often leading to dissatisfaction with the education they receive, is poor knowledge of Russian (recently it has become a problem for students from some post-Soviet countries as well), which inevitably affects the quality of education (Aref'ev, 2018: 320).

In Belarus, the number of foreign students is much less, and their growth rates are smaller than in Russia. Thus, in the 2010/2011 academic year there were 9,357 foreign students in the universities of Belarus, and 15,506 in 2018/2019. Half of these students were from Turkmenistan. However, in 2019 the Turkmen government made a decision not to recognise several higher education degrees from former Soviet states (for example, in business, law, and political science). In the case of Belarus, the Turkmen government allowed Turkmen students to study only in a few Belarusian HEIs. This decision will definitely decrease the number of students from this country soon. Other big groups of foreign students are from Russia (9%) and China (7.2%). This hierarchy has changed during the aforementioned years because the foreign countries change their preferences quite often. In 2010 the number of Russians was 23.5%, Turkmen – 36.4%, and Chinese – 13.1%. Recently a significant shift towards the East took place. The total number of foreign students accounted for 5.8% of the total number of students in the Republic of Belarus (*Obrazovanie v tsifrah*, 2018: 41).

There is a significant exchange of students between Russia and Belarus beyond the official programs. The balance of such exchanges favours Russia. In the academic year 2017/2018, statistics indicated around 1,500 Russian students in Belarus, while the number of Belarusians studying in Russia (mostly as part-time students) was 10 times higher. Such “student exchanges” are popular in the regions (*oblasti*) near the border. Belarusian authorities do not care about this unequal exchange as they cannot stop it or change this tendency.

Belarusian regional initiatives have been determined by the economic interests and directed mainly to more distant countries with a lower level of higher education or a higher level of fees for students. Another aspect is political: Belarus prefers to cooperate in the educational sphere with its political partners. Overall, Belarusian authorities sought to enlarge the educational market for their own country and sell Belarusian educational services to their economic and political partners. Study programs in the Russian language make Belarus attractive for those students from former Soviet states who mostly come from

families with a good command of Russian. Moreover, Belarus has a reputation for being a safe country that provides foreigners with peaceful and comfortable conditions for studies.

The Belarusian HES is known and respectful among many Asian countries as it provides relatively good education, especially in medicine, for a moderate price compared to other countries or less (in comparison with Russia). Two countries, Turkmenistan and China, account for the two largest groups of Asian students in Belarus (7,200 and 1,400 people respectively). Thanks to bilateral agreements, foreign students are only required to pass an interview to demonstrate their proficiency in Russian, the language of most courses of study. Preparatory Russian language training is also available prior to degree programs (Titarenko, 2019: 6). Currently, around 5% of all students in Belarus are international; and the opportunity for further growth exists. However, programs in English are rare which makes education in Belarus less attractive for students from many countries.

Eurasian integration

The search for the new appropriate forms of educational cooperation is continuing. It has been expected that construction of the Eurasian Economic Union will increase cooperation between its members in higher education. However, it did not happen because Belarus (and Kazakhstan) were afraid of the increasing youth brain drain to Russia in case of a higher level of educational cooperation. Russian foreign educational policy is very active. Several Russian universities established bilateral and multilateral MA programs to train Russian and foreign students for employment in the popular spheres of work within the Eurasian region. This kind of cooperation at the inter-university level is on the rise, involving the new educational actors from Russia; and this trend will continue. Belarusian universities do not participate in this initiative. So far, in regard to Russia and Belarus, European integration and Eurasian integration are less developed, than the Asian direction of their foreign educational regional initiatives. On the basis of the past Soviet heritage, integration within the Eurasian economic space (EAES) has started to spread. Russia is a leading country in this process.

Russian branch campuses, as a form of educational cooperation, are typical. Belarus is less active. It protects its territory from any foreign HEIs. For this reason, Belarus has no branches from the EAES and only one joint Belarusian-Russian HEI (in Mogilev). Belarusian campuses and branches do not exist abroad as well; either in Russia or in other countries. The main reasons for this policy are economic: a lack of finance for such initiatives and a lack of assurance that they will be profitable for Belarus. On the

contrary, Russia actively uses its soft power: it opened several branches of its universities in the post-soviet region to promote the internationalisation of education: such branches are considered to be a soft power of Russian international foreign policy and a regional integration strategy in the global educational competition. Russia is among the first five global exporters of the international branch campuses. During the post-Soviet period, according to a study, 58 branch campuses were established by Russian universities in 12 ex-Soviet republics (Abbasov, 2019: 14). It is clear that Russia took the lead in fostering cooperation and educational integration in the post-Soviet region.

Russia has also organised a joint educational forum with ASEAN, after which an ASEAN–Russia Working Group on Education was launched (2018) to work on strengthening cooperation amongst the ASEAN educational network. Similar university cooperation started with the countries from other regions in Asia. In general, Russia “sees itself as an important player in maintaining and extending educational opportunities” (Sabzalieva, 2019: 8). It also increases cooperation with the members of the Eurasian Economic Union, opening and supporting joint universities in these countries and the regions beyond Eurasia (BRICS, Global South). Russia has put forward a similar goal in its educational policy as the EU: to be among the global leaders in the education market.

If we compare the ranks of the universities within the members of the EAES, we will see that all the universities on the top positions among the Eurasian union states belong to Russia. This is a confirmation of Russia’s higher level of scientific development at universities, better financial investments, a greater number of articles published in journals indicated in the Scopus system, and a higher level of quotations of the articles per person among the academic staff (Gaisenok *et al.*, 2019: 40–41). Therefore, in the near future, all the comparisons in the sphere of higher education in this region will be in favour of Russia.

It is worth mentioning the positions of Russian and Belarusian universities in the most famous world ratings published in 2019. According to the Times Higher Education (THE) rating, only the Belarusian State University (out of all 51 Belarusian universities) was included in this list of the world’s best universities, and its place is rather low (among the 1,350 universities it is in a group of 1,000+, while in 2017 its place was in the group of 800+). Russia is represented by 39 universities. The best Russian university is Moscow State: it occupies the 189th place. Over the last few years, five new Russian universities have been included in this rating while a second Belarusian university, Belarusian National Technical, lost its position in THE in comparison with the previous years. For comparison: the best Polish universities, Jagiellonian and Warsaw universities, are in the group of 600+, and 12 other universities are included in THE as well. As for the other popular world ratings: only two HEIs from Belarus are included in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) rating, however, they hold very low positions in QS.

Three Russian HEIs are in the first 1,000 universities according to QS. Two best Russian universities are included into the third most important global rating, the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), where Belarusian HEIs are not selected (BELTA, 2019; Gaisенок *et al.*, 2019).

European integration

The Bologna process currently unites 48 countries. Bologna provides the framework for international cooperation between universities, and facilitates the dissemination of the best regional experience in higher education. Its official goal is the creation of common space for higher education in Europe and the opening of new opportunities for graduates to be employed in the EU labour market. Russia and Belarus are members of the European space of higher education: Russia entered it in 2003, aiming to harmonise European education standards, and Belarus joined in 2015; being the last European country to do such.

The Bologna reforms were gradually introduced in Russian HEIs, starting with the 3-level structure, so that now Russia has the levels of bachelor's, master's and PhD studies. "Specialists" also exist, but they are in a minority. In Belarus bachelor's degrees do not exist: graduates from 4-year courses are called specialists, similar to the previous 5-year course. In 2018 the Ministry of Education in Belarus reduced master's programs from two to one year, with a significant part of classes becoming distance-learning. The Belarusian academic public accepted this change because the students' motivation to continue education immediately increased. Our new survey (2019) discovered that young people did not want to spend 2 years doing master's studies because there is no difference in the employment between the graduates of the two levels. The expert interviews showed that the university staff were not aware of the principal differences between the courses at the first and second levels, and how to control and check the independent student work at the Master's level. This lack of experience has led many teachers to a deadlock – similar to one that Russian university staff experienced in the early 2000s, after the introduction of the Bologna system (Zborovsky, 2018: 99). Probably, the implementation of Bologna innovations in Belarus would also take more time before they bring visible results. Currently, there is a concern that the reduction of master's studies to one year can make the two-level structure of higher education similar to the previous 5-year education model and practically prevent the renovation of the old scheme in higher education. More importantly, however, this is not a solution for another problem – the lack of the students' motivation to study. This question, in turn, leads to the high school system and its similar problems of motivation and quality of education

in both countries. According to Russian sociologist G. Zborovsky (2018: 100), it is necessary to search for “new learning technologies that would allow students to be interested more and more than today...”. Still, it is obvious that as long as the students’ knowledge received is not closely correlated with the future income earned and professional career gained, motivation will remain low, regardless of any educational structures.

Scholars in both countries are concerned about the particular Bologna principles and their implementation. Thus, the students’ mobility depends on the quota given to the country and on the available financial support from the students’ families. Under the poor economic conditions in Belarus, as well as in the Russian provincial cities, many students cannot cover the costs of long-term travel abroad. Russian scholars further argue that their provincial universities are poorly financed (Zborovsky, Ambarova, 2019). The level of participation in the mobility programs run by the Russian Ministry of Education and Science is also small (Poleshchuk, Ridiger, 2018).

In Belarus, according to expert interviews, fewer students are ready to travel than earlier because of financial reasons. What is more, the level of both the staff and student’s knowledge of Bologna principles is poor in both countries (Motova, 2018; Titarenko, Zaslavskaya, eds., 2019). According to our surveys, almost half of Belarusian students do not know about Bologna innovations, and one third cannot assess the impact of Bologna principles on the Belarusian HES. Indeed, the visible results include mainly reduced terms of study at the first level and ECTS, travel and academic freedoms are less visible (Sechko, Romanova, 2017) That said, the participation of the staff and students in the management process was implemented formally; the distribution of Belarusian graduates financed by the state budget is still determined by law. Alas, however, the national structure of qualifications is not in harmony with the new structure of higher education, so that a second-level degree does not guarantee better employment or a higher salary (Motova, 2019; *Belaya kniga*, 2018).

The important issue related to the transformation of universities is quality assurance. Firstly, it is connected to the state accreditation of HEIs: the state has the right to close any HEI due to its low quality. Secondly, it is connected to the market demands: according to expert opinion, the selected quality assessment methods have to meet the demands of the future employers as they need young specialists with particular knowledge, competences and skills (Glebova, Gus’kova, 2012: 2–5). This problem is common for both Russia and Belarus. Many university experts expressed their concerns that the rapid introduction of Bologna principles and new methods of quality assessment in the educational sphere made it difficult to select the best approaches to quality assessment, taking into account the specificity of a particular Belarusian HEI (Titarenko, Zaslavskaya, 2019: 79). For this reason, the national administration tries to modify Bologna principles and make them suitable for the common national practice and compatible with the national

priorities in education: patriotism, national identity, national history (Marzaljuk, 2018). Practically, these are two different ways to interpret and assess the quality of education. As the Belarusian Minister of Education explained the dominant approach, we have to accept the foreign best practice and at the same time keep our full independence (Karpenko, 2017). This complexity and formal acceptance of foreign practice lead to the fact that university administration prioritises national approaches to the quality of education and the HES in general.

Regardless of any approaches to this process, according to the literature, universal methods in quality management do not exist. The applied methods in both countries often lead to a decrease of the HEIs' competitiveness because the HEIs fail to select the best practices and have no incentives to motivate the staff to work better (Korzavina *et al.*, 2016). The plurality of formal indicators of quality cannot bring systemic results and help to improve the educational process.

The European Higher Education Area offers its members a possibility to establish the double degree programs that would allow the students to simultaneously obtain two degrees from partner universities in two countries. Russia has been included in such practice, although there exist numerous financial and formal obstacles for its proper implementation. In Belarus, there are no double programs even between the universities within the Eurasian educational space. The first program of this kind was recently announced for MA students in history: it is planned to start this program between MSU and BSU, however, only as a pilot project. Therefore, many highly motivated students from middle-class families prefer to study abroad and receive degrees issued in the EU or US. This is an example of how economic conditions may cause obstacles for the implementation of the best foreign practices because this process would require much more financial investment and more international communication with the best foreign HEIs.

A common problem – different approaches

For the last few years, Belarus has experienced significant economic problems that influence all other spheres, including higher education. The level of state funding has decreased. Therefore, the Ministry of Education has been trying to make HE less expensive for the state budget and more oriented to market needs. The strategic goal is to connect higher education with business so that the latter pays for the young professionals that are in need in the economic sphere. According to this strategy, the Belarusian Ministry of Education put forward a goal “to construct an educational system of high quality to fully meet the needs of the innovative economy and sustainable development” (*Conceptual'nye...*, 2017).

However, the existing system of HE is not ready to perform the new strategic tasks in full because they demand a lot of financial investments. Thus, the head

of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, academician Vladimir Gusakov, mentioned in his interview:

If we want to receive a new quality, it is necessary to invest a lot of quantitative goods: resources, means, intellectual capital, to create the appropriate material basis, train the personnel. This is not a one-stop action (Gusakov, 2014).

Unfortunately, this statement did not become the key to a substantial improvement of the situation in higher education. Currently, this system still badly needs a higher level of state financing for the practical implementation of the above-mentioned strategic goals. In 2018 an expert survey was carried out amongst university personnel and administrators of different levels employed at the HEIs in Minsk, and several regional cities. The survey helped us to demonstrate that the Belarusian HES cannot be quickly modernised to meet the global challenges (Titarenko, Zaslavskaya, 2019). The Belarusian HES itself (as well as the Russian HES) is a part of the institutional system and it is fully subordinated to the state structures. Universities are not able to change their educational programs and introduce new specialities to meet the demands of the innovative businesses, without decisions being made by the Ministry of Education, that also depends on the decisions of the Council of Ministries, etc. Such changes require lots of time and effort. Even private HEIs are dependent on the state with regards to strategical issues. Taking into account the quick changes in the situations in the conditions of global competitiveness, it may happen that educational innovations will be allowed too late and become obsolete.

This situation is typical for most Belarusian HEIs, that practically cannot meet the demands of the market as these demands themselves are quickly changeable, and the HES cannot adapt to them quickly enough. In Russia the corporate business opened some private universities for its own needs, these HEIs are out of the control of the Ministry of Education; whilst the rest of Russian HEIs experience problems similar to Belarusian HEIs.

Under conditions of high uncertainty in the Belarusian economy, it is not possible to predict what will happen next. Currently, the state demands to shift the higher education closer to the practical needs and even cut some theoretical university courses in favour of increasing the practical training programs. A new step in this direction is connected to the model of the entrepreneurial university (“university 3.0”) that was introduced in the Belarusian HES a few years ago (BELTA, 2018a; Pashkevich, 2018). Using this model, we will show the differences in its implementation in Belarus and Russia, where this model became known earlier but still was not officially imposed on the HEIs. The meaning of the model “university 3.0” is to add a third mission to the university – marketable, or entrepreneurial. Universities have to establish close ties with industrial institutions to perform R&D and create marketable products.

It is assumed that universities have to open new laboratories and industrial structures; they have to invite practitioners and students to work together in these laboratories and produce innovative goods and services. Ideally, representatives of Big Business have to be incorporated into the university councils and take part in the educational decisions with regards to the study programs. Becoming a part of the university-industrial complex, businesses will invest their own money into education and later employ the specialists trained according to their needs. Practically, such complexes will not be universities anymore; they will be business corporations. It will mean that universities will gain profits and become fully commercial structures dependent on business and the market.

This model is known from the late XX century when it was researched in detail by B. Clark. This scholar described 5 cases of such universities and concluded that it is acceptable mainly for technical universities with a highly applied orientation to the market. It means that this model is not universal: it is limited by the existing specialisations of study and depends on many conditions (Clark, 2011). Even in the case of the successful implementation of this model, it is not a guarantee of commercial success being replicated by another HEI. Also, it cannot guarantee the international success of the HEI, measured by the global ratings, high quality of education or number of publications in the Scopus journals.

Regardless of the existence of theoretical and practical literature on the limits of “university 3.0”, this model is currently imposed in Belarus in 8 universities (among them 2 classical and 2 pedagogical). At the same time, the scholars from the non-state organisations who are well aware of this model warned the government that it was a wrong decision to broadly develop the entrepreneurial vector of development for Belarusian universities due to the low level of innovation in Belarus (Kolesnichenko, 2019). However, their experience and assessments of this model were not counted by the government.

In Russia, this model is supported by technical HEIs. The classical HEIs that train both specialists and young scholars reject this model because the orientation of HEIs to the clients makes it impossible to prepare the new generation of scholars (Popova, Klimova, 2018). Unlike in Belarus, the commercialisation of higher education in Russia is broadly discussed in the journals and in public, and is not considered to be a universal answer (Erovenko, 2019; Andrianova *et al.*, 2019). As for Belarus, some critically oriented scholars protest against the transformation of HEIs into commercial organisations that provide diplomas for money, as it contributes to the “transformation of education into a service sector, and the university professors into teaching waiters providing these services” (Kirvel, 2018: 93). To summarise: the practical introduction of a model of an entrepreneurial university can increase inequality between the universities, while it can also contribute to their competitiveness and the diversification of investors in the case of technical universities.

The major indicators of the non-universal character of different models of the commercialisation of the HES, and the uncertain results of the market approach to the sphere of higher education, are the low global ratings of HEIs that already used these tools (at least, these universities did not improve their ratings automatically after the implementation of this approach). When the model “university 3.0” was introduced in the best Belarusian HEIs, such as Belarusian state and Belarusian Technical national universities, their ratings fell. In Russia the best HEIs with the highest ranks belong to the classical universities; however, some technical universities also reached a high level; they are better visible within the universities of the Eurasian educational space where all top positions belong to Russian HEIs (Gaisenk *et al.*, 2019).

Conclusion

Answering the research question put forward at the beginning of this article, it is possible to conclude that the Belarusian HES is not getting closer either to the Russian or Western HES: it tries to follow its own way. In practice, this way is not more efficient but it reflects the country’s current national priorities.

Comparing the development of the HES in Russia and Belarus, one can assume that the Russian HES is more effective in the global, regional and domestic sphere: several Russian research and federal universities reached high world ranks; they attract lots of foreign students to study and invite foreign staff for collaboration. The Belarusian HES cannot attract the best foreign staff and students at the same level as Russia, as it has much less finance from the state – its principal investor. The diversification of its funding base and development of the entrepreneurial culture is on the agenda in Belarus, but far from a reality.

Belarus lags behind Russia in the pace of the transformation of the HES aimed to increase its global competitiveness and adaptation to the digital economy. The high level of the centralised control over the HES in Belarus has slowed down the process of its modernisation. Firstly, such control hinders the practical introduction of the best practices selected by the administration of a particular university. Secondly, the attempts of the Belarusian government to fully control the changes in the HES did not contribute to the improvement of its quality and the motivation of the students. Russia provided more autonomy to its best (federal) HEIs, which made these universities more competitive and effective. The Russian HES more quickly implements the changes associated with the advancement of science, the entrepreneurial university, and the diversification of funds; although only a part of the universities are included in these innovative processes. Russian universities are more active in global international cooperation and use a variety of methods that do not exist in Belarus (double degrees, branch

campuses, joint universities). However, provincial universities in Russia are also under-financed and losing students.

Still, the two educational systems share similarities that set them apart from other countries. Most importantly, both countries provide unyielding support for their national priorities in higher education, even if it prevents the implementation of Bologna principles or their own declarations about unified approaches to education within the Union of Russia and Belarus. While developing their foreign educational policy, both countries are “moving East” following their own different ways: most foreign students are from the Asian region. European educational integration keeps its importance in the alignment of the HES structure and increasing its competitiveness, but it is not promising for recruiting students from the EU.

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Krystian Pachucki-Włosek

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4527-5441>

Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland
Faculty of International Studies and Political Studies
Institute for Russian and Eastern European Studies UJ
e-mail: krystian.pachucki97@gmail.com

Old and New Uzbekistan – A comparative essay on the last years of Islam Karimov’s reign and Shavkat Mirziyoyev’s presidency

Abstract. The article aims to present the positive and negative effects of the change in the position of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The article focuses on economic issues, comparing the policy of President Islam Karimov and the policy of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The work also compares the foreign policy of both leaders towards Uzbekistan’s largest political partners: Russia and China. The above article tries to answer the question: are the changes in Uzbekistan significant after 2016 or only superficial?

Keywords: Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, internal policy, foreign policy.

Introduction

For many years, Uzbekistan was mainly associated with a dictatorial president. A number of wealthy states have wanted to expand their businesses in the excavation industry there, with varying results. There have been a lot of obstacles to this, as proved by the international indexes. In terms of economic freedom, Uzbekistan received 87th place in 2016 (Gazeta.uz., 2015). When we inspect further, the country was given 156th place in a corruption index as well as 166th place in an economic freedom index (Heritage.org., 2019). The situation

seemed to improve however when President Karimov died on September 2nd 2016. There occurred a lot of optimism in the country as his death was seen as an end to the era of corruption and secret police rule; as well as being a chance for economic improvement. A new leader arose, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, who was seen by the West as a great reformer and a stark contrast to a figure such as Karimov.

The author's methodological assumptions were to follow the model of the research process proposed by Norman Goodman. The research problem posed is: To what extent has there been any significant change in economic policy in Uzbekistan as a result of the change in the presidency? An attempt to get acquainted with professional literature was almost impossible because a limited amount of scientific texts on the reforms of the new president exist. The hypothesis adopted by the author was that in Uzbekistan there have been significant changes in economic policy. The text implementation itself was based on the use of the comparative analysis method: by comparing the figures of the two Presidents of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The collected data were analysed and became the source for drawing final conclusions. The criteria for assessing economic policy in the text are trade exchange rates (export and import), the foreign debt of the state, the level of support to domestic trade and industry. Raising political relations with neighbouring countries has become a necessity because in the post-Soviet area politics is directly linked to the economy.

Domestic policy

A different view of the Soviet period

Islam Karimov, despite his lush past associated with the communist movement: he was an activist of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, a member of the Central Committee and finally the first secretary of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan and the president of the Uzbek SSR, he was critical of the Soviet period. In his statements, he emphasized that the Soviet period was a time of Russian occupation of Uzbek lands, and the decision of local political elites was limited by Moscow. Karimov openly hit the political system of Soviet Uzbekistan, without discrediting the modernization achievements nor compromising this period's rapid pace of modernizing in Uzbekistan. At the beginning of the presidency, Islam Karimov treated the figure of the first secretary, Sharof Rashidov, with respect, using his personality to unite society in the economic reconstruction of the country during the transformation. Failures in the recovery of prosperity and the increase in nostalgia for Soviet times in society prompted Karimov to change his rhetoric about his predecessor. In comparison with Karimov's

approach, President Mirziyoyev glorifies the period of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic. The glorification of Rashidov himself results from their common place of origin. Sharaf Rashidov, similarly to Shavkat Mirziyoyev, was born in the Jizzakh Region. The behaviour of the new leader confirms the assumptions about the attempt to redefine Karimov's image as being motivated by the society of Uzbekistan. In 2017, President Mirziyoyev personally opened the Sharof Rashidov Museum and unveiled a memorial monument (President.uz., 2020).

The blow to the Soviet system was one of the tools for showing the international distance from Moscow's policy. The verbal criticism that followed after 2000 was replaced by a deed policy after 2006 when Tashkent began building an independent international position. The symbol of the deed's policy was the removal of the Shoahmed Shamahmudov monument from the Friendship Square of Nations in 2008, placing it on the edge of the capital (Fergana, 2020).

The perception of the Soviet period would shift when Shavkat Mirziyoyev came to power. Karimov, shirking the Soviet period, sought to distance himself from Moscow, while Mirziyoyev, with his positive statements, seeks to improve relations with the Russian authorities. The policy of the deed is also transforming – the destruction of Soviet symbols has ceased, on the contrary, money was allocated for their renovation. Upon Mirziyoyev's behest, many monuments from the Soviet times have been renovated, and the monument of Shoahmed Shamahmudov has been once again placed in the Friendship Square of Nations. It was unveiled solemnly on May 9, 2019 (IA REGNUM, 2017).

Another area of difference is the approach to the Russian language. The harsh policy pushed by President Karimov led to the complete elimination of the Russian language from public life, the change of the alphabet from Cyrillic to Latin, implemented from 1992–2003, was the most emphatic example of consistency in the policy of eliminating Russian from the public life of Uzbekistan. Such policies were completely non-sensical as Karimov himself predominantly spoke Russian and was much more fluent in it than in his native language. Inconsistency was also noticeable in higher education as all university graduates had to pass Russian language exams. President Mirziyoyev decided to improve the status of the Uzbek language, as it is still one of the most commonly used languages in Uzbekistan, however many people still choose to watch Russian TV networks and read Russian press over their native counterparts. Through the policy of abolishing restrictions on languages, Mirziyoyev aims to encourage young Russian people to remain in Uzbekistan. The introduction of the requirement of knowledge of the Uzbek language excluded many young Russians living in Uzbekistan from taking up senior management positions. Karimov was, therefore, wasting the potential contained in young Russians; whilst Mirziyoyev wants to use them to fill the hole in intellectual cadres arising after the mass emigration of Uzbek people for work to the Russian Federation. A liberal policy towards the Russian minority in Uzbekistan contributed to a downward trend in terms of the emigration statistics: in 2013, 908,000 thousand Russians were living

in Uzbekistan, yet by 2015 that number had dropped to about 650,000 thousand, many of them having either passed away or gone back to Russia (Cyrjapkina, 2015: 18–19).

The comparison of Karimov and Mirziyoyev in terms of their attitude to the Soviet period should be considered at the level of authorities. The policy of Islam Karimov in the nineties was an attempt to continue the ideas of Rashidov, with necessary modifications due to the economic and geopolitical situation. Despite being dependent on the authorities in the Kremlin, Rashidov was seen as an autonomous leader in his decisions. The difficulties of the 1990s made it impossible to immediately break the dependence on Russia, so attachment to the character of Rashidov was beneficial to the image of Islam Karimov himself. After 2000, Islam Karimov wanted to be like Vladimir Putin – he wanted to be seen, like the president of Russia, as a saviour in times of crisis. For Karimov, this state of affairs was impossible to achieve as when he first became president, Uzbekistan was just starting to experience a period of economic instability. An attempt to build a social compromise based on the principle of a good life in return for sacrificing political freedom could not be implemented in Uzbekistan. To Karimov's dismay, the process of economic improvement was lagging behind, making it impossible for him to reach a compromise with the Uzbek people. Instead, he abandoned the policy of consensus and turned towards a policy based on ruling with an iron fist, utilizing tactics based on fear, with assistance from the state's security service.

As for Mirziyoyev, it has been established that he follows a similar path to Sharof Rashidov, former First Secretary. The president is aware of the impossibility of quickly improving the economic situation of the country. He tries to prevent the division of Uzbekistan's society, which is why he bases his internal policy on building friendships between nations and peoples living in former-Soviet Uzbekistan. For all ethnic groups living in Uzbekistan, the Soviet period is associated with a period of mutual sympathy, unity and respect.

Approach to internal economic policy

After the independence of Uzbekistan, President Karimov was forced by a difficult economic situation to start the privatization of state property. He openly declared his reluctance to this mechanism, but there was no other way – the state did not have capital that could be allocated to the process of modernizing the machinery park of state enterprises and holdings. Money obtained from the sale of licenses and subsequent plants were used to rescue failing state-owned enterprises. When the situation eventually improved after 2000, Karimov began to control the rate at which privatization was occurring. Between the years 2000 and 2010, the private sector of the economy increased its contribution by only 2.6% GDP (from 42.5% in

2000 to 45.1% in 2010) (Tsereteli, 2018: 18). Restrictions on selling off state assets to foreign capital and an increase in revenues from natural gas exports enabled the implementation of a recovery program for domestic producers and sellers. Karimov's actions led to the regulation of the situation in the internal market after 2010; this situation persisted until his death.

Table 1. Figures of domestic trade's growth in Uzbek regions in years 2015–2018 (%)

| Region | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|------------------------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Uzbekistan (generally) | +15.3 | +14.4 | +1.9 | +6.5 |
| Karakalpakstan | +14.1 | +14.1 | +1.8 | +7.2 |
| Andijan Region | +13.5 | +12.6 | +1.8 | +6.5 |
| Bukhara Region | +15.6 | +11.5 | +0.3 | +8.2 |
| Samarqand Region | +15.7 | +15.0 | +0.7 | +5.0 |
| Tashkent Region | +18.9 | +10.9 | +3.0 | +6.6 |
| Fergana Region | +16.8 | +14.5 | +1.0 | +5.9 |
| Tashkent | +16.2 | +14.3 | +4.4 | +8.5 |

Sources: Super User, 2018b.

The decline in internal trade has been caused by the new trade policy of the state. The new president's vision is based on increasing the quantity of products imported to Uzbekistan. The late President Karimov did everything to prevent the necessity of importing products from abroad – he believed that if there is a possibility of producing a given consumer good in the territory of the country, it is necessary to take out loans and build a plant specializing in the production of the desired product. The presidents also differ in their approach to issuing currency. The situation prevailing in Uzbekistan in the last thirty years can be analogously compared with the period of the sixties and seventies in the People's Republic of Poland. Karimov noticed the dangers of buying expensive imported goods, which citizens could not afford anyway, so consumers had to be content with what domestic trade offered. In economic policy, President Mirziyoyev partly reminiscent of Polish First Secretary Edward Gierek, who bought consumer goods in the West for hard currencies and then sold them on the domestic market below market value. This phenomenon is now taking place in Uzbekistan, the main suppliers of products are Russia and China. Lowering prices for imported products caused an increase in demand for them due to their better quality. Mirziyoyev's privatization process deviates from the model adopted by Karimov however; Mirziyoyev relaunched the privatization process without introducing protective safeguards for domestic producers, which would be unthinkable for Karimov.

Table 2. Figures for individual expenses per capita in years 2015–2018
(measured in millions of so'm)

| Region | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Uzbekistan (generally) | 2.27 | 2.76 | 3.24 | 3.99 |
| Karakalpakstan | 1.34 | 1.63 | 1.92 | 2.39 |
| Andijan Region | 1.92 | 2.30 | 2.72 | 3.42 |
| Bukhara Region | 2.48 | 3.06 | 3.55 | 4.40 |
| Samarqand Region | 1.71 | 2.10 | 2.43 | 2.96 |
| Tashkent Region | 2.76 | 3.28 | 3.93 | 4.82 |
| Fergana Region | 1.77 | 2.16 | 2.50 | 3.07 |
| Tashkent | 6.54 | 7.99 | 9.59 | 11.85 |

Sources: Super User, 2018b.

The problem that Karimov could not solve was high inflation. The regulations adopted during his rule worked for a brief period of time, causing then recurrences of the inflation machine. Economists have rightly noted that it was of colossal importance in this process to maintain the artificial exchange rate, regulations hindering the free circulation of foreign currencies, and to continue price regulation.

When it comes to trying to solve these problems, Shavkat Mirziyoyev is considered to be both a rapid and effective reformer – in just a year, he introduced more changes to Uzbekistan than Karimov would if he had been given five years. The attempt to release the So'm (UZS) was perceived by the West as a milestone. These decisions have proven to be beneficial, especially for people working full-time in Russia. While the exchange rate for 1 US dollar is 10,000 UZS, the rate for the Russian ruble was 1 RUB for 75 UZS in the first half of 2019 – currently, the rate fluctuates between 65–67 UZS for 1 RUB (Rynekwschodni.pl, 2019a). In addition, restrictions on exchanging currency have been lifted, which resulted in Uzbeks massively exchanging so'ms for US dollars, Russian Rubles and Kazakh Tenge. This carries a positive impact as a sudden flow of foreign currency into domestic markets has culled the inflation. It's still too early to say anything for sure, as reforms were only introduced on August 21st 2019, but so far, it has been noted that many Uzbeks prefer to trade in dollars. An interesting piece of trivia – on the day when reforms were introduced, Uzbek banks traded 1.3 trillion so'ms for US dollars which reduced the exchange rate between UZS-US by 100 so'ms (Rynekwschodni.pl, 2019a). By introducing free currency trading, President Mirziyoyev declared war on the grey economy, which, according to unofficial data, can even reach 30% of the country's GDP. The main forces involved in illegal procedures under Karimov were mainly officials from the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of

the Interior. Under the slogan of fighting smugglers and criminals, the president could get rid of corrupt officials from the state apparatus.

Changes in the price freezing policy have caused social discontent. The citizens of Uzbekistan were not prepared for such rapid price changes. Here, attention should be paid to the activities of Karimov, who emphasized that he would free the prices of basic products necessary for life only when the financial status of citizens reaches the appropriate level. President Mirziyoyev promptly ruined many households, but due to the difficult economic situation, he could not continue to subsidize them. Through January to July, prices for milk, alcohol, bread and meat increased by 9%. The impactful change was a cut of subsidiaries for bread production. In 2018, a loaf of bread cost about 600–650 so'ms. Now, it costs around 1,200–1,300 so'ms (0.14\$) (Rynekwschodni.pl, 2019b). This radical approach has been paying off though as price-fixing allowed for a slow transition into a market-based economy. Overtime prices should stabilize.

Foreign policy

Comparison of the approach of Islam Karimov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev to foreign trade with the countries of the Central Asian region

Table 3. Uzbek exports to Central Asia for years 2014–2016 (measured in bln US dollars)

| Year | Kazakhstan | Kyrgyzstan | Tajikistan | Turkmenistan |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| 2014 | 2.427 | 0.151 | 0.002 | 0.195 |
| 2015 | 1.791 | 0.897 | 0.006 | 0.066 |
| 2016 | 0.876 | 0.114 | 0.043 | 0.055 |
| 2017 | 0.991 | 0.169 | 0.075 | 0.053 |
| 2018 | 8.117 | 1.552 | 0.736 | 0.164 |
| I–VI 2019 | 1.914 | 1.004 | 0.267 | 0.068 |

Source: Super User, 2018a.

Initial political disputes negatively affected economic relations with the countries of the region. Those same economic relations became very unpredictable after the year 2000. In some cases, exports would increase exponentially in one year, only to decrease dramatically a few months later. As a leader with economic education, Karimov realized that maintaining this state of affairs only generates losses for the economy of Uzbekistan. In 2010, he began the process of rebuilding economic relations with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, before his death in 2016 he managed to implement part of the plan – economic exchange with Kyrgyzstan

increased. The most successful year for Uzbek's economy, in terms of exports to other countries, was 2014 when sales to Kazakhstan reached a figure of 2.42 billion US Dollars; sales to Kyrgyzstan reached 151 thousand US Dollars and sales to Turkmenistan reached a figure of 195 thousand US Dollars (The Observatory of Economic Complexity, 2014).

The corrective actions taken by Mirziyoyev have stimulated economic relations with neighbouring countries. Between the years 2016 to 2018, the revenue from Kyrgyzstan experienced a 17-fold increase while the revenue from Tajikistan experienced a 13-fold increase. The revenue from Turkmenistan was understandably much less impressive as the country is lacking in foreign currency to engage in wide-range trade. At the time, the revenue from Kazakhstan reached a record-high sum of 8.11 billion US Dollars.

Table 4. Uzbek's imports from Central Asia for years 2014–2016 (measured in bln US dollars)

| Year | Kazakhstan | Kyrgyzstan | Tajikistan | Turkmenistan |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 2014 | 0.971 | 0.058 | 0.003 | 0.178 |
| 2015 | 0.831 | 0.034 | 0.005 | 0.211 |
| 2016 | 0.935 | 0.044 | 0.029 | 0.127 |
| 2017 | 0.975 | 0.072 | 0.049 | 0.105 |
| 2018 | 19.196 | 0.801 | 0.877 | 1.152 |
| I–VI 2019 | 3.458 | 0.195 | 0.173 | 0.721 |

Source: Super User, 2018a.

The changes in the volume of trade with neighbouring countries are significant, but trends from the time of Islam Karimov's rule are still visible. As much as those figures are impressive, a certain trend is noticeable – Mirziyoyev is making an effort to carefully balance out the revenue of imports and exports with Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan – countries with which he's on speaking terms. The smaller revenue from trading with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is indicative of a lower trust with these states. Reasons for why Uzbekistan has kept its distance are as follow: Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are mainly buying machinery and fertilizers, while in return, Uzbekistan gets construction materials and agricultural products – paying with food for advanced tech and machinery seems like a worse deal for Uzbekistan, so that's why Mirziyoyev makes sure that imports do not excel the exports. The year 2018 was exceptional due to the high level of exports and imports from neighbouring countries, however, it showed Uzbekistan's economic weakness and the inability to maintain trade at this level. Data for the first half of 2019 in the case of exports and imports show that there will be a decrease in the nominal value of the trade exchange.

**A comparison of the approach of Islam Karimov
and Shavkat Mirziyoyev to trade with the Russian Federation
and the People's Republic of China**

Table 5. Uzbek's exports to Russia in years 2014–2019 (measured in bln US dollars)

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|--------|
| 2014 | 1.898 | 2017 | 1.527 |
| 2015 | 1.236 | 2018 | 10.449 |
| 2016 | 1.237 | 2019 | 3.326 |

Source: Super User, 2018a.

Table 6. Figures for exports to China in years 2014–2019 (measured in bln US dollars)

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|--------|
| 2014 | 1.553 | 2017 | 1.590 |
| 2015 | 1.992 | 2018 | 12.489 |
| 2016 | 1.401 | 2019 | 4.542 |

Source: Super User, 2018a.

President Karimov was afraid of being overly dependent on Russia and China, which is why he limited cooperation with these countries in exchange for cooperation with European countries and smaller partners from Asia. Mirziyoyev has been much more daring and confident by establishing economic relations with anyone who was willing to cooperate with Uzbekistan, no matter what their intentions were.

Karimov changed the rhetoric after 2005, China ceased to be a hostile power that wanted to colonize Uzbekistan and became a power that wants to help Uzbekistan develop. Over time, it became Uzbekistan's number one economic partner. In fact, Chinese companies have become a prevalent symbol of China's presence and the impact it is having on the Uzbek economy. The president, however, for the rest of his life feared the intentions of Chinese capital; the new ruling team, due to the need for huge economic investment, is trying to pretend that it does not see such a threat. Manifesting total confidence in their Chinese partners.

The steadily increasing export of goods during Karimov's last years was starting to negatively impact the economy. That trend continues with Mirziyoyev's strategy of tightening relations with China. If China were to become Uzbekistan's sole importer, it could start to manipulate the prices of fossil fuels such as oil and gas. The reasoning behind this worst-case scenario is as follows: originally, when Turkmenistan engaged in trade with China, they were selling gas to it at favourable prices. Thinking that it would be less profitable to export gas to anyone else, Turkmenistan cut ties with Gazprom and continued to send gas to China. The latter then demanded that the

prices are renegotiated and soon Turkmenistan found itself selling gas to China at a much lower rate than it originally was. It is probable that China could do the same to Mirziyoyev.

Table 7. Figures of imports from Russia in years 2014–2019 (measured in bln US dollars)

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|--------|
| 2014 | 3.104 | 2017 | 2.564 |
| 2015 | 2.487 | 2018 | 22.192 |
| 2016 | 2.274 | 2019 | 6.188 |

Source: Super User, 2018a.

Table 8. Figures of imports from China in years 2014–2019 (measured in bln US dollars)

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|--------|
| 2014 | 2.357 | 2017 | 2.700 |
| 2015 | 2.227 | 2018 | 21.087 |
| 2016 | 2.234 | 2019 | 7.502 |

Source: Super User, 2018a.

The increase in imports seems to be problematic, whilst towards the end of Karimov's term of office it increased gradually, after Mirziyoyev took power, it increased at a geometric rate. The ability to trade with Russia grants Uzbekistan a chance to import the necessary goods in order to revitalize the Uzbek economy, mainly its gas and oil industries. However, when further studied, while export income has gone up, the same has to be said about the cost of imports. Having to rely solely on Russia as a source for industrial goods, Putin utilizes this fact to his advantage by arbitrarily manipulating prices for said products. Mirziyoyev is unknowingly leading his country into the scenario in which Uzbekistan might become dependent on Putin's decisions – something that Karimov had been trying to avoid. Karimov was convinced that Russia would never abandon its claims to the region of Central Asia, claiming that it lies within its historical sphere of influence.

Comparing the periods of 2014–2016 to 2017–2019, one can notice a significant trend, in the form of increasing imports. This is due to the fact that Uzbekistan's local industry gets a large majority of its materials and equipment from China. Second, there are several Chinese-owned factories who get their supply and machinery from mainland China as well. The reasoning behind this is that the more goods these factories produce, the more materials will have to be imported from China by Uzbekistan, effectively stimulating the Chinese economy (Nechaeva, Li, 2017). There are some who speculate that it is more viable for Uzbekistan to be reliant on China, rather than Russia. China, in opposition to Russia, doesn't integrate the economy into its foreign policy strategies – they do not resort to using economic pressure as a way to gain political concessions. Though of course, that could always change.

Approach to state debt

The two presidents had a differing approach as to how state debt should be regulated. Having studied economics, Karimov was aware of the potential consequences of taking loans from foreign countries. That's why, for the majority of his rule, the total debt had been fairly stable. Only after 2000, having established relations with foreign investors and wanting to develop domestic industry, Uzbekistan's debt increased. In 2015, the total debt reached an equivalent of 11.6% of GDP, when in 2014 it was only equivalent to 8.6%. The debt thus reached a value of 11 billion US dollars (UzDaily, 2015).

Meanwhile Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in a spirit of modernizing the country, decided to speed up the rate at which debt was accumulating. The International Monetary Fund had previously estimated that in 2019, the total debt would have reached a value of 14.63 billion US dollars and in 2020, it would have been around 15.65 billion US dollars. Those were the estimates for the scenario in which Karimov was expected to still be in power.

The unexpected change in the style of leadership has bewildered the economists. According to Uzbekistan's Ministry of Finance, the total debt for July 2019 reached a value of 20.70 billion US dollars. It surprised the experts how during the first three quarters of 2019, the debt has managed to increase by 3.4 billion dollars.

The after-effects of the global financial crisis in 2009 have also contributed to the issue. Between the years 2009 to 2019, the debt rose by 17 billion US dollars, of which 13 billion dollars was government debt, while 7 billion dollars was consumer debt (Simplex Service Group 2019). This accumulation is a result of a policy which aims at aiding domestic industry, especially in the area of excavating resources such as natural gas, oil, or even gold. However, so far these investments only bring in more debt.

Foreign policy

Islam Karimov – an unaware guarantor of Moscow's position in Central Asia. Shavkat Mirziyoyev – Politics of dialogue in Central Asia

At first, the concept of foreign policy under Karimov had a positive outlook, aiming to maintain stable relations between the former Soviet republics. There was a number of factors supporting this vision. Karimov had formed steady cooperation with Turkmenistan, as both countries sought to excavate the bordering

lands which are rich in natural gas. Karimov also sent military aid to President Emomali Rahmon, the ruling leader of Tajikistan, whose country was embroiled in civil war; as well as supported the president of Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akayev during the Batken Conflict (Kuryłowicz, 2014).

At the end of the 1990s, Islam Karimov's problem was too much credulity with regards to the Russian authorities. He believed that Moscow was always guided by good intentions for Uzbekistan – in the situation when Karimov's policy on Russia was tightened, the Kremlin authorities did everything to prevent the relations from cooling down too much. Moreover, Moscow has never undermined the legitimacy of Islam Karimov's rule compared to European countries, which deepened confidence. Following the 2000 change of regime, the new Kremlin ruler noticed Uzbekistan's pretentious policy towards its neighbours, which was a great tool for maintaining control in the region. The Russian authorities were aware that Karimov didn't have enough authority, nor military prowess in order to dictate rules to his neighbours. To get himself out of this predicament, the president turned for help to the Russian Federation. Moscow realized that with Karimov's help, it could gain influence in the Central Asian region, just as it had gained influence over Southern Caucasus. Vladimir Putin, president of the Russian Federation, utilized the tactics of supporting several separatist groups, each one opposing each different country. Uzbekistan was chosen as a base of operations for the organizations. With support granted, Karimov could continue his policy of gaining leverage over the neighbouring countries. This, in turn, caused the dialogue between the states to freeze almost completely; poignantly, it wasn't that long ago when all used to coexist as one republic.

Comparing Islam Karimov with Shavkat Mirziyoyev one can see the difference in the approach to the position of the Russian Federation itself. Both presidents strongly emphasized in their statements the importance of the Russian partner, however, Mirziyoyev effectively tries to limit Russian influence in the region. Karimov also took such actions, but his ill-considered decisions only led to increasing Russia's presence in the region.

The threat over a possible water conflict between both countries granted Russia an opportunity to strengthen its military position in Tajikistan. The Tajik government sent a plea for help to Moscow to bolster the defence forces on the Tajik-Uzbek border. The desire for armed pacification of the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan led to the perception of Karimov's actions as a manifestation of his imperialist aspirations. Demanding the entry of troops in 2010 to protect the defenceless civilian population of Uzbek origin, led to an increase in the military presence of Russians in bases on the territory of Kyrgyzstan (Klenke, 2019).

Relations on the Astana-Tashkent line were cooled by the aspirations of both Nazarbayev and Karimov (Kazakh and Uzbek leaders respectively) to turn their state into a regional power. This conflict of interests antagonized both presidents. It didn't help that both of these countries were supported by Russia.

Uzbekistan's newest president, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, is considered to be a leader capable of executing goals in the area of foreign policy. This notion can even be supported by the actions of the Moscow authorities as Mirziyoyev has been deemed a threat to Russia's position in Central Asia. Mirziyoyev's first step in reconciling with the neighbouring countries was paying a visit to each neighbour's capital city, last of which was Moscow. This was to signal a new step in Uzbekistan's foreign policy – Mirziyoyev was more keen on mending the old wounds with the former republics rather than to win favour with a superpower laying to the north. Another justification for actions may be the desire to focus first on repairing relations with conflicting countries, and only then cooperation with regular partners. The new president adopted the thesis that it was the Uzbekistan authorities that shattered regional cooperation, and now Uzbekistan must rebuild what it destroyed indirectly by engaging in games between the central-power (Russia) and the peripheral states (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan).

The construction of a new image for Uzbekistan in the regional arena was carried out using the recognizable Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan – Abdulaziz Kamilov (Mfa. uz., 2020). The declaration of the President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, during the funeral of Karimov, about the possibility of repairing the relationship on the Tashkent-Dushanbe line met with a quick reaction from the Uzbek side. As soon as September 29, Abdulaziz Kamilov arrived in Dushanbe (Ozodlik, 2016). The minister was ordered to work out the preliminary points of the agreement, which surprised Tajik diplomacy. They expected a courtesy visit as was the case under Karimov and a further freezing of the relationship. This declaration yielded impressive results – Tajikistan allowed for water from the Vakhsh river to flow to Uzbekistan, granting it a higher supply of drinking water. A year later, an air traffic route from Tashkent to Dushanbe was opened (K-News, 2018). The next step was Mirziyoyev's visit to Tajikistan in March 2018, which contributed to the restoration of the railway connection and the opening of border crossings. Furthermore, Mirziyoyev managed to resume the agreement on the supply of Uzbek gas to Tajikistan, which was suspended in 2012, in exchange for Tajikistan's commitment to providing more water during the summer. Gestures which are nothing special from the point of view of European politics have met with the dissatisfaction of the authorities in the Kremlin.

Kamilov's initial talks with Erlan Abdyldayev led to the possibility of meetings at the highest level. The first, unofficial meeting between Mirziyoyev and Almazbek Atambayev, the Kyrgyz president, took place on at Central Asian Forum which was taking place in Tashkent. Later on, Mirziyoyev paid a visit to Kyrgyzstan in September 2017 (Sputnik Uzbekistan, 2020). The visit resulted in the signing of a document setting the border at 80% of the length (Gov.kg, 2020). In one meeting, a problem was solved that had lasted over 25 years (Gov. kg, 2020). That same year however, a change in leadership occurred and a new President, Sooronbay Jeenbekov was chosen. This time, the Uzbek authorities didn't denounce the new leader like they had in 2005 and once again, Mirziyoyev

expressed his enthusiasm to pursue a policy of friendship with Kyrgyzstan. The Uzbek president invited the newest president-elect to Tashkent to discuss how they could further strengthen the bond that Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan had started to form. Both countries could not be divided on the ethnic problems of Uzbeks living in Kyrgyzstan. Mirziyoyev understood that only good relations with the authorities in Bishkek can improve their situation, not a policy of threats.

Karimov, as well as the first presidents of Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akayev and Kurmanbek Bakiyev, did not see the potential of the Central Asian region, they thought that without the help of a stronger economic partner they would not have a chance to develop. The change occurred along with the change of leaders. Both countries (Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan) have seen tangible economic benefits from rapprochement. They believe that the Central Asian region has the economic potential to become more independent of Moscow and Beijing.

Mirziyoyev's next goal was to improve his standing with the Kazakhstan authorities. As a show of respect, the Uzbek leader declared that if any country was to have the mantle of a sub-regional superpower, that mantle ought to belong to Kazakhstan, given how its economic output had outgrown that of Uzbekistan. This declaration allowed for both leaders to reconcile, cultivating by Mirziyoyev's visits to Kazakhstan during the years 2017 and 2018 (inbusiness.kz, 2018).

Mirziyoyev went so far as to declare the year 2019 as "The Year of Kazakhstan", bringing countries closer than ever before. When the rapprochement president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, stepped down in March 2019 and was succeeded by Kasym Tokayev, friendly interactions continued to be strong, evidenced when the new Kazakh president paid a visit to Tashkent a month after being elected into office. This fraternization on the line of Nursultan-Tashkent has placed Russia in an uncomfortable position. Knowing that if this were to continue, Moscow could lose Uzbekistan as an essential scapegoat for riling up the Central-Asian republics against each other. Moscow perceives Mirziyoyev as a political amateur, someone who can be easily influenced and controlled – just like they had done with Karimov.

Not wanting to fall behind in Central-Asian affairs, president Putin sent an invitation to Mirziyoyev to come and visit him in Moscow. The visit took place in April 2017 (Prezident Rossii, 2017). However, it didn't seem to have an impact on Mirziyoyev as no significant agreements in terms of political cooperation were made. Putin decided to invite him to visit again in 2019, only to receive a request to postpone the visit until 2020. This tactic of underplaying Russia's impact in Central Asia is a step in creating a unified block of countries – Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan – who are economically and politically independent from other states.

Conclusion

Judging by the analysis and investigation of history, domestic and foreign policies carried out, it can be stated that Uzbekistan is a country in the process of transformation. There is a clear attempt to reform the banking system (freeing up the so'm exchange rate, the possibility of the legal purchase of foreign currency by citizens), as well as to increase the number of special economic zones, accelerating the pace of investment.

It is also important to mention Uzbekistan's place on the international arena. When the country gained independence in 1991, Karimov looked at a world in a unipolar way. The collapse of the Soviet Union, created a political void in the region, leaving no one to fill it. Aside from failed attempts to establish contact with the European Union, Uzbekistan has always remained in the Russian sphere of economic influence (Fiszer, 2018: 213–217).

Only just before his death did Karimov realize that he was living in a multipolar world. Noticing Moscow's declining position as a superpower and recognizing China as a sleeping giant of the world, Karimov began a process of positioning Uzbekistan right in a place where it could play a pivotal part in both Russia's and China's politics, leaning slightly more towards China.

In Uzbekistan, evolutionary and radical changes are taking place simultaneously. The evolutionary changes in the economic policy of institutions are visible through slow personnel and legal changes – whilst the very structure of the state itself is not significantly transformed, in the case of the ossified Uzbek political system, these slow changes also deserve to be considered revolutionary although they do not meet most of the criteria to be classified as such.

The lack of alternatives pushed Mirziyoyev into having to open the country to others. The president is aware that large scale privatization and integration, brought by world economies, can have damaging effects on the Uzbek economy. The thought of another global financial crisis occurring brings Mirziyoyev nothing but fear. In 2008, Uzbekistan wasn't integrated into the structures of the global market and because of that, it avoided a recession; in fact, during 2008–2009 period the economy actually grew by +8.5% (Worldbank.org, 2010).

A new strategy had to be set in motion – it was decided that a triumvirate of economic partners would suffice. One would be the European Union and its investors, the second would be China and the third one would be Russia.

One way to attract European investors would be to show them that a political restructuring is taking place – various ties with Uzbekistan were cut due to high levels of corruption, as well as unclear economic policies. Mirziyoyev has begun a process of clarifying and giving structure to economic law. Measures have also been taken to quell corruption. All of this is done in an effort to attract European investors and to improve Uzbekistan's image. This strategy seems very

reminiscent of what Karimov would do – showing that he's ready to cooperate, even with his adversaries.

A new phenomenon is a growing dependence on having to trade with Russia and China. For the past three years, imports and exports to them have drastically increased. Mirziyoyev has been much more careful than his predecessor but he's not looking into the future. Fearing a total integration into the world economy, Mirziyoyev chooses to select his economic partners. Having to mainly trade with Russia and China, Uzbekistan, in turn, doesn't need to worry about potential risks of diversifying commerce – if a few select partners can provide you with anything necessary, why bother trying to reach everyone? In contrast, Karimov would often try to maintain as many contacts as possible, particularly with Western countries, even if the total value of traded goods didn't exceed the sum of 20 thousand dollars. The current establishment doesn't see a need to branch out and only pursues a select few suppliers.

In addition, Mirziyoyev's policies changed the Uzbek economic model (Halizak, 2018: 233). He has allowed for greater economic freedom; invited foreign competition to invest in Uzbekistan, eliminated a concept of trade surplus etc. – leaning more towards a European economic model. All these activities are part of the economic reforms planned for 2017–2021, but their effectiveness has turned out to be low. The increase in the level of foreign investment is very slow, the state still remains the main investor, which generates losses for the budget. Funds taken from international loans do not lead to economic growth only to maintain previous indicators. The phenomenon of economic growth caused by the increase in internal consumption has been observed in Uzbekistan since 2016, this solution is short-lived. The authorities in Tashkent, most likely, assuming a timeframe of until the year 2021, expect that this solution will be exhausted within the next two years.

To conclude, Uzbekistan has gone through a number of changes but its core structure remains very much the same. The influence of Islam Karimov is still there. In the future, more changes will surely be introduced but that is yet to be seen. The current ruling style of Mirziyoyev has a thaw-like trait to it – it's improving on what Karimov had already built in the 1990s. The new president hasn't gone through an internal power struggle yet – we don't know what could happen to him in the near future.

The system of duality, concerning Russia and China, has already gone through a change. It is clear that for Mirziyoyev, China is to be an important economic partner, while Russia is to be a vital political ally. But this level of political clarity could be detrimental to Mirziyoyev.

The hybrid created by Mirziyoyev in 2016 is coming to an end. The president is faced with the need to make a bold decision whether he wants to make further changes in the economy, modelled on Eastern European countries that undertook the program of reconstruction in the 1990s; or hang between what was and what could be. Observing the actions of the new president, one can notice an attempt

to imitate the reform efforts of neighbouring Kazakhstan. It should be noted, however, that extending economic changes in the Kazakh model will lead to a decrease in the economic attractiveness of the state for potential investors who expect rapid changes. Following this path and the uninterrupted continuation of reforms may lead to catching up with neighbouring Kazakhstan, but there is a second possibility. Reforms will be started but not completed. Such a scenario will lead Uzbekistan to an economic disaster. In this situation, President Mirziyoyev, when deciding to start reforms, gave a clear signal to rebuild the economic structure of the entire country.

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Ekaterina Rezanova

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3573-7101>

Belarusian Institute for Strategic Research, Belarus
Department of Sociological Studies
e-mail: ekaterina-rezanova@yandex.ru

The social policy of Belarus and the development of human potential: Problems and solutions

Abstract. The article is devoted to the analysis of the directions and mechanisms of adapting the social policy of Belarus to the demographic, migration, communication and technological challenges of modern society. The purpose of the article is to search for social policy mechanisms aimed at developing human potential and stimulating the social activity of citizens. The author analyses the directions of the state's social policy in the absence of the reproduction of labor resources, an increase in the demographic burden on the able-bodied population, an uneven distribution of labor resources, the emigration of skilled personnel, growth in automation and robotization of production, and a growing need to build effective communication between the government and the population. The article provides an extensive analysis of statistical information, sociological research data, the legislative framework, methods and social technologies of social policy.

As a result of the study the author comes to the conclusion that it is necessary to search for new mechanisms for implementing social policy in various fields. Therefore, in the field of demography, it is advisable to search for indirect measures to increase social guarantees for women in order to stimulate fertility, and transform the pension system in order to reduce the demographic burden on the working population. In the field of migration, it is advisable to take government action to prevent the outflow of highly qualified specialists abroad and to return of students who have received education abroad. In the field of social and labor relations existing personnel technologists should be improved and objective methods for evaluating the effectiveness of employees based on a competency-based approach should be introduced. In the field of communication between society and the state it is necessary to inform the public about the current state policy and to organize public discussions of the state initiatives before making them.

Keywords: social policy, human potential, social technologies, migration, communication.

Introduction

Human potential is the main instrument of the socio-economic development of society. The key goal of a state's social policy is to create conditions for the comprehensive and harmonious development of all members of society; providing them with social rights and guarantees in various life situations. The social policy of the state should be aimed at improving public welfare; raising the standard of living of the population; ensuring social and political stability; and encouraging both social partnerships and social harmony in the country. In this way, it is possible to form a socially stable and highly developed society in which there is no poverty, nor sharp social contrasts. In other words, a necessary and sufficient level of social protection of the population has been achieved. There exist such types of social policy as paternalistic, liberal, corporate and others. They differ on the mechanisms that are involved in the realization of the social policy of the state and the type of methods which are used for providing citizens with their needs.

In the framework of the paternalistic approach, the main role in solving social issues belongs to state institutions, the principle of state responsibility is overriding. The state is centrally responsible for the socio-economic status of citizens; all other subjects of social policy act on behalf of the state and under its control. The financial basis of the paternalistic model is the means of the state budget and the budgets of state enterprises. Distinctive features of the paternalistic model are: centralized regulation of the social sphere; crowding out all sources of social policy except the state; the poor development of market relations and competition in the social sphere; a general orientation to guaranteed employment provided by administrative levers; a lack of a real labour market; the presence of a significant level of hidden unemployment in the form of inefficiently used labour; the inefficiency of social sphere management; a low level of social services; the formation of social passivity and dependent moods. Paternalism is now widely used for sound state intervention in the life of citizens (Chubarova, 2019: 28).

This model implements the principle of equality in the consumption of material and social goods and services, as well as their general accessibility, which ensures the achievement of a high degree of social alignment (Lozovova, Nemashkalova, 2014: 124). The positive side of the paternalistic approach is a stable income level for the bulk of the population (guaranteed wages, stable prices, lack of unemployment, universal social support, a certain list of free social services). Very often paternalistic support is needed not only by individuals who find themselves in difficult life situations, but whole sectors of activity that affect the successful functioning of the society often need state support (Plishkevich, 2019: 101).

At the same time, the negative side is the lack of stimulation of labour and no personal responsibility for one's social situation; the shortage of goods

and services; the planned distribution of consumer goods and housing; and the underdevelopment of the private sector of the economy. The paternalistic model of social policy is characteristic of the countries that were part of the USSR and embarked on the path of socialist development. Some countries are trying to get away from the paternalistic path and develop milder forms in social policy, such as libertarian paternalism. However, such negative aspects of paternalism such as interference in a person's choice are preserved (Chubarova, 2019: 29).

Within the corporate model of social policy, all responsibility for the fate of an employee lies with the corporation, enterprise, organization or institution where the employee works. Enterprises have their own extensive social infrastructure and their own social insurance funds. Organizations encourage workers to make the maximum labour contribution and offer them various types of social guarantees in the form of pensions, and partial payment of medical and educational services (advanced training). The financial basis of social policy in the corporate model is the funds of enterprises and corporate social funds. This model of social policy is typical for countries such as Germany, France, Japan, amongst others (Lozovova, Nemashkalova, 2014: 126).

The liberal model of social policy presupposes the principle of the personal responsibility of each member of society for their own fate and the fate of their family. The role of state structures in the direct implementation of social policy is minimized, and the main subjects of social policy are citizens, family and various non-governmental organizations. The financial basis for the implementation of social programs in the framework of the liberal model is private savings and private insurance. The provision and cost of social services directly depend on the size of insurance premiums in the system of private social insurance. The state is only responsible for maintaining the minimum incomes of citizens and for the well-being of the weakest and most disadvantaged segments of the population. The state creates the conditions for the formation in the individual and public consciousness of a feeling of high personal responsibility for their social well-being. The state is not a source of social benefits for citizens, but a guarantor of its rights and freedoms. This model of the social policy of the state is characteristic of the USA, Great Britain, Canada, Ireland, amongst other countries (Lozovova, Nemashkalova, 2014: 121). The advantage of the liberal approach is its orientation to uncovering people's abilities in the interests of increasing their consumption and self-realization; saving budget funds and redistributing resources in the interests of social support for those in need. The disadvantages are manifested in the significant differences between the level of consumption of economically strong and weak households.

The social policy of Belarus is mainly paternalistic. Social programs come down to the distribution of benefits and additional payments, citizens' opportunities are limited, dependent moods are fixed, and the development of human potential is restrained. Over time, the paternalistic approach has yielded

positive results in various areas of the social sphere. However, new socio-economic conditions create the need to search for appropriate mechanisms and technologies in the implementation of social policy in the demographic, migration, communication and social-labour spheres.

Social policy in the sphere of demography

In the demographic sphere, it is necessary to solve a number of important problems. The demographic challenge is primarily associated with the reduction and ageing of the population. The problem of depopulation has been relevant for Belarus since 1993, and since then, mortality has exceeded the birth rate annually. Over the past twenty years, the population has declined by half a million people. Fertility is also constantly declining: 94,042 children were born in 2018 in Belarus. This is 9% less than in 2017. The number of births in the first half of 2019 also decreased compared to the first half of 2018 by 9%.

At the same time, mortality has increased: last year 742 more people died than in 2017. As a result, the natural population decline was 26,011 people, which is by 9,236 more people than the previous year (*Demographic yearbook...*, 2019).

Table 1. Natural increase in 2015–2018

| Year | Number of births, person | Number of dead, person | Natural decline, person |
|------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2015 | 119,028 | 120,026 | –998 |
| 2016 | 117,779 | 119,379 | –1,600 |
| 2017 | 102,556 | 119,311 | –1,6775 |
| 2018 | 94,042 | 120,053 | –26,011 |

Source: based on author's calculations.

In the nearest future, the process of depopulation will continue as we enter into the reproductive period of the generation of women who were born in the 1990s, which as already mentioned is smaller than previous generations.

Belarus implements many state programs to stimulate fertility. Women are granted parental leave for 3 years. Such long parental leave is also provided in Russia, Moldova, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. However, Russia has introduced restrictions on the payment of childcare benefits over one and a half years. In Western Europe, parental leave is significantly shorter (*The demographic situation...*, 2019).

Families with many children receive preferential loans and support in the construction of housing. In the next two years, it is planned to significantly reduce the number of large families that need to improve their living conditions. Since 2015,

Belarus has been implementing a program called “family capital”: it is envisaged that funds will be credited to a deposit account for parents with many children at the birth (adoption) of a third and subsequent children. When the child is 18 years old, these funds can be spent on education, home improvement or medical care.

At the same time, measures taken at the state level to improve the demographic situation are not yet producing sustainable results. Currently, young families often plan to have children at a later age. So, the average age of a mother in 2019 was 29 years, while in 2000 the average age of a mother was 25 years. This is due to the fact that young people prefer career growth, travel and entertainment (*Demographic yearbook...*, 2019).

The next demographic challenge is the increase in the total population of the share of people over working age. Whilst the share of this cohort was 21% in 2000, by 2019 it had reached 25%; this despite a phased increase in the retirement age. At the same time, the number of people employed in the economy is constantly decreasing: since 2010, the employed population has decreased by 8%. As a percentage, the proportion of pensioners to the number of employed population was 52% in 2010; rising to 60% in 2019. A constantly decreasing number of people employed in the economy cannot ensure the payment of pensions to an ever-growing number of pensioners, which leads to a budget deficit in the Social Security Fund (*In Belarus...*, 2017). It should be noted that the bankruptcy of pension funds is a worldwide problem, due to increased life expectancy and low return on the investment of pension funds.

In order to reduce the burden on the Social Security Fund in Belarus, a gradual increase in the retirement age has been carried out since 2016. By 2022, men will retire at 63 years old, and women at 58 years old. The state plans to continue the policy of raising the retirement age with regard to women in order to ensure gender equality in Belarus. In addition, the life expectancy of retired women is much longer than that of men (the average retirement period for women is 23 years, compared to 8 years for men). In many foreign countries (Finland, Germany, France, Norway, Denmark, Greece, Portugal, etc.) men and women retire at the same age. It is clear therefore that only an increase in the retirement age can solve this problem.

Changing the mechanism for calculating pension payments to Belarusians is also relevant today. The procedure for calculating the amount of old-age pensions is regulated by the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Pension Provision” (Law of Republic of Belarus..., 1992). The size of the retirement pension depends on the length of service and the level of wages from which the payment of insurance contributions for pension provision was made. However, when calculating the labour pension in full, only 130% of the average salary of employees is taken into account, and the rest is taken into account with decreasing factors. Thus, the funds contributed into the Social Security Fund by different citizens, during their period of work, may differ by a factor of ten, and yet the accrued pension will be

approximately the same. This leads to equalization of income of most retirees and deprives them of motivation in long and intensive work.

A funded pension insurance system is being developed in Belarus now. Two insurance companies are engaged in voluntary pension insurance: the state company Stravita and the private company Priorlife. Citizens of Belarus can make contributions to the savings fund at a certain percentage. The accumulated amount is returned immediately or in parts when they reach retirement age. At the same time, pension insurance is not widespread: only 4% of the employed population is covered by these types of insurance. The reason for this is the distrust of the population in any long-term savings projects after the number of instances of inflation and devaluations that have occurred in the country over the past decades. Pension programs are designed for a long time, and what will happen in the economy over this period is difficult to predict. In Belarus, pension insurance is carried out on a voluntary basis, while in some foreign countries, compulsory pension insurance is part of the state social policy.

Social policy in the sphere of migration

The migration challenge is associated both with increased labour and educational emigration, and with the growth of internal migration to the central part of the country. The reasons for the growth of labour migration abroad are as follows: the active policy of foreign countries to attract missing labour resources (a system of benefits and preferences), an open foreign policy of Belarus in the western direction, and encouraging labour and educational mobility. The Law of the Republic of Belarus “On External Labor Migration” was amended to simplify the process of attracting foreign specialists and securing foreigners studying in the universities of our country, but they did not create conditions for securing our highly qualified personnel (Rudak, 2019: 147).

At the same time, it should be noted that the study of migration processes poses a number of problems: the lack of a unified methodological base; the unsatisfactory state of migration statistics significantly limiting the possibilities of analysis; an insufficiently developed system of conducting opinion polls in the field of migration; the politicization and idealization of demographic processes and migration studies (Zagorets, Zagorets, 2019: 74).

The existing methodology for the statistical registration of migrants by state bodies in Belarus allows to accurately register only the number of citizens arriving from other countries (immigrants), and the registration of departing (emigrants); it thus provide only minimum data as emigrants also may include citizens who have changed citizenship and have become a consular register in the country of residence; students who have gone abroad

to study; temporary labour migrants who have left under contracts that are officially registered by the Department of Citizenship and Migration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus. At the same time, many migrants are independently looking for work and are not taken into account by official statistics. The lack of accounting for unorganized temporary labour migration leads to a significant distortion of the assessment of the results and consequences of the state migration policy. Government bodies officially declare a positive balance of migration flows, however, scientists who study migration processes using alternative methods repeatedly refute these claims (Zagorets, Zagorets, 2019: 76). For example, research has shown that over the past eight years, the negative balance of migration with Russia for Belarus amounted to more than 69 thousand people. Similar results are obtained by comparing the data of the Belarusian and European statistics: according to the data of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus 472 people left Belarus for Poland in 2017. However, according to Eurostat, 42,756 Belarusians received a residence permit in Poland for the same time (Zagorets, Zagorets, 2019: 77).

Whilst earlier external labour migration was mostly towards the Russian Federation, in recent years the western direction has also gained popularity. There is an increase in migration to Poland and Lithuania. Lithuania issued to Belarusians more than six thousand visas in 2018, giving the right to employment. At the beginning of 2018, more than 100 thousand citizens of Belarus (mainly residents of the Brest and Grodno regions) were issued the Pole card. The Pole card makes it possible to obtain an annual long-term visa according to a simplified scheme, open a business in Poland with the same rights as Polish citizens, receive a free education with financial support from the government, and subsequently obtain Polish citizenship. This document also greatly simplifies employment in Poland, eliminating the need to obtain an invitation to work from an employer. An additional reason for moving is a residence permit in Poland. The number of Belarusians who have received this status is also now approaching 100 thousand. Most of this group receive a residence permit for employment.

Belarusians take the third place in the number of labour migrants in Poland (the first – Ukrainians, and the second – Nepalese). According to the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Protection 8,495 Belarusians left for Poland in order to be employed in 2018 (in 2017 – 6,839 people) (*Workers from Belarus...*, 2018). Compared to Belarus, more favourable working conditions are offered in Poland for such categories of workers as drivers and builders. Poland today has a huge fleet in the field of international transport and takes a leading position in Europe in this area. At the same time, the huge fleet of vehicles lacks drivers today. Belarusian workers are very appreciated in Poland because of their accuracy, responsibility and decency.

Moreover, the countries of Europe and the Russian Federation offer highly qualified health professionals from Belarus a higher status and more favourable conditions, in terms of earnings. Among the students of the Belarusian State Medical University, migratory sentiments are widespread: those who have the ability to learn foreign languages are set to travel abroad; those who cannot learn a foreign language plan to leave for Russia. About 200 doctors leave Belarus every year.

In such conditions, the problem of training specialists is aggravated: every year Belarus spends hundreds of millions of dollars on education, but other countries are increasingly using the effectiveness of the education system. It should be noted that the most qualified, enterprising and promising young people leave Belarus, thus there is a loss of the country's human capital. The data of sociological studies show that the proportion of respondents planning to travel abroad, both for the purpose of changing their place of residence and for the purpose of employment, has increased significantly in recent years, especially among young people (Pushkevich, 2018: 309).

Internal labour migration is also a serious problem: more and more people are leaving their native regions for the capital in search of work and a higher level of income. This causes labour redundancy in some regions and a shortage of personnel in others. In particular, the central part of the country – Minsk and the Minsk region accounts for 40% of the workforce, while, for example, in the Grodno region and the Mogilev region – 10% each. For example, Maloritsky district ranks 17th in terms of wages among all regions of the Brest region, and 1st place in terms of the number of those who left in search of work (about 700 specialists left the region over the past year).

Experts note that the migration of people to the capital city and the Minsk region is inevitable: in the outer regions there is practically no movement of workers from inefficient to efficient production. Despite some incentives for doing business in small towns, business is poorly developed there. At the same time, attempts to limit the internal migration can provoke a surge in external emigration.

The significant reduction in the number of people employed in agriculture is becoming critical, which is accompanied by low labour productivity, a decrease in the number of people employed in farms, a depletion of the demographic base of the village, and a shortage of qualified personnel. Thus, the number of vacancies for veterinarians in rural areas is more than 100 times the number of registered unemployed for this profession, 233 vacancies for 1 unemployed doctor, 377 vacancies for two unemployed nurses, 385 vacancies for two unemployed livestock specialists (Statistics..., 2019).

Table 2. Supply and demand in the labour market in rural areas (2019)

| Name of professions and specialities | Quantity of vacancies declared by employers | The number of registered unemployed |
|--|--|--|
| Veterinarian, chief veterinarian | 970 | 9 |
| Medical specialist sister (nurse) | 377 | 2 |
| Livestock specialist, chief livestock specialist | 385 | 2 |
| Specialist doctor | 233 | 1 |
| Accountant, chief accountant | 307 | 17 |
| Agronomist, chief agronomist | 180 | 1 |
| Engineer | 178 | 6 |
| Foreman of a production team | 125 | 3 |
| Psychologist | 118 | 1 |

Source: based on author's calculations.

The main motive for labour migration is the search for a higher level of income. Therefore, social techniques to prevent internal and external migration are primarily associated with a change in the wage system. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are used in the country. Quantitative mechanisms are associated with the differentiation of wages for individual organizations. For example, in order to consolidate young specialists in the field, they are assigned high premiums: often young doctors without work experience receive the same salary as specialists with 15 years of experience. This allows to partially resolve the imbalance in the labour market but does not have a long-term effect.

Qualitative mechanisms are associated with the transformation of the entire wage system. The main problems in the current wage system in Belarus are: insufficiently effective differentiation of tariff categories, employee disinterest in advanced training due to approximately equal tariff salaries, and the inefficient incentive function of additional payments. As it happens, any work in the country is paid approximately the same (for example, the difference in the salary of a driver and a doctor in Belarus is 35%, while in Germany – 174%, in the USA – 261%, in Brazil – 172%). This situation, on the one hand, significantly reduces the motivation of people to choose highly qualified professions, and, on the other hand, makes them look for highly qualified specialist positions at a decent level of remuneration abroad.

Currently, a number of legal measures are being taken to solve this problem. Thus, according to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus “On the wage of employees of state organizations”, from 2020 the tariff grid with 18 digits will be used for the calculation of wages, previously a tariff grid with 27 digits was used. The wage of employees of state organizations will consist of three components:

salary, incentive payments (bonuses, allowances), compensatory payments (various kinds of surcharges). Under the new system, the number of normative legal acts that respond to this field of activity will be reduced, and the financing of the budget sphere will be built on the principle that more funds will be allocated for each following year than in the previous period (Morozova, 2019: 126). However, employees of state organizations do not believe that these innovations will bring a positive result. They are sure that their salary, on the contrary, will decrease. This is primarily due to the low awareness of citizens about innovations in the law. In general, communication between authorities and citizens of Belarus in various areas of social policy is ineffective.

Social policy in the sphere of communication

The communication problem is associated with the growing need in society to build open and effective interaction between the population and the government. The quality of communication between the “power” and “society” is one of the key characteristics of the level of development of the political system and are an indicator of the effectiveness of the social policy of the state. Communication strategies are an effective way to increase mutual trust between society and political institutions (Smolyanko, Chausov, 2019).

There are certain communication channels between the state and society functioning in Belarus. The main form of interaction between government bodies and the population is to work with citizens’ appeals. It is implemented in the form of personal receptions, holding meetings with groups, direct telephone lines, hotlines, etc. However, opinion polls show that the population is not always satisfied with the work of local authorities in this direction. The reasons are: inattentive attitude to the problems of residents, poor-quality work with citizens’ appeals, a failure of local authorities to fulfil promises, inoperability to solve problems, formality in working with citizens’ appeals, the incompetence of local authorities, insufficient public awareness campaigns, the closed decisions of local authorities and the ignoring of the opinions of residents of the region. In addition, the existing period of consideration of appeals (30 days) does not correspond to the dynamics of modern communication and is perceived by the population as slowness of the state.

However, somethings are indeed changing: e-government, for example, is developing in Belarus. The main goal is to increase the openness and efficiency of government actions. Electronic forms and other methods of interaction can replace visits to government organizations, telephone calls and the sending of paper messages. However, these forms of communication are extremely poorly utilised: less than a third of the population have experience making government payments online (taxes, fines, duties); only every tenth citizen visited the websites of local

authorities and often only a single portal in order to obtain necessary information; 8.3% of the population have filed completed documents electronically. The main reasons for citizen's low use of the Internet to interact with local authorities are the preference for a more familiar form of communication: personal interaction, as well as a lack of knowledge necessary for this form of interaction. The development of Internet technologies necessitates the widespread introduction of one-click communication capabilities and the expansion of dialogue options on government agencies' websites (online receptions, online rating and rating systems, video messages, etc.).

The regulatory impact assessment system is designed to ensure citizen participation in the development of legislative acts planned for adoption, but it also works inefficiently. This is due to a number of unresolved issues: the methodological recommendations for working with regulatory impact assessment have not been adopted; the list of regulatory acts has not been defined; public discussion has not taken place, which will be an obligatory stage for its adoption by the rule-making body; the mechanism for the implementation of proposals received in the course of public discussion has also not been defined. Deficiencies in the development of the regulatory impact assessment institution can be observed on the website of the Legal Forum of Belarus. For example, as part of the discussion of a number of projects, the site does not publish information on the considered and rejected proposals expressed during the public discussion. It remains unclear which of the comments and suggestions of citizens were taken into account when preparing the document, and which were rejected.

One form of communication between the government and society is to hold "single days of informing", during which employees of organizations attend a lecture on a specific topic. However, the topics that are submitted for discussion are not relevant for the population; therefore many perceive this event as a waste of time and consequently, they are not in high demand. The authorities are afraid to bring up for discussion the most important social issues that concern the population. Government officials are often not able to competently explain the situation due to a lack of communication skills. The activities of the organizers of the "single days of informing" are perceived by citizens primarily as old-fashioned management methods.

The political and social activity of the population is reflected in such a form of interaction as self-government. This form is extremely flexible and as close as possible to the population (Esmantovich, Esmantovich, 2017: 137). However, the Belarusian population is characterized by a low degree of awareness about the work of local self-government: only a third of the population is aware of the functioning of such a type of management. In addition, citizens are poorly involved in the activities of local self-government: only 11% of the population participate in local assemblies; whereas only 6% of citizens participate in the organization and conduction of elections to the local Council of Deputies; almost no one participates in local referenda, discussion

of socio-economic development programs and draft decisions of local councils of deputies (Esmantovich, Esmantovich, 2017: 139).

At present, among the residents of Brest, a good response is received by direct communication of the government with the population. For example, the chairman of the Brest City Executive Committee has been practising communication with Brest residents in an open dialogue format for several years. In 2019, the mayor held five meetings with Brest residents, during which he answered questions important to the city and immediately instructs special services to solve specific problems of the city residents. Citizens are actively asking questions, enthusiastically speak about the problems solved by the mayor and his innovative experience in interacting with the population, and are proud of the official's actions. The number of resolved issues is growing, along with credibility and trust in the mayor of the city.

Thus, in order to increase mutual trust between society and the state, it is advisable to: inform the public about the policies pursued, so that this information is communicated to each citizen; send messages to the public in a simple and understandable way; provide citizens with possible options for alternatives and bring the public decision to the most rational option in terms of public benefits in the future; abandon the direct imposition of decisions; take an active part in open discussions of issues. This will allow to gradually move away from paternalistic expectations and develop the constructive activity of citizens.

The decrease in social activity is associated with the emerging negative problems of the formation of democracy and the formation of civil society. The low level of social activity in political life leads to a decrease in confidence in government institutions, as a result of which negative social moods are growing (Kostina, 2019: 79).

Social policy in the social and labour sphere

Social policy in the social and labour sphere is connected with the development of an innovative economy and the processes of robotization and automation in industry. This leads to excessive employment in enterprises, because many professions have disappeared and replaced by robots. This, in turn, leads to the emergence of new professions, therefore, it is necessary to transform the system of education and training of workers. These processes are a global trend in terms of the development of the world economy in the direction of the sixth technological order (Kroytor, 2019: 59).

Most of the employed population in Belarus works in private enterprises. As such, in 2019 the number of employees in private enterprises was 60%, while the number of employees in state-owned enterprises was 40%. Private and public

companies use different mechanisms for adapting to automation and robotization processes. Private companies are increasingly resorting to job cuts; conversely, public companies use traditional social technology to solve the problem of excessive employment: there is widespread hidden unemployment. Workers work part-time or for long periods they stay on unpaid work leave. There are positive and negative consequences to this. The negative consequences are a deterioration in the material situation and purchasing power of the population, as well as a decrease in qualifications, and the weakening labour motivation of employees. In addition, underemployment leads to underproduction and a reduced gross domestic product compared to its potential level, since it represents an inefficient and incomplete use of employed labour resources. At the same time, excessive employment helps prevent mass unemployment, maintain a minimum level of well-being of the population and thereby ensuring at least a minimum level of consumption, as well as maintaining the human resources of the economy. It should be noted that this form of employment to some extent helps to increase the motivation of employees to change their position through advanced training, retraining, and also stimulates entrepreneurial activity (Syroyed, Gromyko, 2018).

Hidden unemployment is very difficult to gauge. One of the methods is to analyse statistical data for the following categories of workers: persons with part-time work; persons on work leave and without pay at the initiative of the employer. In 2018 about 48 thousand people worked part-time in large and medium-sized enterprises: in agriculture – 4.6 thousand people; in the food industry – 3.6 thousand people; in light industry – 7.2 thousand people; in construction – 11.2 thousand people. For the same period, 32.5 thousand people were sent on leave without salary (Work and employment in the Republic of Belarus: statistical collection, 2018).

The problem of underemployment is particularly relevant for single-industry towns with one or two city controlled enterprises. The real economic condition of many city controlled enterprises is such that only one-third of the available staff of their labour resources is needed to carry out the current volume of industrial production. However, most government organizations cannot fire redundant workers because the Belarusian economy is socially oriented. In addition, many enterprises are not able to fulfil the requirements for monetary compensation for workers who have been made redundant.

Social technology for maintaining excessive employment in order to prevent mass unemployment is an intermediate tool, allowing only to delay the negative consequences associated with the extinction of professions. The transformation of the HR technologies at enterprises will make it possible to ensure the necessary level of qualifications of employees without the need to reduce or transfer them to part-time work.

Among HR technologies for development, we especially note the system of advanced training. In 2019 about 10% of all employees were involved in educational

programs, most of them took advanced training courses. However, the material and technical support, personnel, content and teaching methods in the framework of educational programs do not meet modern requirements and do not provide training for specialists of a sufficiently high level. The reason for this is the fundamental nature of the educational system, which does not allow for a quick response to innovative changes and the training of specialists of modern high-tech production.

Practice-oriented HR technologies should be improved. For example, it is possible to activate the personnel technology of mentoring. It is aimed at professional development and the training of an employee for the independent fulfilment of labour functions and the acquisition of specific professional knowledge and skills. In sociological researches personnel services workers point out the positive impact of mentoring in the organization: professional and career growth of employees, shortening the period of professional and social adaptation, increasing the efficiency of the structural unit (Semerikova, 2017: 167). However, in the Republic of Belarus there is no legislative support for the institution of mentoring, there are only local regulatory legal acts that determine the practice of its application. In addition, the mentor motivation system needs to be improved. Today, even in those few organizations where mentoring is enshrined in regulatory legal acts, the implementation mechanism and extremely low material remuneration create conditions for a high staff turnover rather than for retaining young specialists in the field.

At present, distance learning is actively developing, which allows employees to acquire new knowledge and increase their professional competence; it saves time and reduces costs, allows them to improve the quality of training through the use of modern tools and technologies.

Personnel assessment technologies are also able to increase labour productivity and employee motivation. However, innovative methods should be sought, since the existing system of employee certification is more formal and does not have any effect on the professional growth of employees. Using the competency-based approach in the certification process will improve this HR technology. A set of competencies (personal-business and professional qualities) sets the standard for the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to fulfil duties within the framework of the position. The assessment of competencies can be carried out by various methods: testing, interviewing, associative experiment, qualification card, etc. A competency-based approach in assessing employees allows one to diagnose the professional qualities of an employee, identify gaps in qualifications and determine the necessary steps to address them.

It seems effective to include the released public sector workers in business. In order to regulate the development of small and medium-sized businesses in Belarus, the state has reduced the number of administrative procedures: a lot of reforms have been carried out together with entrepreneurs. However, sociological research shows that entrepreneurs complain about the conditions for doing business in Belarus: high

tax rates; complex licensing and insurance processes, frequent inspections, unequal conditions for public and private organizations; unstable legislation (*Belarusian business of 2016...*, 2016). So, in the Doing Business ranking for 2019, the position of Belarus immediately fell by 12 points (from 37 to 49 places) compared to 2018. Among the ten criteria by which the overall rating is considered, Belarus has the worst indicators for the following: obtaining loans (104th place), taxation (99th place) and protecting minority investors (79th place).

In order to accelerate the pace of the formation of a new business, as well as the growth and competitiveness of small and medium enterprises, the institutional conditions for doing business should be improved. It is also important to increase the effectiveness of business associations, the main tasks of which are to establish interaction between entrepreneurs and government in order to make joint decisions, support and advise entrepreneurs on the legal regulation of entrepreneurial activity, and assist in international cooperation. The membership of small and medium enterprises in business unions over the past 10 years remains extremely low.

In the conditions of globalization and the strengthening of the influence of the private sector on the world economy, it is necessary to look for a compromise between regulating and the economic function of the state. This needs to be done to solve the problem of privatization within certain spheres of the economy within the country and business liberalizations, to create an equal competitive environment for the private companies and the state enterprises, and to develop institutes of public-private partnership. In this regard, the main condition for the normal functioning of a market economy is constructive dialogue between the state and business.

Conclusions

The main condition for the country's socio-economic development is a high human potential, because the professional and motivational competence of workers opens up significant reserves for innovative transformations and activates the development of modern business organizations. Belarusian state is currently facing demographic, communication, technological and many other challenges. Therefore, it has to solve complex problems: on the one hand, maintain the stability of the social structure and prevent its destruction; on the other, provide the necessary leap in development for innovative qualitative changes. At the same time, the key goal is to preserve the country's physical, intellectual and moral potential, stimulate the reproduction of the workforce and provide conditions for personal development.

1. In the field of demography, the social policy of the state should be aimed at searching for indirect measures to increase social guarantees for women in

order to stimulate fertility and encourage in the society the traditional values of family and children. Changing the mechanism for calculating pension payments to Belarusians is also relevant today. It would help to reduce the demographic burden on the working population.

2. In the face of growing external and internal migration, the development of the new state measures to prevent the outflow of highly qualified specialists, the effective mechanisms to encourage the return of students who received education abroad, and the creation of good conditions for professional activity in all areas of Belarus is needed. Changing the mechanism of the payroll is also relevant to solving the problem of labour migration.

3. Social policy in the labour sphere within the current conditions of the development of an innovative economy and processes of automation and robotization should be aimed to maintain the labour potential. It is necessary to improve the existing personnel technologies (development of the institution of mentoring, popularization of the distance learning for employees) and introduce the innovative personnel technologies. Personnel assessment technologies based on a competency-based approach are also able to increase labour productivity and employee motivation.

4. The effectiveness of communication between society and the state should be also increased. The state should inform the public about the current state policy, send messages to the public in a simple and understandable way, provide citizens with possible options for alternatives, take an active part in the organization of the public discussions of the state initiatives before making them. This will increase people's trust in government, will allow to gradually move away from paternalistic expectations and develop the constructive participation of citizens. Also, such steps can prevent Belarusian state from such instances as the mass rejection of such state actions as increasing the pension age, taxes and prices. French experience of the "yellow vests" gave a good lesson to all governments how to communicate with the citizens.

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Ivana Jolović

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6167-2965>

University of Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Serbia
Faculty of Technical Sciences
e-mail: ivanajolovic@uns.ac.rs

Alpar Lošonc

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5046-6170>

University of Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Serbia
Faculty of Technical Sciences
e-mail: alpar@uns.ac.rs

The impact of foreign direct investment and venture capital investment on entrepreneurship in the Republic of Serbia

Abstract. The subject of the research is the examination of features and significance of two modern types of investment intended for financing entrepreneurship: that is, foreign direct investment and venture capital investment. The starting point of the study is the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs with all the challenges and opportunities that characterize its financial position in the Republic of Serbia. The aim of this research is to analyse the impact of both direct investment and entrepreneurial capital investment on small businesses, or more precisely, to examine the influence of foreign direct investment and venture capital investment on entrepreneurship. This paper focuses on the impact that these types of financing have on management structure, financial stability, and the performance of the relevant business entities. Consequently, the current status and perspectives of these types of financing are analysed in detail. The conducted research, also, aims to provide an answer to the dilemma which type of investment is currently a more favourable solution for financial problems with which Serbian entrepreneurs are faced. A detailed analysis of the content of national and European statistical reports; available national and foreign literature of domestic and international authors; and descriptive and comparative method were used for the preparation of this paper.

Keywords: foreign direct investment, venture capital investment, entrepreneurship, Republic of Serbia.

Introduction

Business entities in countries in transition are faced with numerous challenges, especially financial ones. Businesses that are particularly affected are: entrepreneurs that, in the beginning, do their business in industries that are closely related to technologies and innovations; and small and medium-sized enterprises that start stagnating due to insufficient financial funds or development ideas. Considering the nature of their activities, their short presence in the market, and the low amount of share capital, these business entities are rarely accepted by banks as loan applicants. This unfavourable position results in the failure of many business entities on an annual basis, adding to an increase in unemployment and a decrease in the economic growth of the country. A country that is worried about the position of these entities (primarily because these business entities employ most of the working age population) often takes many measures for promoting their business activities by allowing them access to capital, subsidies, or tax incentives. However, the country's effort in financing does not completely solve the problem that these entities are faced with.

Although there is an opinion among business entities that there is not enough capital in the national market for financing all of them, this is not always seen as such within scientific circles. Namely, numerous authors claim the contrary: that the banking sector has enough funds, but they do not want to invest because of the high risk of the entities applying for loans. Recognising the problems that have been present in this market segment for decades, the Republic of Serbia has decided to address this problem and to make available alternative types of funding to the business entities, in addition to the traditional ones provided by banks. Owing to the efforts of the state, the market has been gradually adjusting to the European legislative framework for years in terms of adopting legal and legislative regulations that allow additional foreign capital inflow into the national market.

Foreign direct investments have for many years been the most popular form of capital investment by foreign investors in business entities outside their domestic market. This type of capital, especially in the Republic of Serbia, is mostly provided for standard entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises while the demand for capital for many high-risk businesses in this sector is rarely satisfied. The potential solution to this problem can be found in the examples of good practice in the European market, which ensures the success of their smallest entities through venture capital investment.

This paper aims at providing insight into the effects that foreign direct investments and venture capital investments have on the Serbian market of small and start-up businesses; as well as at showing the academic community the possibilities that will open up on the Serbian capital market in the near future due to the changes in legislation. The relevance of this research is confirmed by the aforementioned measures that the Government has taken and continues to take in the field of investment policy,

and which obviously produce results: since the Republic of Serbia is a country that many investors choose to invest in.

Considering the presented problems and aims of the research, the basic hypothesis about the research has been defined in the following way:

- H0: 'Foreign direct investment and venture capital investment have a positive impact on entrepreneurship in the Republic of Serbia'.

Specific hypotheses which are closely related to the basic one and which determine it more precisely are defined in the following manner:

- H1: 'Financing Serbian entrepreneurship with foreign direct investments influences the empowerment of entrepreneurial businesses due to the involvement of new players in the management structure of these entities';

- H2: 'Financing Serbian entrepreneurship with venture capital investments influences the development of ideas and innovations and encourages the technological development of entrepreneurial entities';

- H3: 'Financing Serbian entrepreneurship with foreign direct investment and venture capital investment influences the increase of the financial stability of entrepreneurial entities and their chances of survival in the market'.

During the preparation of this paper, and with the aim of confirming the constructed hypotheses, the following methods were used: analysis of the content of national financial and statistical reports and documents; analysis of available national and foreign literature of the relevant domestic and international authors in the field of foreign direct investments, venture capital investments and entrepreneurship; as well as descriptive and comparative methods.

A literature overview and theoretical considerations on investments

In the modern global environment, the growth and operation of a national economy greatly depend on the relationship and connections that it establishes with the rest of the world. The nature and intensity of these relationships are, apart from trade, increasingly marked by investment flows that enable internationalisation and integration in the dynamics of the world market (Nestorović, 2015). Therefore, the monitoring and analysis of investments and their flows are particularly important in both developed and less developed countries. One of the most popular investments certainly are foreign capital investments.

Determination of foreign direct investment in theory

Foreign direct investments represent the category of cross-border investments that are made by a resident in one economy (direct investor) with the aim of taking a permanent interest in or control of a company in another country (OECD,

2008). To be more precise, foreign direct investments are investments that result from using foreign accumulations for the purpose of investing in national companies that have a high demand for capital (Nestorović, 2015). According to many authors, foreign direct investments represent the most significant part of international capital flows. In the context of globalization and the new economic order, these investments play the role of an important lever for economic growth (Ignjatijević, 2015).

After analysing the performances of foreign direct investments, it can be concluded that these investments have become one of the most important pillars of global economic growth over the last few decades, and the significance that these investments have for developing countries, including the Republic of Serbia, is particularly important. Namely, most developing countries and countries in transition are characterised by a lack of their own (national) capital. These countries are given the opportunity to be subject of successful changes in economic structure and to adjust to the demands of the world market by attracting foreign direct investments as an additional financing source (Milovanović *et al.*, 2018). The basic aims of these countries are related to achieving stability, long-term economic growth, and development based on the increase in investments, improvement in the technological base of a country, and the improvement of product competitiveness in the international market. Therefore, these investments can play an important role in fulfilling the aims of the country, that is, they can contribute to the process of transition directly (through capital inflow) and indirectly (through the transfer of managerial, production and organisational know-how; furthermore, improvement can be achieved through the creation of a new sales channel for national companies, by improving competition and restructuring the processes in the national economy) (Stefanović, 2008).

Foreign direct investments are essentially different from other types of foreign investment. Foreign direct investments are only those investments that a foreign investor invests in the establishment and foundation of a new company; or investments which they use to buy shares (namely, directly acquires an ownership interest) in an already existing company. This purchase enables the investor to become an owner with the right to control and manage the company in a foreign economy (Makroekonomija, 2013). The role of the mentioned investor can be performed by: a company, individual or a group of companies, group of individuals, government bodies, other organisations, or any other combination of the mentioned entities. In the case that two companies both have 10% or more share of the receiving company, they are both considered to be foreign direct investors in the other company (Kastratović, 2016).

Foreign direct investments can appear in two forms in the market and those are (Makroekonomija, 2013):

- **establishment of a company as a form of foreign direct investments**
– this form of foreign investment implies the establishment of a company and

the creation of production and other capacities by a foreign investor. Investment in a brand-new economic entity is called a 'greenfield investment'. Investors are very cautious when it comes to selecting the market in which they will invest their capital. In the process of selection, they consider the two most important criteria – the safety of investments and the nature of the overall long-term interest they can achieve in the capital importing countries;

● **buying stocks or shares in an already existing company as a form of foreign direct investment** – this is a form of foreign investment done by acquiring a majority ownership interest in an already existing company in the following way: purchasing the company through the process of privatisation; or through buying stocks or directly getting ownership interest (acquisition) in a company. These types of investments are known as 'brownfield investments', and they are considerably faster and simpler for investors compared to the types of investments related to establishing a company. This is the reason why the focus of this paper will be on them.

Many discussions have been had about the impact of foreign direct investments on a national economy, trade, and the unemployment rate. Recent research papers have tried to analyse the impact that foreign direct investments have on a national economy, and the empirical results have shown that the consequences can be quite different. Namely, some studies have shown that foreign direct investments can stimulate economic growth while others have indicated that foreign direct investments can neutralise this growth and income in the host country (Šabić *et al.*, 2012). Nevertheless, numerous authors believe that the role and significance of foreign direct investments for the economic growth of a country cannot be overstated and questioned. This attitude they explain by the fact that even the strong, stable economies of the world develop policies that will create a favourable investment climate for them (Šušić, Spasojević, 2016).

In a potential host country, foreign direct investment brings an integrated package of tangible and intangible resources (capital, technology, management, marketing, organisational knowledge, workforce training, etc.) that serve as an alternative to labor migration and as a stimulus for economic development. On the one hand, the investment package is a supplement to the available domestic factors of production and creates conditions for new employment and work, while on the other hand, it stimulates the growth of the host country through the transfer of technology, the training of the labor force, the establishment of relationships with other parts of the economy and the opening of the way for domestic producers to enter the world market (Vidas-Bujanja, 1998).

It is important to emphasise the privileges that investors provide to the companies with this type of investment, which relate to: product placement and expansion in the market of the capital exporting country, import of technology from that country, and the capitalisation of managerial knowledge and experience.

The last listed item can be characterised as a crucial factor since a large number of entrepreneurs stop working in the first few years of doing business due to the mistakes that insufficiently experienced and skilled managers make (Makroekonomija, 2013). These mistakes are minimised when a foreign direct investor sends to a company their management team which thoroughly analyses the market, competition, and possibilities for the progress of the mentioned company. This type of support enables entrepreneurs, in which the capital is invested, to gain an advantage over the other participants in the market.

Finally, it is important to emphasise that although foreign direct investments operate in an almost identical way in each state, they have different determinations (by countries) in terms of the threshold for foreign ownership interest which gives to the investment the status of foreign direct investment. It is the level of participation in a voting share portfolio of ordinary shares that provides decisive influence in the management of the company's operations. This ownership interest's threshold for controlling the invested funds ranges from 10% to 50% (Stefanović, 2008).

Determination of venture capital investment in theory

Venture capital investments represent the type of financing that enables entrepreneurs or other small businesses to raise capital. Venture capital investors tend to invest in high risk/high income companies, based on the size of a company, property, and stage of development of their products (Investopedia, 2019). The demand for venture capital that can be invested, is justified by the inadequate structure and regulations that prevail in the relevant capital markets. Entrepreneurs who have ideas or develop new technology often have no one to rely on for financial support during the early stage of their business development. State laws limit the interest rate that banks can charge when giving loans, and risks related to start-up and technologically oriented companies usually require higher interest rates than those stipulated by law. This is the reason why banks offer financing for new entrepreneurs only in situations when there are significant funds that can secure the mentioned loans. These situations resulted in the creation of a new type of investment – venture capital investments (Zider, 1998).

Specifically, this type of financing was identified in the USA where, in the 1950s, these investments emerged as a response to the need for the financing of entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises which were established for the purpose of using the possibilities offered by technological advancement. When developing their new products, these risky entrepreneurs (without established creditworthiness or collateral) expressed the need for additional capital but they were rejected as unacceptable 'service buyers' for traditional commercial and investment banks because of their characteristics. The alternative for them

was provided by capitalists who devised the new financing system. This system enabled the entrepreneurs to use the required capital in exchange for a share in the ownership interest that would bring profit to the potential investor over a certain period of time.

Essentially, this type of investment is based on believing in an idea, an entrepreneur, or an entrepreneur's vision of running a business, which means that investors believe that the company will succeed in the market in the near future. Investors ready for such risky ventures typically invest in several businesses and expect from at least one of those entrepreneurs to meet their expectations and make a return that is sufficient to compensate for the losses caused by investing in a significant number of other similar but unsuccessful ventures. Venture capital investors (or their executives) are not often involved in the management structure of a company, yet, as members of the board of directors, they have the right to participate in all major decisions about the business of their 'financial protégés'.

As mentioned above, this type of investment is typical for a company with high growth potential and substantial risk (UNCTAD Secretariat, 1997). Venture capital investment is good financial support for entrepreneurs who are in the following development stages (Invest Europe, 2019b):

- **'seed' development stage** – funds are provided for businesses that have not yet started mass production/distribution. Financing can provide the conditions for: completing the research, defining or designing the product, ensuring that market tests are conducted, and that prototypes are created. Therefore, these funds do not serve to initiate the mass production/distribution;

- **'start-up' development stage** – funds are provided to businesses after the product or service is completely developed so that its mass production/distribution can start and can cover the costs associated with initial marketing investment. The companies in question are those which are in the process of foundation or may have been operating for a short time but have not yet had the chance to sell their products for commercial purposes. The invested capital is mostly intended to cover capital expenditures and initial reversible capital. This stage can involve the investments of the 'second early stage' which involves providing funds to the companies that have already started commercial production, but they need financial coverage for additional capital expenditures and reversible capital before penetrating the market;

- **'later-stage financing'** – this is the late stage in which funds are provided to operating companies that may or may not be profitable.

Therefore, it can be concluded that venture capital funds play an important role in all stages of the innovation life cycle, and especially in the period when a company begins to commercialise its idea. It is estimated that more than 80% of the funds that venture capitalists invest in the company are intended for: building the infrastructure necessary for business growth, investment costs (production, marketing, and sales),

and balance sheet items (providing fixed and current assets). Therefore, venture capital is not long-term money. The idea of its investment is to finance the items in the balance sheet and the infrastructure of a company until it reaches an adequate size and credibility to be sold to a larger corporation or continue to operate successfully as an independent entity (Zider, 1998).

The characteristics of the venture capital investments are as follows (Metrick, 2007; Milenković, Kalaš, 2018):

- **investments are made only in private businesses** – these are the companies which stocks are not listed on stock exchanges so they cannot be traded within the same;

- **by investing, the investors get minority ownership interest in a company** – this share allows the investor to have an influence on the business decisions of a company and with the simple market offer of this share the investor can earn money;

- **institutional investors have the right to make their knowledge, technologies, and management teams available to the companies** – this is one of the most important characteristics of the investment. Namely, investors are given the opportunity to monitor the day-to-day activities of entrepreneurs and have an influence on their decision-making by suggesting and directing entrepreneurs towards new, technologically supported ways of doing business;

- **exit strategy** – it is possible to exit the investment by selling, redemption or providing an initial public offering of a share in the company in the case where the investor is forced to act in this way or when they estimate that this will maximise their invested capital;

- **capital acquired in this way is invested in the internal growth of a company** – investments can be related to the acquisition of the required fixed and current assets for the production process, the development of a product or technology needed for the same.

Foreign direct investment and venture capital investment in the Republic of Serbia

Foreign capital represents the most important means of the economic recovery and further development of the Serbian economy; and the foreign capital inflow strategy must become the backbone of the economic and development policy of a country that pursues such goals. Foreign direct investment and venture capital investment represent the most important additional source of financing the economic development of the national economy. They are especially important for the interests of the Serbian economy which is characterised by low accumulation capacity and minimal domestic

savings. However, a much more significant role of these investments is related to their impact on accelerating the transition process, that is, on building the missing institutional and physical infrastructure. They have a positive effect on strengthening the competitiveness of the national economy as well as accelerating the privatisation process (Nestorović, 2015).

Foreign direct investment in the Republic of Serbia

Later in this paper, it will be discussed about the trends of foreign direct investments recorded in the Republic of Serbia over the past decade; and about their relationship with the most important macroeconomic indicator of the state of the economy – the gross domestic product (GDP). Firstly, however, there will be analysed the relationship between net foreign direct investments and real GDP growth over the period of eleven years (from 2008 until 2018). A growth of net foreign direct investments should contribute to a growth of real GDP or to the decrease in the oscillatory growth rate of the real GDP (Milovanović *et al.*, 2018), which has occurred in the Republic of Serbia. The data in Table 1 show that there was a steady growth in net foreign direct investments in the Republic of Serbia from 2012 onwards (especially in the final three years of the period). In 2018, the value of these investments was €3,187.9 million, which represents an increase of approximately 22% compared to the previously observed period (2008). In the observed period, the value of the GDP of the state was at a relatively similar level with a tendency for a steady increase. In 2018, it amounted to €42,780.0 million. The encouraging fact is that the value of foreign direct investment held an increasingly significant share in the value of GDP, that is, it had a constant upward trend from 2012 when its minimum was recorded (2.23%). In 2018, this percentage was 7.45.

For the purpose of providing a more detailed overview of the situation with foreign direct investments in the Republic of Serbia, the following figure is presented and shows the inflows and outflows of foreign direct investments in the period from 2008 to 2018. Net investments in 2018 amounted to \$3,762 million, which was precisely the result of the record investments made by investors in the form of foreign direct investment in the last observed year. Such tendencies are expected to have continued in 2019, which is great news for entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises that are heavily dependent on funding from these sources. In the observed period, the highest inflow of foreign direct investment was recorded in 2011, when it amounted to \$4,932.3 million, while the record outflow of foreign direct investment was recorded last year (\$363.5 million in 2018).

Table 1. Trends in foreign direct investments (FDI) and GDP in the period from 2008 to 2018 in the Republic of Serbia

| Year | Net FDI (millions of euros) | GDP (millions of euros) | Increase in net FDI (%) | Real GDP growth (%) | FDI/GDP (%) |
|------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| 2008 | 2,485.7 | 35,712.5 | 7.0 | 5.7 | 6.96 |
| 2009 | 2,067.8 | 32,486.2 | 6.4 | -2.7 | 6.36 |
| 2010 | 1,133.4 | 31,545.8 | 3.6 | 0.7 | 3.59 |
| 2011 | 3,319.6 | 35,431.7 | 9.4 | 2.0 | 9.37 |
| 2012 | 752.8 | 33,679.3 | 2.2 | -0.7 | 2.23 |
| 2013 | 1,298.1 | 36,426.7 | 3.6 | 2.9 | 3.56 |
| 2014 | 1,236.3 | 35,467.5 | 3.5 | -1.6 | 3.49 |
| 2015 | 1,803.8 | 35,715.6 | 5.1 | 1.8 | 5.05 |
| 2016 | 1,899.2 | 36,723.1 | 5.2 | 3.3 | 5.17 |
| 2017 | 2,418.1 | 39,183.3 | 6.2 | 2.0 | 6.17 |
| 2018 | 3,187.9 | 42,780.0 | 7.5 | 4.3 | 7.45 |

Source: Authors, according to data obtained from the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Serbia, 2019b.

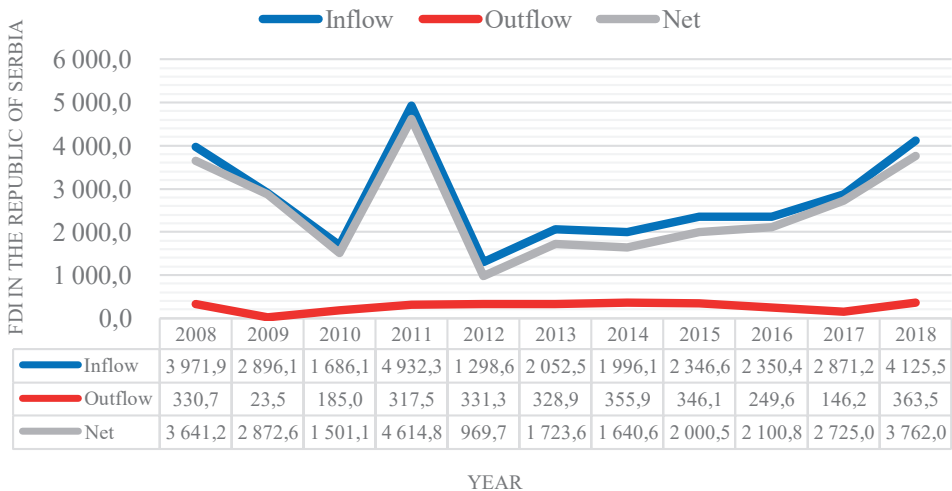


Figure 1. Foreign direct investments in the Republic of Serbia in the period from 2008 to 2018 (in millions of dollars)

Source: Authors, according to data obtained from the UNCTAD, 2019a; 2019b.

Venture capital investment in the Republic of Serbia

After presenting the main tendencies regarding foreign direct investments in the Republic of Serbia, the attention will be diverted to the consideration of additional alternative sources of funding in the form of venture capital investments. Although there are no classic venture capital funds in the Republic of Serbia (which are the main holders of this type of financing), it is important to know that Serbian companies have at their disposal venture capital financing mechanisms from the institutions of the European Union, that is, the European Investment Fund that established the Western Balkan Enterprise and Innovation Facility (WBEIF) for the Western Balkan countries. WBEIF consists of venture capital funds for investment in early stages of development (€40 million); business expansion (€55 million); and guarantee schemes for entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises (worth €25 million) (SEVEN, 2015).

Earlier in the paper, when it was discussed about the incentive measures and activities of the Republic of Serbia in the sphere of regulating the legislative framework which should facilitate the business of the smallest economic entities; it was though the actions the country takes in the sphere of the formulation of new regulations on alternative sources of financing. One of the most recent steps that the Republic of Serbia has taken in this area is to amend the laws in the field of investment funds. More precisely, the Draft Law on Alternative Investment Funds was put on the Government's agenda during September 2019. This document prescribes the manner in which alternative financing models will function, in particular venture capital funds that are the bearers of the eponymous investments. According to the new Serbian regulation, venture capital funds are private equity funds whose assets are predominantly invested in newly established businesses or businesses that are in the initial stages of operations and, according to the management of the fund, show potential for growth (Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Serbia, 2019a).

Given these opportunities and the fact that the steps regarding the creation of conditions for venture capital investing have been made recently, the data presented in the following table will not come as a surprise. Namely, Table 2 shows the total amount of venture capital investments in the Republic of Serbia from 2014 to 2018; and in addition to the total values, there is data which upon analysis can help in revealing in which stage of development of the entrepreneurial entities, venture capital investments were most attracted to. The observation period covers the last five years; as it is by inspecting the statistical reports observed that there had been no such investments before 2014 on the territory of the Republic of Serbia (EVCA Central and Eastern Europe Task Force, 2014). This spreadsheet indicates a positive trend in the Serbian capital market regarding the successful implementation of this type of investment in the past period.

Table 2. Venture capital investments (VCI) in the Republic of Serbia in the period from 2014 to 2018 (in thousands of euros)

| Stage of development of a company | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Seed | 0 | 0 | 80 | 300 | 400 |
| Start-up | 0 | 423 | 1,000 | 1,200 | 3,465 |
| Later-stage venture | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total VCI | 0 | 423 | 1,080 | 1,500 | 3,865 |

Source: Authors, according to data obtained from Invest Europe, 2016; 2018; 2019a.

However, regardless of the encouraging 2018 data related to the increase in these investments (when a historical maximum of almost €4 million was recorded), it is worth pointing out that the results so far are not impressive. The unsatisfactory results are confirmed by the insight into European market statistics for venture capital investments, where, as an example of good practice Finland and Denmark, which are leaders in terms of this type of financing can be highlighted. Namely, their venture capital investments account for 0.096% and 0.095% of national GDP respectively (Invest Europe, 2019b). In the Serbian case, in the year when the country had record amounts of venture capital investments (2018), the share of these investments in the national GDP was only 0.0000000009%, which is presented in the table below.

Table 3. Trends of venture capital investments (VCI) and GDP in the period from 2014 to 2018 in the Republic of Serbia

| Year | VCI (millions of euros) | GDP (millions of euros) | VCI/GDP (in %) |
|------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 2014 | 0 | 35,467.5 | 0 |
| 2015 | 0.42 | 35,715.6 | 0.000... |
| 2016 | 1.08 | 36,723.1 | 0.000... |
| 2017 | 1.5 | 39,183.3 | 0.000... |
| 2018 | 3.86 | 42,780.0 | 0.0000000009 |

Source: Authors, according to data obtained from the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Serbia, 2019b; Invest Europe, 2016; 2018; 2019a.

Entrepreneurship in the Republic of Serbia

The sector of small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs is, individually observed, the most significant segment in the economies of almost all countries in the world. A healthy and dynamic sector of this type represents a stable source of new jobs, increasing employment, innovation, tax revenue

generation through a contribution to the reduction of informal and grey economy, etc. Exploiting completely the potentials of entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises, in terms of their contribution to the growth and development of national economies and poverty reduction, is largely conditioned by the degree of institutional support provided by the state through their mechanisms. Encouragement of the development of the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs is defined as one of the priority goals of the economic policy of the Republic of Serbia. Small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs represent a significant factor in the recovery of the national economy, reflecting the stability of the financial assets through: employment, export, import, and investment (Ilić *et al.*, 2018).

The results of numerous studies show that the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs represent a significant driving force for the economic development of every country and that it is a potential generator of entrepreneurial ideas and innovations. Namely, the main direction of the development of the mentioned sector is based on an innovative approach to the real needs of the market. The intensified transition process after 2000 made the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs the carrier of economic growth and employment, which gradually grew into the most dynamic and efficient segment of the economy of the Republic of Serbia (Kostadinović, Petrović-Randelović, 2015). Small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs are legal entities with less than 250 full-time employees (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2018).

In 2017, there were 357,234 entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises in the Republic of Serbia, which was an increase compared to 2009 when 314,827 such economic entities operated in the Serbian market. This means that, in the observed period (from 2009 to 2017), the market received 12,407 new entrants, and what is encouraging is the fact that these values have a tendency of further growth. The aforementioned sector consists mostly of entrepreneurs which amounted to 344,279 in 2017, or 96.4% (Table 4).

In addition, the same table gives an insight into the number of persons employed by this sector. Thus, it can be noted that entrepreneurs retain primacy in this category as well. Namely, this type of legal entities employed 415,762 persons in 2017, which represents 47.6% of all persons employed in the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs. Compared to the beginning of the observed period (2009), it can be noted that the total number of employees remained at relatively the same level, and that employment in each of the mentioned types of companies recorded very similar values.

For a better understanding of the data presented below and the current situation in which entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises are, the figure below (Figure 2) will present an overview of the number of established and extinguished

Table 4. Small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs* (number of enterprises and employees) from 2009 to 2017 in the Republic of Serbia

| Specification | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Entrepreneurs | 302,484 | 306,669 | 307,430 | 305,321 | 303,927 | 312,943 | 312,887 | 327,695 | 344,279 |
| Small enterprises | 9,873 | 9,614 | 9,656 | 9,699 | 9,353 | 9,198 | 9,531 | 10,154 | 10,583 |
| Medium-sized enterprises | 2,470 | 2,257 | 2,218 | 2,142 | 2,132 | 2,131 | 2,182 | 2,263 | 2,372 |
| Enterprises total | 314,827 | 318,540 | 319,304 | 317,162 | 315,412 | 324,272 | 324,600 | 340,112 | 357,234 |
| Entrepreneurs | 412,457 | 385,440 | 358,992 | 361,311 | 356,384 | 355,389 | 387,278 | 401,848 | 415,762 |
| Small enterprises | 200,954 | 194,450 | 195,602 | 196,492 | 189,172 | 185,206 | 190,936 | 203,681 | 213,380 |
| Medium-sized enterprises | 259,129 | 234,695 | 232,279 | 224,223 | 222,994 | 220,994 | 223,505 | 232,003 | 244,320 |
| Employees total | 872,540 | 814,585 | 786,873 | 782,026 | 768,550 | 761,539 | 801,719 | 837,532 | 873,462 |

* Aggregated data for entrepreneurs and micro enterprises.

Source: Authors, according to data obtained from the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Serbia, National Agency for Regional Development, 2014; Čokorilo *et al.*, 2018.

enterprises in the Republic of Serbia from 2010 to 2017. Since 2013, the net number of enterprises was constantly increasing, with a particularly significant increase in value in 2016 compared to 2015 (from 6,498 to 17,316 companies). The reason for this situation is the decrease in the number of extinguished enterprises, not the increase in the number of newly established. Considering the fact that in the last few years the Republic of Serbia has taken active measures to encourage entrepreneurship (2016 was declared as the year of entrepreneurship), this data is not surprising. The improved business environment, which has strengthened additional capital investment in this sector, in addition to state support, was one of the main reasons for such positive results.

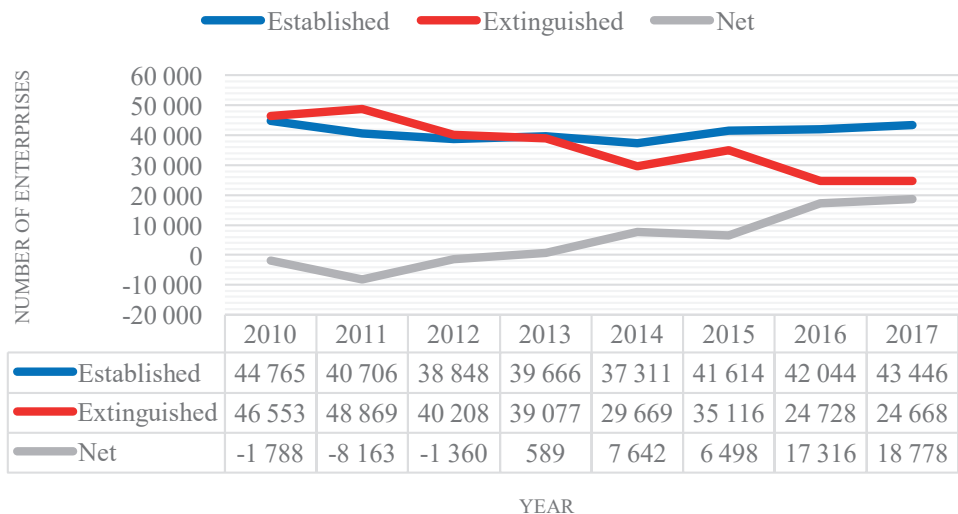


Figure 2. The number of established and extinguished small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs in the Republic of Serbia from 2010 to 2017

Source: Authors, according to data obtained from Ćokorilo *et al.*, 2018.

The relatively low number of these entities that manage to survive in the market clearly indicates the problems they may face. As already pointed out in this paper, access to financial banking products in the Republic of Serbia is extremely difficult, and these companies must seek additional sources of income. This difficult access to funds is also evidenced by the ranking of the Republic of Serbia in relation to various financial indicators. Namely, this country in the world occupies (EY, 2018):

- 98th position regarding the availability of financial services;
- 121st position regarding access to credits; and
- 132nd position regarding the availability of foreign capital.

Conclusion

The research conducted above is dedicated to the examination of foreign direct investment and venture capital investment impact on small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs in the Republic of Serbia. This paper presents data on the volume of the aforementioned investments in business entities based on their size, organisational type, and the number of employees. Furthermore, the problems that arise from the characteristics of these entities: that is, lack of bank creditworthiness, credit history, and collateral were pointed out. Small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs are the most significant, the most represented, and the most endangered entities in the Serbian economy, so special attention is rightly paid to them. The state has recognised their vulnerability and has dedicated its resources to modify sectoral regulations in order to influence the creation of a decent financial environment necessary for minimizing the number of extinguished entities on an annual basis. Within this paper, the positive actions undertaken by the state are highlighted, with the included additional estimation that they need to be more frequent, methodical, and concrete in order to ensure faster development of the national capital market.

On the development scale, the foreign direct investment currently occupies a better position compared to the funds for similar purposes – venture capital investment. Namely, since 2012, foreign direct investments record constant increase, and in the last three years, their existence was characterized by significant positive jumps. In 2018, it has even been noted a record inflow of these investments. These are encouraging news for endangered small and medium-sized business entities which will continue to benefit considerably from the positive effects caused by these investments. On the other hand, venture capital investments are extremely undeveloped in the Serbian capital market, especially when compared to the level of these investments in developed European economies. The utilisation of these investments at the European level is an indisputable indicator of the importance of attracting them to the national market. There is no doubt that investments of this type represent a back wind to the entrepreneurship of any country they gravitate to.

Both foreign direct investment and venture capital investment are characterised by investing in companies for the purpose of taking one part of their property and exploiting benefits which that property offers. This is especially evident in the case of venture capital investments which are aimed at high-risk entrepreneurial businesses that are at the very beginning of operations and usually oriented to the development of new technologies. Capitalists invest in a large number of entities with these characteristics, aware that at least 90% of their money will be wasted, but also expecting that at least one of their ‘financial protégés’ will achieve excellent market results, provide funds that will repay all previous investment failures, and bring in additional profit. Further, the

capitalists will estimate whether the sale of the ownership share in mentioned entities is justified and profitable at that moment, or it is worth to wait in order to achieve a substantial profit. Evidently, the level of risk to which the capitalists are exposed is very high in all phases that the recipient entity goes through, but it is a position to which they have agreed. Nevertheless, more than to capitalists, these investments mean to the entities that absorb them.

Small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs have difficulties with funding, i.e. they often can not take loans on the banking financial market. Even if they can, it is generally under extremely unfavourable conditions. According to this situation, entities with a lack of capital have three alternatives at their disposal: seeking partners, attracting foreign investment, or extinguishing their businesses. A potential partner could be a resident of the same country, with the capacity to solve the problem that the entrepreneur is struggling with. On the other hand, a foreign investor in addition to capital can offer multiple benefits to the company, and the most important among them is managerial support (investor makes his management team available to the investment recipient, and directs its knowledge and experience towards improving the performance of the mentioned entity). Empowered with the capital and backed up by a quality management structure, this entity can dedicate to the development of its own idea, with upgrading its products and improving performance by applying new technologies. In this way a likelihood of achieving success increases. At the very end, it is not difficult to conclude that among available alternatives that the entity has, an attraction of foreign investment is the most favourable one.

The research highlighted the fact that foreign direct investment and venture capital investment, according to their characteristics, are suitable for different types of companies. Thus, foreign direct investments reach the greatest effects when investing in later-stage businesses, i.e. entities that already have developed products and harmonised production process, use relatively old technology, slowly enter into the phase of stagnation, and need a 'refreshment' in the form of new capital. With such investments, these entities receive the financial resources necessary to encourage the development of new ideas. This whole process is aided by quality human resources (management teams), whose experience and enviable market knowledge can provide entities' rapid and unhindered growth. On the other hand, venture capital investment should be exclusively directed towards small, high-risk entrepreneurial businesses, that plan to develop products/services in promising, usually technologically demanding industries. By using these investments, entities renounce only a minor share of ownership, and in turn, receive enviable support in staff and capital.

In accordance with all the facts stated in this paper, it is possible to analyse the fulfillment of the research hypothesis set at the very beginning; thus:

- the hypothesis H1: 'Financing Serbian entrepreneurship with foreign direct investments influences the empowerment of entrepreneurial businesses due to the

involvement of new players in the management structure of these entities' is fully confirmed. Namely, the existing practice of the positive impact of institutional investors on the company's operations after acquiring the right to manage and control it through the purchase of ownership shares was emphasized in the paper;

- the hypothesis H2: 'Financing Serbian entrepreneurship with venture capital investments influences the development of ideas and innovations and encourages the technological development of entrepreneurial entities' is fully confirmed. As already emphasised, venture capital investments are intended for promising and innovative entities dealing with modern technologies and their implementation in the production process. When a company with this sphere of business receives financial support, it directs it to the most important segment of its operations – knowledge. Consequently, entrepreneurs become motivated by the fact that their idea was recognised as valuable at the market, so optimistically continue their work with encouragement to present and other innovative projects to it. With the necessary capital, these entities effortlessly create prototypes of their products, and at the same time have enough funds left to deal with other innovative experiments;

- the hypothesis H3: 'Financing Serbian entrepreneurship with foreign direct investment and venture capital investment influences the increase of the financial stability of entrepreneurial entities and their chances of survival in the market' is fully confirmed. This hypothesis is confirmed by the data in Table 1, Table 3, and Figure 2 which indicate a potential correlation between an increased number of foreign direct investment and venture capital investment, and a reduced number of extinguished entities in the same period in the Republic of Serbia;

- the basic hypothesis of the research, H0: 'Foreign direct investment and venture capital investment have a positive impact on entrepreneurship in the Republic of Serbia' is fully confirmed by virtue of data presented in the paper and validation of specific hypotheses that determine it more closely.

Based on everything presented, it should be noted that alternative sources of financing (foreign direct investment and venture capital investment) could be the main drivers of development for promising small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs. In this way, mentioned entities undoubtedly could be empowered and focused on the smooth realisation of their business ideas, and cumulatively, their operations could contribute to the growth and prosperity of the entire Serbian economy.

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Alena Artsiomenka

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3162-1363>

Belarusian State University, Minsk, Belarus
Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences
Department of Social Communication
e-mail: lena.artsiomenka@gmail.com

The transformation of family values in Belarus: Social and demographic factors

Abstract. The article is devoted to the social and demographic factors of family values transformation in Belarus. It aims to find out to what extent age, educational level, and place of residence influence the dynamics of changing family values. Based on the data of the European Value Survey in Belarus in 2000, 2008 and 2017, the tendencies of the transformation of attitudes towards family, marriage, children, and women combining family and profession roles, are analysed. It is concluded that changes in family values in the Eastern European region and Belarus are multidirectional. On the one hand, the significance of the family and marriage is growing. On the other – the necessity to combine the professional and family roles of women is getting more common. The paper evaluates how these general trends are manifested in different social groups; broken down by age, education level and place of inhabitation. The analysis allows one to conclude that there are universal trends like the importance of family as it is. However, some trends like pronatalist attitudes have specificity for different groups. The reasons for family values transformation include the position on the labour market, the perspective of professional self-realisation, and income growth. A lack of such a perspective among women with secondary education causes them to be more focused on family and children. Both urbanisation and the growth of a young generation with a high educational level can contribute to the decrease of pronatalist attitudes and an increase in the idea of women combining family and professional roles in the future.

Keywords: values transformation, family, marriage, children, gender, Belarus.

Introduction

In Belarusian society, as in other European countries, the institution of the family continues to undergo changes. While the family remains very significant, as “a basic vital value” (Burova, 2015: 4), the stability of family relationships is decreasing. The markers of this process are the increasing age at which people get married and have children; the high divorce rate, and the decreasing fertility. In 2017 the number of divorces in Belarus amounted to 48.3% of marriages (the marriage rate constituted 7.0 marriages per 1,000 inhabitants while the divorce rate was 3.4 divorces per 1,000 inhabitants). It is often the case that families with children were broken up as a result. In 2017 13.6 thousand (42.5%) divorces happened in families without children; however, 13.4 thousand divorces (41.9%) occurred in the families with one child. When it comes to the attitude of having children, in the long-term perspective, the fertility rate is decreasing. While in the mid-1980s the total fertility rate in Belarus exceeded 2 childbirths per woman, in 2017 the index constituted only 1.54 childbirths (Medvedeva ed., 2018). All the listed tendencies which can be described with the concept of the second demographic transition pertain to Belarus as well (Lapeto *et al.*, 2018: 21).

To understand the process of change in the family institution we need to analyse the transformation of family values: if the family continues to be the basic social unit, what is the perception of marriage and childbearing? What are the attitudes towards the relationship between family members? Many of these trends affect not only one country but the whole region, as “not only personal but even moral and civilisational changes are occurring through the family” (Titarenko, 2004: 77).

The comparative analysis of the transformation of values on a European and global level is possible with the support of the empirical database of the World Values Survey and European Values Study (WVS/EVS) which have been carried out since 1981 in 97 countries of the world. The methodology of WVS/EVS enables us to analyse (in both a synchronic and diachronic perspective) such components of the family value system as the perception of a family as a value in general; attitudes to marriage; childbearing; and one other important feature of family relationships: the perception of the combining of professional and family roles by women as an important marker of the modernity of the views.

The world data of the surveys from 1988–2005 allows the researchers to come to the conclusion that value changes all over the world can be described by the common patterns of: 1) from traditional to secular-rational values; and 2) from survival to self-expression values. Movement along the first axis is connected to the weakening of such important traditional values as the significance of the family as a social institution, while movement along the second axis is associated with the strengthening of gender equality (Inglehart, Norris, 2003: 11).

However, the transformation of the value system in an individual country is determined by not only the general trends, but the cultural-historical context as well. As noted by the authors of the research, Belarus belongs to the group of countries with a common Communist past and with a prevalence of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Analysing the tendencies of value transformation in this group of countries, the researchers noted that after 1991 values were changing in this region in the direction towards traditional religious values, contrary to the general world trend; this in turn also influenced the attitudes towards the family (Inglehart, Oyserman, 2004: 88).

The analysis of changes in family and the marital values depicted in the data of WVS/EVS in 1990–2000 (carried out by L. Titarenko in the monograph *The value world of the contemporary Belarusian society. Gender aspect*) shows that, as the result of the controversial trends described above, the values of Belarusians are forming as a *métissage* system “in which traditional and contemporary views are of equal importance” (Titarenko, 2004: 104). However, women are both carriers of distinctly patriarchal views, and advocates of the equal distribution of duties in the family at the same time. The monograph prepared by the researchers of the Centre for Sociological and Political Studies at the Belarusian State University “The value world of today’s people: Eastern Partnership countries, European Union and Russia in international projects on value studies” is focused on the cross-country comparison of values (Bulyanko *et al.*, 2016). To understand what Belarusians’ positions concerning the family are, the authors conducted cluster analysis using the key factors of family values. According to the result, Belarus belongs to the group of countries with a distinguished pronatalist component, yet with the lowest level of family significance and matrimonial traditionalism. Generally, the analysis shows the differences between the value systems in the Eastern Partnership countries and the European Union member states.

Sociologists in neighbouring countries pay close attention to the result of the research in cross-country comparisons as well. Analysing the family values in Russia according to the result of the WVS/EVS in 2008, the authors of the article *Family values of Russians and Europeans* came to the conclusion that, “Russia is a country with a medium to high level of traditionalism of the reported normative views.” Moreover, as we saw in Belarus the most conservative position is reported with regard to having children. However, at the same time, there were signs of a liberalisation of views, such as a more liberal attitude towards homosexuality (Fabrikant, Magun, 2014). In the article *Differences and similarities: the place of religion and family in the value system of society in Poland, The Czech Republic and Slovakia*, the family values analysis of Belarus’s western neighbours is presented (Swadźba, 2015). The author concluded that religion is more important for Polish people than for Czechs and Slovaks, and this influences attitudes towards family and marriage, meaning that they are also more traditional. However, it is remarkable that youth is more liberal in its views and less inclined to religion in all the analysed countries and this corresponds to the general trend of values modernisation.

The last wave of WVS/EVS data in Belarus in 2017 confirms the previous conclusions. Nowadays the dynamics of Belarusians' family values is continuing the tendency noted above. On one hand, the importance of the family continues to grow (in 2000 78.5% answered very important, in 2017 the share was 89.4%) as in Poland, Russia and Ukraine (the trend in Latvia and Lithuania is the opposite). Also, an increasing number of people in Belarus think that it is an obligatory duty towards society to have children (from 20.1% in 2008 to 25.3% in 2017), as in Poland and Russia. On the other hand, marriage is more rarely perceived as necessary for happiness (in 2000 34.6% agreed with the statement, while in 2008 only 28.0% agreed), as in Poland, Lithuania and Latvia (the trend in Russia and Ukraine is opposite). Moreover, fewer and fewer people in Belarus agree that it is enough for women just to stay home with children to be happy (the share decreased from 31% in 2000 to 15.7% in 2017), as in Russia and Poland as well (Artsiomenka, 2019). Thus, we can see that there are similarities and differences in the dynamics of the value system in Belarus and neighbouring countries, and some trends in Belarus strengthen traditional views (like the general attitude towards family and the perception towards childbearing), but some of them are modern (like the perception of the combination of both family and professional roles for women).

However, there arises the question of whether the value system in Belarusian society is heterogeneous; as tendencies with regards to changing values could differ from one social group to another. To understand the process of value transformation deeper it is important to uncover what socio-demographic factors can influence the dynamics. Thus, the objective of the current work is to investigate the difference in the transformation of the values system between different groups, based on age, education level and place of inhabitation. It is important to ascertain whether the trends are universal, or there is a specific character for different social groups. The answer to this question could enable us to understand some reasons for value transformation, as well as to assume what changes we can expect in the future. In this paper, as a benchmark for family values dynamics, we use the perception of the family as a value in general: the view that marriage is as outdated social institution; the belief that childbearing is an obligatory duty towards society; and the opinion, that work is important but women really want to stay at home with children.

Age as a factor of value transformation

The first social characteristic we consider as a very important factor for the transformation of family values is age. Traditionally younger generations are perceived as carriers of the modernisation of views; however, in the case of controversial trends in the transformation of Belarusian values, the result may not be so obvious. When the last wave of the study is analysed, most people in every

age group consider family as a very important value; although, the older the age the stronger this attitude is. According to the analysis in the neighbouring countries we mentioned above, this rule is typical for all of them as well. The difference between the youngest group (15–24 years old) and the oldest one (65+ years old) is more than 10% (77.3% vs. 88.6%). However, the trend is common: every group demonstrates the strengthening of the attitude.

Table 1. The distribution of answers to the question: How important is the following value in your life? Family (response rate of “Very important” by age group), %

| Year | 15–24 y.o. | 25–34 y.o. | 35–44 y.o. | 45–54 y.o. | 55–64 y.o. | 65+ y.o. |
|------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|
| 2000 | 73.4 | 82.9 | 84.5 | 81.1 | 83.1 | 64.3 |
| 2008 | 79.1 | 80.3 | 85.3 | 87.4 | 79.4 | 76.9 |
| 2017 | 77.3 | 89.5 | 91.1 | 88.9 | 93.9 | 88.6 |

Source: based on author’s calculations.

When we look at different components of the family in detail, we discover that there is not such a uniform situation. The share of people who believe that marriage is an outdated social institution is bigger among younger people than among older people (from 27.1% in the group of 15–24 years old to 8.3% in the group of 65+ years old); however, among the younger groups, we observe a decreasing popularity of the statement, while in groups of 55–64 years old and 65+ years old we can see the increasing popularity of the statement. Sure, the difference is too small to state that it is statistically significant, but the trend is obvious. To understand why social groups which are usually more traditional in their views demonstrate such a difference in the dynamics we have to discuss what they mean when they talk about family as an outdated institution. Our assumption is that they are more critical in the perception of the current transformation of marriage and its functions nowadays (e.g. the changing focus from duty and childbearing to personal relations and emotions; a different distribution of family roles etc.). This is why they can perceive the transformation as a kind of perversion. However, this assumption needs to be checked with further studies.

Table 2. The distribution of answers to the question: Do you agree with the statement, that marriage is an outdated social institution? (response rate of “Agree” by age group), %

| Year | 15–24 y.o. | 25–34 y.o. | 35–44 y.o. | 45–54 y.o. | 55–64 y.o. | 65+ y.o. |
|------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|
| 2000 | 31.0 | 21.7 | 18.2 | 14.0 | 9.4 | 5.5 |
| 2008 | 23.7 | 21.8 | 19.0 | 15.4 | 16.1 | 12.0 |
| 2017 | 27.1 | 18.4 | 17.6 | 12.3 | 11.2 | 8.3 |

Source: based on author’s calculations.

Speaking about childbearing, the respondent's age is important from the point of view of the life cycle stage which people are experiencing at the moment. The average age at which a woman has her first child in Belarus is 27 years old (Medvedeva, 2018). Thus, the youngest group of 15–24 years old has not realised their reproductive needs yet, most probably. This can be the reason, why the growing trend of people who are sure that it is their duty towards society to have children is not a characteristic of this group. The share of those who agree strongly with the statement in the group of 15–24 years old decreased from 19.7% in 2008 to 10.4% in 2017. However, as we see in the case of general attitudes towards the family, the younger people are, the less traditional views they have. Thus, the difference in the dynamics of the perception of childbearing among youth can be the beginning of a new trend for the whole society.

Table 3. The distribution of answers to the question: Do you agree with the statement, that it is a duty towards society to have children? (response rate of “Agree strongly” by age group), %

| Year | 15–24 y.o. | 25–34 y.o. | 35–44 y.o. | 45–54 y.o. | 55–64 y.o. | 65+ y.o. |
|------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|
| 2008 | 19.7 | 15.4 | 16.3 | 21.3 | 23.0 | 29.0 |
| 2017 | 10.4 | 18.1 | 20.3 | 29.0 | 32.0 | 36.1 |

Source: based on author's calculations.

As we mentioned above, younger people have more modern views, and this is true for the perception of women combining family and professional roles. However, the trend is universal, and all the age groups demonstrate a decrease in the degree to which they agree that it is enough for a woman just to be at home with children. In 2017 the difference in the position of the youngest group, 15–24 years old, and the oldest group, 65+ years old, was only 5.5%.

Table 4. The distribution of answers to the question: Do you agree with the statement, that work is important, but women really want a home and children? (response rate of “Agree strongly” by age group), %

| Year | 15–24 y.o. | 25–34 y.o. | 35–44 y.o. | 45–54 y.o. | 55–64 y.o. | 65+ y.o. |
|------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|
| 2000 | 26.3 | 32.0 | 27.7 | 31.2 | 37.3 | 43.7 |
| 2008 | 15.3 | 13.2 | 17.9 | 19.4 | 20.8 | 18.6 |
| 2017 | 8.5 | 14.1 | 19.5 | 13.8 | 20.1 | 14.0 |

Source: based on author's calculations.

Thus, we can see that the general trend of the traditionalization of some views is typical for all age groups. The research in neighbouring countries shows, that the youth typically have more modern views for all the questions, with the exception of attitudes towards abortion: the youngest groups in Poland and

Slovakia demonstrated a lower tolerance to abortion than people of middle age (Swadźba, 2015: 116). However, speaking generally, the latest data proves the previous conclusions that the younger people are, the more modern views they have. However, there are some interesting observations about the age groups to think about. In the youngest group of Belarusians, we can see a change of the general trend towards the increasing number of those who are sure that it is everybody's duty to have children; this could be a sign that the pronatalist tendency may change in the nearest future. The second interesting finding is that the oldest people more often think that marriage is an outdated institution. Our assumption is that such answers stem from the fact that their attitudes towards marriage differ from contemporary forms of family relations, that is why their view is more and more critical. However, both assumptions need further research.

Education as a factor of value transformation

The second parameter which is interesting for us in terms of the dynamics of the value system is the level of education. Education is very important for the socialisation process; also it can influence the circle of social contacts; preferred sources of information; as well as career ambitions and position on the labour market. In our comparative analysis, we are concentrating on the three largest groups of educational levels: just secondary education (25.9%), post-secondary (not tertiary) education (31.5%), and tertiary education (34.8%), according to WVS/EVS data in 2017. The dataset contains comparable data on education levels only for the waves in 2008 and 2017, but this 10-year interval is enough to note the main tendencies.

As in the case of different age groups, it is a universal trend that the concept of family is given greater importance with the increasing course of time. That said, it should be noted that it is somewhat lower among those who have only secondary education and there is almost no difference between people with post-secondary and higher education.

Table 5. The distribution of answers to the question: How important in your life is the following value? Family (response rate of "Very important" by education), %

| Year | Secondary education | Post-secondary education | Tertiary education |
|------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 2008 | 77.9 | 85.0 | 85.5 |
| 2017 | 87.2 | 91.2 | 90.1 |

Source: based on author's calculations.

In 2008, in the group of people with only secondary education, the statement that marriage is an outdated social institution was the most popular as well. However, in time the difference between groups was smoothed over, and the statement becomes less popular for all of the groups. Anyway, we can note that the group of people with the lowest educational level demonstrates less traditional views on the importance of the family and the relevance of marriage.

Table 6. The distribution of answers to the question: Do you agree with the statement, that marriage is an outdated social institution? (response rate of “Agree” by education), %

| Year | Secondary education | Post-secondary education | Tertiary education |
|------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 2008 | 22.7 | 19.2 | 15.3 |
| 2017 | 15.3 | 16.2 | 12.2 |

Source: based on author’s calculations.

In the case of attitudes towards childbearing, we can see the opposite situation. People with the lowest education achieved the highest level of agreement with the necessity of children. In spite of the common trend of increasing pronatalist views, the perception of the necessity to have children is lower in the group of people with higher education than with secondary education (19.2% vs. 29.6% correspondently). The reasons can be different. The first one is that people with higher education could be less sensitive to the state rhetoric about the necessity to increase fertility because of the usage of a broader range of media and informational sources. However, in that case, we would see the same trend (less traditional views) regarding family and the perception of marriage. The second reason can be that people with tertiary education can have more ways for self-realisation, the perspective of carrier growth and higher income. The dynamics of pronatalist views in the group of higher education is much lower as well, that is why we can conclude, that increasing the education level among the population, in general, can lead to a decreasing of pronatalistic views in the future.

Table 7. The distribution of answers to the question: Do you agree with the statement, that it is a duty towards society to have children? (response rate of “Agree strongly” by education), %

| Year | Secondary education | Post-secondary education | Tertiary education |
|------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 2008 | 18.6 | 21.8 | 16.6 |
| 2017 | 29.6 | 27.6 | 19.2 |

Source: based on author’s calculations.

The universal trend, in terms of different age groups, to welcome the combining of family and professional roles by women looks different when

we analyse the level of education. In spite of the general tendency towards the modernisation of views, people with only secondary education in 2017 more often agree with the statement, that work is important but women really want a home and children. The reason for such dynamics can be the same as in the case of childbearing attitudes. Having fewer possibilities for career and self-realisation they agree that the family can be the central role in a woman's life. With a decreasing of the share of people with only secondary education, we can expect an even higher acceleration of positive attitudes towards the combining of family and professional roles by women.

Table 8. Distribution of answers to the question: Do you agree with the statement, that work is important but women really want a home and children? (response rate of "Agree strongly" by education), %

| Year | Secondary education | Post-secondary education | Tertiary education |
|------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 2008 | 16.5 | 17.8 | 13.9 |
| 2017 | 19.2 | 14.9 | 12.9 |

Source: based on author's calculations.

The analysis of views of people with different educational levels shows that the group with only secondary education is less traditional in the questions about the importance of family and the relevance of marriage. However, at the same time they are more traditional when it comes to childbearing; and even stand out against the general trend, starting to claim more often that it is enough for women to stay home and bring up children. We suppose that the reason for such a difference is in the narrower perspective of professional self-realisation, careers, and income growth, which makes them more focused on childbearing and family, even when their views are no more traditional than others.

Settlement type as a factor of value transformation

To understand the role of geographical factors in the process of values transformation we started from looking at the regional distribution of beliefs. However, as in many other cases in Belarus, the difference in value dynamics between the regions is not well defined, and the only remarkable distinction between Minsk as the capital and all the other territories can be explained by the difference in city size. That is why we focused on the settlement types according to the number of inhabitants. The WVS/EVS dataset allows the use of the classification which includes settlements with less than 5 thousand, 5–100 thousand, 100–500 thousand and 500+ thousand

inhabitants. The smallest type includes most of the rural and several of the smallest urban settlements, while the largest type includes only Minsk and Gomel (the largest regional centre in Belarus, apart from the capital). All the other regional centres and 1–2 big cities in each region belong to the group of 100–500 thousand inhabitants. The WVS/EVS dataset from 2017 contains the following distribution by settlement size: 26% live in settles of under 5 thousand, 21.4% in settles of 5–100 thousand, 26.9% in settlements of 100–500 thousand, and 25.6% in settlement of more than 500 thousand inhabitants, thus they have almost equal influence on the situation in general.

As for such a factor as the type of settlement, the growth in the importance of the family is a universal trend: there is no significant statistical difference related to the size of the settlement.

Table 9. The distribution of answers to the question: How important in your life is the following value? Family (response rate of “Very important” by settlement size), %

| Year | Under 5,000 | 5,001–100,000 | 100,000–500,000 | 500,000+ |
|------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|----------|
| 2000 | 75.8 | 76.3 | 82.9 | 81.0 |
| 2008 | 82.7 | 83.2 | 78.0 | 84.5 |
| 2017 | 91.3 | 89.7 | 86.5 | 90.1 |

Source: based on author’s calculations.

However, the situation does not look so universal when we speak about the attitudes towards marriage. People consider marriage as an outdated institution less often in all the settlement types, apart from the smallest one. In 2000 16.1% of inhabitants of the smallest settlements perceived marriage as outdated, while in 2017 the share increased to 20.6%. However, taking into consideration the relatively small sub-sample size, this difference is not statistically significant; but it is remarkable because in bigger settlements the trend is the opposite. This situation corresponds to the same characteristics of the oldest age groups. People in rural areas (the proportion of older people is higher there than in urban areas as well) could perceive the current changes in marriage more critically, that is why their answers differ from others’.

Table 10. The distribution of answers to the question: Do you agree with the statement, that marriage is an outdated social institution? (response rate of “Agree” by settlement size), %

| Year | Under 5,000 | 5,001–100,000 | 100,000–500,000 | 500,000+ |
|------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|----------|
| 2000 | 16.1 | 14.2 | 19.7 | 18.5 |
| 2008 | 13.5 | 21.9 | 20.0 | 18.8 |
| 2017 | 20.6 | 13.9 | 12.1 | 12.8 |

Source: based on author’s calculations.

In the case of readiness to have children, the trend in the largest cities differs from others. While in smaller settlements, as in Belarus in general, we can speak about the obvious strengthening of pronatalist views; in the largest cities, we see some decrease of the share of people who believe that it is an obligatory duty to have children. This can be explained with many factors: from the younger age structure of the population in Minsk to a better situation on the labour market and lifestyle specificity. However, in any case, we can assume that the further urbanisation of Belarus will change the trend from a growing pronatalist orientation to the opposite.

Table 11. The distribution of answers to the question: Do you agree with the statement, that it is a duty towards society to have children? (response rate of “Agree strongly” by settlement size), %

| Year | Under 5,000 | 5,001–100,000 | 100,000–500,000 | 500,000+ |
|------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|----------|
| 2008 | 21.5 | 19.4 | 18.0 | 22.5 |
| 2017 | 29.8 | 25.5 | 25.4 | 20.3 |

Source: based on author’s calculations.

In the final component of family values that we observed (the attitudes towards combining family and professional roles by women) we saw a symmetry between inhabitants of different settlement types: that fewer people support the idea of women staying at home without professional self-realisation.

Table 12. The distribution of answers to the question: Do you agree with the statement, that work is important but women really want a home and children? (response rate of “Agree strongly” by settlement size), %

| Year | Under 5,000 | 5,001–100,000 | 100,000–500,000 | 500,000+ |
|------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|----------|
| 2000 | 37.7 | 30.1 | 27.9 | 31.9 |
| 2008 | 15.9 | 19.4 | 16.3 | 17.8 |
| 2017 | 22.4 | 18.2 | 9.7 | 12.9 |

Source: based on author’s calculations.

Thus, the settlement type is significant for some trends in the transformation of family values, but some of them are universal for all the territories. To the second group of universal tendencies we can allocate the perception of the importance of the family in general (a trend towards traditional values) and at the same time the growing popularity of women combining professional and family roles (a trend towards modern values). However, the settlement size is important in the case of attitudes towards marriage (in the smallest settlements it is perceived as an outdated institution more often), and in the case of the necessity to have children (in large cities there is a decreasing amount of agreement that it is a duty for everybody).

Conclusion

The analysis of the influence of social-demographic factors on the transformation of family values we have conducted allows one to make the following conclusions:

1. In general, the younger people are, the more modern views they have; the same rule we can see in the case of settlement size (a bigger settlement is associated with less traditional views). That said, there is no such dependence in the case of groups with a lower or higher level of education.

2. Some of the trends are more or less universal, but some of them have specificity in the case of different social groups. The most universal trend for all the analysed social groups is the growing importance of the family, which is a sign of values traditionalization in the whole population.

3. Marriage is perceived as an outdated institution more rarely, and this is the sign of traditionalization as well. However, regardless of their more traditional views, older people and inhabitants of the smallest settlements are starting to think more often that marriage is an outdated institution. Probably, because of their personal traditional views on marriage differed from contemporary forms of family relations, their current views are getting more critical.

4. Over the course of their lives, people in Belarus become more supportive of pronatalist views. This is especially strongly pronounced in the group of people with just secondary education. The youngest group and inhabitants of the largest cities demonstrate the opposite trend. We assume that the growth of urbanisation may lead the youngest groups to changes that can stop the pronatalist tendency.

5. A strong attitude towards women combining family and professional roles distinguishes Belarusians from people in the neighbour countries; currently, it seems to be a universal trend for different age groups and type of settlements. At the same time, however, groups with secondary education demonstrate the opposite tendency: probably women in this group do not have a real possibility for professional self-realisation when they have a child, and they prefer to focus on the family.

6. Finally, we selected possible reasons for the transformation of family values. They include the position on the labour market, the perspective of professional self-realisation, and income growth. The more perspectives women have (especially in the largest cities), the fewer pronatalist views they express.

7. Both urbanisation and the growth of the education level among the current young generation could contribute to a decrease of pronatalist attitudes and an increase in the idea of women combining family and professional roles. Still, there are no visible signs to prove that family and marriage will be less important in the nearest future.

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Hongfei Gu

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7976-0341>

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, P.R.China

Institute of European Studies

e-mail: guhuf@cass.org.cn

Subnational actors in the relations between China and Central and Eastern European countries*

Abstract. While much discussion centres on China's engagement with Central and Eastern European countries, few studies investigate the role of subnational actors in the relations between the two sides. This paper brings China's cooperation with Central and Eastern European (CEECs) countries, centred around what is popularly known as the "16 + 1" mechanism. It aims to unravel the link between local governments and the "16 + 1" cooperation mechanism. Local governments' external cooperation is a new attempt in China's diplomatic layout. It argues that the exchanges between local governments are a useful supplement to the in-depth cooperation between the two sides, and the cooperation between the two sides has formed a relatively stable pattern. At present, it has entered the stage of an in-depth integration focusing on optimization and upgrading. The further development of local cooperation mainly depends on whether it can play a sufficient leading role in the economic development of China and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Keywords: China-CEE Relations, Local Government, China-Poland Relations.

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Introduction

Local government's external relations emerge in the context of the relationship between the central and the local governments. As an institutional distribution method, it appropriately alleviates the problem of uneven development domestically. As a part of China's internationalization process, the active involvement of China's local governments has knock-on effects on their surrounding areas. The existence of globalization enables local government cooperation to generate higher revenue expectations from global contacts.

The participation of local governments in international affairs has become an issue of concern in the development of China's foreign relations. As a sub-state actor, when the interest pursued at the local level is the same as that of the country, local governments act as a useful complement to the country's overall diplomatic strategy. Starting with the Bucharest Guideline in 2013, cooperation at the local level is encouraged and supported as one of the crucial pillars of China's cooperation with Central and Eastern European (CEECs) countries.

This article illustrates local cooperation between China and countries in Central and Eastern Europe. It is divided into three parts. The first part will briefly review the development of local cooperation between China and the CEECs. In the second part, the paper will examine the institutional arrangements of local cooperation to see how they have evolved, in terms of sister cities and city networks, and what has been achieved thus far. The third part will analyze the case of China-Europe Express, involving China's western Sichuan Province and Łódź in Poland as an example, and thus gain a realistic and detailed understanding of local cooperation in Sino-CEEC relations. The examination of this case not only reveals some fundamentally different understandings of economic changes brought by local governments but also indicates the challenges of China's future position and policy. The investigation of subnational actors' activities requires a comprehensive approach. Therefore, in this part of the study, data will be obtained through various reports issued by the Chinese and CEECs government, as well as data published on relevant websites.

Local cooperation between China and CEEC: An overview

It seems that by highlighting the strategic importance and opportunities of China with the "European" frontier, Chinese scholar Wang Jisi (2012) regards this "matching westwards" action as a rebalancing of geo-strategy by the Chinese government. In fact, Chinese policymakers took the opportunity to engage with the region almost immediately after the former Soviet republics become independent in

the early 1990s. Since then, China has made continued efforts to manage relations with Central and Eastern European countries through pursuing its interests and impacts in the region. What makes China's effort in the region different now is its practice of largely experimental multi-dimensional diplomacy. This practice centres on the "China-Central and Eastern European Countries Cooperation Mechanism" (generally referred to as 17 + 1 Cooperation Mechanism), a network that brings together China, eleven European Union member states: Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia; and four Candidate countries: Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia. Moreover, there is one potential candidate, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the academic literature on China-CEE relations little attention is placed, in terms of research, on the subnational dimension compared to traditional diplomatic issues. Although there are some empirical studies (Blatter *et al.*, 2008; Nagel, 2010; Tatham, 2016), they are concentrated rather on intra-European activities, not on relations with third countries. However, some recent publications have been trying to cover this phenomenon. T. Kamiński (2019) takes the case of the Lodzkie region's (Poland) cooperation with Sichuan Province in order to answer the question of what the factors behind the success of the Lodzkie region are. The primary motivation for this is to recognise the conditions that may play an important role in the process of building strong bilateral links between European and Chinese subnational units. Moreover, the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM, 2019) issued a report named *The Subnational Dimension of EU-China Relations*, it analysed selected case studies of European regions cooperating with Chinese partners. Besides this, D. Mierzejewski (2017) presents a picture of bilateral relations between Poland and China, so as to indicate the role of local governments in bilateral relations. Local authorities play an ever more critical role in shaping Poland-China relations. The author innovatively puts forward the role of local governments in the integration of the diplomatic relations between China and Poland. Furthermore, Chinese scholars (Liu 2017; Song 2017; Yuan, 2018) provide a systematic investigation, with a clearly defined overarching organizational framework for its vital research themes and questions. Apart from the local interactions, the above research omitted providing a timeframe for the relations between China and the CEECs in a systematic manner. In particular, the effect of local cooperation is not discussed in detail in the existing literature.

Local governments in international affairs have become an issue of concern in China's foreign relations. The local cooperation is another crucial dimension of China's tactics concerning Central and Eastern Europe. The Chinese leadership is determined to construct a "comprehensive, multilevel, multifaceted" approach for its diplomatic agenda for the new era. The frameworks are further elaborated in President Xi Jinping's report to the 19th National Congress of the Chinese Communist

Party in October 2017. The top Chinese leadership commits to the idea that China will continue to promote friendship and partnership with countries in Central and Eastern Europe, consolidate friendly relations and deepen mutually beneficial cooperation to ensure that China's development and policies bring more benefits to these partners. China is, therefore, putting an unusual focus on its relations, which places particular emphasis on local cooperation and marks Guidelines achieved in the past by both leaders. As a sub-state actor, when the interest pursued by the local level is the same as that of the country, local governments act in order to complement the country's overall diplomatic strategy. Starting with the Bucharest Guideline in 2013 (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013), cooperation at the local level is encouraged and supported as one of the crucial pillars of China-CEEC cooperation.

In this context, the willingness of Central and Eastern European countries to seek cooperation with countries such as China becomes increasingly stronger. Such changes in interdependence also contribute to the active participation of local governments. This also makes it possible for local governments to participate in international activities, and also provides favourable conditions for China to enter into the regions.

Central and Eastern European countries are closer to the EU in terms of culture and norms. Some of China's policy instruments (such as the \$10 billion special loans) still encounter problems with European Union law, resulting in China's investment and engineering contracting in the region still being mostly concentrated in non-access countries (such as the Balkan countries). In terms of investment preference, Central and Eastern European countries generally prefer greenfield investment, while China prefers the model of corporate mergers and acquisitions; for example, 86% of China's investment in Europe in 2016 was corporate mergers and acquisitions. As an increasingly internationalized and globalized world economy, local governments with enhanced economic functions can take advantage of opportunities embodied in internationalization to highlight their merits in low-level political agendas such as economics and culture.

Local cooperation provides China with the opportunity to integrate into the Central and Eastern European markets and to cooperate. Moreover, the lessons learned from the transformation and development of Central and Eastern European countries can provide a reference for China's reform. For example, Poland's experience in regional and urban management: local officials from Gdansk, Poland, and the visiting Chinese delegation have a strong interest in the city's taxation, finance, and sports facilities management. In addition, China's Guangxi Liugong Machinery and the HSW (Huta Stalowa Wola) Group in Stalowa Wola County, Poland, have reached agreements to establish a manufacturing and R&D base. The top bulldozer production line of Polish companies will help China further develop the Central and Eastern European markets (Huang, Liu, 2018).

In addition, after strong growth in 2017 and early 2018, global economic activity slowed notably in the second half of last year, the diversification of

development in various regions of Europe is further intensified. In particular, the situation in Ukraine and the refugee crisis highlights the difference between East and West Europe. The cohesive bonds that exist between the EU and European countries are gradually weakened, and the Central and Eastern European countries show that centrifugal force in the current refugee crisis. In this context, the trust of Central and Eastern European countries to China's promise is gradually "overdrawn", and the weakening of the institution also means that state power shifts at this regional level, such transferral correspondingly leads local governments to continue to search for it, so as to provide a driving force for deepening cooperation at the local level.

Moreover, the sixteen countries in Central and Eastern Europe have a total area of about 1.34 million square kilometres, which is close to 1/7 of China (World Bank, 2018). The total population is 123 million, which is close to 1/10 of China (World Bank, 2018). This scale is similar to the provincial units in China. In addition, the total trade volume with China is less than 1/10 of the total EU trade with China. Such a huge asymmetry also spawns the role of local governments in their broader participation in decision-making, implementation, and interest advancement. For example, Chinese narratives concerning cooperation with the CEE countries as an economic bridgehead of the "Belt and Road" Initiative (Kowalski, 2017). In recent years, China's Hebei, Chongqing, Chengdu, Suzhou, Ningbo, provinces, among other provinces or cities, have started to cooperate with the Central and Eastern European regions based on their local characteristics and open needs.

However, the localities of the sixteen countries in Central and Eastern Europe are complex, and economic status is different in their respective countries. For example, between China and Poland, the most important issue is the huge trade imbalance (Kamiński *et al.*, 2019), and China's huge trade volume inevitably cause a huge asymmetric impact. In addition, the complexity of local governments also creates uncertainty. When obstacles are detected on the Polish governmental side and the agreements from Xi Jinping's Warsaw visit are not properly implemented, the Chinese turn to the Polish local authorities, which are mainly held by the political parties who are in opposition to the current Polish government, and signs new agreements with them (Góralczyk, 2017).

As China's power grows, especially in its global strategy, China is exerting its ambitions even more proactively. China finds it much more useful to exercise its economic statecraft, for example, by providing preferential loans and constructing necessary infrastructure in return for market, energy and other resources. However, it cannot overlook that the Central and Eastern European countries have considerable differences regarding population, economic development levels, religious beliefs, and degrees of return to Europe. These differences will, to some extent, affect these countries as an entire region. This in turn largely determines the long-term sustainability of China's cooperation with Central and Eastern European countries.

Local cooperation in practice: Sister cities and city networks

At present, local cooperation is considered as the method with which cities or local governments aim at pursuing local interests and develop interactive relationships with other actors in the international political arena (Van der Pluijm, Melissen, 2007). Similar references to local cooperation include “city-to-city diplomacy”, “sister cities”, “local diplomacy”, “local foreign policy”, “sub-national government foreign affairs”. China’s local cooperation in practice arises in the context of the globalization era. It mainly comes from two reasons: first, as the country’s diplomatic system becomes more open, the local level gains more massive arena and abundant resources, it has appropriate diplomatic identities and plays a unique role in foreign affairs. Second, in the era of globalization, general foreign-related affairs are likely rising to become crucial for the overall situation. As a critical node connecting China and the world, cities play an essential role in dealing with related issues. Cities establish relations of international friendship so that their economic, scientific and cultural exchanges and cooperation can be facilitated.

For the city, the development of globalization completely changes in the country and even the world, so that the economic centres of each country more fall to the unit with the city as the main part. Globalization is increasingly enhancing the city’s resource allocation capabilities, while causing a global market demand for the role of cities. Pushed by the Internet information wave, that emerges simultaneously with globalization, it brings a broad flow space to the city and makes it possible for the city to participate on a global level. It jointly promotes the city’s participation in the global governance system, the city thus establishes a stable and sustainable connection with the international system.

Local cooperation has achieved prosperity development when promoting China-CEEC cooperation under multi-forms since the “China-CEEC” framework was established, i.e., Local Leaders Meetings, Working Meetings of China-CEEC Association of Provincial Governors, and Meetings of CEEC Capital Cities.

Table 1. Previous Local Cooperation Meetings between China and CEECs

| |
|---|
| Local Leaders’ Meeting |
| Chongqing, China (2013) |
| Prague, Czech Republic (2014) |
| Tangshan, China (2016) |
| Working Meeting for the China and CEEC Association of Provincial Governors |
| Langfang, China (2015) |
| Tangshan, China (2016) |
| Plovdiv, Bulgaria (2018) |

Forum for Mayors of CEEC Capital Cities

Sofia, Bulgaria (2016)

Podgorica, Montenegro (2017)

Belgrade, Serbia (2018)

Source: data collected by the author.

Local cooperation is represented by establishing city diplomatic ties, which has taken over the external affairs framework in the general sense. Chinese President Xi Jinping has called on the CPAFFC association (Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries) to innovate and explore ways to allow for more people-to-people exchanges, help build more sister cities and promote exchanges between localities. The local dimension is further elaborated in President Xi Jinping's report to the 19th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. Moreover, the number of friendly cities is increasing. According to CPAFFC association statistics, as of 2018, China and Central and Eastern European countries form 63 pairs of friendly cities at the provincial level, and at the city level. Meanwhile, some local universities or colleges set up language majors in Central and Eastern European countries to meet the demand for talent. Second, with the promotion of bilateral local cooperation, direct flights facilitate bilateral economic, trade, and personnel exchanges between Chinese cities and CEE countries. At the same time, various cities in China and Central and Eastern Europe have opened freight rail-routes, such as Suzhou-Warsaw, Yiwu-Riga, Chengdu-Lodz (Poland), Wuhan-Pardubice (Czech Republic), and Changsha-Budapest.

Sister cities

The prominent role of Chinese cities in external exchanges, especially furthering the work of sister cities, is carried out with the aim of reform and opening up trade routes (Chen, 2001). The need for foreign exchanges brings a huge adjustment in the relationship between the central and local governments. Local governments become important participants in China's foreign affairs. Chinese cities have taken on the most active role in participating in diplomacy following decentralization. The construction of international friendship cities also become the main way for Chinese cities to realize their foreign exchange functions.

In addition, with the deepening of regional integration, the exchanges between cities provide a new platform and act as a conduit for urban and rural cooperation between Chinese and foreign cities. Many cities in China are also promoting the development of urban foreign exchange under the mechanism of

multilateral regional cooperation. In this process, sister cities have done a lot of work to attract foreign investment, introduce projects, and expand exchanges. At the same time, there are many opportunities for cooperation in the construction of soft environment, environmental protection, and sustainable development among cities in adjacent areas.

The expansion of China's sister cities in the international geospatial context is in fact synchronized with the process of China's integration into the world system. Historical and cultural factors are the most important factors influencing the development of friendly cities. This is the most effective entry point for China, which is just beginning full contact with the world, to surpass the political obstacles at the time and promote cooperation between cities. With the deepening of China's reform and the opening up of its market, economic factors have become the main driving force for friendly city exchanges since the 1990s. This can be proved from the geographical distribution of China's sister cities. The closer to the globalized regions, the friendlier cities are able to move toward depth and breadth of relations, and the more advanced the level of urban modernization. This fully reflects the interaction between globalization and urbanization factors in the development of sister cities. In recent years, friendly city exchanges increasingly become the main means of coordinating the country's overall diplomacy. Therefore, developing a friendly city is not only to shape the international image of the city, to promote the history and culture of the city; but also to promote the overall internationalization strategy of the city by carrying out humanities exchanges, and to laying the foundation for the development of the city from both economic and cultural aspects.

The local governmental engagement between China and the Central and Eastern European countries began on June 18th, 1980. Shanghai and Zagreb, the capital city of Croatia, officially became sister cities. Since then, China has started its local interaction with Central and Eastern European countries. However, the progress between China and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe is not always entirely prosperous. For example, when we look at the statistics of the sister cities for friendship, there are three significant problems in China's city relations with Central and Eastern European countries. First, the overall quantity remains at a low level compared with other areas. Second, it stagnates in some years. Third, they are unevenly distributed in China and vice versa.

International friendship cities can also be called sister cities, since the mainland of China started its friendly city activities in 1973. As of December 31st, 2018, they account for a total of 2,532 pairs of sister cities in 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities (excluding Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao) with 136 countries. Among these friendly relationships, a total of 164 friendly cities are established within CEE countries.

Table 2. Friendly Cities between China and CEE until 31.12.2017

| Country | Province | City | Sum |
|------------------------|----------|-------|-------|
| Albania | 0□ | 2 | 2 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Bulgaria | 1 | 10 | 11 |
| Croatia | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| Czech Republic | 9 | 4 | 12 |
| Hungary | 19 | 19 | 35 |
| Latvia | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| Lithuania | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| Macedonia | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Montenegro | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Poland | 13 | 23 | 36 |
| Romania | 18 | 15 | 33 |
| Serbia | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| Slovakia | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Slovenia | 0□ | 4 | 4 |
| CEE-total | 63 | 101 | 164 |
| Europe-total | 261 | 643 | 904 |
| World-total | 650 | 1,882 | 2,531 |

Source: data collected from the China International Friendship Cities Association (CIFCA), <http://english.cifca.org.cn/> (accessed 1.01.2018).

As of January 2018, China and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have jointly formed 164 friendship cities (including voivodeship) relations. However, from the perspective of Europe (including 27 EU countries and 5 Central and Eastern European countries that have not yet obtained formal membership), the 16 countries account for 50% of the total number of Europe, but the number of sister cities accounts for only about 18%. From a global perspective, Central and Eastern European countries accounted for only about 6.5% of all the 136 countries. This is still inconsistent with the prospects for the development of bilateral relations.

Moreover, in the past years, despite the fact that annual quantity shows an overall upward tendency, there is also a stagnation period in the early stages. The figure below shows the changes in the number of China and CEE sister cities each year.

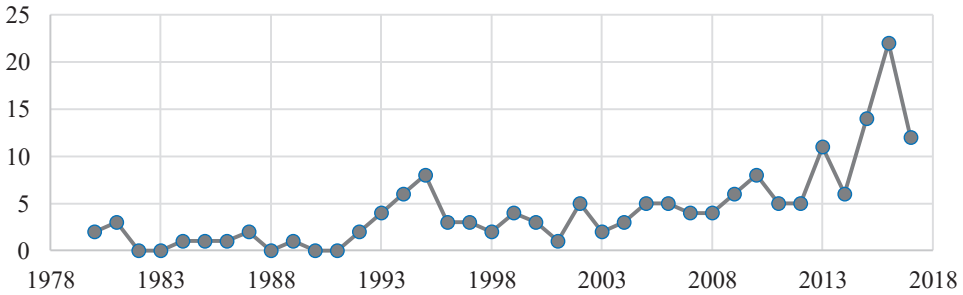


Figure 1. Amount China and CEE Friendship Cities (1980–2018)

Source: data collected from the China International Friendship Cities Association (CIFCA), <http://english.cifca.org.cn/> (accessed 1.01.2018).

In 2016, the number of sister city friendships reached a peak of 22 pairs, but during the other years there was still fluctuating and small numbers, and even stagnant phenomena such as from 1990 to 1991. The reason why this problem occurs is that there is a specific correlation between the dynamic changes in the relations between China and Central and Eastern European countries: for example, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the political turmoil in China in 1989. On the other hand, the visits of Chinese President Xi Jinping Poland, Czech Republic, Serbia, and other countries in Central and Eastern Europe have helped to further cooperation. Also, after the occurrence of political protests in China, the relationship between sister cities has gradually resumed. It also shows that city diplomacy, as a semi-official form, can make a useful contribution to the maintenance of bilateral relations even when they are not normalized, and can be a useful supplement to bilateral diplomatic strategies.

Regarding the geographical distribution of friendly cities, the 31 mainland provinces (municipalities, autonomous regions), excluding Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan, are ranked as follows:

Table 3. Friendly Cities between China and CEE until 2018 in Provinces

| Province | Quantity | GDP (bln) | Share (%) | Population |
|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Guangdong | 14 | 7,951.21 | 10.69 | 104,303,132 |
| Jiangsu | 12 | 7,608.62 | 10.22 | 78,659,903 |
| Henan | 10 | 4,016 | 5.4 | 94,023,567 |
| Shanghai | 9 | 2,746.62 | 3.69 | 23,019,148 |
| Hubei | 9 | 3,229.79 | 4.34 | 57,237,740 |
| Heilongjiang | 8 | 1,538.61 | 2.07 | 38,312,224 |
| Shandong | 8 | 6,700.82 | 9 | 95,793,065 |
| Beijing | 7 | 2,489.93 | 3.35 | 19,612,368 |

| | | | | |
|----------------|---|----------|------|------------|
| Guangxi | 7 | 1,824.51 | 2.45 | 19,612,368 |
| Fujian | 6 | 2,851.92 | 3.83 | 36,894,216 |
| Hainan | 6 | 404.45 | 0.54 | 8,671,518 |
| Shaanxi | 6 | 1,916.54 | 2.58 | 37,327,378 |
| Sichuan | 6 | 3,268.05 | 4.39 | 80,418,200 |
| Hebei | 5 | 3,182.79 | 4.28 | 71,854,202 |
| Liaoning | 5 | 2,203.79 | 2.96 | 43,746,323 |
| Jiangxi | 5 | 1,836.44 | 2.47 | 44,567,475 |
| Gansu | 4 | 715.2 | 0.96 | 25,575,254 |
| Hunan | 4 | 3,124.47 | 4.2 | 65,683,722 |
| Ningxia | 4 | 315.01 | 0.42 | 6,176,900 |
| Tianjin | 3 | 1,788.54 | 2.4 | 12,938,224 |
| Shanxi | 3 | 1,292.83 | 1.74 | 35,712,111 |
| Jilin | 3 | 1,488.62 | 2 | 27,462,297 |
| Zhejiang | 3 | 4,648.5 | 6.25 | 54,426,891 |
| Anhui | 3 | 2,411.79 | 3.24 | 59,500,510 |
| Yunnan | 3 | 1,487 | 2 | 45,966,239 |
| Inner Mongolia | 2 | 1,863.26 | 2.5 | 24,706,321 |
| Guizhou | 2 | 1,173.44 | 1.58 | 34,746,468 |
| Qinghai | 2 | 257.25 | 0.35 | 5,626,722 |
| Chongqing | 1 | 1,755.88 | 2.36 | 28,846,170 |
| Tibet | 0 | NA | NA | NA |
| Xinjiang | 0 | NA | NA | NA |

Note: Data for Xinjiang and Tibet are not available. Also, Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan are excluded.

Source: the data comes from the World Bank (2018) and CIFCA (2018).

Regarding statistical data and geographical distribution, the provinces with the most sister cities (five or more), except Sichuan, are mostly located in the eastern part of China. Cities in networks tend to have both a hierarchical system and a spatial concentration primarily in regions such as Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei, Yangtze River Delta, and the Pearl River Delta region. Moreover, urban networks, under the framework of “Belt and Road”, show several significant corridors and more opportunities for more cities, particularly western cities. For example, Guizhou Province, which is developing the big data industry; in fact, the government of Pomerania Province (Województwo Pomorskie) has already cooperated with Guizhou Province in this regard. Also, the Chinese Ministry of

Foreign Affairs holds several events promoting local provinces to the global media. This was the case for Sichuan in 2016, Minister Wang Yi stressed that,

Sichuan is Connected with Central Asian and European countries to the West, aligned with the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor to the north, integrated in the China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor to the south, as well as reaching the golden waterway of Yangtze River to the east, Sichuan boasts broad prospects in its blueprint for comprehensively opening-up (China MFA, 2016).

City network

A network, as an organizational model that promotes collective action, serves as a global governance approach. The American scholar Zeev Maoz (2009) states that “international relations have become a network relationship”. Moreover, the concept of “network power” has come to exist (Grewal, 2011). As an emerging player, the city is involved in various transnational social networks in the era of globalization.

China and Central and Eastern European countries have relatively little cooperation in transnational city networks; however, such initiatives as Global Cities Dialogue, UCLG, Organization of World Heritage Cities, and Mayors for Peace cover many countries in CEEC. China and CEE countries under these networks collaborate on related issues. For example, Guangzhou, one of China’s UCLG chairman cities, have been discussing cooperation issues with Lodz in urban governance issues in 2017

Table 4. China and CEE Countries in City Networks

| Organization | Date of Founding | Number of CEEC | Number of China | Remarks |
|--|------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Global Cities Dialogue | 1999 | 13 | 2 | City Development |
| World Association of Major Metropolises (Metropolis) | 1985 | 4 | 19 | City Development |
| Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) | 2005 | 1 | 12 | Climate Change |
| Regions of Climate Action (R20) | 2010 | 2 | 1 | Climate Change |
| United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) | 2004 | 16 | 20 | Comprehensive |
| Organization of World Heritage Cities | 1993 | 14 | 6 | Culture |
| UNESCO Creative Cities Network | 2004 | 8 | 4 | Culture |

| | | | | |
|---|------|----|---|-------------------------|
| World e-Governments Organization of Cities and Local Governments (WeGO) | 2008 | 1 | 7 | Information Technology |
| International Association for Peace Messenger Cities | 1988 | 9 | 1 | Social Issues |
| Mayors for Peace | 1982 | 16 | 7 | Social Issues |
| Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) | 1990 | 9 | 1 | Sustainable Development |

Source: summarized by the author.

China and CEE countries are participating in transnational city networks. From a spatial perspective, cooperation in a transnational city network covers different spatial scopes, including the cross-border urban network between Asia and Europe, and also involves participation in multinational city network cooperation such as UCLG. The Chinese central government retains significant control over foreign affairs at the local level. For instance, the state-organized “Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries” coordinates Chinese cities’ participation in UCLG. China and Central and Eastern European countries have limited local cooperation through their participation in transnational city networks. It needs to be particularly pointed out that it is still difficult to judge whether there are apparent interactions between China and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in these networks.

For the participants, i.e., local governments (cities), non-governmental organizations, bilateral or multilateral development agencies, and academic and research institutions, the primary focus is on the low-politics field, especially on environmental protection and sustainable development. Due to its cross-border and diffuse nature, environmental issues become one of the most critical issues for network governance, followed by urban construction issues. At the same time, cooperation in the fields of tourism, culture, economy, and trade, and logistics. It reflects a substantial economic interest orientation. Most urban networks have a strong continuity of cooperation: the standing meetings of each mechanism are being operated for more than ten years, and this continuity is an essential guarantee of effectiveness.

Meanwhile, the merits of network cooperation are its non-binding property. Taking environmental cooperation as an example, China and Central and Eastern European countries have not formed a binding institutional framework based on the treaty system for environmental cooperation. The governance network with local governments (cities) as the leading player is more flexible and can solve common concerns through the use of voluntariness, mutual benefit, and consultation. This kind of cooperation at the local level has its own flexibility and advantages, and it provides a fundamental role in promoting overall regional integration.

Such network cooperation emphasizes the participation of multiple actors and has significant governance characteristics. As the information exchange and dissemination centre, the city is also the core area of information production. Non-government actors can rely on the city to participate in the global governance process. Moreover, the city can participate in the global civil society through non-governmental actors. For example, during the operation of UCLG, it divides into different sections according to regions, and the participation of actors in different fields is fully mobilized.

Finally, the network can promote mutual learning and consensus among participants. For example, the participation of organizations such as the C40 and UCLG gains experience for the development of sustainable urbanization in China and CEE countries, it provides a basis for cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European countries.

China started relatively late in the process of participating in transnational city networks, and their progress is relatively sluggish. However, the transnational city network is a new trend of local cooperation between China and CEE countries. It helps cities to communicate with each other and share successful practices and governance experience. It also helps to solve the common problems of both cities.

Case study: Chengdu and Lodz – A local dimension

The subnational relations of Polish regions with Chinese partners are distinctive to some extent. In particular, the cooperation between the Lodzkie region (and its capital city of Lodz) and Sichuan (and its capital city Chengdu) serves as an example of the success of a CEEC region developing strong links with China. It is presented in numerous analytical publications and media reports in Europe (Casarini, 2015; Mierzejewski, 2017; Shepard, 2016; Szczudlik, 2015; Tiezzi, 2016; Kamiński, 2019).

For Poland, the present Polish government desires to change the current *status quo*; and the development of relations with Asia, especially China, is conducive to mitigating diplomatic pressure. Therefore, Poland regards Asia as a new target of its external affairs. Moreover, regarding infrastructural initiatives, the President of the Republic of Poland and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs opens Poland to China as potentially its largest investor and largest market outside the EU. Poland has an opportunity to assume the role of a hub (main distribution centre) for Chinese exports to Europe under the Chinese “Belt and Road” Initiative (Grajewski, 2017).

At the same time, although the economies of China and Poland still maintain an upward trend, the downward pressure on the economy is increasing. China and Poland stated clearly in the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Declaration in

2016 their wish to expand cooperation between the central and local governments of both countries.

Local cooperation is an essential driving force and a new growth point for the comprehensive development of China-Poland relations. Under the impetus of the governments of China and Poland, the China-Poland Local Cooperation Forum, an important symbol of local cooperation between China and Poland, has held six sessions in Guangzhou (2014), Wuhan (2017) and Chengdu (2018) in China, as well as in Gdansk (2013), Lodz (2015) and Warsaw (2016). The local forum continuously expands the cooperation between the two countries in the fields of culture, education, and tourism. In this context, Lodz, a city in the centre of Poland, has ambitions of becoming a transport hub for reloading goods (Mierzejewski, 2017), this coincides with the development strategy of Chengdu.

The Sichuan and Lodzkie provinces signed friendly cooperation agreements at provincial and city levels on June 29th, 2015 and April 29th, 2016 respectively. Lodzkie and Sichuan provinces established friendly relations and the Lodzkie capital of Łódź becomes a friendly city with Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province. Such cooperation between Sichuan and Łódź has been in tandem with China-Poland relations at the national level.

According to China's Xinhua News Agency, in 2014 and 2015, Chengdu and Lodz, the capital cities of Sichuan and the Lodzkie region, were awarded the China-Poland Friendly Cooperation Award by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries in terms of praising the intensive pragmatic cooperation between partners. Currently, Poland is Sichuan's largest trading partner in Central and Eastern Europe, despite the fact that the Sichuan and Lodzkie provinces are completely different in terms of the economic scale. That said, both from an economic and social development level the two provinces are becoming more and more alike. To further cooperation, the Sichuan province in Southwest China is now facilitating cooperation and exchanges with more countries and regions along the Belt and Road, with an intercontinental railway network connecting it to Europe and other parts of Asia. The route stretches 9,826 kilometres, almost along the ancient Silk Road, linking Chengdu with Lodz, an emerging European logistics hub in Poland.

Table 5. Lodz Voivodeship and Sichuan (and Chengdu) in Area, Population, and GDP

| Specification | Lodz Voivodeship | Sichuan | Chengdu |
|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Area (km ²) | 18,219 | 486,000 | 14,312 |
| Population (million) | ≈2.48 (2017) | ≈83.02 (2017) | ≈16.04 (2017) |
| GDP (billion euro) | 25.8 (2017) | 469.41 (2018) | 176.31 (2018) |
| GDP <i>per capita</i> (euro) | 18,600 (2017) | 5,668.85 (2018) | 9,770.76 (2018) |

Source: Statistical Office in Lodz (US w Łodzi) and Statistical Bureau of Sichuan.

The “Rong-Ou+” (Chengdu-Europe) Plan

In most cases, Central and Eastern European countries export raw materials to European markets, and these countries export their goods to China. Thus, Central and Eastern European countries' exports to China are underestimated. In recent years, the opening of the Rong-ou Express Railway enabled the two sides to improve their import and export trade. Due to the spectacular failure of the first attempt at the construction of Poland's A2 motorway by China Railway Engineering Corp (CREC), the Chengdu-Lodz railway did not attract much attention at the beginning. In May 2013, Hatrans, a local logistics services company in Lodz, launched the first regular railway container connection between Chengdu and Lodz. Within three years, the interest of customers increased significantly and subsequently an increase in the frequency of use (Jandula, 2016).

The achievement of the Lodz regional authorities in establishing a connection with various Chinese regions and being potentially able to reach to Chinese markets has significant implications. The arrival of the first cargo train from China on the 2nd January 2013, after a 2-week journey, the arrival of 41 carriages, mostly filled with electronics, was welcomed with hopes that the Lodzkie region could become a significant regional transportation hub.

It may turn out that rail transport is competitively priced with sea transport. In China, many factories are located in the interior of the continent, thus for the transportation of goods by sea reloading takes place, which incurs additional payments. Then in the European ports, it is necessary to reload the cargo in order to transport it further around the continent. Therefore, in the case of a freight train which sets off from Chengdu to Lodz, the whole duration of the trip decreases by one-third compared to sea transportation, and the cargo size is increased by a quarter.

The “Rong-ou+” strategy accelerates the construction of Chengdu International Railway Port and promotes the construction of its logistics, manufacturing, and service industry. The railway created a new bridgehead across Eurasian corridors. As of the first half of 2018, Rong'ou Express Railway (Chengdu-Lodz) operates 153 lines, it fulfils the goal of the daily operation, and carries a total of 5,906 containers. The European terminus extends to Nuremberg in Germany and Tilburg in the Netherlands, and an overseas company and Polish office in Lodz has been established. From the perspective of Sichuan's trade volume with Europe, the effect of the “Rong-ou+” strategy is significant. The proportion of Sichuan's cumulative imports from Europe to Sichuan has increased from 12.9% in 2017 to 13.8% in 2018. The proportion of exports to Europe is maintained at about 18%. Also, the transit time from Chengdu to Lodz is only about ten days; it is lower than the average of 13 days for all China-EU freight trains. It operates 11 services a week (six outwards and five inwards), it achieves bidirectional operation.

By the end of 2018, the Rong-Ou express railway had boosted Sichuan's total import and export trade by nearly 4 billion US dollars. In 2018, the total import and export volume of Sichuan-Poland exceeded US\$230 million, a year-on-year increase of 74%. Moreover, with the support of the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine, Sichuan actively set up a designated port for the entry into the airport. In 2018, the first batch of Polish apples was successfully exported to China through Chengdu.

Sichuan Province and Chengdu City have strengthened the mechanism of exchange visits while establishing new mechanisms and platforms, i.e., the Chengdu international railway port and free trade zone. Since 2013, Chengdu international railway port has been continuously upgraded with the Chengdu-Europe Express Railway. Since 2017, the Qingbaijiang railway port in Sichuan inland free trade zone has been successfully approved, it became the first free trade zone area which relies on railway ports to be established.

The Chengdu-Europe Express Railway is an essential instrument for Chengdu to expand its relations with Poland and even Europe. The relationship between Sichuan and Lodz has accelerated since the opening of the "Rong-ou" Express. In 2014, the Lodzkie Province set up an Economic and Trade Representative Office in Chengdu (becoming Poland's second economic and trade representative office in China, after Shanghai) alongside Chengdu's EU Project Innovation Center. In 2015, the Polish Consulate General in Chengdu officially opened, which is Poland's third consulate general in mainland China. Later, Chengdu and Lodz formally signed a friendship city agreement. On November 22, 2018, Poland's economic and trade representative office in Chengdu was inaugurated at the China-Europe Center in the Chengdu High-tech Zone. It enables the representative office to greatly promote investment between the two sides and provide a platform for cooperation in aviation, supermarkets, railways, containers and other fields.

At present, Chengdu and Lodz National Economic Development Zone have signed a strategic cooperation agreement, and the two sides have in-depth cooperation in building a major international logistics channel. With the opening of Chengdu-Europe Express Railway, Sichuan has become the fastest-growing region in China's western provinces. The Rong-Ou Express Railway has connected Sichuan to Europe's major transportation arteries.

Challenges and opportunities for local governments

The goal of local governments to create favourable conditions for the opening and operation of a China-Europe express was mainly to reduce freight costs, so that the China-Europe express can play an active role in overcoming local development obstacles and foster new economic growth points in local provinces and cities.

However, despite the continued willingness of the two sides to cooperate at the local level, regardless of whether this can be sustainability achieved, many problems that hinder development are also encountered. As mentioned earlier, there is a huge asymmetry in the economic scale of both sides. Take the China-Europe express between Chengdu and Lodz as an example. First of all, in the freight cooperation between the two sides, the target market is not subdivided according to commodity cost, time, scale and other factors. On the contrary, in order to maintain or increase the number of trains to transport all technically feasible goods indiscriminately, the operation quality is reduced and the ability for sustainable development is restricted. As a result, some cities in China mainly rely on low prices to compete for the supply of goods.

Secondly, although the existing coordination mechanism has played an important role in promoting the development of China-EU express, its defects also restrict the development of trains. For China, the prominent contradictions between the central and local governments, line platform companies, domestic carriers and other domestic entities are one of the main factors restricting the improvement of the development quality of China-Europe express. The existing coordination mechanism relies more on initiative guidance than enforcement norms to exert its influence. It is difficult to play a significant role in resolving conflicts between the relevant local interests of industries, politics and economy.

Finally, the transport infrastructure in the countries along the route from Chengdu to Lodz is, to varying degrees, backward. These countries either have slow train operation speeds, due to ageing tracks and a state of disrepair of the railways, or have difficulty in keeping up with the increasing demand between China and Poland (and Europe) due to insufficient locomotives, less equipment for changing trains, less line layout, etc.

Therefore, the cooperation and interaction between the two sides at the local level, represented by China-Europe express, need to continue to supplement and establish specific working systems and norms of coordination mechanisms at the transnational, domestic and industry levels, and at the same time, it is necessary to establish an emergency mechanism to deal with unexpected problems so as to provide a basis for better coordination and resolution of obstacles to operation.

Conclusion

In the 40 years since the reform and opening up of CEE countries, local exchanges and cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European countries have gone through ups and downs. The “16 + 1 Cooperation” initiative launched in 2012 has gradually formed local leaders’ meetings, “Capital Mayors’

Forum”, Sister-city cooperation, the China-Europe Express and other platforms. Cities in China’s Sichuan, Zhejiang, and Hebei provinces, and cities in Central and Eastern Europe, such as Warsaw (Poland) and Lodz (Poland), have been active in participating in and advancing “16 + 1” local cooperation.

However, there is still room for further improvement in “16 + 1” local cooperation. Such as the demonstration effect and the scale of the economy must be highlighted, country differences should be highly valued, and multilateral cooperation platforms need to be further expanded. There are currently 164 pairs of friendly cities between China and Central and Eastern European countries. However, these friendly cities also have obvious deficiencies, such as insufficient quality of economic and trade cooperation, fewer cultural exchange activities of personnel, less coordination and cooperation between friendly cities, less substantive cooperation, a single exchange mode and the concentration of twinning in provincial capitals or state locations. At the same time, communication is in a more procedural and routine stage. Some cities do not have enough participation in the “16 + 1 cooperation” initiative and their overall influence in central and eastern Europe is relatively weak. Therefore their role in China-central and eastern Europe cooperation is also negligible.

It may be possible to build a cooperative network of friendly cities between China and Central and Eastern Europe, promote cultural and personnel exchanges in friendly cities in-depth, and form a regular exchange mechanism for friendly cities. For example, to strengthen complementary cooperation in specific economic fields, support sister cities in Central and Eastern European countries to host and provide assistance to the “16 + 1” local leaders’ meetings, and actively invite more sister cities to cooperate in the EU and international networks in order to broaden local cooperation channels to further enhance the sustainability of cooperation.

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Victor Laputsky

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2514-9608>

Belarusian State University, Minsk, Belarus

Department of Social Communication

e-mail: valnoros@gmail.com

The adaptation of students during academic mobility processes: The case of Belarus

Abstract. The article describes the experience of Belarus in the field of international academic mobility. The purpose of the article is to reveal the theoretical and methodological aspects of the internationalization of higher education and academic mobility and describe the current situation on the integration of Belarus into the international context, from a sociological and statistical perspective. In view of the significant number of Belarusian students in Polish and Eastern European universities, the topic is relevant in the context of the study of academic mobility in Eastern Europe. As part of the first task, the theoretical aspects of studying the internationalization of higher education in the country are described – with justification for the development of both the external and internal internationalization, as well as a description of various types of students' adaptation when studying abroad (academic, linguistic, socio-cultural). As part of the second task, the results of the author's sociological study are presented, which includes two main components. Firstly, the results of a survey devoted to the study of the views of Belarusian students regarding academic mobility (including cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects) are presented. Secondly, the results of a series of in-depth interviews among participants in the processes of academic mobility aimed at studying the practices of Belarusian students staying abroad for educational purposes are considered. The studies showed the need to increase the awareness of Belarusian students about the possibilities of academic mobility (the vast majority of students have incomplete or fragmented ideas about the possibilities of academic mobility), as well as the problem of the incomplete involvement of the Belarusian higher education system in the international context (the activity of students participating in exchange programs is not counted at Belarusian

universities). In accordance with the results, recommendations are given for the further integration of the Belarusian higher education system into the international context.

Keywords: international cooperation in education, Belarus, academic mobility, academic adaptation.

Introduction

Over the past ten years, the process of integrating Belarus's educational system into the international context has become a hot topic in Belarusian institutions of higher education. Furthermore, the inclusion of Belarus in the Bologna process is an additional challenge for the education sector (Titarenko, Zaslavskaja, 2019: 102). At the same time, the involvement of universities in the European educational space can become one of the main ways to activate the work of educational institutions and stimulate positive changes in the education system of the Republic of Belarus.

The annual data on Belarusians going abroad for educational purposes differ depending on the source of the data. For example, according to one monitoring study, the Eurostudent V international project, no more than 1% of Belarusian students participate in academic mobility (*The concept of the development...*, 2016). According to other data, annually more than 3.5 thousand students and more than 3.7 thousand pedagogical workers of Belarus go abroad as part of academic mobility (*Education in the Republic of Belarus*, 2019). The small percentage of Belarusian students studying abroad indicates that the level of involvement of the educational system of Belarus in the processes of academic mobility is low.

Belarusian students participate in academic mobility during international educational programs (ERASMUS+, IAESTE, LINGUA, etc.) and interstate and inter-university agreements. It is noteworthy that, firstly, these programs have a small focus, and, secondly, Belarus is more a consumer of academic mobility services than an exporter. For example, in 2015 there were 153 Belarusian students who completed placements in foreign universities participating in the Erasmus+ program, while only 22 foreign students visited the Belarusian universities themselves, under the program. Poland is one of the leading Erasmus+ participants, with more than 4 thousand students and staff annually (*Erasmus...*, 2013). The insignificant share of the exchange programs participants indicates that Belarus is still at the initial stage of integration into the international education system (*The concept of the development...*, 2016).

At the same time, despite the small number of Belarusian students studying abroad, there is a certain positive trend. In comparison to 2011, the number of Belarusian students who participated in international academic exchange programs increased by 86% (*Education in the Republic of Belarus*, 2019). The

greatest number of Belarusian students were recorded in Russia, Lithuania, and Poland. In Russia, for 2018/2019, 7.3 thousand Belarusian students were enrolled at various levels of education (*Russian statistical yearbook*, 2018). The large number of Belarusians in Russian universities is due to the low number of barriers for studying abroad, similar higher education systems, and no need for linguistic and sociocultural adaptation.

Polish universities are second in popularity among Belarusians. According to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland, in the academic year 2018/2019, 7,314 Belarusian citizens studied in Poland. Only Ukraine has more students in Poland: Ukrainians make up about 50% (39,203 people) of the total number of foreign students in Poland. Given the number of residents of both countries (Belarus: 9.5 million, Ukraine: 47 million), the share of Belarusian students in Poland is almost two times higher than in the case of Ukrainian youth (*Higher education institutions...*, 2018). Universities in Poland are usually chosen by those Belarusians who have Polish roots. Such students can count on free admission and even a scholarship from the Polish universities. “The Study in Poland” program annually organises an Education and Career educational exhibition, which takes place in the capital of Belarus. The small number of barriers results in a constant flow of Belarusian students studying at Polish universities.

The internationalization of higher education: theoretical aspects

The theoretical frame of studying educational internationalization in this article is based on the theories of globalization by R. Robertson and P. Sztompka. R. Robertson (one of the main theorists of globalization and a lecturer at the University of Aberdeen) considers globalization in the cultural sphere as “glocalization” (this term is also used by other theorists of globalization – Z. Bauman, B. Wellman, etc.), i.e. the process of preserving and developing the local characteristics of any territory against the background of the influence of globalization processes. Such optics are relevant in the case of considering the integration of countries into international educational cooperation – despite being involved, they retain local features (Robertson, 1992). According to P. Sztompka (professor of sociology at the Jagiellonian University and the author of the theory of social trust), the involvement of the national higher education system in the global context can be considered as a traumatic situation leading to ambiguous consequences. The transformation of a country’s higher education system under international influence can lead both to positive changes and to the deformation of the existing system. It creates the risk of incomplete involvement in a global context – which could potentially lead to a state of

trauma in the system (Sztompka, 2000: 450). The impossibility of achieving a unified social space in the field of education makes relevant the studying of both the internationalization of the country's higher education system and the adaptation of participants in academic exchanges.

According to P. Altbach (the founding director of the Boston College Center for International Higher Education), the internationalization of higher education involves the verification of knowledge acquired by students at universities outside the country; increases their mobility; and contributes to the exchange of knowledge between countries or universities, which positively affects the socio-economic development of the countries. Educational integration allows a country hosting foreign students to receive additional funds, through international programs and payment for educational services by foreign students. As a result, integrative processes can be useful both for individual young people studying abroad, and for the universities and the state (Altbach, 2001: 6).

In OECD studies, the internationalization of higher education is seen as "a process through which interactions at the level of government, higher education institutions, social groups and individuals receive an international dimension" (Knight, 2015: 1). The result of this process is the formation of a new educational environment, which is a synthesis of the best achievements of the foreign education system and the specifics of the social structure, economy, politics, and traditions of the state.

Conceptually, the implementation of this process provides for the updating of two aspects: internal and external (Stukalova *et al.*, 2015: 276). Internal internationalization implies the creation of a culture and climate directly within the educational institution, within which there is an intercultural and interethnic understanding. This process includes the implementation of all academic programs, projects, and studies, which contain an international dimension through their compliance with international standards, the attracting of foreign developments, or through joint implementation with foreign partners. External internationalization covers the process of exporting educational services to foreign countries through various educational technologies and through agreements between countries and between universities (Stukalova *et al.*, 2015: 276).

In the context of internationalization, participants in the processes of academic mobility themselves play an important role. P. Osipov (the professor of Kazan National Research Technological University) shares the idea of considering participants in various educational programs or processes of academic mobility as acting subjects. Analysing the internationalization of education in Russia, the author emphasizes that the current state of Russian universities from the point of view of international activity does not meet the goals. Osipov notes that "there are no significant barriers to the international activities of teachers and students in Russian realities. The question of the state of international activity of Russian

universities is reduced to the question of abilities (professional competencies) and the motivation of potential participants”. This statement leads to the conclusion about “the important status of participants in academic mobility as active actors in the internationalization of education” (Osipov, Ziatdinova, 2017: 66).

In educational integration, both participants of academic mobility processes (students, staff) and the organizations that regulate their activities (universities, states) act as agents that contribute to the success of the process. Participants in the processes of academic mobility in the future contribute to its further intensification (both through the implementation of the experience gained abroad and its transfer of experience to potential participants in this process) (Wende, 2015: 85; Campbell, 2015: 287).

In the context of educational integration, the issue of the adaptation of participants in this process is relevant. It is not enough to attract foreign students or specialists to the country. It is necessary to create a comfortable environment, both from an educational point of view (the adaptation of the curriculum, the educational process) and from the social one (ensuring living conditions in the country). The process of integrating education can't be effective without social technologies aimed at providing favourable conditions both for international and local students, participating in the academic mobility processes (Laputsky, 2019: 99).

In the case of educational integration, representatives in the field of educational sociology distinguish three areas of adaptation: academic, linguistic, and sociocultural. The adaptation of foreign students to the new environment consists of certain stages: entering the student environment; mastering the basic norms of a multi-ethnic group; developing one's own style of behaviour; forming a stable positive attitude towards the future profession; overcoming the “language barrier”; and reinforcing a sense of academic equality. The above components are in close interconnection, and each foreign student, when entering a university whose studies are in a foreign language, is faced with the task of simultaneously adapting in three areas at once (Sakhieva *et al.*, 2015: 257).

Academic adaptation relates to the pace of adaptation of an educational migrant to the conditions of study at a foreign higher education institution and country. It includes adapting to the new pedagogical system; following the formal requirements of the educational process; as well as mastering the types and organizational forms of educational activity. An educational migrant, in the framework of academic adaptation, is faced with the need to simultaneously adapt to the faculty, administration, dormitory standards, and study group, which imposes certain restrictions on him at the beginning of his studies at the university. (Cheng, Fox, 2008: 308).

Linguistic adaptation takes place when training in a foreign institution is not conducted in the native language of the educational migrant. In order to reduce the barrier, educational institutions practice preliminary language training at

preparatory faculties (intended for foreign students), which lasts about a year. Within this period, a foreign student is given basic knowledge of the language, which in the future will allow them to absorb the material of subsequent courses. However, it should be noted that the language adaptation of a foreign student does not end when he graduates from the preparatory faculty. It continues until the completion of studies at the university. For example, language adaptation takes place while an educational migrant communicates with the local students (within the training group or outside of it) and its pace, respectively, depends on the intensity of such processes (Ren *et al.*, 2007: 12; Sánchez Hernández, 2013: 188).

In the case of communication, adaptation in the sociocultural space is relevant. Sociocultural adaptation is a complex multifaceted process of interaction between the individual and the new socio-cultural environment, during which foreign students, having specific ethnic and psychological characteristics, are forced to overcome various kinds of psychological, social, moral, and religious barriers, in order to master new types of activities and behaviours. Sociocultural adaptation is the most complex process of all three presented since it affects both the person's communication with the local students and their interaction with other foreign students who arrived from other countries. The pace of sociocultural adaptation depends both on personal qualities (its tolerance towards representatives of other cultures, faiths, nationalities), and on its host (university, study group, etc.) (Georgette, 2011: 25).

The sociocultural adaptation of foreign students in the local group is a two-way process because it is carried out not only by foreigners themselves but also by the host country. And yet this is not a guarantee of the successful sociocultural adaptation of an individual. Depending on the cultural distance of the already existing collective and the migrant trying to get into it, it is possible to form a cultural pluralism in the group, as well as to organize a "friend or foe" system with the isolation of the migrant from the group. The barriers to the entry of a foreign student into the group by the receiving side are student rejection due to insufficient language skills, too great a cultural distance, or a low level of cultural pluralism (Georgette, 2011: 25).

The adaptation of a foreign student in a new country and university is a complex process, depending on the soft skills of the person and the level of internal internationalization of the university. During the learning process, it comes down to overcoming a number of barriers of an academic and socio-cultural nature, and, if successful, leads to the acquisition of new experience and the expansion of current professional competencies.

The Belarusian practice of academic mobility

In order to study the current involvement of Belarusian student youth in international integrative processes, a study was conducted from 2017 to 2019 aiming to examine the cognitive and affective attitudes of Belarusian students and graduates who studied abroad. The object of the study includes Belarusian students and graduates who became participants in the processes of academic mobility. The purpose of the study was to review the practices of Belarusian students and graduates participating in educational programs and internships abroad in the context of academic mobility. The following tasks were set:

- 1) to study the cognitive aspect of the attitude of Belarusian students and graduates regarding the possibility of studying abroad;
- 2) to consider the motivational attitudes of Belarusian students and graduates when studying abroad;
- 3) to identify the main barriers to participation in forms of academic mobility;
- 4) to study the attitude of Belarusian students and graduates who have become participants in the processes of academic mobility in relation to this phenomenon;
- 5) to study Belarusian students and graduates assessment of their experience of studying abroad in terms of acquired professional competencies and life experience.

Empirical material was collected through in-depth interviews of participants of academic exchanges and through questionnaires given to all students who did not participate in academic exchange programs or other forms of academic mobility. The choice of in-depth interviews as the main research method is due to the capabilities of this method to solve the tasks. One of the main advantages of in-depth interviews is the semi-formalization of the conversation scenario and the possibility of changing it during the conversation depending on the research tasks. In-depth interviews also allow personal information to be obtained and reveal the subjective attitude to the issue under study; as well as to obtain high-quality information on a wide range of issues. The motives for participation in academic mobility programs, the pace of adaptation to life abroad, the attitude to higher education, are personal topics for each participant and as such the respondent will not always be ready to present them to the public. Therefore, it's preferable to collect such data through in-depth interviews.

In total 40 interviews were conducted with people who studied in Poland, the Czech Republic, Russia, China, Lithuania, Latvia, Portugal, Spain, Germany, and Sweden. The average interview duration was one hour.

In the survey, the focus was on students who did not participate in academic exchange programs. It is important that in the toolkit itself, the main emphasis was placed on open-ended questions – respondents were asked to write in their own words an opinion on the proposed question instead of choosing pre-defined

answer options. On the one hand, such a solution slightly increases the share of cases, when respondents ignore the open-ended questions, and the time needed to process the received questionnaire array significantly increases; however, on the other hand, it avoids potential data distortion in situations where the respondent has the opportunity to choose any answer option, even without a stable position or information on the question.

The sample set of the questionnaire was 420 respondents studying in 7 universities of Belarus. The selected universities are located in Minsk and are the largest ones in the country among the three main directions of higher education – natural sciences, technology, and social sciences. Students for the survey at each university were selected by random sampling.

The study did not include those students who went to study abroad after graduation from school. The focus on academic exchanges participants is related to the possibility to evaluate the activities of Belarusian universities in integrating Belarusian higher education into the international context. In the case of going to study directly at a foreign university after leaving school, personal opportunities are the main driver. In the case of academic exchanges, universities are an important factor. This leads to the study of this particular aspect of academic mobility.

The study showed the need for the formation of international competency among the students. This is expressed both in the development of a level of awareness about the international activities of the university by students and in creating the motivation among students to participate in such activities. The questionnaire highlighted how about 60% of the students surveyed (who did not participate in any exchange programs) could not name a single academic exchange program. The most popular program was Erasmus+, it was mentioned by 63% of those who mentioned any educational programs. Among other programs, students also mentioned Hanban, DAAD and Au Pair. It is noteworthy, that among the international student exchange programs, the Work & Travel program (not specializing in education, but a peculiar form of tourism) was chosen as a program by about 30% of those who mentioned any programs. This fact speaks not only about the low level of awareness of those surveyed but also about the distorted ideas of students concerning what an international exchange of students is. For students who participated in academic exchange programs or other forms of academic mobility, the main source of information was the information they found on the Internet and personal acquaintances.

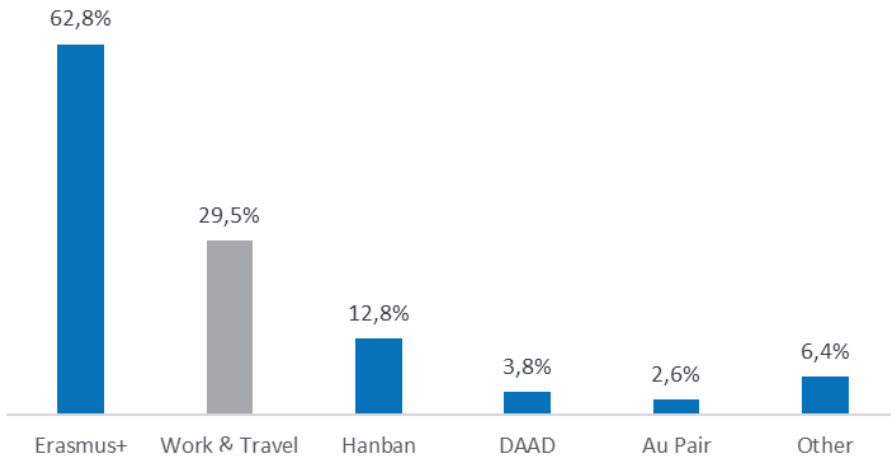


Figure 1. Distribution of answers to the question: What international academic exchange programs can you name, n = 168

Source: based on author's calculations.

It is possible to solve this problem through the implementation of information activities aimed at increasing awareness of the various forms of academic mobility, as well as introducing courses in the curriculum aimed at developing mobile competence. This will allow both the increase of the participation of students in this segment and the reduction of the number of socio-cultural barriers encountered when deciding on a trip abroad for educational purposes.

That said, even with a low level of awareness, the attitude towards mobility is predominantly positive. Almost 90% of all respondents rated this phenomenon positively and expressed a desire to participate in it. The desire to gain new experience, make new acquaintances and raise the level of language proficiency have been distinguished as the main motives. It is noteworthy that students did not indicate professional motives – the share of answers related to the development of professional competencies or acquaintance with another educational system was minimal.

The positive impact of participation in academic exchanges was noted by the participants in academic exchanges during the in-depth interviews. The interviewees noted the impact of participation in academic exchange programs on their personal development (broadening their horizons, gaining experience in a completely different socio-cultural environment) and, to a lesser extent, the impact on their professional development. In rare cases, it was noted that participation in exchange programs did not affect its participants in a professional way, however, it was still useful in terms of gaining new experience that was impossible in Belarus.

From the other side, the study showed the need to address the level of inclusion of various international educational programs in Belarusian higher education.

During the survey and in-depth interviews, Belarusian students identified three major barriers to participation in academic exchanges. The first is the financial factor: since most universities are not ready to take over the costs of study programs, students are forced to rely on personal financial opportunities. The second significant factor relates to personal fears: respondents are not always psychologically ready to be in a foreign country with a completely different way of life for a long period of time. This factor includes the problem of adaptation – both in academic and socio-cultural ways. Students who participated in international academic programs mentioned that this problem was the most significant during the first months – but later the overcoming of this becomes the main driver of personal development.

There exist situations where expectations do not match the result of training. These situations occur if there is incomplete information about the study-abroad program, the student's personal circle of contacts has no experience of such trips or there exists incorrect expectations regarding the impact on subsequent scientific or professional activities. These reasons create an additional need for informing students about the contents of various foreign programs, organizing events that facilitate the receipt of this kind of information and facilitate more successful adaptation.

Table 1. The main barriers of academic mobility for Belarusian students (Distribution of answers on the question: What is the main barrier to participation in international exchange programs for you, n = 420)

| Barrier | Description | Share, % |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------|
| Financial barrier | Inability to pay for education and residence abroad | 25.78 |
| Personal affairs | Students' fears of inability to socioculturally and academically adapt | 15.63 |
| Combining of studying | The difficulty of combining studies abroad during the academic program and at the native university | 12.50 |
| Language barrier | Lack of a proficiency level in a foreign language | 9.38 |
| Documents preparation | Difficulties in preparing a package of documents for studying abroad | 8.59 |
| Lack of information | Lack of information on possible academic mobility programs | 7.81 |
| Other | Other barriers | 10.16 |

Source: based on author's calculations.

The third significant factor, raised by students during the survey, is the difficulty of combining study abroad under the academic exchange program and study at a Belarusian university. Even though universities participate in such programs as ERASMUS+, DAAD, etc., the question of their inclusion is still open. Students participating in these programs are forced to solve issues of combining

them with continuing education at their university. Staying abroad for educational purposes, with rare exceptions, is considered by Belarusian universities simply as a pass for part of the educational program, without the possibility of considering activity during participation in the exchange programs. For students, this becomes one of the most significant deterrents when deciding on participation in educational programs.

Unfortunately, normative documents in Belarus do not provide conditions under which students can continue to study abroad without hindrance while maintaining their former status at a Belarusian university. Due to this, the combining of studying at home university and abroad is a personal responsibility of the students themselves. Since, according to students answers during in-depth interviews and questionnaires, the administration of universities does not always facilitate the participation of students in academic exchange programs, this is also a significant barrier.

It is possible to solve this contradiction by implementing a student activity accounting system at home universities for students studying abroad. To some extent, the credit system adopted by the Bologna universities is designed to solve this problem. However, today its existence in Belarusian universities is difficult to consider manifest – the implementation of a credit system in Belarusian universities is at its initial stage. Solving the issue of including students' activity abroad in educational programs could reduce the number of barriers and make participation in international educational programs more attractive for students.

So, there is a need to intensify the activities of universities in carrying out activities aimed at developing international competence among students. This is expressed both in the development of the level of awareness about the international activities of the university by students and in creating motivation among students to participate in such activities. The solution to this issue is possible through the implementation of information events aimed at increasing the awareness of the various forms of academic mobility, introducing courses in the curriculum aimed at developing mobile competence; as well as (in the case of foreign students) the formation of international competence. Such changes will reduce the number of barriers for visiting students and the local population, thereby positively influencing the educational process.

Conclusion

The integration of the Belarusian higher education system into the international context is a complex process that affects both academic and socio-cultural aspects and requires the development and implementation of social

technologies. The analysis of the aforementioned studies allows us to make the following conclusions:

1. Belarus is still at the initial stage of integrating higher education into the international context. Even if there is a considerable number of agreements with various universities and participation in many international exchange programs, internal internationalization (first of all, regarding the regulatory aspect) needs to be improved.

2. The level of awareness of Belarusian youth about academic exchange programs is at an average level – there were many respondents who, although did not participate in academic mobility programs, knew about such programs as Erasmus+, DAAD, Qu Pair, and others. However, the share of those who do not know about any academic exchange programs is quite high. Therefore, there is a need to improve the mechanisms of informing Belarusian youth about academic exchange programs.

3. There is a positive attitude of Belarusian youth to the academic mobility processes. Both participants of academic mobility programs and non-participants positively evaluated this process – however, not from the point of view of professional skills, but from the point of view of personal development.

4. On the other hand, there is a mixed assessment of the implementation of the integration of Belarusian higher education into the international context from the point of Belarusian students participated in this process. Students experience certain difficulties in mastering the curriculum and combining it with studying at their home university; as well as in adaptation whilst participating in programs.

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Pavlo Katerynychuk

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0579-3321>

Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University
Chernivtsi, Ukraine

Department of International Information
e-mail: pavlo.katerynychuk@gmail.com

Challenges for Ukraine's cyber security: National dimensions

Abstract. The usage of information as a weapon in the foreign and domestic policies of Russia is not a new phenomenon. Still, the sophistication and intensity of it grow with each passing year. Recently the EU and USA have realized the powerful latent influence of Russian media and propaganda, including on electoral processes and the activities of State administration. They have realized that Russian disinformation poses a serious threat to the United States and its European allies, first and foremost with regard to Poland, the Baltic States and Ukraine. Moreover, unlike Soviet propaganda, the modern methods of the Russian information war do not rudely promote the agenda of the Kremlin. Instead, they aim to confuse, daze and divert citizens from supporting the EU and Ukraine. Russia seeks to undermine the support for European values; producing disarray among European allies in order to increase its influence. Ethnic, linguistic, regional, social and historical contradictions and stereotypes are used for this purpose. As current experience shows, Russian advocacy efforts in Europe make up an important part of their hybrid approach to the projection of force. Despite the fact that the crisis in Ukraine for the first time drew the attention of the West to the importance and real meaning of the information campaign in Russia, the Kremlin's use of disinformation was launched long before the crisis. Russia carefully and purposefully prepared an information war against Ukraine.

Keywords: cyberspace, cyber security, hacker attacks, information security.

Introduction

The hybrid war in the East of Ukraine and the information confrontation with the Russian State, a state that systematically uses the media space and the Internet to achieve its political goals, necessitates the study of the issue of protecting the cyberspace of Ukraine as an integral part of the state's information security.

The necessity of building an effective cyber security system as one of the main components of national information security in Ukraine became ever apparent after the annexation of Crimea by Russia and the invasion of Russian troops in the territory of the Ukrainian Donbas.

The problem of cyberspace research and the analysis of cyber security is characterized by a number of uncertainties both in the terminology itself and in the regulatory sphere. For further reference, research into the interconnection of information security and cyber security needs clear form in order to understand the essence of the concepts of "cyber security" and "information space". This, in turn, can only be done when the essence of the concept of cyberspace is clearly stated.

The term "cyberspace" was first coined by Canadian science-fiction writer William Gibson in 1982 in the *Burning Chrome* novel. In 1984, this concept was further elaborated on in the work *Neuromancer*. According to Gibson, cyberspace is a well-balanced hallucination that is experienced daily by billions of conventional operators around the world.

There are many interpretations of the concept in the scientific literature of Cyberspace. In this case, a myriad understanding of this concept is inherent in the regulatory and legal sphere: practically every country in its legislation gives its own definition. For example, 1) in accordance with an international standard (ISO/IEC 27032, 2012), cyberspace is the complex environment resulting from the interaction of people, software and services on the Internet by means of technology devices and networks connected to it, which does not exist in any physical form; 2) in accordance with US regulatory framework (National Military Strategy, 2004), cyberspace is a field characterized by the ability to use electronic and electromagnetic means to memorize, modify and exchange data through network systems and related physical infrastructure; 3) in accordance with official documents of the European Union (European Commission, Glossary and Acronyms), cyberspace is the virtual space in which the electronic data of the world's personal computers (PCs) circulate; 4) According to UK Cyber Security Strategy (2009) documents, cyberspace is all forms of networks and digital activity, including content and activities, implemented through digital networks; 5) according to German Cyber Security Strategy (2011) cyberspace is all the information infrastructure available through the internet outside any territorial boundaries.

In general, most definitions boil down to understanding cyber security as a state of cyberspace security of the state as a whole, or of some of its infrastructure against external influences and risks, which ensures their sustainable development, as well as the timely detection, prevention and neutralization of real and potential challenges, cyber interventions and threats to personal, corporate and /or national interests.

Russia's hybrid aggression against Ukraine developed into an active phase in early 2014, but long before the direct military intervention it was accompanied by tactical information support, which contained a wide range of information and psychological influences on the population of Ukraine and Russia, more or less since Ukraine's Declaration of Independence in 1991.

Estimates from Ukrainian experts also indicate that Russia has always worked to weaken Ukraine, and this activity has been particularly intensified with the coming to power of Putin.

The main focus of the war on the hybrid nature of the Russian Federation against Ukraine is the information sphere, however, Russian influence is also exercised on the cultural, humanitarian, military, financial, energy and diplomatic and economic spheres, as well as cyberspace. This proves that Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine is aimed at non-military spheres, and its primary focus is outreach, where cyber aggression is a key component.

Analysis of recent research and publications

The study of the security of cyberspace as a component of information security has become the subject of scientific research by many foreign scientists: J. Nye, S. Morgan, M. Schmidt, A. Klimburg, M. Gedeker, M. Libitsky, I. Zubarev, M. Bezkorovayny. It should be also noted that since the beginning of the Russian armed aggression Ukrainian scientists have also become interested in this issue, in particular, M. Ozhevan, V. Buryachok, V. Furashev, V. Butuzov, V. Tolubko, O. Dovgan, V. Khoroshko, S. Tolyupa, M. Pogoretsky, K. Titunin and other scientists.

I would like to mention separately the works of researchers of the National Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of Ukraine, especially B. Parahons'kij and G. Javors'ka *Ontology of War and Peace: Security, Strategy, Meaning* (Maksym Rozumnyĭ..., 2018; Parahons'kij, Javors'ka, 2019: 560); *Putin's regime: reboot-2018* / M. Razumny (ed.) (Parahons'kij, Javors'ka, 2019: 480), and D. Dubov *Cyberspace as a new dimension of geopolitical rivalry* (Dubov, 2014).

That said, despite a fairly large number of studies and publications on the topic of information and cyber security, analysis shows that researchers have considered the general issues of developing a national system of cybernetic

security as an integral element of the information security system. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to study the national dimensions of cyberspace as a component of Ukraine's information security.

Presentation of the main research material

For the first time, Russian cyber threats and possible cyber attacks began to peak during the 2016 US election campaign, when, according to many researchers, the intervention of Russian hackers and the hacking of the electronic mailbox of the Democratic Party and Hillary Clinton, influenced the electoral campaign and electoral sympathies of Americans. However, these were only echoes of a long and purposeful campaign of Russian intelligence services, which increasingly involve cyberspace and electronic media of mass communication for espionage and undermining the interests of the Kremlin. At the same time, hacker attacks on government structures and industrial facilities occurred earlier, and not only within the same continent.

The United States reacted to Russia's hacking attacks by introducing new sanctions against companies and individuals thus prohibiting any operations within the US financial system. Among the examples of "malicious and destabilizing activity", the US Department of the Treasury calls the NotPetya virus an attack on power distribution networks. In February 2018, the White House said that the damage caused by the NotPetya virus in Europe, Asia, and America was calculated to be billions of dollars. The NotPetya attack in the White House was named a part of the Kremlin's efforts to destabilize the situation in Ukraine, which is increasingly demonstrating Russia's participation in the ongoing conflict (CShA takozh zvinuvatili..., 2018).

Russia, however, denies involvement in the attack and indicates that Russian companies have also suffered from it. However, British ministers also said that Russian cyber attacks are NotPetya (Uryad Brytaniyi zvyuvatyv..., 2018). On the first day of the spread of the virus, June 27, it struck 2,000 organizations; 75% of the victims fell to Ukraine. Ukrainian ministries, police, banks, Boryspil airport, Kyiv metro, media, mobile operators, medical companies suffered. The virus blocked computers and demanded money in exchange for restoring access to locked programs. British prime minister Theresa May blamed President Putin in November last year for trying to "sow discord" in the west: through interference in elections, dissemination of disinformation and cyberwar.

Theresa May has accused Russia of meddling in elections and planting fake stories in the media in an extraordinary attack on its attempts to "weaponise information" in order to sow discord in the west. Listing Russia's attempts to undermine western institutions in recent years, she said: "I have a very simple

message for Russia. We know what you are doing. And you will not succeed” (Mason, 2017).

American and British officials said that the attacks affected a wide range of organizations including internet service providers, private businesses and critical infrastructure providers. They did not identify victims or provide details on the impact of the attacks. “When we see malicious cyber activity, whether it be from the Kremlin or other malicious nation-state actors, we are going to push back”, said Rob Joyce, the White House cyber security coordinator (Finkle, Chiacu, 2018).

Earlier, in February 2018, German officials also accused Russia of hacking attacks on government sites. In particular, according to media reports, hackers from the grouping of APT28, also known as Fancy Bears, successfully attacked the German Foreign and Defence Ministries at the end of February. They entered the so-called Berlin-Bonn Information Network (IVBB), which is used by the Federal Chancellery of Germany, the federal ministries and services security, as well as the Bundestag and the Bundesrat (Nimechchyna zvyuvatyly Rosiyu..., 2018).

Along with the statements of the official agencies of the United States, Great Britain and Germany, NATO has adopted a consolidated decision on Russia's destabilizing role in the modern world, which is expressed by

a long illegal and illegitimate annexation of the Crimea, violations of sovereign borders with the use of force; the intentional destabilization of the situation in eastern Ukraine; the sudden launch of large-scale military exercises contrary to the spirit of the Vienna Document and provocative military action at NATO's borders, including in the regions of the Baltic and Black Seas and the Eastern Mediterranean; irresponsible and aggressive nuclear rhetoric, as well as repeated violations NATO Allied airspace (*Warsaw Summit Communiqué*, 2016).

In the communiqué after the Warsaw summit, NATO noted that cyber attacks present a clear challenge to the security of the Alliance and could be as harmful to modern societies as a conventional attack.

We agreed in Wales that cyber defence is part of NATO's core task of collective defence. Now, in Warsaw, we reaffirm NATO's defensive mandate and recognize cyberspace as a domain of operations in which NATO must defend itself as effectively as it does in the air, on land, and at sea. It will support NATO's broader deterrence and defence: cyber defence will continue to be integrated into operational planning and Alliance operations and missions, and we will work together to contribute to their success. Furthermore, it will ensure the more effective organization of NATO's cyber defence and better management of resources, skills, and capabilities» (*Warsaw Summit Communiqué...*, 2016).

However, these examples of violations of the national cyberspace of Western powers are just the tip of the iceberg, which hides years of agency activity and Russian attempts to control the media.

Undoubtedly, Ukraine is the main target for cyber crime and cyber attacks by Russia. This is the meaning of the hybrid nature of the war, which, besides the military component itself, also includes powerful information campaigns, disinformation, fake news and hacking activities.

Purposeful cyber attacks against Ukraine began simultaneously with the events of March 2014, when Russia virtually annexed the Crimea by bringing its troops into the peninsula. At the same time as the annexation of the Crimea there began in Ukraine massive DDoS attacks carried out by the so-called CyberBerkut. CyberBerkut is a modern organized group of pro-Russian hackers. The group became locally known for a series of publicity stunts and distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks on the Ukrainian government, and western or Ukrainian corporate websites (Soshnikov, 2017).

During the period of 2014–2017, about 6,000 hacker attacks were committed against Ukraine (Prezident, 2016). Undoubtedly, the most powerful of the famous cyber attacks took place on June 27, 2017 (Borys, 2017). A series of powerful cyber attacks using the Petya malware began on 27 June 2017 that swamped websites of Ukrainian organizations, including banks, ministries, newspapers and electricity firms. Similar infections were reported in France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia. ESET estimated on 28 June 2017 that 80% of all infections were in Ukraine, with Germany being the second hardest hit with about 9% (Cyber-attack..., 2017). On 28 June 2017, the Ukrainian government stated that the attack was halted. On 30 June 2017, the Associated Press reported that experts agreed that Petya was masquerading as ransomware, while it was actually designed to cause maximum damage, with Ukraine being the main target (Bajak, Satter, 2017).

The cyber attack was based on a modified version of the Petya ransomware. As with the WannaCry ransomware attack in May 2017, Petya uses the EternalBlue exploit previously discovered in older versions of the Microsoft Windows operating system. When Petya is executed, it encrypts the Master File Table of the hard drive and forces the computer to restart. It then displays a message to the user, telling them their files are now encrypted and to send US\$300 in bitcoin to one of three wallets to receive instructions to decrypt their computer. At the same time, the software exploits the Server Message Block protocol in Windows to infect local computers on the same network, and any remote computers it can find.

Security experts found that the version of Petya used in the Ukraine cyber attacks had been modified, and subsequently has been named NotPetya or Nyetna to distinguish it from the original malware. NotPetya encrypted all of the files on the infected computers, not just the Master File Table, and in some cases the computer's files were completely wiped or rewritten in a manner that could not be undone through decryption. Some security experts saw that the software could intercept passwords and perform administrator-level actions that could further ruin computer files. They also noted that the software could identify specific

computer systems and bypass infection of those systems, suggesting the attack was more surgical in its goal. There also has yet to be discovered a “kill switch” as there was with the WannaCry software, which would immediately stop its spread. According to Nicholas Weaver of the University of California, the hackers had previously compromised MeDoc, that is made it into a remote-control Trojan, and then they were willing to burn this asset to launch this attack (Borys, 2017).

During the attack, the radiation monitoring system at Ukraine's Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant went offline. Several Ukrainian ministries, banks, metro systems and state-owned enterprises (Boryspil International Airport, Ukrtelecom, Ukrposhta, State Savings Bank of Ukraine, Ukrainian Railways) were affected. In the infected computers, important computer files were overwritten and thus permanently damaged, despite the malware's displayed message to the user indicating that all files could be recovered “safely and easily” by meeting the attackers' demands and making the requested payment in Bitcoin currency.

The attack came on the eve of the Ukrainian public holiday, Constitution Day (celebrating the anniversary of the approval by the Verkhovna Rada (Ukraine's parliament) of the Constitution of Ukraine on 28 June 1996). Most government offices were to be empty, allowing the cyber attack to spread without interference. In addition, some security experts saw the ransomware engage in wiping the affected hard drives rather than encrypting them, which would be a further disaster for companies affected by this. A short time before the cyber attack began, it was reported that an intelligence officer and head of a special forces unit, Maksym Shapoval, was killed in Kiev by a car bomb. A former government adviser in Georgia and Moldova, Molly K. McKew, believed this assassination was related to the cyber attack (McKew, 2017).

On 30 June, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) reported it had seized the equipment that had been used to launch the cyber attack, claiming it to have belonged to Russian agents responsible for launching the attack. On 1 July 2017, the SBU claimed that available data showed that the same perpetrators who in Ukraine in December 2016 attacked the financial system, transport and energy facilities of Ukraine (using TeleBots and BlackEnergy) were the same hacking groups who attacked Ukraine on 27 June 2017. This testifies to the involvement of the special services of the Russian Federation in this attack it concluded (Ukraine Security Service Blames Russia For Recent Cyberattack, 2017). Ukraine claims that hacking Ukrainian state institutions is part of what they describe as a “hybrid war” by Russia on Ukraine (Polityuk, 2017).

According to reports cited in January 2018, the United States Central Intelligence Agency claimed Russia was behind the cyber attack, with Russia's Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) having designed NotPetya (Nakashima, 2018). Similarly, the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence accused Russia in February 2018 of launching the cyber attack, and that by attacking systems in Ukraine, the cyber attack spread and affected major systems in the United Kingdom and

elsewhere. Russia denied its involvement, pointing out that Russian systems were also impacted by the attack (Marsh, 2018).

The reaction of the Ukrainian state to such actions by its northern neighbour was predictable. First of all, the role of the Department of Cyber Police of the National Police of Ukraine was strengthened – the inter-regional territorial body of the National Police of Ukraine, which is part of the structure of the criminal police of the National Police and in accordance with the legislation of Ukraine, ensures the implementation of state policy in the field of combating cybercrime. This division specializes in the prevention, detection, termination and disclosure of criminal offences where the mechanisms of preparation, execution or concealment of which, involves the use of electronic computers (computers), telecommunication and computer Internet networks and systems (Pro utvorennia terytorial'noho orhanu..., 2015). On July 19, 2017, within the framework of the project “Capacity building for cyber police”, representatives of the OSCE Project Coordination in Ukraine transferred 194 units of specialized equipment to the units of the cyber police of the National Police of Ukraine (*Kiberpoliciya...*, 2017).

In addition, repeated cyber attacks have prompted the accelerated adoption of a law in Ukraine on the protection of cyberspace, which was adopted on October 5, 2017, but came into force only on May 9, 2018 (Pro osnovni zasady..., 2017).

This Law defines the legal and organizational foundations for ensuring the protection of the vital interests of: a person and a citizen; society and the state, as well as the national interests of Ukraine in cyberspace. To that end, the main goals, directions and principles of state policy in the field of cyber security; the powers of state bodies, enterprises, institutions, organizations, persons and citizens in this area; as well as the main principles of coordination of their work on the provision of cyber security have been laid out in this legislation.

The law explicitly interprets the meaning of the notion of cyberspace – the environment (virtual space), which provides opportunities for communication and/or implementation of social relations, formed as a result of the operation of compatible (connected) communication systems and the provision of electronic communications using the Internet and/or other networks' global data networks (Pro osnovni zasady..., 2017); and cyber defence – a set of organizational, legal, engineering and technical measures, as well as measures of cryptographic and technical protection of information aimed at preventing cyber incidents, detecting and protecting against cyber attacks, eliminating their consequences, restoring the sustainability and reliability of the functioning of communication and technological systems.

The law also stipulates that the main subjects of the national system of cyber security are the State Service for Special Communications and Information Protection of Ukraine, the National Police of Ukraine, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine and the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, intelligence agencies, and the National Bank of Ukraine (Pro osnovni zasady..., 2017).

The objects of critical infrastructure are enterprises and organizations that provide services in the economic sphere, in the energy and chemical industry, transport and information and communication industries, utility companies, healthcare, or objects of potentially dangerous technologies and industries. The coordination of activities is carried out by the President of Ukraine with the help of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, which he heads. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine ensures the formation and implementation of state policy in the field of cyber security (Pro osnovni zasady..., 2017).

Thus, the Ukrainian authorities have taken a number of steps to protect the national cyberspace, both normative and practical. However, this does not reduce the level of threats that cyber attacks pose. After all, despite the adoption and enactment of the law on the protection of domestic cyberspace and the creation of the Department of Cyber police and a number of other actions by Ukraine, attempts at cyber attacks on our country have not been stopped.

Authorities in the United States said they broke up a potential digital attack called VPN Filter that affected half a million internet routers and could have caused widespread havoc in Ukraine. The US Justice Department said this was the most recent attack programmed by the Sofacy Group; the Russian hackers – also known as Fancy Bear – are suspected of being behind cyber attacks on several governments, international agencies and infrastructure providers. The largest number of infections was in Ukraine but affected routers in 54 countries, according to the technology company Cisco Systems and antivirus company Symantec, which cooperated with the FBI during the operation (FBI thwarts potential cyberattack..., 2018).

Conclusion

The study of cyberspace as a component of Ukraine's information security gives a number of important conclusions. For a long time, Cyber security and the cyber space of Ukraine was of little interest to domestic researchers and, therefore, civil servants. For more than 20 years, the young Ukrainian state did not waste its efforts on the formation of not only effective and reliable troops, but also information security. The government did not endeavour to strengthen the country's defence, and this probably only compounded its lack of progress in fighting corruption and the dominance of Russian media and intelligence. As a result, in the spring of 2014, after a long confrontation between the regime of Viktor Yanukovich and the citizens of Ukraine, Russia conducted special operations with the aim of annexing the Crimea and facilitating the war in Donbas. An important part of this campaign were raids for information and offensive actions carried out by cyber

Russian hackers. The purpose of which was to paralyse government agencies and influence public opinion in Ukraine through Russian-controlled media.

As a result of prolonged and massive cyber attacks, Ukrainian state structures, banking system, industrial facilities and private business suffered significant material and reputational losses. As a result, Ukraine began to realize the seriousness of cyber security as a component of national security. This contributed to the creation of a cyber police department, national cyber security strategy, the acceptance of a number of regulations on cyber security, and the overall strengthening of public defence for the protection of domestic cyberspace. At the moment, Ukraine is on the way to rethinking the role of cyber security and the formation of a national system for protecting against cyber threats.

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Artem Karateev

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8930-8807>

Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia
Faculty of Political Science
e-mail: artem.karateev@gmail.com

Stability and economic freedom in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe: Quantitative analysis

Abstract. Exploring the stability of states and political systems is of interest to scientists and politicians all around the world. One of the most important questions in this field is the question of the relationship between stability and freedom.

This paper considers the relationship between economic freedom and stability with regards to the example of countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The study uses quantitative analysis and the operationalisation of economic freedom through the Index of Economic Freedom (IEF); furthermore, stability is studied through the Fragile States Index (FSI), and the Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Index (PSI).

The analysis reveals a strong correlation between economic freedom and stability. According to linear regression models obtained by the author, economic freedom has a strong impact on stability. Models show that most of the components of IEF increase stability, whilst some components decrease it. This means that the same factors affect economic freedom and stability in different ways. In particular, taxes have a very positive effect on stability. At the same it is obvious that taxes reduce economic freedom. This fact allows us to resolve the existing contradictions among politicians and scientists, who differently assess the impact of economic freedom on stability. It may be stated that whilst economic freedom has in general a strong positive effect on stability, it can also have a negative effect.

Keywords: stability, political stability, economic freedom, data analysis.

Introduction

Issues of social and political stability are widely discussed around the world. Western political tradition connects stability with freedom, liberal values, and democracy. While authors from countries with a strong authoritarian tradition, on the contrary, argue that stability can be ensured through control and centralisation.

A striking example of the Western approach is President Bush's Second Inaugural Address (2005) which proclaimed the idea of global stability through liberty. This idea is supported both by considerations that democracies are more peaceful than other regimes in foreign policy, and conclusions that countries with a higher level of freedom are more stable. There is a vast bibliography on how ensuring rights and freedoms affects economic development and determines economic and political stability. This tradition is well known thanks to such names as F. Hayek (1944, 1973), M. Friedman (1962), L. von Mises (1952) and more modern authors like D. Acemoglu and J. Robinson (2012).

In modern Russia, many scholars and politicians believe that conservative anti-liberal policies are needed to achieve stability and provide social progress. This tradition continues from at least the second half of the 19th century (Shirinians, 2015). A high level of freedom (both political and economic) is perceived as a risk factor. In addition, at the level of mass consciousness, Russia's political and economic instability of the late 80s and 90s is associated with the spread of liberal ideas at that time. This naturally discredits the ideas of freedom, while conservative ideas find support among Russians. Interest in conservative methods of ensuring stability is also fuelled by the Chinese development experience, where stability (in the system of priorities) is placed above rights and freedoms.

At the same time, the flip side of stability is also being discussed. Although it is said that stability is crucial for growth, sometimes stability does not trigger any growth. Accordingly, B. Shepherd (2010), in the example of African countries, demonstrates the essential contradictions of stability. On the one hand, the African states that have achieved high growth rates are stable, because stability means a predictable political environment, which in turn attracts investment, both internally and from outside. On the other hand, some African states with remarkably stable political systems do not demonstrate high performance. The fact that stable political regimes turn out to be less effective is confirmed by other modern studies (see for example Bueno de Mesquita *et al.*, 2003). An analysis of the literature available shows, therefore, that the question of the relationship between freedom and stability has not yet been answered and requires further research.

In this paper, we want to focus on the relationship between economic freedom and stability in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. These countries,

being in geographic proximity, share common historical and cultural features and nevertheless demonstrate different approaches both to ensuring economic freedom and stability.

A preliminary hypothesis of this work is the assumption that there is a medium or even strong correlation between economic freedom and stability. At the same time various components of economic freedom may have different effects on stability. Some components may increase it, while others may decrease it. Thus, the political system must keep a balance between freedom and stability, taking into account the need to ensure the ability of the system to change and develop. The historical and cultural proximity of the studied European countries and the proximity of the social practices of their citizens, should level the influence of cultural factors that explain the differences in the inferences obtained in different cross-country studies.

Operationalisation/Measuring freedom and stability

For the operationalisation of economic freedom we will use the Index of Economic Freedom (IEF), annually presented by The Wall Street Journal and The Heritage Foundation. The IEF has a 0–100 scale and 12 components that are separately evaluated. Each component has a value of between 0 and 100. These components are organised into 4 categories presenting 4 pillars of economic freedom – Rule of Law, Government Size, Regulatory Efficiency, and Market Openness. The resulting IEF for a country is calculated as an average value of 12 components. So it is supposed that all the components have equal weight in constructing economic freedom. A high IEF indicates a free economy while a low score indicates an unfree (or repressed) economy.

Stability will be operationalised by using the Fragile States Index (FSI), annually presented by The Fund for Peace. The FSI also has 12 components including social, economic, political and military indicators. Each component has a value of between 0 and 10. The resulting FSI for a country is calculated as an arithmetic sum of 12 components without weighting them. Thus all the components are claimed to be of equal importance for evaluating stability. The higher the value of the FSI, the more fragile is state.

In addition, the Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Index (PSI) will be used to operationalise stability. The PSI is one of the World Governance Indicators collected by The World Bank. This index measures perceptions of the likelihood that the government will be destabilised or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically-motivated violence and terrorism. It has a scale with a minimum equal to –2.5 and maximum equal to 2.5.

The FSI is picked as a more comprehensive measure, vulnerable to the economic situation; whilst the PSI is picked as being more vulnerable to political risks.

Analysis

At the first stage of the study, the hypotheses that there is a medium or strong correlation between economic freedom and stability was tested.

For the analysis we took a dataset for 8 countries of Central Europe (Austria, The Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, The Slovak Republic, Slovenia, and Switzerland) and 7 countries of Eastern Europe (Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine). Since there are various interpretations of the borders of Central and Eastern Europe, we took as a basis one of the most popular interpretations according to the CIA World Factbook. (Note: Liechtenstein was excluded from the study, since the data on it were incomplete.)

The correlation coefficients between IEF and stability indexes (i.e. FSI and PSI) were calculated using annual data. It can be seen from Table 1, that IEF is strongly negatively correlated with FSI. This means that countries with a high level of economic freedom are supposed to be less fragile than countries with low level of economic freedom. Conversely, IEF is strongly positively correlated with PSI, illustrating that countries with high level of economic freedom are supposed to be more politically stable than countries with low level of economic freedom. As it is seen, both these tendencies are stable over time.

Table 1. Correlation coefficients between IEF and stability indexes

| Year | Fragile States Index | Political Stability Index |
|------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 2013 | -0.840 | 0.864 |
| 2014 | -0.868 | 0.816 |
| 2015 | -0.850 | 0.811 |
| 2016 | -0.868 | 0.813 |
| 2017 | -0.767 | 0.782 |

Source: based on author's calculations.

These results show that economic freedom has a crucial importance for a state's stability. The regression model for 2017 (obtained using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method) demonstrates that a 1.0 point change in IEF leads to an approximate 1.4863 points change in the FSI:

$$FSI = -1.4863 IEF + 147.99.$$

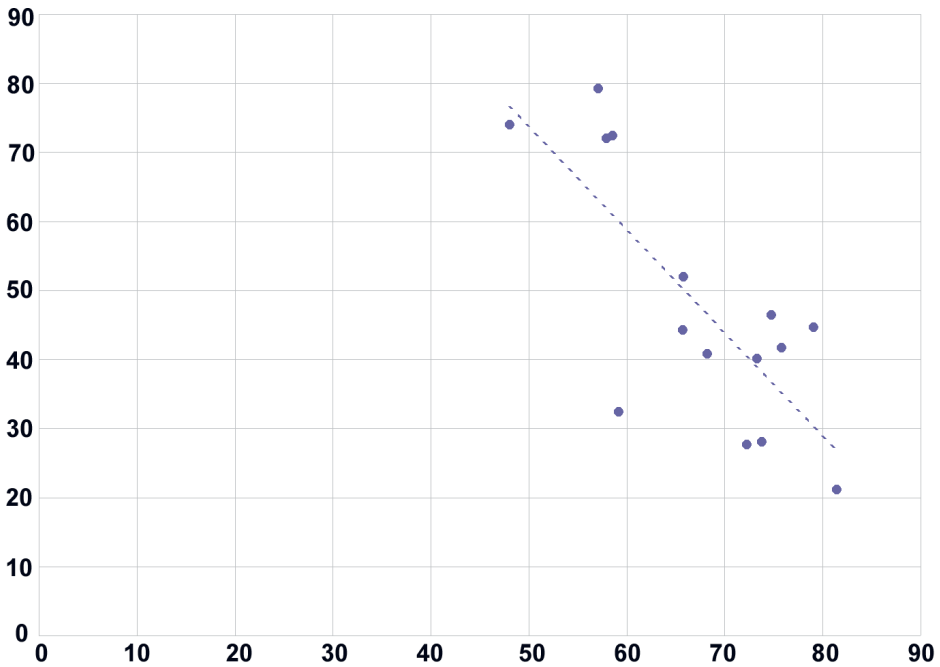


Figure 1. Scatter plot of IEF and FSI with OLS regression line (2017)
 Source: based on author’s calculations.

Only a few countries deviate significantly from the trend line. Deviations of the real FSI values from the trend line are presented in Table 2. Slovenia has the greatest deviation -27.6 (the minus shows that the real fragility of the state is less than it is expected by the model). Similar results can be obtained for other years (2013–2016).

Table 2. The real values of the IEF and FSI and the difference between the real value and the expected value of the FSI (2017)

| Country | Index of Economic Freedom | Fragile States Index | Difference between real value and expected value of FSI |
|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Austria | 72.3 | 27.7 | -12.9 |
| Czech Republic | 73.3 | 40.1 | 1.1 |
| Germany | 73.8 | 28.1 | -10.2 |
| Hungary | 65.8 | 52 | 1.8 |
| Poland | 68.3 | 40.8 | -5.7 |
| Slovak Republic | 65.7 | 44.3 | -6.0 |

Table 2 (cont.)

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-------------|------|------|-------|
| Slovenia | 59.2 | 32.4 | -27.6 |
| Switzerland | 81.5 | 21.1 | -5.8 |
| Belarus | 58.6 | 72.4 | 11.5 |
| Estonia | 79.1 | 44.7 | 14.2 |
| Latvia | 74.8 | 46.4 | 9.5 |
| Lithuania | 75.8 | 41.7 | 6.3 |
| Moldova | 58.0 | 72 | 10.2 |
| Russia | 57.1 | 79.2 | 16.1 |
| Ukraine | 48.1 | 74 | -2.5 |

Source: based on author's calculations.

Regression model of IEF and PSI for 2017 is:

$$PSI = 0.0667 IEF - 4.0905.$$

It is important to compare the effect of the IEF on the FSI with the effect of the IEF on the PSI. In order to make this comparison, the fact that the FSI and the PSI have different scales must be taken into account. As a result it can be seen that the effect of the IEF on the PSI is slightly stronger than the effect of the IEF on the FSI (by the power of 1.08).

At the next stage of the study, we will try to understand what effect each of the IEF components has on stability indicators.

As it was mentioned above, the IEF includes 4 categories of components – Rule of Law (RL), Government Size (GS), Regulatory Efficiency (RE), and Market Openness (MO). Using data for the 2017, and the OLS method, we can get a multiple regression model for the FSI:

$$FSI = -0.454 RL + 0.356 GS - 0.224 RE - 0.576 MO + 107.021.$$

The regression equation shows that a 1.0 point increase of RL, RE, MO decreases the fragility of a country by 0.454, 0.224 and 0.576 points respectively. Whereas a 1.0 point increase of GS increases the fragility of a country by 0.356.

The negative correlations between the FSI and RL mean that an increase of government integrity and judicial effectiveness, as well as the protection of property rights, should have a positive effect on stabilisation. The negative correlations between the FSI and RE indicate that an increase of business freedom, labor freedom, and monetary freedom leads to stabilisation. However, it is MO which has the greatest influence on the FSI, which includes trade freedom, investment

freedom, and financial freedom. The positive correlation between the FSI and GS means that an increase of such components as Tax Burden, Government Spending, and Fiscal Health should decrease stability. Low values of these components mean that the situation with tax burden, government spending, and fiscal health is not “friendly” for business; that taxes and government spending are high, and therefore the budget deficit and country’s debts are rising. Thus the higher the taxes and spending, and deficit and debts, the higher $-1.4863 \text{ IEF} + 147.99$.

The presented regression model has a very good explanatory power: R-squared is equal to 0.926. It means that RL, GS, RE and MO are able to explain the 92.6% variability of the FSI.

Considering the correlation between the FSI and indicators from the GS group in Table 3, i.e. Tax Burden (TB), Government Spending (GSp), and Fiscal Health (FH), we can see that the greatest correlation is between the FSI and TB. Correlations between other components and the FSI are rather weak. It may be therefore inferred that GSp and FS do not have a significant effect on state fragility in Central and Eastern Europe. Unfortunately this result cannot be proved using data for other time periods, as the TB component was only added to the calculation formula of the IEF in 2017.

Table 3. Correlation coefficients between the components of Government Size and the FSI (2017)

| Component | Fragile States Index |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Tax Burden | 0.641 |
| Government Spending | 0.172 |
| Fiscal Health | 0.162 |

Source: based on author’s calculations.

The importance of taxes in ensuring stability can be explained by the fact that taxes are used to implement various measures and projects designed to reduce the degree of a country’s instability. For example, taxes can be used to regulate the macroeconomic situation, to reduce tensions in society, to provide social assistance and to strengthen security forces, etc.

Using all 12 components of the IEF, we can obtain a comprehensive regression model with even higher explanatory power than the previous model with 4 predictors:

$$\text{FSI} = -0.333 \text{ PR} - 0.039 \text{ JE} + 0.165 \text{ GI} + 1.072 \text{ TB} - 0.431 \text{ GSp} - 0.054 \text{ FH} + 0.149 \text{ BF} - 0.173 \text{ LF} - 0.717 \text{ MF} - 1.775 \text{ TF} + 0.227 \text{ IF} - 0.008 \text{ FF} + 198.952.$$

Where PR stands for Property Rights, JE for Judicial Effectiveness, GI for Government Integrity, TB for Tax Burden, GSp for Government Spending, FH for Fiscal Health, BF for Business Freedom, LF for Labor Freedom, MF for

Monetary Freedom, TF for Trade Freedom, IF for Investment Freedom, and FF for Financial Freedom.

R-squared for this model is equal to 0.983. It means that the combination of 12 components is able to explain the 98.3% variability of the FSI. It can be seen that most of the components reduce state fragility, except GI, TB, BF, and IF. Due to a shortage of data, statistical significances of model coefficients are far from 5%, so detailed discussion about these coefficients is unnecessary.

Based on the data for the years 2017, 2018, 2019 a more sophisticated regression model can be obtained (see Table 4). As was mentioned above, the 12 components model of the IEF has been used from 2017 and there is no appropriate data for the previous period. So dataset is scarce and it leads to the fact that many of the obtained model coefficients do not have the necessary statistical significance.

Table 4. Coefficients of regression model (2017–2019)

| Component | Coefficient | P-value |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---------|
| Constant | 131.294 | 0.000 |
| Property Rights (PR) | -0.617 | 0.001 |
| Judicial Effectiveness (JE) | 0.126 | 0.217 |
| Government Integrity (GI) | -0.080 | 0.513 |
| Tax Burden (TB) | 0.704 | 0.000 |
| Government Spending (GSp) | -0.242 | 0.017 |
| Fiscal Health (FH) | -0.001 | 0.985 |
| Business Freedom (BF) | 0.225 | 0.271 |
| Labor Freedom (LF) | -0.202 | 0.007 |
| Monetary Freedom (MF) | -0.395 | 0.014 |
| Trade Freedom (TF) | -0.764 | 0.026 |
| Investment Freedom (IF) | 0.102 | 0.428 |
| Financial Freedom (FF) | -0.058 | 0.612 |

Source: based on author's calculations.

Nonetheless, with the increase of the dataset, we can expect that the situation with some of the components will not change in general. As was already discussed, TB is expected to have a strong positive effect on the FSI.

Freedoms and rights, apparently, should reduce the FSI. Actually such components as PR, LF, MF, TF, FF have negative coefficients. At the same time BF and IF have positive coefficients though these coefficients are not high and are not significant statistically. JE as an indicator of the quality of institutions should also have a negative impact on the FSI, but in fact it has a positive coefficient, although

it is small and does not have statistical significance. GI in theory can have both positive and negative effects on the FSI. On the one hand, irregular payments and bribes and cronyism, and other forms of political corruption, negatively affect the image of authorities and politicians. That said, cronyism and patronage can make elites more cohesive and stable.

Government Spending (GSp) includes the costs of maintaining the authorities themselves (which depends on their size), as well as the costs of state projects and programs. Low values of GSp imply high costs. High expenditures on maintaining the authorities can deprive the economy of the necessary funds and cause discontent among the population. At the same time, government investments in infrastructure, scientific research, human capital, and national defence have a positive effect on stability. However, it is supposed by the authors of the IEF that government investments are not so efficient as private sector investments. In the model for 2017, as well as for 2017–2019, GSp has a negative coefficient, reflecting the fact that government spending in Central and Eastern Europe mainly does not contribute to stabilisation.

Fiscal Health (FH) is derived on the basis of two indicators: the size of the state debt and the size of the state budget deficit. The higher the deficit and debt, the lower the FH value. A large debt and deficit means an increased likelihood of government intervention in the economy: tax changes and other measures that reduce economic freedom. On the one hand, a low debt and small deficit indicate stability in the economy; on the other hand, debt and budget deficit may be the result of policies aimed at social and economic stabilisation. Thus, stability depends not only on the size of the debt and deficit, but also on the purposes funds were used for. Accordingly, this situation is reflected in the fact that FH has a coefficient close to zero, and the coefficient of correlation between FSI and FH is also close to zero (see Table 3).

Conclusion

Exploring the stability of states and political systems is of interest to scientists and politicians from all parts of the world. And one of the most important questions in this field is the question of the relationship between stability and freedom. This paper considered the relationship between economic freedom and stability using the example of countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Economic freedom is operationalised through the Index of Economic Freedom (IEF), and stability through both the Fragile State Index (FSI), and the Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Index (PSI). Comparing states with similar historical and cultural heritage, as well as the proximity of the social practices of their citizens, reduces the impact of cultural and geographical factors.

The analysis reveals a strong correlation between economic freedom and stability which is confirmed by recent data. According to the linear regression models obtained, economic freedom has a strong impact on stability. Models show that most of the components of IEF increase stability, whilst some components decrease it. This means that the same factors affect economic freedom and stability in different ways. In particular, taxes have a serious positive effect on increasing stability. At the same time, it is obvious that taxes reduce economic freedom. This fact allows us to resolve the existing contradictions among politicians and scientists, who differently assess the impact of economic freedom on stability. It may be stated that whilst having in general a strong positive effect on stability, economic freedom can also have a negative effect.

Since the dataset used is not yet sufficient to obtain a statistically significant model of coefficients it is necessary to continue research, either after the release of a new IEF report, or by expanding the studied region.

The analysis should be useful for scientists and academicians; as well as policy makers.

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Anna Kobierecka

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2492-6452>

University of Lodz, Lodz, Poland
Faculty of International Relations and Political Science
e-mail: anna.kobierecka@uni.lodz.pl

Michał Marcin Kobierecki

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8180-5710>

University of Lodz, Lodz, Poland
Faculty of International Relations and Political Science
e-mail: michal.kobierecki@gmail.com

The negative implications of Russia's doping scandal on the country's international image*

Abstract. In December 2014, Russia was accused of developing a state-organized doping system in the second decade of the twenty-first century. The scandal resulted in many Russian athletes being banned from competing in the Olympics in Rio in 2016 and the IOC's suspension of the Russian National Olympic Committee prior to the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang. The research presented in this article aims to answer the research question of whether the doping scandal actually affected the international image of Russia. The research was conducted with the use of frame analysis of public discourse. The hypothesis to be tested states that the Russian doping scandal contributed to the intensification of a negative external image of this state.

Keywords: Russia, doping, sports diplomacy, nation branding, image of a country.

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Introduction

Sports are believed to play various political roles, both in states' internal policies and in international relations. Most importantly, they can help shape a country's external image through the hosting of sports events, development of a high level of elite sport, sports development aid, etc. Such branding sports diplomacy is regarded as a sub-category of public diplomacy. As the understanding of the importance of sports is growing among political decision-makers, an increasing number of states have begun to utilize sports to shape their national brand. Of course, sport is only one of many means of shaping a nation's brand; a state's prestige and reputation or soft power can be influenced by attractive culture, touristic attractions, development aid, strong commercial brands, and many other things. Currently, a growing interest in hosting sports mega-events among developing countries can be observed (Schausteck de Almeida *et al.*, 2014); as can attempts to develop elite sports programs in order to achieve their political, diplomatic, and – above all – branding objectives. Still, branding sports diplomacy can be regarded as a double-edged sword, and in some cases, it may fail to bring benefits to a state's image. If executed incorrectly, branding through sports may lead to losses in a nation's prestige.

The international image of Russia can be assessed as negative for various reasons. Under the leadership of Vladimir Putin, Russia was criticized internationally in reference to its reported intervention during the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2006 or the conflict with Georgia in 2008 (Averginos, 2009); as well as the more recent reported engagement in the conflict with Ukraine and the war in Syria. Despite Kremlin attempts to develop Russia's soft power in order to foster Russian foreign policy goals, protect its interests (Simons, 2014), and project the country's image as "good" rather than "strong", Russia has not been successful in this area (Volcic, Andrejevic, 2011: 599). One of the main goals here is to attract weaker states to orbit around a strong Russia (Simons, 2014) – much like during the Soviet Union, but with less stress on ideology. However, at the same time, Russia's controversial foreign engagements make it extremely difficult for this state to strengthen its international position or create a more positive image with the use of soft power. It is thought-provoking why Russia finds it difficult to strengthen its international image when other nation-states are often guilty of much the same controversial foreign invention. What is more, many factors that influence the Russian international image remain beyond the Kremlin's control. The reasons for this could be manifold; for example, American culture is perceived as one of the most influential cultures in the world. It can export its values and opinions via Hollywood and reputable international media platforms, such as CNN. According to Joseph Nye's concept, the media influence not only what they broadcast, but also the tone or content of certain information

(Nye, 2011). Therefore, it can be assumed that the image of Russia presented in American media or films, which is mostly negative, also influences the external perception of Russia. The USA, Western Europe, and especially the former Soviet satellite states have little respect for Russia based on historical issues or simply because contemporary Russia does not follow the American concept of a unilateral international environment.

The research presented in the article refers to yet another means of deteriorating the international perception of Russia and creating the villainous 'other' than just through strong criticism of Russia in foreign media, which is the attention paid to the doping scandal in Russian sport. As a matter of fact, the doping scandal has been an important topic in the world of sports since it was revealed in 2014, particularly with respect to the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 when the question of whether Russia should be banned from the Games was vividly debated in international sports' governing bodies. Accordingly, an attempt to verify the hypothesis that the Russian doping scandal contributed to the creation of a negative external image of Russia will be made.

Theoretical background

The research presented in the article is related to Joseph Nye's concept of soft power. J.S. Nye (2004) claimed that a state can sometimes realize its objectives because other countries will want to follow its example. Soft power resources include migrations, tourism, culture, the presence of a country in the media, technology, science, education, development aid, regime, and foreign policy, etc. Sport has also been named as one of the soft power resources (Ociepka, 2013; http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_en, accessed 15.05.2018) and has been included in attempts to rank states' soft power (McClory, 2012) or their nation brand (Anholt, 2009). A nation brand is defined as "the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with a culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its targeted audiences" (Dinnie, 2008: 15). It is also described as "country image", which Alexander Buhman (2016) defined as the sum of beliefs, attitudes, and impressions that a person or group of persons have of a country. One of the proposed methods for understanding nation branding is equating it with concepts concerning certain states, encompassing both knowledge and the emotional sphere (Ham, 2011). Nation branding involves, therefore, a process of shaping or enhancing the nation brand and, what is even more significant, enhancing the competitiveness of a state. According to W. Olins (2005), such competition is currently visible within three dimensions: brand export, direct foreign investments, and tourism. Eytan Gilboa (2008) indicates that branding is about linking a state to its characteristic features: making it exceptional and remarkable and enabling

it to be distinguished from other states. Nation branding as a process of shaping a state's image and its international perceptions is complex. According to Katarzyna Pisarska (2016), this process begins at home in order for it to be most effective. This means that a nation must first shape its perception of itself, and then export it to foreign nations. However, it should be noted that a nation's perceptions of itself can be often contradictory or not fully compatible with the official branding content proposed by the government. Nevertheless, the main focus of this article is put on the aspects of the international perceptions of national brands. Therefore, the definitions proposed by Ham, referring to the concept encompassing both knowledge and emotions, seem to be of significant interest in the case of the doping scandal and how it influenced Russia's international image.

In order to shape their soft power, states also employ methods of public diplomacy. Public diplomacy can be understood as the communication of an international actor's policies to citizens of foreign countries through the engagement of foreign ministers, non-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations (Pamment, 2013); whilst nation branding, on the other hand, is often defined as a marketing strategy that targets external markets to establish and communicate a specific image of national identity (Varga, 2013). Sport can be employed both in public diplomacy and nation-branding strategies, even though those two terms overlap or are actually the same concepts according to some scholars (Szondi, 2008). As far as sport is considered, the utilization of sport for the sake of both bolstering a nation brand and fostering foreign policy goals is referred to as sports diplomacy. It should be noted, however, that using sport to shape a state's image or international position is not always effective.

There are various methods that allow states to use sports to shape their international image. Hosting sports events, so-called mega-events in particular, is believed to be one of the most important tools. These events are often perceived as ideal channels for nations, regions, and cities to "share their identities, their merits and 'brands' with the rest of the world" (Pigman, Rofe, 2014: 1096). The reason for this is that they attract the attention of billions of people and are therefore a "perfect platform for showcasing the hosting nation" (Grix, Houlihan, 2014: 578). For example, China is believed to have desired to use its position as the host of the Beijing Olympics to show the world its economic power; the merits of its political system; that it poses no danger to the world (Gries *et al.*, 2010); and its technological achievements and organizational capacities (Panagiotopoulou, 2012). The 2012 Olympic Games in London were meant to create a platform for communicating key information about modern, twenty-first century Britain (Rofe, 2014; <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmfaff/581/581.pdf>, accessed 30.08.2018). Of course, this does not mean that the viewing public will completely absorb and accept what the host nation presents. Rather, it implies the host nation's ability to reach a number of people with its message. Its effectiveness in shaping others' opinions depends on many factors, including

the message itself. Apart from that, in some situations even simply participating in international sports events may have a positive effect on a nation's brand in the case of small or unrecognised countries. This is why countries that are not recognized by the international society, such as Kosovo, tend to attach great value to the possibility of competing in international sport (Brentin, Tregoures, 2016). This was also the case with the German Democratic Republic, which throughout the 1950s and 1960s strived to be accepted to compete independently in the Olympic Games. In order to enhance their image, states may also provide sports development aid; establish various types of exchanges in the field of sports, for example, through a coach exchange; or simply benefit from grassroots initiatives deriving from its high-level sports – for example, English football club Manchester United plays exhibition matches abroad during the off-season, simultaneously promoting Great Britain (Rofe, 2014).

Another method for shaping a state's international image, that is especially important in the context of this research, is the achievement of success in sports. High performance in elite sport may bring certain benefits to a state both internally and externally. Generally, this is about gaining prestige. In some cases, the political objectives of superiority in sports may also include winning support for political leaders and the legitimization of a political system. Externally, sporting victories are meant to show a country's virtues to the world. According to Barrie Houlihan (2006), sport is an international stage on which states can project their identity. In this way, success in sports events may provide a "benign and uncritical backdrop for the parade of national achievements" (216). Using sport in such a way was given great importance in the Cold War era, when communist and capitalist states justified their athletic victories as evidence of their political superiority, with the America-Soviet athletic competitions being the most important example. The two Cold War geopolitical blocks competed in the Olympic Games medal tables and in individual prestigious competitions, such as the ice hockey semi-final between the USA and the Soviet Union during the Olympic Games in Lake Placid in 1980. The Olympic medal table, although not approved by the IOC, appeared to be the main arena of this surrogate war following the Soviet debut at the Helsinki Games in 1952.

The mechanism of using sports victories to shape the image of a country is fairly simple: in general, it is about gaining media exposure, although victories may also have a symbolic meaning that is consumed domestically. However, this is not the subject of the research. A winning athlete or team is present in the media worldwide. As they represent their homeland, it also benefits from a public relations mechanism called publicity. At the same time, such sports victories have many other meanings. For example, in the case of the Cold War rivalry between the USA and USSR, a sports victory was about proving ideological superiority (Thomas, 2012). International sports may, therefore, be regarded as an arena for gaining soft power (Reiche, 2016), although of course, the behaviour of the athletes may also play a role here.

For example, national governments may leverage individual sporting successes into narratives about national prestige, but the athlete in question may exhibit behaviour that trumps any such attempts. This utilization of sports is described by some scholars as sportive nationalism, defined as governments using elite athletes for the purpose of enhancing their national prestige (Koller, 2008). However, the whole situation is much more complex. Contemporary sport is heavily globalized, and the migration of transnational athletes is a typical example of contemporary developments in the world of sport (Maguire, Tuck, 2005). As a result, some athletes who are not able to qualify for their national teams seek this possibility elsewhere, although they may have other motivations as well. When seeking sports victories, most states fast-track citizenship for foreign-born athletes or hire foreign coaches whose reputation and training techniques suggest potential medal winners.

Sports victories are believed to be one of the facets of a state's international presence. For example, points in the FIFA world ranking and medals won at the Summer Olympic Games are included in the Elcano Global Presence Report (http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_en, accessed 15.05.2018). As a result, countries that desire to enhance how important international community members perceive them often take steps to maximize the performance of their athletes. The most common way of doing this is to create an elite sport system. Within such efforts, states create strategies for identifying and developing talented athletes. All of these endeavours require substantial assets. This includes the finances to support full-time athletes, sport science provision, full-time high-quality coaches and specialist training facilities, specialist administrative units, post-career support, a supportive domestic competition structure, and a whole list of less tangible resources and processes (Houlihan, Zheng, 2013).

The soft disempowerment proposed by Paul Michael Brannagan and Richard Giulianotti (2015) is a key concept that is useful in explaining how a state's international image can suffer eventual losses resulting from an attempt to enhance its image through sports. The concept refers to the risks of upsetting, offending, or alienating others, leading to a loss of attractiveness and influence. P.M. Brannagan and R. Giulianotti refer to the reputational risks of hosting sports mega-events. If the hosts are unprepared for the global attention and scrutiny, they may receive negative publicity and as a result "lose more than they can gain in terms of destination image" (706). They used this concept to assess nation branding through hosting sports events, as in the example of Qatar hosting the football World Cup in 2022. However, the authors believe that it is equally useful to consider other means of boosting a state's image through sports. As has been noted, Russia attempted to enhance its image through several elite sports initiatives: hosting mega-events, winning important international team and individual competitions, and medal success at the winter and summer Olympics. It used various methods to reach this goal, including those that were morally positive, neutral or negative.

Russian sports policy and the doping scandal

Russian branding endeavours strongly refer to sports. Considerable efforts were made to secure and organize sports events on Russian soil. The Russian prime minister at the time, Vladimir Putin, was personally engaged in applying for the 2014 Winter Olympics and 2018 FIFA World Cup, and it was said that securing them was his double victory (Hoberman, 2011). The Winter Olympic Games in Sochi are believed to have been the most expensive in history. The Russian Ministry of Regional Development estimated it to have cost around 42 billion US dollars (Karnaukh, 2014), while according to other calculations it could have cost 51 billion US dollars. However, it is very difficult to calculate the expenditures precisely as the sums had been artificially inflated by the private sector; which would later give them an advantage in applying for, for instance, preferential tariffs (Gibson, 2014). As a result, Russia has been the host of high-profile sports events such as the aforementioned FIFA World Cup in 2018, the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, the University Games in Kazan, and the track and field World Championships in Moscow. Since 2014, Sochi has also been a venue for the annual F1 Grand Prix (<https://www.formula1.com/en/championship/races/2017/Russia.html>, accessed 10.08.2018). These successful bids can be seen as a soft power example of a strong Russia, in reaction to American and European leaders' new approaches to Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which were not compatible with Russian elites' ambitions for the country to be a great power (Trenin, 2007, 2011).

Sports victories are meant to be another branding tool, and they appear to have become a significant goal of Russian decision-makers, as in Soviet times. It is claimed that Russian leaders believe that, generally speaking, sports victories enhance Russia's foreign interests and sports investments boost Russian soft power (Rukavishnikov, 2011). In 2010, Dmitry Medvedev, then-President of Russia, said in the context of the upcoming Sochi Olympics that "developing sport is one of our top national priorities" and that there was a correlation between prestige and success in sports arenas (Pettersson, 2014). This situation resulted in the state's strong engagement in developing its sports performance. This has been particularly visible since the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century when sports victories became an important objective of Russian leaders. This was the time when various tools were employed to boost the country's sporting victories. Considerable sums were invested in elite sport, although this was not purely through public funding. It should be noted that Russian sport is co-financed by the public and private sectors – primarily by oligarch money. For example, before the Games in Beijing, Russia's oligarchs established the Russian Olympic Fund, which donated prizes to Olympic medal winners (Argent, 2012). When

Sochi was awarded the right to host the Olympics, Russia's engagement in elite sport intensified, as could be seen through greater investments in elite sport and institutional changes (Andreff *et al.*, 2011; Smolianov, 2013). In order to be at the top of the medal table in Sochi, methods such as naturalizing athletes and hiring foreign coaches were also used (Connor 2014; Gronskaya, Makarychev, 2014). In addition, Olympic medalists from Russia received some of the highest bonuses for their successes (Argent, 2012). All these factors support the assumption that Russia had not only a critical interest in elite sport success in the market economy but also the nostalgia for a return to the success demonstrated by the state amateurs of the Soviet era.

In December 2014 German television ARD broadcasted a documentary about doping in Russian sports. The investigation of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) conducted by Richard McLaren resulted in two reports being published, the first one in July 2016 and the second in December 2016. The reports generated turmoil and the condemnation of Russia, as well as criticism and doubts concerning the authenticity of these revelations. According to the first report, Russia had most likely developed a state-dictated failsafe system described as Disappearing Positive Methodology (Duval, 2017). The report suggested that with this system, state authorities protected athletes who tested positive for using forbidden substances. The system was claimed to have begun in a Moscow laboratory in 2011 with the knowledge of the Deputy Minister of Sport, Yuri Nagornykh, who decided which athletes should be protected. The laboratory would report that a protected athlete's sample was negative and falsified the screen result in the Laboratory Information Management System. However, according to the report, Russian authorities developed a more sophisticated method of sample swapping with the help of the FSB security agency during the Olympics in Sochi. A urine bank was supposedly established in order to store frozen: "clean" urine, and the samples were swapped through a "mouse hole" in the Sochi Laboratory.

After the Sochi Olympics, Russia was supposed to have returned to Disappearing Positive Methodology (McLaren, 2016a). The second report was released in December 2016 and also referred to the Olympic Games in London in 2012, the IAAF World Championships in Moscow in 2013, and the University Games in Kazan in 2013. The report confirmed the charges from the first report by claiming, for instance, that "corrective actions announced by the Russian Federation following the issuance of the 1st Report implicitly confirm the contents of the 1st Report". Such corrective actions included, for example, suspending and subsequently discharging from office Yuri Nagornykh, the Deputy Minister of Sport; Natalia Zhelanova, the anti-doping advisor to the Minister of Sport; and Irina Rodionova, the Deputy Director of the Center of Sports Preparation of National Teams of Russia. Moreover, it was reported that the FSB had developed a method of opening and closing sample bottles in order to swap not only sample A,

but also sample B. It was claimed that sample swapping was conducted after the Olympics in Sochi as well, and that over 1,000 Russian athletes in summer and winter sports were involved. The second report, however, did not mention the word “state” in its findings; the authors used expressions like “institutional conspiracy” and “systematic and centralised cover-up and manipulation”, and referred to the athletes’ cooperation with the officials from the Ministry of Sport or the FSB (McLaren, 2016b). Both reports implied that there was a state-sponsored and state-organized doping system in Russia, although the second report appeared to be more cautious with making accusations against the whole Russian state. This was probably because the first report’s findings about the state-dictated doping system in Russia was a “surprise” outcome of McLaren’s investigation, whereas establishing the involvement of the Russian state would have required a methodology designed accordingly.

McLaren’s reports drew vast criticism from Russian sport, even though they did respond to some controversies and criticism. Critics claimed, for instance, that the first report relied primarily on the testimony of Dr Grigory Rodchenkov, that the investigation team did not hear Russian authorities’ counter-arguments, or that it was inconsistent on a number of issues (Sterling, 2016). The second report, on the other hand, was criticized, for example, for not providing enough evidence to support its findings, such as the engagement of Russian institutions and officials (Sterling, 2017). There were also claims that McLaren was previously engaged in a WADA commission that exposed doping in Russian athletics and therefore was somehow associated with the issue (Katz, 2016). One of the experts cited by the Russian News Agency TASS also questioned some of the findings and claimed that doping was not only a problem in Russia, but also in other countries (<http://tass.com/sport/889531>, accessed 30.08.2018). Other doubts might refer to the acceptance of as many as 1,000 athletes who were involved in the doping system or the report’s claims concerning the FSB’s engagement in the operation – and the question might arise as to whether the Russian security service was so incompetent that it was caught in sporting espionage. What is more, in 2017, WADA cleared the first 95 out of 96 Russian athletes implicated in the report due to a lack of evidence (Ruiz, 2017). There were, therefore, a number of flaws in the conclusions of WADA’s investigation. Russian speakers’ arguments that performance-enhancing drug use is evident in high-performance sport, in general, are valid. Nonetheless, it has, along with the ARD’s documentary, brought about a vivid discussion and criticism of Russian sport. The authors are less interested in whether or not the use of drugs is athlete-driven or a state-sponsored system. The intent is to ascertain whether the doping scandal had contributed to the deterioration of the generally negative image of the country, particularly in the West.

After McLaren’s first report was published, the World Anti-Doping Agency recommended collective sanctions against Russia during the Olympic Games

in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 and beyond. WADA has also suspended Russia's anti-doping agency RUSADA and insisted that RUSADA, the Russian National Olympic Committee, and its sports ministry publicly accept the outcomes of McLaren's investigation (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/olympics/2017/09/13/wada-clears-95-russian-doping-cases-still-pursuing-others/105583622/>, accessed 12.12.2017). Concerning the Rio Olympics, the International Olympic Committee decided that International Federations (IFs) should decide upon the eventual disqualification of particular athletes. Apart from that, any Russian athlete who had ever been found guilty of doping could not compete in the Games, whereas those who had qualified had to undergo additional tests (<https://www.olympic.org/news/decision-of-the-ioc-executive-board-concerning-the-participation-of-russian-athletes-in-the-olympic-games-rio-2016>, accessed 1.07.2018). One of the reasons for rejecting WADA's call for a ban of the whole Russian team from the Olympics in Rio was because the report provided no direct evidence that members of the Russian Olympic Committee were involved in the conspiracy (Ingle, 2016). The IOC has also established an Inquiry Commission chaired by Samuel Schmid and a Disciplinary Commission chaired by Denis Oswald in order to investigate the problem (<https://www.olympic.org/news/ioc-session-given-update-on-anti-doping-efforts>, accessed 16.09.2017), which also suggests a more cautious approach to McLaren's investigation. The conclusions of the Schmid Report confirmed "the systemic manipulation of the anti-doping rules and system in Russia". As a result, the IOC Executive Board suspended the Russian Olympic Committee but invited individual Russian athletes to participate in Winter Olympics in PyeongChang under the name "Olympic Athletes from Russia" (<https://www.olympic.org/news/ioc-suspends-russian-noc-and-creates-a-path-for-clean-individual-athletes-to-compete-in-pyeongchang-2018-under-the-olympic-flag>, accessed 5.12.2017). If IFs are considered, the track and field IAAF was particularly severe, suspending the All-Russia Athletic Federation (<https://www.iaaf.org/news/press-release/iaaf-araf-suspended>, accessed 20.08.2018) as early as November 2015. In the end, the only Russian track and field athlete to compete in Rio was Darya Klishina, who resided in Florida (Masters, 2016). In addition, Russian weightlifters were banned from the Rio Olympics (<http://www.bbc.com/sport/olympics/36881326>, accessed 20.05.2018).

The most direct conclusions from the McLaren reports were that Russia developed a state-organized doping system in order to enhance the results of Russian athletes in international competition. Regardless of whether a state-dictated doping system was developed in Russia or not, it may be assumed that the Russian government was interested in using the Winter Olympics as yet another tool of winning international prestige and enhancing the Russian nation brand. This was to be achieved not only by hosting the Olympics, but also through good sports performance. However, after the doping scandal was revealed, many people began to see Russia in a negative context of "cheaters" instead of positive

“winners”. Such opinions came to light after the two previously mentioned reports were revealed, and it can be assumed that such negative perceptions of Russia in the field of international sports competition were still palpable. Although the analysed period of the article encompasses chosen timescales, with the last being after the Rio Olympic Games in 2016, it was possible to observe the negative impact of the doping scandal during the latest Winter Olympic Games in PyeongChang: Russian curler Aleksandr Krushelnitskii was excluded from the Olympic Village after testing positive on a drug test, and this was widely commented on in the international media (<https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/olympics/winter-olympics/winter-olympics-2018-russia-curling-meldonium-pyeongchang-a8216456.html>, accessed 20.02.2018). Interestingly, one week earlier a Japanese athlete was sent home (Ingle, 2018) with almost no media coverage. Such interest could be the result of generally negative opinions about Russia in the world as well as the result of the country being under scrutiny following the previous doping scandal.

Method

The determination of how the attitudes towards Russia in the US and Poland changed as a result of the doping scandal has been based on the assessment of attitudes towards the country presented in selected foreign press releases. The meaning of phenomena is believed to be socially constructed through language, while discourse is the result of a social practice that establishes relations among the concepts and their meanings (Rasmussen, 2009). In this context, it can be stated that news is constructed by a personally involved individual journalist playing the role of an engaged narrator, meaning objectivity is sometimes hard to reach (Grunwald, 2017) if it is possible at all. According to these assumptions, the news published in the foreign media reflects and/or shapes the general external or international perception of an object. For the sake of this study, it can be used to observe changing attitudes towards states.

The introduction of secondary statistical data concerning the attitudes towards Russia in the US and Poland has been employed as a starting point for the investigation. This was followed by the main part of the research, within which the frame analysis of public discourse was conducted. The core idea of this method is to combine qualitative text analysis with a quantitative analysis of information from articles in print media (Keller, 2013). This combination enabled the observation of interesting patterns within changes in the perceptions of Russia in the USA and Poland, as the authors decided to analyse changes within international – not domestic – perceptions of this state with regard to the doping scandal. This was done by including a considerable number of texts and

examining them from the perspective of their core meaning, in this case, based on the occurrence of particular phrases (Keller, 2013).

The sample of texts is based on a selection of press articles from chosen influential and frequently read newspapers in Poland and the United States of America. The two countries were selected for the study in order to avoid potential distortions caused by the events of bilateral relations, and based on the geographical factor – Poland as a state in close vicinity to Russia and United States as a distant state. The selection of such a sample may raise concerns over the plausibility of the research since both countries present a rather negative political stance against Russia, which was particularly visible after the events in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, which at the same time fell into the period of the research. The political stance of the governments of the US and Poland are also reflected in the general attitudes towards Russia among the societies of both countries. The attitudes of Poles towards Russia and Russians are generally negative, partially owing to the history of Polish-Russian relations. Americans' general perception of Russia is negative as well, however not as strongly as in Poland (<http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/07/09/russias-global-image-negative-amid-crisis-in-ukraine/>, accessed 4.04.2018). It was therefore assumed that the perceptions of Russia would be rather negative from the beginning, as terms related to the considerably bad international reputation and perceptions of Russia had already been noted. What is more, Western societies such as Polish and American were expected to be more prone to adjust their perception of Russia as a result of the doping scandal, because of the reasons that have been pointed out earlier, such as the Cold War history. The research was, however, designed to observe the tendencies in the changing attitudes towards Russia in conjunction with the doping scandal through the example of particular countries, not to measure its global image.

The newspapers from both countries to be investigated were selected on the basis of their outreach. According to the Institute of Media Monitoring in Poland, one of the most influential newspapers in Poland between 2014 and 2016 was *Gazeta Wyborcza* (http://www.imm.com.pl/badania_mediow/najbardziej_opiniotworcze_media_2015, accessed 20.09.2017). In the case of the United States, *The New York Times* was chosen as one of the most frequently read newspapers. It is, however, necessary to mention that both newspapers can be perceived as having relatively negative views of Russia. The explanation for this can be the assumption that newspapers are to some extent reflections of social attitudes and, conversely, can influence what people think (Gries *et al.*, 2010).

The authors decided not to limit the analysed articles with regard to their main topic. Taking into consideration the fact that the opinions, attitudes, and reputations of countries are shaped and influenced not by one single indicator, e.g., culture, sport, products, political values, or the influence of famous people, but rather are a sum of many different aspects, all of the articles found were

included with only one restriction, which is described below. Considering only articles concerning sport would be a major simplification of the comprehensive character of a state's external image. What is more, only a limited number of articles dedicated to sport in Russia were found in the acquired timescales, making it impossible to make any reliable observations with regards to the changing attitudes towards this country. The press releases were selected by searching for the phrase "Russia(n)" in *The New York Times* and "Rosja" in *Gazeta Wyborcza* in the digital databases of the respective newspapers available online. The collected articles were screened, and the articles that only mentioned Russia without direct reference to contemporary Russia or its people, e.g., a ballerina's memories from a performance in Russia or historical memories, were excluded from the analysis and further evaluation. This was the only exclusion in the selection of texts for the analysis. The texts were then labelled and grouped as positive, neutral, or negative. The labelling and grouping process was based on an assessment of the press releases concerning the occurrence of expressions that were emotional or judgmental. The texts were then coded as having a positive or negative overtone. The expressions perceived as negative concerned phrases such as "annexation of Crimea", "aggressive policy", "expansive", etc. An example of an article labelled as negative can be represented by the following citation:

One of Europe's most senior human rights officials, the Council of Europe's human rights commissioner, Nils Muiznieks, has criticized as "ridiculous" a new Russian law on road safety that prohibits transgender people from obtaining a driver's license (<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/10/world/europe/nils-muiznieks-criticizes-russian-law-ban-transgender-driving.html>, accessed 9.01.2015).

Press releases that contained no such expressions and were purely informational were coded as neutral. The following citation represents an article labelled as neutral:

Russian delegates on a meeting with Venezuela, Mexico and Saudi Arabia in Vienna did not manage to convince Rijad to support the production limits. Moscow also made a shift. On Monday "Kommiersant" reported that Russia offered to reduce the oil production by 0.3 million barrels of oil a day.

[originally]: rosyjska delegacja na spotkaniu w Wiedniu z Wenezuelą, Meksykiem i Arabią Saudyjską nie przekonała Rijadu do wsparcia ograniczeń wydobycia. Moskwa też wykonała woltę. W poniedziałek dziennik "Kommiersant" napisał, że Rosja zaoferowała zmniejszenie produkcji ropy o 0,3 mln baryłek dziennie] (https://wyborcza.pl/1,155287,17040348,OPEC_nie_podbil_cen_ropy__Szejkwie_pognebili_Putina.html accessed 27.11.2014).

The main challenge within the research referred to observing the actual significance of the doping scandal on the attitudes, and consequently the

perception, of Russia among the analysed countries. As has been mentioned, both of the analysed countries present rather negative attitudes towards Russia, while the doping scandal, in general, coincided with international developments that generated international criticism against Russia, such as engagement in Ukraine, annexing Crimea, or Russian interference in the US elections in 2016. An attempt to minimise the potential distortions within the whole period was made through the selection of the timescales of the research. Accordingly, the sample of articles was selected from three timescales: before the disclosure of the doping scandal in Russia (November 23–29, 2014), after the information concerning the Russian doping system was revealed (January 5–11, 2015), and after the publication of the first of WADA's reports (September 5–11, 2016). This sample selection was intended to allow for the observation of the fluctuation of perceptions of Russia in Poland and the USA over time. The first timescale was intentionally set after the Crimea crisis, as this event led to a serious deterioration of the perception of Russia worldwide and was the most influential factor in terms of Russia's reputation, particularly in the Western world. Therefore, in order to avoid the distortion of the measurement, the authors decided to collect the first sample in the period when Russia's image had already worsened. The last timescale was intentionally set after the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, as the goal of the research was to measure the general perception of Russia, not only in the context of sports.

Findings

Both Poland and the United States belong to the countries with rather negative attitudes towards Russia. It is important to note how these attitudes have been changing in recent years. In 2013, 43% of respondents in the USA had unfavourable opinions of Russia, and this number went up to 54% for respondents in Poland. Only two countries stated a more positive attitude towards Russia: Greece (63% positive opinions) and South Korea (53%) (<http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/09/03/global-opinion-of-russia-mixed/>, accessed 30.08.2018). In Spring of 2015, the unfavourable views of Russia were presented by 80% of respondents in Poland and 67% in the US (<https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2015/08/05/russia-putin-held-in-low-regard-around-the-world/>, accessed 5.08.2015). This marked a massive deterioration of how Russia was perceived in both countries, although this tendency had a generally global character. The subsequent period marked a slight improvement of how Russia was perceived by the societies in both countries. According to the data from the opinion polls in 2017, 63% held negative opinions in the USA, and 69% held negative opinions in Poland (<http://www>.

pewglobal.org/2017/08/16/publics-worldwide-unfavorable-toward-putin-russia/, accessed 17.08.2017).

As for the analysis of the attitudes towards Russia displayed the articles in the selected newspapers, the first timescale analysed in *The New York Times* encompassed 55 articles published November 23–29, 2014, before the announcement of the doping scandal. Within these 55 articles, four were video materials, which were excluded from the sample material. Another 31 articles did not concern Russia itself and had only negligible references to the country. Therefore, these articles were excluded from the analysis as well. Within the same timescale, 21 out of all 26 collected articles published in the Polish *Gazeta Wyborcza* were analysed. Most of them had a rather negative overtone relating mostly to the Ukrainian crisis – the annexation of Crimea and support of separatists in Eastern Ukraine.

A total of 46 articles were found in *The New York Times* in the second timescale. However, only 17 were chosen in the latter analysis for the reasons listed above. Video materials, articles only mentioning Russia, and two articles that were missing in the online archive were excluded. In the same timescale, 10 articles from *Gazeta Wyborcza* were found, three of which did not concern Russia directly.

In the final timescale analysed, September 5–11, 2016, 63 articles were found in *The New York Times*. A total of 21 of them were excluded from the analysis, including one video, since they did not refer to Russia directly. In *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 20 articles were found, and six of those were excluded from the analysis as they did not concern Russia directly.

The quantitative data obtained from the assessment of the press articles in the selected periods are presented in the tables below.

Table 1. Articles on Russia in *The New York Times*

| Article | Positive | Neutral | Negative |
|----------------------|----------|---------|----------|
| November 23–29, 2014 | | | |
| Number of articles | 0 | 11 | 9 |
| Percentage | 0 | 55 | 45 |
| January 5–11, 2015 | | | |
| Number of articles | 0 | 6 | 11 |
| Percentage | 0 | 35 | 65 |
| September 5–11, 2016 | | | |
| Number of articles | 0 | 14 | 28 |
| Percentage | 0 | 33 | 67 |

Source: Authors' study based on The New York Times Article Archives.

Table 2. Articles on Russia in *Gazeta Wyborcza*

| Article | Positive | Neutral | Negative |
|----------------------|----------|---------|----------|
| November 23–29, 2014 | | | |
| Number of articles | 0 | 9 | 12 |
| Percentage | 0 | 43 | 57 |
| January 5–11, 2015 | | | |
| Number of articles | 0 | 2 | 5 |
| Percentage | 0 | 29 | 71 |
| September 5–11, 2016 | | | |
| Number of articles | 0 | 4 | 10 |
| Percentage | 0 | 29 | 71 |

Source: Authors' study based on *Gazeta Wyborcza* (AGW) – Archiwum.

What can be observed is a clear decline in the perception of Russia after the doping scandal was revealed in December 2014. The percentage of articles classified as neutral towards Russia decreased, while at the same time the number of negative ones increased. No articles with a positive tone towards Russia appeared in any of the newspapers in any of the timescales. In the case of *The New York Times*, there was a 20% increase in articles with a negative attitude towards Russia after the doping scandal was revealed. In *Gazeta Wyborcza*, there was a 14% increase, but negative attitudes towards Russia appeared more frequently in this publication from the beginning. The figures remained approximate in the second and third periods in both analysed cases, meaning that the deterioration of Russia's image after the drop between the first and second measurement had a lasting character.

Discussion

According to McLaren's report, Russia developed a state-organized doping system. No matter whether it was state-dictated or of grassroots origins, the obvious goal of developing a costly and risky doping system was to boost the number of medals won by Russian athletes during the most important sports events. There are a few reasons for a state's leaders to engage their country in such operations. Both internal and external goals can be achieved through elite sport. Internally, sports victories may boost athletic participation throughout society, thus enhancing the health of the nation. They may also further legitimize the political system and win support for its political leaders. Externally, sports victories are about winning international prestige and enhancing the way a country is perceived by the world.

Russian sports achievements were supposed to serve each of these goals, along with fostering nostalgia for the past greatness of the Soviet Union that Vladimir Putin uses to strengthen his leadership in Russia.

Russian attempts to maximize its sports performance proved to be fairly successful. For example, Russia came top of the medal table during the Olympic Winter Games in Sochi in 2014 (<http://www.bbc.com/sport/winter-olympics/2014/medals/countries>, accessed 1.03.2014) and was generally regarded as one of the most successful nations in the world of sports, although, as has been noted, most hosts of such events perform extraordinarily well. Sports victories furnished Russia with positive publicity, thus serving the purposes of nation branding. Disclosure of the doping scandal reversed the whole situation, and Russia was again the centre of interest, but this time in a negative light. What is more, many Russian athletes were banned from competing in the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro and many other sports events. In this way, Russia was not only put in a bad light, but also lost an opportunity to gain international prestige by successfully competing in international sports as it used to do as part of its branding strategy.

The research presented in the article shows a correlation between the doping scandal in Russia and the tone of press articles about the country in the United States and Poland. Of course, a country's image is an exceptionally complex phenomenon and numerous factors affect it. Russia is, regardless of sport, a frequent object of international criticism, especially concerning its reported engagement in international conflicts and its human rights record (<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/russia>, accessed 13.08.2018). All such events deteriorate Russia's image. This was perfectly visible when the statistical data on attitudes towards Russia in both of the analysed countries between 2013 and 2017 are interpreted and compared with the results of the discourse analysis. The poll from 2013 can serve as a reference point as it illustrates the views of Russia before both the doping scandal was revealed and most critical occurrences concerning the external perception of Russia took place, such as the annexation of Crimea. The results of the frame analysis of the articles in November 2014 (after the annexation of Crimea) correspond very closely to the opinion polls from 2013, with almost identical results. The subsequent period in which the doping scandal was revealed marked a massive deterioration of the attitudes towards Russia both in Poland and in the US, both according to the opinion polls and the frame analysis. The frame analysis performed for the articles published in the selected timeframe of 2016 implied a moderate further deterioration of attitudes in the US and unchanged stance in Poland, whereas according to the opinion polls from 2017 the attitudes towards Russia improved in both societies despite further criticisms against Russia, for example in reference to its involvement in the conflict in Syria or interference in the 2016 presidential elections in the US. Obviously, attitudes towards a country or its image are shaped by numerous factors and occurrences, and the aim of the article was not to argue that developments in the area of sport have a particular meaning.

However, the results acquired through the analysis of the attitudes presented in the newspaper articles in the US and Poland, compared with the results of the opinion polls concerning the views of Russia in both countries imply that doping scandal did contribute to the deterioration of Russia's international perception, which speaks in favour of the hypothesis that the Russian doping scandal contributed to the worsening of the negative external image of Russia. In this context, it can be stated that employing ethically vague means in order to improve sports performance may have negative effects on the state's image, regardless of whether the state's authorities were responsible for these actions or not. The concept of soft disempowerment can be helpful in explaining this.

The doping scandal not only affected the international image of Russia, but it also proved to be a challenge to the integrity of sport worldwide. It led to tensions between the World Anti-Doping Agency and the International Olympic Committee, which rejected WADA's call for a ban of the whole Russian team from the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. There were also obvious tensions between WADA and Russia, which, regardless of the controversies, has been one of the most successful sporting nations in history. As a result, Russia is unwilling to accept the results of McLaren's investigation, which is one of WADA's requirements. After 95 of the Russian athletes mentioned in McLaren's report were cleared of accusations due to a lack of evidence, 16 national anti-doping organizations demanded that Russia be banned from the Winter Olympics in PyeongChang (Payne, 2017). There have also been different stances presented by different international sports federations, with the IAAF being particularly severe towards Russia. All of this has led to the assumption that the world of sport cracked after the doping scandal was revealed, and it appears to remain divided. Therefore, the implications of the scandal have more far-reaching consequences than simply affecting Russia's international brand, thus leaving space for further investigations.

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Sabrina P. Ramet

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2843-3898>

Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Trondheim, Norway
Department of Sociology and Political Science
e-mail: sabrina.ramet@ntnu.no

Kant on ethics and politics

Abstract. Best known for his ethical works, Immanuel Kant was part of the liberal Enlightenment and addressed most of the principal political issues of his day. Several of his major works were written in the wake of the storming of the Bastille in Paris, while Europe was engaged in the French Revolutionary Wars. His rejection of revolution but endorsement of the principles for which the French revolutionaries were fighting, as well as his plea for a federation of European states that would settle disputes peacefully, reflected his engagement with the controversies raised by the Revolution. But, although he could not countenance revolution, he declared that, once a revolutionary government has succeeded in establishing itself, citizens should obey the new government, rather than try to restore the ousted authorities.

Keywords: Immanuel Kant, religion, ethics, politics, philosophy.

Immanuel Kant lived in revolutionary times. Some of his earlier works were devoted to issues related to morality and religion; he spelled out what he called the ‘categorical imperative’, which called for people to act only in a such a way that, if everyone did likewise, the world would be a better place. Later, as the French Revolutionary Wars got underway and Europe was shaken by revolutionary currents, Kant advised that people should be loyal to whichever government was in place, seeking neither to overthrow an existing regime nor to restore a fallen one. In his *Perpetual Peace*, he sketched a vision of a more peaceful world and argued that, as the rule of law and republican rule spread across Europe, the continent would see fewer wars.

Early career

Kant was born on 22 April 1724 in Königsberg (now Kaliningrad) in East Prussia. Except for occasional journeys into the immediate vicinity just outside the city limits, Kant never left Königsberg during the 80 years of his life. Königsberg in the eighteenth century – unlike Kaliningrad today – was a lively, cosmopolitan city with flourishing trade and participating in the broader European cultural and intellectual trends. Kant himself was no recluse; on the contrary, he enjoyed a lively social life and had a wide social circle. In his later years, Kant was extremely regular and meticulous in his habits, unfailingly punctual; locals joked that they would set their watches by the schedule of Kant's daily walk. His parents were Pietists, advocating complete reliance on God and the renunciation of personal moral autonomy. Kant turned his back on his parents' Pietism and, in opposition to their views, came to champion moral autonomy, personal responsibility, and reliance on one's own reason in making moral decisions (Kuehn, 2001: 53–54; Jaspers, 1975; Immanuel Kant and Gregor, 1991a: 97–107).

Kant's intellectual gifts were evident already at an early age, and he was admitted to the University of Königsberg, where he excelled. In 1755 (at age 31), he was granted the right to lecture at the university as a *Privatdozent*, meaning that his salary consisted of fees for lectures. Kant proved to be a popular lecturer, offering lectures on many subjects: logic, metaphysics, ethics, jurisprudence, geography, anthropology and other subjects. In 1764, he was offered a full professorship in poetry at the University of Berlin; he declined the offer. Five years later, the University of Erlangen approached him with an offer that he assume the first chair of theoretical philosophy; he turned down this offer as well, hoping to remain in his native Königsberg. He achieved this objective the following year, when he assumed the post of professor of moral philosophy at the University of Königsberg (Kuehn, 2001: 158–159, 162–163, 188–189). He continued to present lectures across a range of subjects; thus, in addition to moral philosophy and rational theology, he also presented lectures on anthropology, logic, and mineralogy during 1770–1771 and on theoretical physics and physical geography in summer 1776.

At the time of his appointment, the 46-year-old philosopher had not yet written any of the works for which we remember him today. His chief concerns at that time were epistemology and the moral law. Indeed, by 1763, Kant had reached the conclusion that it was necessary to spell out the highest principle of morality and he was convinced that this had to be a rational principle (Siep, 2009: 78). He set to work on what became his *Critique of Pure Reason*, published in 1781.

Even before 1763, various works of the Scottish ethicist Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746) appeared in German translation (Henrich, 2009: 30, n. 1–4) and, in 1781, a German translation of David Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* was published. Hutcheson and Hume (1711–1776) agreed that morality

was founded on a “moral sense” – a feeling. Kant rejected this view, and interpreted moral understanding in terms of reason (Kuehn, 2001: 202) He also rejected Hutcheson’s belief that God tendered “kind affections” toward humanity and that He wished to promote the happiness of humankind and all His other creatures (Henrich, 2009: 37). Privately, Kant disclosed that he did not believe in an afterlife or in a personal God, and, in the company of his friends, would mock religious practices (Kuehn, 2001: 3). He also had no use for the doctrine of original sin, and wrote that the “doctrine of the Trinity, taken literally, has *no practical relevance at all*” (Immanuel Kant and Gregor, 1991a: 65).

His religious scepticism was already revealed in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), where we find him declaring that

[t]he concept of a Supreme Being is, in many respects, a very useful idea, but being an idea only, it is quite incapable of increasing, by itself, our knowledge with regard to what exists. It cannot even do so much as to inform us any further as to its possibility (Kant, 1929b: 251).

In conceding that the concept of a God was, in his view, “a very useful idea”, Kant betrayed a functionalist approach to religion which would reemerge in his later writings. But already in the *Critique*, he dismissed the cosmological, empirical, and ontological arguments for the existence of God, only to declare that “the Supreme Being remains, no doubt, an ideal only” (Kant, 1929b: 267; Byrne, 2007).

Hume had expressed a similar scepticism in *Dialogues*; indeed, Kant and Hume concurred that one simply could not know anything about a putative Supreme Being. But, reflecting on Hume’s supposition that scepticism was the end-point of our reflections on this matter, Kant countered that one could, all the same, think about God (Logan, 1998: 138). But, agreeing with Aquinas on this point, Kant upheld the idea that the moral law did not depend on commands from a Supreme Being; on the contrary, in his *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), he would argue that “common human reason” was sufficient to identify which actions were good and which bad (Kant, 1929a: 283). In Kant’s view, thus, people understood the moral law quite readily, but they demanded a firmer, or perhaps more authoritative, foundation than mere reason – in effect, a divine command.

Groundwork of the metaphysic of morals (1785)

In the years preceding the French Revolution, Kant’s attention was firmly fixed on identifying the fundamental principle of morality. He conceived of his *Groundwork* as a preliminary investigation of the moral law, and proposed to derive its fundamental principle from a priori concepts alone. As such, his

concern in *Groundwork* was above all with defining and clarifying the nature of duty. Kant emphasized that right and duty are interconnected, so that one cannot have one without the other.

For Kant, it followed that, if one relativized one's morality, reducing everything to situational variables (that is to say to "situational ethics", which relies on empirical considerations), then one could, by the same virtue, claim only very relativized and situationally determined rights, again as conditioned by empirical considerations. Or again, if one chose to construe one's duties as purely subjective, then, to be completely consistent, one should construe one's rights as dependent on the purely subjective opinions others may hold concerning their own duties. Yet again, if one were to believe that the only duties one has are those specified by positive law (the position of Thrasymachus in Plato's *Republic*), then it would follow that one might claim only such rights as are granted by the statutes of the government under whose jurisdiction one happens to live. And finally, if and only if one accepts the rock-hard ethics based on Natural Law (whether in Kant's form or in some other), can one presume to postulate inalienable and unbridgeable natural rights. Hence, by endeavoring to set forth an air-tight system of natural duties, Kant laid the groundwork, at the same time, for a metaphysics (a system of a priori knowledge from concepts alone) of *rights*.

Duties, rights, and respect for the rights of others became *absolute* in Kant's system, which means that they are ends in themselves, and should never be regarded as mere means to realize some other end. For Kant, "Duty is the necessity to act out of reverence for the law" (Kant, 1948: 66). It followed, for Kant, that

An action done from duty has its moral worth, not in the purpose to be attained by it, but in the maxim according with which it is decided upon; it depends therefore, not on the realisation of the object of the action, but solely on the principle of volition in accordance with which [...] the action has been performed (Kant, 1948: 65).

In other words, the morality of an action does not depend upon the success of one's endeavor, but upon one's motivation. Thus, the only motivation which qualifies as morally worthy, is the desire to be in conformity with the moral law ("because it's the right thing to do"). This, for Kant, must be for its own sake: if one obeys the moral law in expectation of "eternal salvation", then one is acting in the expectation of payment and one's action has no moral content. Again, if one obeys the moral law to please somebody (mother, teacher, pastor, God), then again, one's action, even if helpful to others, has no moral content¹.

In *Groundwork*, Kant offered three formal statements of his *categorical imperative*:

¹ R.B. Pippin writes, however, that Kant did not, in fact, mean to suggest that acts not motivated purely by a sense of duty have no moral worth (Pippin, 2000: 241).

● 1st statement: “I ought never to act except in such a way that I can also will that my maxim [meaning the maxim from which my action would appear to be derived] should become a universal law” (Kant, 1948: 67).

● 2nd statement: “Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law” (Kant, 1948: 84).

● 3rd statement: “Act on the maxim which can at the same time be made a universal law” (Kant, 1948: 98).

This may be reasonably paraphrased as follows: “Act in such a way that, if everyone were to act as you are acting, the world would be a better place”.

In chapter 2 of *Groundwork*, Kant set forth his opposition to projects of attempting to derive the moral law from examples: no contingent example is capable of serving as either a first principle or as a springboard to a first principle. If then, the moral law cannot be derived from empirical cases, it can only be grounded on “pure reason” (recall that Cicero, Aquinas, and others had equated Natural Law with Right Reason). Now, if, furthermore, all human beings are to be considered subject to the moral law, it necessarily follows that all human beings (with certain exceptions) have the capacity to judge right from wrong.

But Kant was worried lest the appeal to universality could make the moral law contingent upon *general* comprehensibility, which is to say on the *lowest* common denominator among humankind. He therefore wanted principles of morality to be derived not from “the special nature of human reason” (Kant, 1948: 76) (which might even qualify as an empirical consideration), but more abstractly from notions of rationality as such. (What would a rational person do?).

In chapter 2, Kant also spelled out a “practical imperative”: “Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end” (Kant, 1948: 91). This “practical imperative” is, in fact, derived from the categorical imperative, because if everyone treated everyone else only as a means to one’s own pleasure or profit (the position of pure “realism”), then there could be no true friendships, no bonds of trust, and no moral behavior.

Toward the end of chapter 2, Kant attacked empirical principles for the second time, and this time singled out the appeal to happiness for especial criticism. He wrote as follows:

Empirical principles are always unfitted to serve as a ground for moral laws...The principle of **personal happiness** is, however, the most objectionable, not merely because it is false and because its pretence that well-being always adjusts itself to well-doing is contradicted by experience; nor merely because it contributes nothing whatever towards establishing morality, since making a man happy is quite different from making him good and making him prudent or astute in seeking his advantage [is] quite different from making him virtuous; but because it bases morality on sensuous motives which rather undermine it and totally destroy its sublimity, inasmuch as the motives of virtue are put in the same class as those of vice and

we are instructed only to become better at calculation, the specific difference between virtue and vice being completely wiped out (Kant, 1948: 103).

The foregoing amounted, among other things, to a repudiation of the “realist” position spelled out by Machiavelli and Hobbes. Further, lest anyone still object that morality should best be derived from God’s will, Kant criticized this as a *heteronomous* (non-autonomous) principle.

Kant now took his argument to its logical conclusion, not merely freeing the moral law from any connection with God’s Will, but also insisting that his appeal to rationality as the ground of the moral law “is better than the theological concept which derives morality from a divine and supremely perfect will” (Kant, 1948: 104) In this way, Kant established a firm secular basis for the moral law. He added that only the postulate of the individual *autonomously* discerning and willing the moral law could succeed in laying the foundation for authentic moral action. In chapter 3 (the final chapter in *Groundwork*) Kant returned to the theme of autonomy and freedom, and developed it further.

There was yet another alternative to Kant’s effort to link morality to *a priori* principles, viz., claims registered on behalf of empirical knowledge (in particular the notion that one could build up an ethical system on the foundation of mere empirical observations). What Kant wanted to do, in the realm of ethics, was to develop a purely deductive system of ethics, which could be derived from logically defensible *a priori* principles.

Justus Möser was among the best known advocates of deducing moral principles from empirical observations. A prominent conservative, he thought that it was mistaken to try to theorize from *a priori* principles. Kant replied to Möser in *Groundwork for a Metaphysic of Morals*, writing:

Everything that is empirical is, as a contribution to the principle of morality, not only wholly unsuitable for the purpose, but [...] even highly injurious to the purity of morals...Against the slack, or indeed ignoble, attitude which seeks for the moral principle among empirical motives and laws we cannot give a warning too strongly or too often; for human reason in its weariness is fain to rest upon this pillow and in a dream of sweet illusions (which lead it to embrace a cloud in mistake for Juno) to foist into the place of morality some misbegotten mongrel patched up from limbs of very varied ancestry and looking like anything you please, only not like virtue, to him who has once beheld her in her true shape (Kant, 1948: 88–89).

Clearly, Kant had a talent for sharp polemic, even though he rarely put that talent to use.

Wrestling with the French Revolution

Groundwork and the *Critique of Practical Reason* were Kant's last major writings before the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789. But even before the outbreak of the Revolution, Kant, who was profoundly influenced by Rousseau's writings², was writing about the subject of revolution. In his 1783 essay, "What is Enlightenment?," he had warned that one could not expect a revolution to engender "true reform" in people's thinking and, thus, one could not expect results as positive as what could come from gradual reform (Williams, 2003: 22). The French Revolution, which led to the outbreak of continent-wide war in 1792, was the major event in Kant's life and gave him occasion to write extensively on political subjects. During the period of the constitutional monarchy (1789–1792), Kant's comments about the French Revolution were largely positive; indeed, the French constitutions of 1791 and 1793 included principles consonant with Kant's philosophy, most notably in calling for progress in public enlightenment, i.e., education (Burg, 1974: 56–57); but he became highly critical of the revolutionaries during the Reign of Terror (1793–1794) and, in 1798, assessed that "the activity of the Committee of Public Safety in the phase of the revolutionary dictatorship under [Maximilien] Robespierre [w]as unjust" (Burg, 1974: 20). By contrast, Kant had a positive view of the bourgeois republic of 1795–1799, with its limited suffrage. Although he recoiled at the violent excesses of the French Revolution and was outraged by the execution of King Louis XVI, which he considered completely unnecessary and an offense to law, even putting social cohesion at risk, Kant remained sympathetic to the ideals of the Revolution. This sympathy caused him to revise his assessment of Great Britain, once the British went to war against Revolutionary France. Before 1789, he had held a high opinion of the British constitution and even thought it could offer a model for the development of a republican system within the framework of a limited government. But he now reversed his view of Old Albion and concluded that Britain's Glorious Revolution of 1688 had failed to achieve the goals for which Locke, Sidney, and others had been fighting. He also detected traces of both absolutism and corruption in the British system, and faulted it for nontransparency (Henrich, 1993: 108; Ellis, 2005: 24–25, 36, 122–123). In his *Conflict of the Faculties*, although addressing primarily religious matters, Kant boldly declared his sympathy for the principles of the revolution and confessed that his emotional response to the events unfolding in France "border[ed] closely on enthusiasm" (Kant, 1998: 153, 159). Kant's last public utterance concerning developments connected with the French Revolution was a commentary on the Egyptian campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798/1799, which confirmed his (continued)

² There was only one picture on the wall in Kant's house – a portrait of Rousseau.

partiality for France. He made no comment about Napoleon's assumption of power in November 1799; by then his mental and physical strength was in decline (Burg, 1974: 20).

In *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (1793; 2nd edition, 1794), he revived his functionalist approach to religion, advancing the proposition that religion could contribute to human progress and, more controversially, calling for an "ethical commonwealth" in which Christian religions would overcome their differences and draw steadily closer to a moral understanding founded on reason (Kant, 1998: 108–112). As he expressed himself here, Christianity had placed people "under a slavish yoke of faith" from which people were just beginning to escape; "freedom of thought" was his clarion call (Kant, 1998: 180–181). In this work, Kant rejected both the idea of state control of religion (the Hobb'sian solution) and religious toleration (Bodin's solution); he felt that bare toleration would allow outright superstitions and corrupt religious and moral perspectives to flourish. His alternative – the ethical commonwealth – would have no enforcement capacity but would promote shared ethical principles. He intended the commonwealth to overcome the "ethical state of nature" in which he believed people were living, with no recognized ecclesiastical authority to adjudicate and resolve moral and religious disputes (Lilla, 1998: 423, 425, 427; Kant, 1998: 106–109). This unique solution may be viewed as the ethical counterpart to the political federation of states he would shortly outline in *Perpetual Peace*.

Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason, with its reference to the "slavish yoke of [Christian] faith", enraged the King of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm II (1744–1797; reigned 1786–1797). (His uncle and predecessor, Friedrich II, had been an advocate of religious toleration, but Friedrich Wilhelm II did not believe in toleration and apparently did not subscribe to Kant's notion of an ethical commonwealth either.) The King ordered his minister of education and religious affairs, Johann Cristoph Woellner, to write to Kant to extract a promise that he would not write again on religion: this was tantamount to a Royal command. Kant reluctantly agreed, writing in reply that he would never again write on religious matters "as Your Majesty's most loyal subject". When the King passed away in 1797, Kant resumed writing on religion, explaining that the phrase "as Your Majesty's most loyal subject" had served to limit the promise to the lifetime of King Friedrich Wilhelm II (Kant, 2011: 9–19).

Kant was of a mixed mind about his decision to comply with the King's orders; but consistent with the principles he defended in his writings, he considered himself duty-bound to obey the King's orders, and noted that, although one was morally bound to tell the truth, it did not follow that one had to tell the whole truth in the public sphere. In the meantime, Kant's influential essay, *Perpetual Peace* was published in 1795, and in 1797–1798, Kant published his final and definitive statement on ethics, his *Metaphysics of Morals*. Then, in 1798, Kant brought together three shorter pieces of his, publishing them under the title, *The Conflict*

of the Faculties. The main focus of the work was the differing perspectives and methodologies of the faculties of philosophy and theology. In the course of this work, as if to spite the deceased monarch, Kant suggested that the Bible contained “mistakes” (Kant, 2011: 121), expressed skepticism concerning the allegedly divine inspiration of the Bible (Kant, 2011: 77), and referred to Christianity merely as “the most adequate religion” (Kant, 2011: 61). Yet, insofar as this “most adequate” religion could help to induce people to behave morally, Kant urged the government to promote the Bible as a “great means for establishing and administering civil order and peace” (Kant, 2011: 119). But, by this point, Kant was declining physically and he retired from the university. In 1803 he fell seriously ill for the first time, and on 12 February 1804 he passed away, a few months before his 80th birthday and just over two months before Napoleon Bonaparte would crown himself Emperor of the French.

Kant greeted both the American Revolution and the French Revolution, believing that both of them held the promise of bringing forth systems founded on the rule of law and committed to the common good. But in spite of his sympathy for the French Revolution, bordering on “enthusiasm”, Kant was deeply conflicted about it. He considered revolution illegal, by definition. Already in his essay, “On the Proverb, That May be True in Theory, But [it] Is of No Practical Use” (published in 1793, after the French Revolutionary Wars had broken out), Kant declared that

all resistance to the supreme legislative power, all incitement of subjects actively to express discontent, all revolt that breaks forth into rebellion, is the highest and most punishable crime in a commonwealth, for it destroys its foundation. And this prohibition is **absolute**, so that even if that power or its agent, the nation’s leader, may have broken the original contract, thereby forfeiting in the subject’s eyes the right to be legislator, since he has authorized the government to proceed in a thoroughly brutal (tyrannical) fashion, the citizen is nonetheless not to resist him in any way whatsoever. This is because under an already existing civil constitution the people no longer have the right to judge and to determine how the constitution should be administered (Kant, 1983: 79).

Put differently, Kant believed that the doctrine of popular sovereignty popularized by John Locke among others involved self-contradiction, since sovereignty – in his view – could not be located both in the government and in the people, and, in any event, there was no such thing as a “people” except insofar as they were united under a sovereign government (Flikschuh, 2008: 376–377, 382). But there was another problem with revolution in general, viz., that revolutions typically led, in the short run, to situations of interregnum, which returned citizens to the state of nature. Furthermore, he feared that, in the absence of the changes in people’s attitudes which he believed revolutions were ill equipped to promote, they were likely to end with governments which would be worse than what people had before (Flikschuh, 2008: 418).

Perpetual Peace was published in 1795, the same year in which the Peace of Basel brought an end to the first phase of the wars unleashed by the Revolution. Written during the worst fighting across Europe since the Thirty Years War of 1618–1948, the tract may therefore be understood as Kant’s response to the French Revolutionary War. In that treatise, Kant laid down the principle of non-interference in the government or constitution of any state, except in cases of civil war, together with a corollary prohibiting partition (Ellis, 2005: 75). Given that this came in the wake of the first (1772) and second (1793) partitions of Poland, with Poland about to be wiped off the map by the third partition (of 1795), Kant’s reference to the impermissibility of partition would have had a concrete reference for his contemporary readers. He also declared his opposition, in the same work, to “piracy, enslavement, colonial oppression, and subversion of a foreign people” (Ellis, 2005: 95). But it was the war engulfing all of Europe which was most on Kant’s mind. He hoped, to be sure, that war would prove to be

the means by which nature drives nations to make initially imperfect attempts, but finally, after many devastations, upheavals and even complete inner exhaustion of their powers, to take the step which reason could have suggested to them even without so many sad experiences – that of abandoning a lawless state of savagery and entering a federation of peoples in which every state, even the smallest, could expect to derive its security and rights not from its own power or its own legal judgement, but solely from this great federation...and the law-governed decisions of a united will (Ellis 2005: 47).

In his *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* (1784), he had nurtured a dual concern – to identify what might be called a “perfect civil constitution” and to urge that states enter into a federation which could assure the security of all – a dual concern which likewise animated Kant’s *Perpetual Peace*. In this latter work, he explicitly endorsed *republican* government as the only form of government compatible with the moral law (Kant 1991: 101). Kant’s notion of *republican* government is easily confused with representative government. What Kant had in mind by the term was that the will of the people should be sovereign but, he insisted, not only a representative government but also a monarchy could be republican, provided that the monarch allowed a public sphere to function in which the public could express its opinions and voice its concerns and provided that the system was characterized by the rule of law. Kant laid especial stress on the duty of rulers to respect the rights of their subjects and to promote their welfare. In the second edition of the work (released in 1796), Kant added a chapter stressing that it was in the state’s own interest to assure freedom of speech and press to philosophers (Ellis, 2005: 108, 110). The reason for this is that Kant believed that it was precisely the philosophers who were reflecting the most seriously about the problems of the age as well as about prospective solutions.

Hobbes' *Leviathan* had recently been published in German translation, and interest in the English philosopher's views, in the German-speaking world, was high. Kant had read Hobbes and considered the Englishman's arguments dangerous. Among other things, Hobbes thought that a sovereign was above the law and thought the international political order to be of secondary importance for the maintenance of order within any given state. Kant, by contrast, insisted that a republican political order was likely to be less conducive to belligerence and placed great stress on achieving peace in the international political order (Williams, 2003).

The first step, then, was to construct a well-ordered state in which the laws and institutions of state moderate, neutralize, or even eliminate most of the destructive potential of people's selfish orientation (Kant 1991b: 112). Kant did not expect people to agree to a republican constitution out of good will; on the contrary, he warned that people had a natural propensity to evil (Kant, 1998: 52–53). But the need to counter the self-seeking of other selfish individuals and groups would be – he thought – quite enough to motivate people to agree to a set of laws which would assure some measure of fairness toward all. What is practical, thus, is what is fair and, even from self-seeking motives, it is possible to realize that all are best served by a state having “an internal constitution organised in accordance with pure principles of right” (Kant, 1983: 123). Once such a state would be set up, it would actually serve, Kant suggested, to raise the level of morality among the people living under its jurisdiction (Kant, 1983: 113). This, Kant pointed out elsewhere, should be embraced as a conscious task, so that the level of morality and sociability could be steadily raised from one generation to the next (Munzel, 2003: 43–44). Thus, morality should serve as the yardstick by which to measure the health of a state. On this point, Kant urged explicitly that “the well-being of a state” cannot be reduced to the welfare and happiness of the citizens. On the contrary, Kant noted, “By the well-being of a state is understood, instead, that condition in which its constitution conforms most fully to principles of Right” (Kant, 1991a: 129). Kant also argued that the inclusion of the citizens in deliberations about public policy would provide an assurance that war would be a rare event since – he was convinced – people would be loath to willingly agree to endure the hardships of war (Kersting, 2009: 255).

The next step, for Kant, was for states “to arrive at a lawful settlement of their differences by forming something analogous to a universal state” (Kant, 1983: 123). But, he cautioned in another work, a unified world state under a single ruler might prove to be inimical to human freedom and, thus, it would be safer and preferable for nations to agree to a “state of nations” (*Völkerstaat*), in which the distinct cultures, along with the constituent states themselves, would be preserved (Byrd and Hruschka, 2010: 198–199). Kant specifically cautioned against trying to erect a world state, believing that the project, if successful, would risk creating “the most terrible despotism” (Byrd, Hruschka, 2010: 197). At the same time, he also warned that too

loose a grouping, such as in what he called a *Völkerbund* (a league of nations), being oriented only to collaboration and mutual consultation, would not serve the purpose of assuring peace as effectively as a *Völkerstaat*.

The *Völkerstaat* which Kant envisioned would, he hoped, establish certain provisional laws and rights – which he linked to his principles of cosmopolitan right, summarized in laws of hospitality. These “laws” should include the right of individuals to visit all parts of the world, the right of travellers not to be treated with hostility by citizens of other countries, the right to engage in public reason, the right to engage in commerce, and the right to be treated fairly in contracts (Brown, 2006: 667–670). Insofar as these are rights, they impose certain duties on others, duties which are, in fact, reciprocal and constitute, thus, the foundation for a notion of cosmopolitan or universal rights. It comes as no surprise, then, that one scholar has suggested that Kant’s concept of cosmopolitan right and the laws of hospitality can be seen as foreshadowing the human rights embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued by the United Nations in 1948 (Brown, 2006: 665).

Kant was, in fact, a cautious optimist. In spite of his concern about “self-seeking energies” and about human selfishness generally, he believed that humanity was improving not only culturally and in terms of scientific knowledge but also in relation to moral principles (Kant, 1983: 112; 2011: 157, 159, 165, 167). Indeed, in his view, the goal of history should be understood in terms of the improvement in humankind’s capacity for good – in a word, in terms of humankind’s moral improvement; at the same time, progress in morality entailed progress in the understanding of right (*Recht*), and here he was convinced that the French Revolution marked a watershed in the realization of human freedom and in the evolution of systems based on the concept of right (Burg, 1974: 37, 62, 65, 67). Accordingly, even while recognizing the imperialistic or irredentist ambitions which drive states, leaving no nation entirely secure (Kant, 1983: 91–92), he was convinced that humanity’s growing wisdom would serve it well at such point as practical considerations dictated the creation of a federation of independent states. Cautious to the end, he readily admitted that “*perpetual peace*, the ultimate goal of the whole Right of Nations, is indeed an unachievable Idea.” But, in the same breath, he insisted nonetheless that “the political principles directed toward perpetual peace, of entering into such an alliance of states, which serve for continual *approximation* to it, are not unachievable” (Kant, 1991a: 156).

The Metaphysics of Morals (1797)

Kant was still wrestling with the themes of revolution, political legitimacy, war, and freedom as he sat down to write what has been called his “most important political work” (Ellis, 2005: 6). Like many of his philosophical

forebears, Kant saw that political theory has a natural and organic connection with moral theory and that, to offer any normative propositions concerning politics, one had to develop them on the foundation of a comprehensive moral theory. This is precisely what he set out to do in *The Metaphysics of Morals*. As he noted there, he believed that people had a duty to strive to improve themselves, even to aspire to “natural perfection”; insofar as this required that people be able to set rational ends for their actions, this entailed at the same time that people had an “innate right to freedom” (Wood, 1999: 140, 323; Kant, 1998: 80). Accordingly, the purpose of the state was to maximize people’s freedom, but people’s happiness, as such, insofar as it is to some extent subjective, could not be a legitimate object of government. At the same time, however, he identified freedom with the moral law; to be free is to be free to live morally; there is no such thing as freedom to be immoral (Kant, 1948: 52).

He also expanded his scope to subsume the political. He argued, for example, that the laws of the state (positive laws) may not infringe upon people’s natural rights, including the right of first possession of land. But he further underlined the connection between positive laws and Natural Law, by arguing that the validity of the former depends upon its conformity with the latter. One of the most controversial passages of *The Metaphysics of Morals* occurs in the chapter devoted to “Public Right”. Here, he argued that:

The head of a state has only rights against his subjects and no duties (**that he can be coerced to fulfil**). Moreover, even if the organ of the head of a state, the **ruler**, proceeds contrary to law, for example, if he goes against the law of equality in assigning the burdens of the state in matters of taxation, recruiting and so forth, subjects may indeed oppose this injustice by **complaints (gravamina)** but not by resistance (Kant, 1948: 130)³.

The key qualifier in the foregoing passage is “that he can be coerced to fulfil”. After all, Kant had already stressed that positive law *cannot* infringe upon natural rights. The reason that there is no right of resistance, for Kant, is that he did not recognize any notion of popular sovereignty. Rousseau had assumed a basic human innocence (albeit corrupted by conditions of inequality) in his defence of popular sovereignty. But Kant was not prepared to assume human innocence. On the contrary, like most other liberals, he took human shortcomings as a given, warning, at one point, “...of men’s maxim of violence and of their malevolent tendency to attack one another before external legislation endowed with power appears” (Kant, 1948: 123).

The difficulty, for Kant, was that, insofar as he viewed sovereignty in *functional* terms, i.e., as being in charge, he could not allow that anyone might judge the state except the state itself, since if there were some higher judge, then

³ First emphasis mine, others Kant’s.

– in his view – that higher judge would be the sovereign state, rather than the state itself. Accordingly, rebellion would result in “abolishing the entire legal constitution” (Kant, 1948: 131) which has value in assuring the “negative freedom” of the citizens of the state (Riley, 1973: 453). But, inevitably, the subjects will draw conclusions about what the sovereign is doing and will conclude – and rightly so – that they have some duties to respond in some way to unjust commands. Therefore, following Richard Hooker on this point, Kant made a provision for passive resistance, in what he called a “limited constitution”, but he insisted that “no active resistance...is permitted” (Kant, 1991a: 133) which is to say, no rebellion and no revolution. But Kant was writing this text even as the French Revolution was unfurling the banner of “Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité”, and he did *not* want to end up advocating monarchical restoration. Kant therefore immediately provided the following qualification:

once a revolution has succeeded and a new constitution has been established, the lack of legitimacy with which it began and has been implemented cannot release the subjects from the obligation to comply with the new order of things as good citizens, and they cannot refuse honest obedience to the authority that now has the power (Kant, 1991a: 133).

As for the legitimate jurisdiction of the state, Kant emphasized that the state existed for the good of the entire society, from which he concluded: first, that the government had every right to tax the rich (whether via tax on property or a tax on commerce) in order to use the funds to support vital social services, including providing for the sustenance of the indigent (Kant, 1991a: 136); and second, that the government does *not* have the right to prescribe specific religious beliefs or religious rituals to the society or to favor one religion (in practice, one Christian denomination) over others.

Kant was, as already noted, highly conflicted about revolution as a means to advance human civilization. The best route to expanding the political participation of citizens, building a representative government on republican foundations, was – he thought – for an absolute monarch to launch a gradual transition, reforming the system step by step. In the short run, he favoured intellectual freedom and the expansion of public education, combined with a measure of civil unfreedom. In this way, enlightened absolutism could provide a secure environment in which a people could grow and mature intellectually and culturally (Taylor, 2006: 557, 559–560).

Once again, he employed the categorical imperative (Kant, 1948: 51), and delineated the duties respectively of citizens and rulers. Citizens, aside from their duty to obey the law and restrict themselves at the most to passive disobedience, also had a further duty, viz., to the extent that they perceived injustice or corruption in the country, they were obliged, said Kant, to bring their information to the attention of the authorities in a public forum and to share their perspectives (Ellis,

2005: 145). The ruler's duties included the protection of the lives and property of the country's inhabitants, respect for the law, and protection of the lawful (and moral) freedom of the people. In addition, Kant argued that the government was

authorized to constrain the wealthy to provide the means of sustenance to those who are unable to provide for even their most necessary natural needs. The wealthy have acquired an obligation to the commonwealth, since they owe their existence to [...] its protection and care (Kant, 1948: 136).

Finally, insofar as a government in which executive and legislative functions are not separate may only be characterized as despotic, an enlightened monarch had a duty to maintain the separation of these functions, thus the independence of the judiciary. At the same time, viewing the state as the guarantee of people's security and freedom, Kant was careful to defend its prerogatives and therefore was prepared to legitimate the government's interference in meetings of private associations and in other domains sometimes thought to belong strictly to the private sphere (Ellis, 2005: 17).

Kant's importance

With his defense of individual rights, the rule of law, personal freedom, and the separation of powers, Kant is unmistakably part of the liberal tradition and a key figure in the liberal Enlightenment (Rosen, 1996: 116; Flikschuh, 2000: 2)⁴. He advocated the spread of democratic republics throughout the world, and predicted that republican democracy (i.e., respecting the principles of rule of law, individual rights, toleration, and some measure of equality) would eventually be the only legitimate political system. He asserted the importance of individual duty and individual rights. He stressed the centrality of freedom. He sympathized with both the American and the French revolutionaries, despite his philosophical misgivings about revolution as such.

Kant rejected Hobbes' authoritarian view of sovereignty and Hobbes' endeavor to trace the civil compact to nothing more than the fear of violent death. Kant also differed from Rousseau in his interpretation of notions of communal, or "general", will. Among Kant's legacies was his contribution to shaping the doctrine of the *Rechtsstaat* (nomocracy), a state governed by law, and his achievement in revivifying the Natural Law tradition, albeit in a transformed variant.

In sum, Kant's importance may be summarized in four points. First, Kant laid out an ethical system derived from *a priori* principles and summarized by

⁴ As noted by various writers, including: Rosen, 1993: 116; Flikschuh, 2000: 2.

a single overarching imperative – the categorical imperative. Second he argued that liberal policies must be built on the foundation of a strict ethical system, and that there could be no freedom to be immoral. Third, he argued that it was possible for people to improve (morally) and that the state could play a constructive role in this improvement, among other things by fostering conditions conducive to the promotion of “sociability under laws” (Munzel, 2003: 67). And fourth, he made a strong argument that it was possible to build up a network of international organisations and international law, and that this, in combination with the promotion of liberal politics could move the planet *in the direction of* perpetual peace, with steadily less violence and warfare.

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Olena Shevchenko

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3119-9193>

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv
Kyiv, Ukraine
Institute of International Relation
e-mail: ovsh@ukr.net

The role of traditional and new international relations actors in addressing climate change

Abstract. Addressing global climate change brings up a number of priority issues. The fundamental issue is the definition of the participants in this process and the scope of their competencies and areas of responsibility. Practice shows that modern global challenges, which include global climate change, cannot be solved individually and in a straightforward manner without the involvement of all stakeholders and the general public. The article discusses actions aimed at adapting and mitigating the consequences of global climate challenges carried out by states and their alliances (as traditional international actors) and corporations and media (as new international actors). It is shown that today state political decisions on the adaptation to and mitigation of the consequences of global climate change are associated, in particular, with the transition to a low-carbon economy. At the same time, specific and effective climate policies are also being implemented by international corporations. Global media implement their own climate initiatives from one side and shape international public opinion regarding the climate challenge from the other side. The author concludes that, despite the active presence of the theme of global climate change in international and national political discourse, as well as in media and in the social and economic projects of corporations, the general attempts to resolve the issue can't be considered as a well coordinated, and the results are not efficient enough.

Keywords: global climate change, international actors, states, corporations, media.

Introduction

Humanity's adaptation to global climate change is now regarded as a necessity for solving technical, managerial and communication issues. Managing climate change adaptation and mitigation includes interacting with many international actors and is reflected at all levels of governance – from local to international. Today there is a strong understanding of the need for short- and medium-term climate policy to be made on the basis of long-term forecasts. Climate change requires collective action at the global level; major changes must be initiated by the most influential international actors. Climate change can be considered as a global political problem, as it has many commonalities with other actual issues of international policy; moreover, methods of regulating it are similar to those used by the international community to deal with other issues.

Traditionally, states and their alliances have been the actors of international relations and world politics; they have actively shaped political processes at the international level for many years, since the birth and development of the Westphalian system. In the second half of the twentieth century, the political model of the world changed under the influence of the activities of non-state transnational actors. In the fundamental work *Transnational Relations and World Politics* J. Nye and R. Keohane (1972) formulated the idea of transforming the Westphalian Model of the World and broadened the idea of being an actor in international relations. According to the authors, “along with states, non-state actors have begun to act as actors in world politics” (Keohane, Nye, 1972). This means that the transnational interaction of other actors such as international organizations, interstate entities, transnational corporations, and media, has been added to interstate cooperation.

The purpose of the study is to identify the role and potential of states as traditional actors in international relations and to determine the extent to which intergovernmental organizations, corporations and the media act as the newest international actors. Thus it is hoped to be able to characterize their contribution to the resolving of global climate change and to define what non-governmental actors add to the traditional actors (the states) in terms of shaping, framing, mobilizing, and solving this global climate problem.

Recent literature review

The most extensive publications on the role of states and interstate entities are presented in the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change under the leadership of R. Pachauri and also in the works of British researchers

M. Allen, J. Brum, German V. Kramer, O. Edenhofer, J. Marotzke, and American L. Clarke, K. Field, K. Mach, M. Mastrandrea, B. Preston, Norwegian J. Fuglstvedt, K. Oberin, Australian M. Hofden, S. Power, Russian V. Kattsov and others. These studies look at global causes and possible scenarios for managing global climate change.

Studies of the risks of global climate change and the role of international organizations and subnational structures in overcoming them are reflected, in particular, in international documents (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Kyoto Protocol, Paris Agreement), materials from UN conferences (UNFCCC), official publications of the specialized UN agencies (Evaluation reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, UN Climate Change Reports, World Meteorological Organization Research, Global Atmospheric Service, etc.), publications by other UN agencies (including Food and Agriculture Organization, World Food Program, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, International Organization for Migration, UN Intergovernmental Commission on Oceanography, UN Environmental Programme), as well as in open materials of national meteorological and hydrological services, regional climate centres.

Specific areas for tackling global climate change, including the contribution of international organizations and research centres are contained in the work of the Spanish researcher X.K. Abanades, Japanese M. Akai, American S. Benson, K. Keldeira, R. Doctor, Dutch H. De Koninko, B. Metz, L. Meyer, British P. Freund, D. Gale, E. Palmer and others; the role of sub-national actors are looked at in the work of A. Hsu, O. Widerberg, A. Weinfurter, S. Chan, M. Roelfsema, K. Lütkehermöller and F. Bakhtiari.

Information about the role of subnational actors in addressing global climate challenges is also provided in the special reports (Bridging the Emissions Gap, CDP Supply Chain Report 2017, Green Bonds Market Summary, Low Carbon Investment Registry Highlights and others); analytical reports of research centres (Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, Center for International Climate and Environmental Research, Climate Ark, Harvard Project on Climate Agreements, etc.); specialized communication programs on climate change at Yale University, George Mason University, the Adam Corner British Project and the Adelphi Platform. These documents identify the interplay between global climate and non-climate risk factors and the role of international organizations, sub-national actors and research centres in overcoming them.

The theoretical literature on the role of global social movements (global civil society) is quite rich and presented in particular in the work of Donatella della Porta, Alberto Melucci, Alain Touraine and other researchers.

However, the new realities of global climate change and the impact of international actors, both traditional and new, require the further exploration of this issue. Unfortunately, the interconnection of traditional and new

international actors in policy aimed at combating global climate change and its communicative support has not yet been given sufficient attention in Ukrainian and Western literature. Therefore, the study of these issues is an urgent problem of modern international communication, and their solution will be of considerable practical importance.

Main research results

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the climate change challenge “a defining issue of our time, and its solution is a turning point in history. We still have time to put an end to the negative effects of climate change, but this requires unprecedented efforts from all walks of life” (Un.org, 2019). That is, according to the UN Secretary-General, resolving global climate change is the purview of both traditional international actors (which include states, governments) and the newest (interstate alliances, coalitions, international corporations, the media, etc.). This idea is supported by the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, former Head of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2002 to 2015), Rajendra K. Pachauri, who stated that “the most driving forces behind the implementation of adaptation and mitigation programs of global climate change are governments and political parties, the UN, international organizations, corporations and every citizen of the planet” (Bunjak, 2017). We characterize the impact of each of these international actors on resolving global climate change.

States and interstate alliances

In the Report on the Work of the First Regular Session of the 2018 United Nations Development Program, the Delegation Group emphasized that “the involvement of States in resolving global climate change is a key driver of the 2018–2021 Strategic Plan, and its implementation requires the active involvement of Member States at the country level” (*Doklad o rabote...*, 2018).

Until recently, global climate leadership was represented by three geographical centres: the US, the EU and China, that is, these countries and intergovernmental entity are the largest emitters of greenhouse gases in the world. According to BP’s report, in 2016, the largest amount of emissions was generated by China – 27.3% (9,123.0 million tons), second place – by the USA – 16% (5,350.4 million tons), and the EU – 10.4% (3,485.1 million tons) (BP global, 2017). Given the termination of the US’s participation in the Paris Agreement on Climate, today each of these international actors pursues its own climate policy and “considers itself a leader in this field” (Karlsson *et al.*, 2011).

It is possible to agree with British researcher Amy Below that “the most impressive results of overcoming global climate challenges today are demonstrated by the EU” (Below, 2016). Strengthening the EU’s position on climate diplomacy was a logical consequence of the US’s own climate policy and coincided with the EU’s geostrategic goal of global leadership (Jordan *et al.*, 2012). The EU’s economy is one of the most powerful in the world and, accordingly, the EU can involve all its international partners in order to achieve leadership in climate diplomacy by implementing a soft leadership strategy (Oberthür, Roche Kelly, 2008).

One of the components of the EU’s climate leadership policy today is the Emission Trade Scheme (ETS). In addition, the EU’s Climate Guidelines contain stricter restrictions and commitments on the part of European countries than stipulated in the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement (Oberthür, Roche Kelly, 2008). Such EU climate policy could be an example for China, as well as other developed and developing countries.

The G20 accounts for 79% of global GHG emissions (excluding forestry emissions) and about 81% of global CO₂ emissions (Gfz-potsdam.de, 2015; Iea.org, 2019). As such, the measures written in international climate policy and related climate programs often align with the national interests of countries, as they meet other social needs, support the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and deliver significant economic benefits. An ambitious climate policy could create more than 65 million new low-carbon jobs worldwide and prevent 700,000 premature deaths from air pollution by 2030 (UNLOCKING..., 2018). National budget revenues could grow to 2.8 trillion dollars worldwide by 2,030 through subsidy reform and carbon pricing. On the other hand, inaction could lead to significant economic losses. According to the Brown-to-Green report, the “20 trillion USD which is being spent on energy and electricity generation in the world is a certain financial risk that can be minimized if capital will be diverted to invest in low carbon energy projects” (Climate Transparency, 2018).

All G20 countries, except Russia and Turkey which have not yet ratified the Paris Agreement (as of the middle of 2018), have submitted their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Each NDC contains the country’s goal of reducing or limiting greenhouse gas emissions. The NDCs of some of the G20 countries, namely Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and South Africa, include national visions of adapting to global climate change. India and South Africa are the only countries from the G20 to declare their investment needs for mitigation and adaptation measures. Determining the investment required to implement the NDC is essential for reconciling the financial flows at national and international levels, as written in the Paris Agreement. Brazil, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Mexico and others

have declared in NDCs their interest in emissions trading using international market mechanisms under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. According to the recommendation of the Talanoa Dialogue 2018, countries are advised by 2020 to update their NDC targets for 2025 and 2030 to more ambitious ones, as this will be important to bridge the gap between current emissions and those needed to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

Ambitious state climate policies require widespread political and public support. It is important that the transition to a low carbon economy takes into account the interests of those who could potentially suffer from it: workers, communities, businesses, and poor households. According to the recommendations of the International Labor Organization: “Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all”, as part of “the transition to a new type of climate, economic relations should be compensated and retrained for those who could potentially lose their jobs and implement a national policy to support the development of green jobs” (*Guidelines...*, 2015). Some researchers believe that “stopping fuel subsidies and setting carbon pricing can lead to higher energy prices, creating an even greater burden on the poor” (G20 Insights, 2017). To counteract such effects, subsidy reforms and carbon pricing can be complemented by monetary compensation for poor households.

Different G20 countries are moving to a low carbon economy in different ways. Today, we can study and use their experience, in particular the practices of Australia, Canada, the European Union, France, Germany, the United States, and others. Common to all G20 countries is the involvement of trade unions and the most vulnerable regions.

For example, major Australian unions (CFMEU and ACTU), together with the Government of the State of Victoria and three private power plants, have developed a Latrobe Valley workers’ transfer scheme that not only mitigates the effects of hazardous emissions, but also prevents job losses (Worker Transfer Scheme, 2018). The document foresees the employment of workers of the Hazelwood Power Plant, which was closed in March 2017, in alternative jobs, and obliges partner companies to minimize job losses, arrange the retraining of employees and introduce early retirement schemes that give an opportunities for young workers who want to stay in the industry.

The Canadian Framework Strategy, a long-term plan for adapting the country to global climate change, approved by the Government of Canada in 2016, states “a commitment to developing and educating workers in order to provide the right conditions for Canadian workers in the transition to Canada’s new clean economy” (Environment, 2017). As of 2018, a special federal task force has begun developing a plan for a “clean growth” economy for coal and gas workers. Canadian unions are involved in that process through conducting information campaigns, explaining the principles and mechanisms of transition, as well as offering skills development, retraining and insurance programs.

Furthermore, they are encouraging investment in clean energy sources for indigenous territories, remote and rural communities.

The European Commission has incorporated the concept of Fair Transition into its Communication on the Energy Union, according to which a fair energy transition will require the “retraining or upgrading of workers in certain sectors and, where necessary, social measures taken at the appropriate level” (*A Framework Strategy...*, 2015). In December 2017, the Commission set up a Transition Platform for Coal Regions to assist EU Member States and regions in the structural and technological transition of Coal Regions. The concept of a “fair transition” is also mentioned in the European Union Directive on Governance, which emphasizes the need to consider these aspects of decarbonising the economy (Atavist, 2017).

The concept of “Fair Transition” has become a part of French political discourse after the election of President E. Macron in 2017, at the same time as the formation of the Ministry of Ecology (Ministry of Ecological and Inclusive Transition). The French Climate Plan prioritises the closure of four coal-fired power plants by 2022, which has caused disagreement among national coal and sea unions. The plan calls for a “managed transition”, emphasizing the need to support workers who may be affected in the short and medium-term (Gouvernement.fr, 2018). The Draft Budget for 2019 envisages the creation of a ten-year fund to compensate for the loss of revenues of local authorities through the closure of coal-fired power plants (Gouv.fr, 2018). Similar community support schemes are already operating in nine regions of the country that are implementing local climate change mitigation projects or green startups as opposed to wholesale industrial restructuring.

In Germany, about 20,000 workers will have to seek new employment if the government decides to phase out lignite in electricity production in order to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. The government has already allocated € 1.5 billion (\$ 1.72 billion) for 2017–2021 to facilitate structural change. The government also understands that, after 2021, funding for environmental projects will increase, so a commission on “growth, structural change and employment” has been set up, aimed at mitigating the effects of the abandonment of coal (Bundesministerium, 2019). The country is ready to phase out coal, notwithstanding the problem of job cuts in the coal industry and the higher cost of electricity generated from alternative sources, given that more than 40% of all fuels used in Germany are coal.

In the United States, discourse on the use of fossil fuels takes place at the state level. The states of the Appalachian Coal Region (eg, Kentucky, West Virginia) created a Power Plus initiative in 2015 to support economic diversification, which outlines employee retraining and potential benefits. In contrast to these states, there is currently no official program in California to manage the transition from oil to alternative energy sources (Coal Transition, 2016). India, Japan, Mexico,

Russia, South Korea, and the United Kingdom are also believed to suffer losses from the abandonment of fossil fuels, but have not yet taken any action to mitigate their economic or social consequences.

Given the global nature of the climate change problem, countries are working together to form intergovernmental organizations and coalitions in order to address them. Today, such interstate groups continue to develop. The following structures addressing global climate change include JUSSCANNZ (developed by non-EU countries: Japan, USA, Switzerland, Canada, Austria, Norway and New Zealand) and the G77. JUSSCANNZ today has become an umbrella group after the United States began to separate itself from countries that were in favour of large-scale climate action. Switzerland has partially abandoned the JUSSCANNZ/umbrella group and together with Mexico, South Korea, Liechtenstein and Monaco form an Environmental Integrity Group (EIG). Other associations of developed countries, such as the G20 and G8, are also active in climate action, especially in those non-climate summits, to discuss issues and gain consensus on adapting to global climate change. The Presidents of the United States, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, organized the Major Emitters Forum and Donald Trump the Major Economies Forum. Experts consider such actions as “US attempts to coordinate developed countries and undermine the authority of the United Nations to regulate climate issues” (Happaerts, 2015).

Alliances are also emerging among developing countries, and their structures become more complex over time due to the exacerbation of existing differences. Experts believe that the causes of global climate policy disagreements lie not so much in the lack of wealth in these countries, but in the uncertainty of areas of responsibility and facilities that require such assistance, as well as the uncertainty of countries' vulnerability to global climate change. For such developing countries, the main negotiating block is the Group-77 (G-77), the largest intergovernmental organization of developing countries operating within the UN and its bodies. However, more than a dozen subgroups and groups representing the heterogeneity of the Global South have emerged within this structure. Examples of such contradictions are the relationship between G-77 and OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries), in which OPEC's priorities (high oil prices and poor or no climate agreement) conflict with the goals of G-77 members.

International corporations

In the context of global climate change, multinational corporations, small and medium-sized businesses are important non-governmental actors. Business structures are implementing their involvement in addressing global climate issues at national and international levels through corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. Today, CSR projects are becoming an integral part of the development

strategy and business model of a growing number of business entities. In addition to raising public awareness and ensuring a positive impact on reputation, the cause of CSR implementation in the European Union is a political imperative. In its Communication on CSR, the European Commission redefined the concept of corporate social responsibility as “the responsibility of enterprises for their impact on society” (CRISTINA QUINTANS, 2011), instead of the previous version, when CSR was defined as “an approach whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns into their activities and engage with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis”. That is, the eco-conscious behaviour of companies has become an integral component of their operations.

EU experience is stimulating, which encourages the implementation of environmental projects by business entities in all Member States through the implementation of various tools. For example, the European Parliament and the European Council endorsed the European Commission’s proposal to revise public procurement criteria. According to this document, new provisions on social and environmental criteria have been introduced, as well as ensuring the access of small and medium-sized enterprises to the European market through public procurement.

The National Action Plans of individual EU Member States set legislative requirements for CSR support in the public procurement process. Thus, in 2020, the Swedish Government plans to introduce a new tax on disposable plastic bags (Espresso.tv, 2019), whereby 3 kronor (0.28 euros) will be taxed per standard bag and 0.3 kronor (0.028 euros) per thinner one. The standard bag will cost up to 7 Swedish kronor (0.66 euros). The purpose of the tax is to get consumers to think about an alternative and also to reach the EU’s goal of a maximum of 40 plastic bags per person per year.

In order to promote sustainable public procurement Austria, Denmark, France, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom do not use legislative tools such as action plans and strategies but actions aimed at promoting sustainable procurement in terms of preparation or instead of developing legal requirements. For example, an action plan for the compulsory consideration of social and environmental criteria in the area of public procurement has been adopted in Austria. Several European countries have put forward initiatives that encourage dialogue between municipalities or local authorities to intensify work on sustainable public procurement. In Denmark, urban partnerships are developing a collaborative procurement approach that will help ensure transparency and provide an equal field for suppliers.

EU Member States are now at different stages of work on sustainable public procurement. The governments of countries already experienced in the field, such as Denmark, have developed guidelines for the Baltic authorities; as well as guidelines and an information website for Romania. In addition to the “CSR Compass” online project, Finland and Sweden have prepared a step-by-step guide on sustainable public procurement.

To further support responsible consumption, the Commission issued a statement on “Creating a single market for green products – Encouraging the sharing of information on the environmental performance of products and organizations” (Europa.eu, 2013), where it required, in particular, the use of common methods for measuring and communicating the environmental life cycle of products.

In 2012, the European Commission decided to make mandatory CSR disclosure for retail investment projects aimed at increasing the market reward for socially responsible investments. The Commission also co-financed a project aimed at building capacity for socially and environmentally responsible investments (adopted in February 2013). In addition, all top executives of European multinational corporations were invited to sign the UN Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI).

According to the directives of the European Parliament since 2014, the disclosure of social and environment-related information became mandatory for European businesses. Openness to non-financial reporting is a must for large, medium-sized and small businesses operating in the EU market. Unlike NGOs, where there are no uniform standards for non-financial reporting, European business practices are based on a single universal methodology for measuring and comparing environmental performance across enterprises. Specific provisions for multinational enterprises’ obligations to implement environmental protection projects in their CSR strategies are contained in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Guidelines, first adopted in 1976 and updated in 2011.

Considering the best European practices, most of the climate projects of large corporations are related to the transition to renewable energy. This is confirmed by the words of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who noted that

more than 130 of the most influential companies in the world have committed to fully switching to renewable energy; 18 multinational corporations have committed to using solely electric vehicles; and countries whose economies are closely linked to fossil fuels seek to diversify it (Novosti OON, 2018).

Today there are already successful examples of climate-friendly projects around the world implemented by large corporations. The Lego Group has already reached 100% of renewable energy. The duration of this project was 4 years and cost 6 billion kroner of investment in an offshore wind farm. Since 2012, more than 160 megawatts of renewable energy have been generated with the support of the Lego Group. Today, the total output from Lego Group’s investments in renewable energy will exceed the amount of energy consumed by Lego’s production facilities, stores and offices worldwide (Lego.com, 2018). Another example of mitigating the effects of climate change and the transition to independent energy sources is the experience of the

Swiss company Umwelt Arena, which in 2016 commissioned an energy-independent residential building in the commune of Brütten in the Canton of Zurich. The house is not connected to the electricity grid and gas supply as the structure provides itself with heat and electricity. Moreover, it fully complies with the Swiss standard of energy-efficient buildings. Similar projects have already been implemented in Norway, Sweden and Japan.

One of the most popular tools that confirm companies' conscious approach to social responsibility and high environmental standards of production is creating awards or promoting responsible and sustainable practices through labelling. In an increasingly global economy, efforts to create regional or globally recognized labels and awards, in order to raise awareness of the topic, are also critically important. One of the interesting examples in this area is the Norwegian eco-labelling scheme Nordic Swan Ecolabel. The Scandinavian project, created in 1989 by the Nordic Council of Ministers as a voluntary eco-labelling scheme for the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, is to "facilitate consumers' choice of the best environmental products and services" (Nordic Ecolabel, 2020). The presence of such a label is a signal to the consumer that the company meets strict environmental requirements at all stages of the product life cycle, the products meet the established requirements for the presence of chemicals, and that the manufacturer supports the ideas and creates conditions for sustainable development. In the European Union, more than 25,000 different products are already being marketed under the Nordic Swan eco-brand, and their number is growing, which confirms the effectiveness of this tool. In 1994, the Eco-labelling Global Network was one of the founders of the ISO 14024 International Network for Type 1 Eco-labels, GEN and the Global Eco-Brand Network.

Another popular tool in the European Union is the award of CSR best practices, which also encourages the exchange of best practices in the field of environmental and climate CSR practices. Thus, in Denmark, Germany, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, awards for the best CSR projects can be given to companies that are performing well in the field of responsible business practice; in Latvia and Slovenia, such CSR areas are noted as "an effective governance" and engagement with families as key stakeholders. In Ireland, in addition to promoting responsible business, organizations are rewarded for promoting responsible consumption. In Lithuania, the data on companies with the status of "responsible business" can be found in open online databases.

Thereby, the activities of major European corporations in managing global climate change are determined, in particular, by a number of factors: political decisions by EU governing bodies and national governments that are imperative for business structures (eg the adoption of national action plans; the adoption of relevant legislation, in particular, one that obliges all business entities to disclose non-financial information; the defining of public procurement criteria; and an obligation for corporations to implement projects of environmental protection

in their CSR practices); the development of Corporate Social Responsibility policies with a mandatory environmental component; and by encouraging small businesses to comply with environmental standards throughout the product life cycle (through the introduction of eco-labelling and related awards). Important milestones of European businesses' efforts to tackle global climate change are the information component and stakeholder engagement.

International media

The media contributes significantly to the process of shaping public opinion on climate change as part of a global social challenge through news reports on extreme weather events, linked to the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and the United Nations Annual Conventions. There are many influential tools for shaping public opinion on global climate change that include but are not limited to references to competent climate specialists, policymakers, experts, comments of journalists etc. Therefore, it is important to work with climate journalists and provide them with complete and objective information.

In recent decades, the role of journalists in highlighting the climate issue has transformed significantly. Today, in addition to traditional climate journalism, new ways of communicating with target audiences about climate change are emerging due to the development of digital media. American researcher M. Brugman (2017) believes that "climate change is a challenge for contemporary journalism" and identifies four stages of change in climate journalism: from sporadic to routine coverage of climate change; from ignoring scientific consensus in covering climate change as a serious problem to baseline assumptions about the anthropogenic cause of such changes; from neutral coverage of those who agree and those who disagree with the facts of climate change to authoritative publications that contain an analysis of different approaches; from the dominance of traditional journalism to modern online journalism (Brüggemann, 2017).

The scientific research outlines the challenges of global climate change for international journalism because, as noted by R. Kunelius and E. Eid (2012),

climate change is international, supranational, and requires the further development of established journalistic norms such as negativism (disclosure of what is happening in society), focusing on facts and short-term events and reporting, rather than providing context and analysis (Kunelius, Eide, 2012).

Sustainable journalism is considered as a promising direction for the development of modern media since it focuses on those moments that are not related to the commercial component or hidden advertising. Some researchers claim that environmental journalists understand the topic well, and therefore

report on specific environmental crimes, although there are cases of dependence of the context of climate information and the political component.

In the articles *The need for knowledge-based journalism in politicized science debates in the United States*, US researchers M. Nisbett and D. Fahy (2015) developed the concept of “knowledge-based journalism”. The basic idea of the concept is that journalists should gain environmental knowledge and scientific topics, such as climate change, to further be “knowledge brokers”, “dialogue brokers” and “policy brokers” that could provide and extend the context of the perspectives that are polarized and the ideologically based debates on climate change (Nisbet, Fahy, 2015). As an example of a “knowledge journalist”, these researchers cite Andrew Revkin, a blogger on climate and science at the New York Times, and note that knowledge-based climate journalism will continue to evolve.

Given the dominance of the media as a source of information on climate change for most of the European and global public, understanding how the media covers climate change is important for understanding public opinion on climate change. In addition, there has been identified a direct correlation between the influence of news and journalistic norms on the coverage of this issue, including in online media (Chadwick, 2017).

To this list we can add another factor of influence on public opinion on climate change – this is fake news. Many researchers consider that a large amount of fake news on this issue is one of the possible reasons of a lack of consensus on understanding the manifestations, causes and consequences of global climate change in European and the world community. The problem of fake climate news is not new, but it has become especially relevant since the Paris Agreement. Climate change fake news may include direct disinformation, selective coverage of the problem, fabricated contradictions, and alternative facts that lead to misunderstandings and confusion among target audiences. The introduction of media literacy programs aimed at building critical thinking and fact-checking skills has become one of the solutions to overcome the impact of fake news on public opinion on global climate change. Facebook and other social networks have already implemented their own way to combat fake news by cooperating with organizations that are specialized in verifying climate change facts and helping to identify conflicting content in news feeds.

According to British journalist Sunny Handan, effective communication of the issues of climate protection and global warming requires different rhetoric,

the problem is not that people choose between bad and good news or between hope and fear. The stories we tell are too abstract in nature: they have little to do with people’s daily lives. [...] So let’s try to take this into account, at least in conversations with friends and beloved ones. This will help to change the way you look at the problem, as well as encourage people to start acting faster and more actively. Every such conversation should start with what is close, clear and important to us (topics, euro, 2018).

Successful trends in the dissemination of true information on global climate change are fact-checking projects, of which the most popular today according to MediaSapiens' experts are Global Climate Change, Climate Feedback and Inside Climate News (Kucaj, 2017). The main purpose of these resources is to tackle "alternative facts" about climate change. Global Climate Change is a project of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), which provides evidence of global warming, its causes and effects. A separate block is devoted to scientific discourse. The Climate Feedback project is a collaborative project with programmers and climatologists with a PhD degree sponsored by the University of California. The first task of this project is scanning the internet in order to find high-profile stories about the climate, and the second is analysing and evaluating these stories on different quality criteria of the journalistic text on a scale from "very low" to "very high". The resource informs the authors of the material and the editors of the publications where they have been published that they have been reviewed and commented upon by experts. Inside Climate News is an independent news organization specializing in environmental issues, including energy development and its environmental and wellbeing impact. For example, journalists at Inside Climate News, after analysing a speech by the head of the US Environmental Protection Agency Scott Pruitt, concluded that he speculates with facts on climate change, the Paris Agreement and coal.

Many of the authors of this resource are high profile journalists who are also published in such publications as The Wall Street Journal, New York Times, ProPublica, Los Angeles Times, Bloomberg News, and have received numerous awards for their work, including the Pulitzer Prize for a series of publications on leaks of more than 1 million gallons of oil into the Kalamazoo River in July 2010, leading to the most expensive river cleanup in US history (The Dilbit Disaster, 2015).

Thus, shaping public opinion on global climate challenges has become the topical issue today and it shall be implemented only by objective and professional media coverage, as only a well informed public acts appropriately.

Research Centres

The research centres may not be actors in international relations in the classical sense. However, taking into consideration that the results of their research and observations become the basis for political decision-making and the promotion of global climate change in society, such structures can be referred to as actors addressing global climate challenges. Thus, national meteorological and hydrological services facilitate national climate assessments. As a rule, their documents are used in policy formulation and are informational and advisory. For

example, the report by the relevant Swiss Service about climate scenarios, released on November 13, 2018, notes that the climate in Switzerland is getting hotter and drier, but in the future, the country will have to face more heavy rainfalls and its famous mountains resorts will be less snowy (WMO News, 2018).

Powerful resource centres that accumulate information on global climate change include the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, a non-governmental organization that conducts research related to the development of new energy technologies to tackle climate change; the Center for International Climate and Environmental Research (CICERO) – an independent Norwegian Climate Policy Research Center that publishes climate policy reports, news and analysis; Climate Ark, a portal and search engine that provides access to news articles, working papers, government reports and climate-change-related researches; and the Harvard Project on Climate Agreements, a project sponsored by the Harvard Center for Science and International Relations which provides access to working papers, records and comments of experts on climate negotiations.

Among the university's climate change programs are US climate change projects at Yale, George Mason University and Adam Corner's British project. It should be noted that they are not only conducting research on global climate change, they are also putting a lot of efforts into the communication of the issue to different public groups in order to raise awareness of it. Thus, within the Climate Change Communication Program at Yale, research is being conducted on global climate change to identify public attitudes to the problem, political preferences and the behaviour of the ruling political elites; as well as the major psychological, cultural and political factors that influence them. Representatives of the general public, government, media, business, and non-governmental organizations are invited to discuss climate issues on the daily national radio program Yale Climate Connections (Yale Program, 2015). The results of the research are published in open reports, interactive maps, scientific articles, and announced during public presentations and private briefings. Yale University's climate research program is used by hundreds of news organizations, including CBS, ABC, CNN, The New York Times, The Washington Post, Associated Press, The Guardian, Xinhua, and more.

One of the most powerful centres for research on global climate change in continental Europe is the Adelphi platform, which is supported by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany. The main objective of the project is "the exchange of information on the environment, climate conflicts and international climate cooperation" (Dashboard, 2015). The centre's activities are focused on climate diplomacy and the development of strategies for resilience to global climate change. Climate diplomacy explores the external dimension of global climate change and climate policy, including a variety of regional and thematic approaches, such as access to drinking water, global food security, global climate risks, climate security in the UN, G7, and informing key stakeholders about climate risks and global climate

instability. The second milestone is to analyse and highlight existing approaches and projects on adaptation to, and the mitigation of, the effects of global climate change.

Impact Assessment of Actors

As shown above, projects aimed at addressing global climate challenges are being implemented today by both state and non-state actors. However, the results of their activities differ in terms of the nature of the decision, the reach of the audience, the tools used, the speed of implementation of climate initiatives and other parameters.

The decisions of states and governments as actors in resolving global climate change are imperative and relevant to the general public. These actors apply a wide range of tools, including the conclusion and ratification of international agreements, the adoption of national action plans, the adoption of appropriate legislation, including those requiring organizations to disclose non-financial information, the introduction of mandatory environmental product labelling. Moreover, state actors ensure the prohibition of advertising non-environmental friendly products; the adherence to the principles of “sustainable public procurement”; the development and maintenance of on-line databases with best environmental practices; the initiation of environmental projects; as well as distribute funding for ‘think tanks’ and research institutes; outline criteria and awards for environmental projects; sponsor information campaigns and information dissemination through forums, roundtables, seminars, trainings, training networks, teachers, academics, trade unions, civil society, business structures, and more. Needless to say, the speed of implementation of these instruments by states and governments is slow due to the large number of bureaucratic components.

The environmental and climate projects of business structures are imperative for a clearly segmented audience. Such long-term projects are quickly implemented through CSR campaigns, business’s own projects, learning and disseminating experience through participation in forums, round tables, conferences, the involvement of online resources, as well as through joint projects with partners, authorities, NGOs.

The mass media today have become a separate influential actor in solving the global climate challenge and new the direction of journalism – climate journalism – has been formed. Its outreach activities are aimed at a well-defined mass or segmented audience, and projects related to the coverage of climate issues are being implemented quickly compared to the other actors discussed above. Traditional media tools include the production of its own content to cover the issue of global climate change; the dissemination of information on successful climate

projects; the implementation of its own climate projects; and collaboration with other stakeholders.

The results of research and projects of educational institutions and research centres are advisory and informative. The conclusions of scientific developments are the basis for political and managerial decision-making at all levels. Therefore, the target audience of the research centres is quite narrow and segmented. Their tools include, *inter alia*, conducting their own research and disseminating their results through the media to decision-makers and opinion leaders; conducting joint research with partner organizations, disseminating ideas through training courses; and developing and disseminating educational literature.

Conclusions

Many different actors, with their strategies and interests, are involved in managing global climate change. An integrated approach to managing global climate issues requires the development of appropriate governance mechanisms, defining levels and timing of implementation, coordination across sectors; and the choice of optimal tools, that is, everything that provides the most appropriate form of leadership. At the same time, the development of environmental initiatives at the corporate level is shaped by a number of cultural, economic, institutional and political factors that determine the priorities of the country and each enterprise. Today, in the dissemination of climate information, the role of the media as an influential international actor has increased. The media is creating awareness, shaping public opinion and the position of political leaders, as well as defining the behaviour (support or protest) of the general public or well-defined audiences.

Although the speed of decision-making and their innovational approach are the highest among new actors of international relations (non-state segment), traditional actors (governments), who are the main focus of diplomatic efforts and the sole signatories of the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol and other treaties and agreements, have the greatest potential and influence. Therefore, we can fully agree with R. Pachauri's opinion, who states that "corporations fully understand what they need to change, but the impetus for change should be given by governments of countries that, in cooperation with political parties, must emphasize that in reducing carbon dioxide emissions we need to start now" (Bunjak, 2017).

We can state that new international actors, such as international organizations, media and research centres, help traditional actors (states) in resolving global climate change, shape public opinion, mobilize the international public, and build a scientific base. Civil society, represented by grassroots organizations and movements, celebrities and individuals, act as incubators and accelerators of new strategies for addressing climate challenges.

The projects of NGOs and movements, celebrities and individuals are increasingly becoming the platform for the demonstration, testing and dissemination of new, cutting-edge climate adaptation technologies, they have the opportunity to raise local proposals and ideas to an international level.

However, despite the diversity of stakeholders, programs and projects addressing the global climate challenge, “carbon dioxide emissions will increase by 0.6% in 2019” (McGrath, 2019), and since the signing of the Paris Agreement in 2015, CO₂ emissions have increased by 4%. Furthermore, emissions growth in 2018 was almost 3%. The main reason for the increase in emissions is the increase in the use of oil and gas and the high demand for coal in China, while coal consumption in the US and the EU is declining (by almost 10% in 2019). This means that the continued use of fossil fuel technologies is jeopardizing the reaching of the Paris Climate Agreement’s objectives, and it is possible to speak of the inefficiency of climate projects globally.

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e-mail: ksiegarnia@uni.lodz.pl
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