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## Changes in Attitudes towards Advertising: 2007- 2018 Evidence from the New Generation Bangladeshi Consumers

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### Abstract

This paper presents a comparison of the attitudes of New Generation Bangladeshi consumers (18 – 24 years old) towards advertisement 10 years apart – in 2007 and 2017. Within five years of gaining independence in 1971, Bangladesh abandoned her socialistic path of economic development to adopt the capitalistic alternative. By the early 2000s, the country experienced substantial economic growth which resulted in the emergence of a “new rich” urban consumer class. To attract these consumers, the then infant advertising industry in Bangladesh started to grow at a fast pace; but neither the marketers nor the advertisers had a clear understanding of the attitudes of these consumers towards advertising. In 2007, I conducted an empirical research that examined the perception of these consumers on various aspects of advertising as well as their media usage behaviour. Bangladesh economy made spectacular progress during the last decade resulting in the fast-paced development of a better organised consumer market and a thriving advertising industry to support the current new generation Bangladeshi consumers who are more affluent, technology savvy and who seek better information. This study examines the perception of these consumers on various aspects of advertising as well as their media usage behaviour and compares them with the responses of their cohorts of 2007. The analyses of the data reveal discernible differences in the attitudes of the two similar groups. The paper tries to explain the reasons for the differences and argues that they have important implications for the consumer marketing and advertising industry in Bangladesh.

**Keywords:** Bangladesh, Attitude, Advertisement

### Introduction

During the last decade, economy of Bangladesh has grown substantially which attracted many international marketers to invest in the country. An increased level of production as well as marketing of goods and services became evident in the country which contributed towards the achievement of higher GNP and per capita income. Bangladesh witnessed the emergence of a new breed of urban consumers who are different from their cohorts of a decade ago in that they are far more sophisticated, technology savvy and more prone to emulate their Western cohorts who tend to have a liking for branded products. In order to promote their respective market offerings to these customers marketers needed to have a better understanding of the needs, wants, habits and behavioral patterns. Consequently, there was a discernible increase in promotional activities, particularly in advertising efforts. It is not surprising that advertising industry of Bangladesh has grown at a reasonably fast pace. In 2008, the estimated total advertising expenditure in the country was 250 million US dollars (Akter, 2008); a recent report by Zenith expects that Bangladesh's ad market will reach \$1.3 billion in the next three years (2017 - 2020) and experience a robust average annual growth of 15% ranking Bangladesh among the world's fastest-growing media markets (Dhaka Tribune, 2019). Given this scenario it has become imperative for marketers to understand advertising effectiveness in the Bangladesh market.

The market impact of globalisation of Bangladesh's captive economy in the mid-1980s became apparent in the late 1990s and early years of the new millennium when a 'new rich' segment of consumers comprising teenagers and young adults emerged in the country (Kaynak et al. 2000). Not only they had substantial amount of money to spend for themselves, they also wielded tremendous influence on the spending behaviour of their respective families. It was essential for marketers in Bangladesh to gain insights into the opinions and attitudes of this new-generation of consumers towards advertising. Keeping this in view, the researcher conducted a study in 2007 (referred to as S1) to get an understanding of the beliefs that underlie the perception of advertising among these consumers. The current research conducted in 2018 (referred to as S2) is a replication of the same investigation a little over ten years after the completion of the first research. It is expected that this research will be helpful to advertisers and marketers seeking to enter the Bangladesh market at a time when it is being dubbed as one of the fastest growing economies of the world. In terms of household final consumption expenditure currently Bangladesh has the 40th-largest consumer market of the world (Dhaka Tribune, 2019).

### **Advertising and Consumer attitudes**

Attitude has been defined in many ways. For this paper attitude has been defined as "a relatively enduring organisation of beliefs, feelings, and behavioural tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols" (Hogg and Vaughan 2005, p.150). The variations in its many definitions notwithstanding, it has generally been agreed that "... the characteristic attribute of attitude is its evaluative dimension" (Ajzen, 1993); i.e., positive or negative judgments about an object or phenomenon (Thurstone, 1928) "... in a consistently favourable or unfavourable way (Allport, 1935)". Most attitudes in individuals- which have both direction and strength - are a result of *social learning* from the environment. An individual's attitudes are reflections of his/her evaluative responses following the affect-behavioral change - cognition (ABC) model. This model views attitude formation as a step-wise process starting with a response expressing the individual's preference followed by a verbal indication of the individual's intention leading to a cognitive evaluation of the entity resulting in the formation of an attitude. Since attitudes are learned and built up through experience, they can be changed through persuasion. In the context of marketing, change of attitude can be viewed as a response to a communication by the marketer such as an advertisement message or an ad campaign, or a reaction to unpaid publicity by a media.

The scope of this paper limited to a specific aspect of attitude namely, attitude towards advertising. Extant research has shown that a consumer's attitudes towards advertising are affected by variables such as consumers' personality traits, influences of family and peer group, previous information and experience (Bennett and Kassarian, 1972; Fishbein, 1975; Lutz, 1991; Assael, 1995; Wells, Burneet and Moriarty, 1998). Hence, advertisers may use attitudes to predict consumer behaviour and understand how consumers interpret advertising in developing purchase intention for products and services. While the affective responses reflect consumers' attitudes toward the message which could range from positive to negative; consumers' cognitive responses, i.e., their endorsement of, or opposition to the acceptability of the message contained in an advertisement, are functions of their prior beliefs. While the role, importance and value of advertising as a vehicle of disseminating information to the target audiences cannot be overemphasised, there are studies that indicate a generally negative public attitude towards advertising. (Alwitt and Prabhaker, 1994; Zanot, 1981). For example, consumers find the use of various intrusive tactics by advertisers intended to draw their attention rather annoying and unacceptable (Sandage & Leckenby, 1980; Zhang, 2000).

One of the major issues in the context of advertising a product or service internationally involves the degree of standardization of the message conveyed in the ad. As a form of social communication, advertising is particularly reflective of culture and its norms. Researchers have identified cultural differences and level of socio-economic development as the two main drivers of message adaptation (Abernethy & Franke, 1996; Baack & Singh, 2007). Indeed, advertising appears to be the most culture bound element in the marketing management mix because advertising messages combine language and other communication tools that are very deeply embedded in a given culture of a society. Slater (1997) viewed the



study of consumer culture as the study of 'texts and textuality', 'individual choice and consciousness', and 'wants and desires' in the context of social relations, structures, institutions, and systems.

The pervasiveness of the influence of cultural differences on advertising has been empirically established (Berman, 1981; Hong, Muerrisogolu & Zinkhan, 1987). Also, it has been observed (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard 1995) that the ability of advertising to develop positive impression towards a product or service often depends on consumers' attitudes towards the advertisement itself. Today's ever-increasing competition forces businesses to spend huge sums of money for advertising and promotion with the objective of persuading their customers to purchase their products/services. But persuading customers in an unknown overseas market could be quite difficult; it requires marketers to have clear understanding of how to advertise effectively to consumers in a different culture since "...advertising message consists of language and other communication instruments that are themselves very deeply rooted in a given culture of a society. Even within the same language, word connotations can vary extensively from culture to culture" (Schutte and Ciarlante, 1998).

Interest on understanding consumers' attitude towards advertisement is not new. Since early 1970s, many of the studies in this area (e.g., Larkin, 1971, Dunn and Yorke, 1974; Rau and Preble, 1988; Moser and Johns, 1996; Al-Makaty, Tubergen & Whitlow, 1996; Shavitt, Lowtry & Haefner, 1998) have been conducted in the developed Western nations using Bauer and Greyser's (1968) two-dimensional measure of perceived social and economic effects of attitudes towards advertising. Several researchers in the 1980s (e.g., Shimp, 1981; Lutz, Mackenzie and Belch, 1983; Lutz, 1985; MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch, 1986; MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989) have empirically shown that advertising effectiveness, brand attitudes, and purchase intentions are influenced by consumers' attitude towards the advertisement. Most of these studies tended to use. With the exception of a handful of cross-cultural studies (e.g., Andrews, Durvasula & Neemeyer, 1994; O'Donohoe, 1995) and studies on China (e.g., Kwan, Ho & Cragin, 1983; Semenik, Zhao and Muir, 1986; and Semenik and Tao 1993; Pollay, Tse and Wang, 1990, Crellin 1998, Razzaque, 2008) there exists a general paucity of similar studies in the context of developing nations. This research on understanding consumers' attitude towards advertisement in Bangladesh – a developing nation in two different time periods ten-years apart will be a good contribution to the literature. As Bangladesh has undergone rapid economic changes during the last ten years, it is now attracting many international marketers. For all those marketers operating in (or intending to operate) in Bangladesh, it is imperative that they have a clear understanding of how consumers perceive their advertising and how to make their advertising effective in the context of Bangladesh.

### **Advertising in Bangladesh**

Since gaining her independence from Pakistan in 1971, war ravaged Bangladesh adopted a socialist path of economic development until 1975 when a new military government ceased power and adopted a mixed economy leaning more towards capitalism. In the pre-1975 struggling socialist economy of Bangladesh, advertising had virtually no real meaning. However, all the post-1975 economic policies allowed market economy to flourish giving marketers opportunity to promote their market offerings to consumers by opening new channels of promotion. Through the dedication of talented ad makers, the ad industry in Bangladesh started to take shape at a steady pace. Ad regulations, however, were generally restrictive for all types of media and strict censorship policies were in force.

Since about 75% of the Bangladeshis live in rural areas, the broadcast media, particularly the radio, had the highest overall reach, followed by print media. Because of non-availability of electricity in many rural areas, TV ads had very poor reach in rural areas. But in the nation's urban areas TV ads had the most profound impact followed by the print media. The 2002 National Media Survey (NMS) found 25.8% of the population read newspapers. As such use of print media for advertising was a common practice among marketers.

Since the mid-1990s, Bangladesh witnessed a big change in its media landscape; there was, a proliferation of commercial media channels in the country. Bangladesh witnessed the introduction of cable television in 1992, and private television in 1997 bringing an end to the three-decade long domination of the state-owned Bangladesh Television. Over the years, the number of private television channels in Bangladesh increased exponentially driven mostly by massive growth in the

telecommunications sector. Bangladeshis were introduced to Internet in the late 1990s which started to gain popularity from the beginning of the new millennium. Several big mobile phone operators have taken active interest in investing in media advertising and branding. With more than 110 advertising agencies, the media industry has been thriving in Bangladesh (Rahman, 2016, p. 326). According to ACNielsen Media and Demographic Surveys (2015, 2013, 2006), access to television in the urban areas has increased from 69 percent to 96 percent over the last decade. By 2015 access to television surpassed 85 percent nationally.

According to the 2016 National Media Survey (NMS), Print is the second most widespread media in the country with 23.8 percent readership. It is interesting to note that even after the rise of TV and Internet print readership has not diminished that much. There has been a drastic improvement in the quality of print media in Bangladesh. They are now using better quality paper and adding more colour pages with a view to attract more consumers and advertisers. It should be noted that advertisers have not shunned the use of traditional advertisement outlets, such as billboards, store displays, street side shows and other indigenous methods of promoting.

## **Methodology**

### **Background of respondents**

The main objective of this paper is to present a comparison of the attitudes of the new generation Bangladeshi consumers' (between 18 and 24 years old) towards advertising in general and their media usage behaviour studied 10 ten years apart – in 2008 and 2018. In both these studies the respondents were tertiary students from universities and colleges as they represent a homogeneous population of interest and convenient sample. Use of a convenient sample of students is acceptable since earlier studies did not find any considerable difference between students' attitudes towards advertising in general and other cross-sections of the overall population (Ramaprasad and Thurwanger 1998).

While the 2008 study was based on the responses of 132 tertiary students aged between 18 and 24 in Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, the current, 2018 study made use of a much larger sample of 403 students who completed the study between November 2017 and in June 2018. A short questionnaire was administered to the respondents in an informal environment which required between 15 and 20 minutes to complete. Any questionnaire completed by respondents below the age of 18 or above 24 was excluded from analysis. Because of this screening, the total number of usable questionnaires came down to 386 representing 252 or 65.3% male students and 134 or 34.7% female students. Almost two fifths of the respondents (38.6%) were between 18 years and 20 years of age while the remaining 61.4% belonged to the 21 years to 24 years age group. The 2008 study, however, had 54.5% male and 45.5% female participants.

### **Questionnaire development**

Data for both S1 and S2 were collected using a modified version of the two-part questionnaire used by Liu (2002) to study advertising attitude of young Chinese consumers. The statements have been borrowed from the works of earlier researchers (e.g. Larkin, 1971; Kwan et al., 1983; Ho and Sin, 1986; Liu, 2002). Minor modifications were necessary to make the instrument usable in the Bangladesh context. First developed in English, the questionnaire was translated in Bengali, the native language of the Bangladeshi people with the help of an expert translators. To ensure equivalence of the two instruments, the Bengali version of the questionnaire was back-translated into English using a second language expert. The instrument was further modified after pre-testing on a group of 15 students to ensure accuracy. There were no inconsistencies between the original questionnaire and the re-translated version.

The first part of the S2 instrument (second part in S1) sought responses to a set of 34 five-point Likert-type statements (29 in S1) - ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5) regarding attitudes towards advertising in general focusing on five attitudinal areas in advertising, namely (i) individual perception of usefulness of advertising; (ii) importance of advertising for national economy; (iii) social beliefs about advertising; (iv) ethics considerations in advertising; and finally,

(v) regulatory concerns in advertising. The second part of the S2 questionnaire (first part in S1) sought demographic information of the respondents. The questionnaire took about 15 - 20 minutes to complete.

## **Analysis and Findings**

To facilitate comparability of the findings of the two studies, data were analysed using simple statistical tools such as frequency and mean tests. Results of the analyses of the two studies are presented below under different sub-headings.

### **The new generation Bangladeshis' general view on advertising**

Analyses of the data reveal that the new generation Bangladeshis participating in the two studies obtain information on products and services from various sources. Respondents of S1 reported Television to be their major source of product information (34.9%) closely followed by word-of-mouth of friends, peers or relatives (29.3%). Other sources include magazines and newspapers (22.7%); radio (5.3%), Internet (4.1%) and others such as billboard, pamphlets, posters (3.7%). For them TV commercials were the most popular vehicles of advertisement followed by print media such as newspapers and magazines. More than half of the S1 respondents (54%) believed that there were too many advertisements in TV whilst about a third (32.7%) of them believed that the number of advertisements in print media is less than what it should have been. The results further indicated that 18% of the new generation customers participating in S1 spent at least seven hours or more per week reading magazines and newspapers; 30% spent between four and seven hours per week; 37% spent between one and three hours per week; while only 15% reported spending less than an hour on reading magazines and newspapers.

Although watching TV was reported to be popular among the S1 participants less than seven percent seemed to spend more than an hour daily watching TV; about 19% reported spending between half and one hour per day. Rest of the respondents reported less than half an hour of TV watching per day. Being students, respondents spent most of their time in the college/university; they could watch TV only at nights or during the weekend. Female respondents reported spending relatively more time in watching TV. This makes sense since in a traditional Muslim country such as Bangladesh women tend to spend more time at home than men. Almost half (47%) of the S1 respondents reported that they did not listen to radio at all; 30% appeared to be occasional listeners while only 13% listened to radio every day. Browsing the Internet – a relatively new phenomenon in those days – was quite popular among these new generation consumers. More than half of them (57%) reported spending an average of half an hour or less per day on Internet; almost a third (31%) reported spending between half and one hour whilst the remaining 15% spent more than an hour per day in browsing the Internet.

Almost half (47.8%) of the S1 respondents expected to see more advertising regarding motorcycles, computers, mobile phones and entertainment; 31.6% of the respondents would prefer more fashion information and 21.4% of the respondents wanted more advertising on watches, books and magazines.

Respondents of S2, however, reported obtaining product information from various sources namely, Internet including online search, social media and Youtube (73%); TV (69.7%); printed media such as newspapers and magazines (64.3%) and word-of-mouth of friends and relatives (37.6%). Other sources include radio (11.2%) as well as billboards, pamphlets and posters (9.1%). For them, Internet appeared to be the most popular vehicle of advertisement (77.9%). Internet browsing comprised online search, social media, LinkedIn and Youtube. About 14.1% of the respondents reported spending 3 hours or more per day on Internet, 19.3% spent between 2 and 3 hours, 35.6% spent between 1 and 2 hours and 31% spent less than 1 hour per day.

Unlike their S1 cohorts, S2 respondents, rated TV commercials as their second most popular vehicle of advertisement. This relatively higher proportion (compared with 34.9% in S1) is not surprising since in 2018, respondents could watch TV programs on Internet (computer/iPad/smart phones) and student dormitories had better access to television viewing. Of all the S2 TV viewers, 16.7% percent seemed to spend more than an hour daily watching TV; about 23.9% reported spending between half and one hour per day. The remaining respondents reported less than half an hour of TV watching per day.

Print media comprising newspaper and magazine was reported as the third most popular vehicle of advertisements. Compared to their S1 cohorts, a much larger proportion of the S2 respondents believed that there were too many TV ads (74.3%); however, unlike them, about 43.2% of the S2 respondents believed that the number of advertisements in print media is less much more than what it should have been. Most of the respondents reporting reading newspapers and magazines did it online. About two-fifths of them (41.2%) reported spending between half and one hour per day while 22.1% reported spending more than an hour. Given the popularity of smart phones among the S2 respondents, these statistics is acceptable.

Reliance on 'Word-of-Mouth' (WoM - i.e., opinions/views of colleagues, friends and relatives) was rated as the distant fourth major source (37.6%) of gathering product/service information and a factor in influencing purchase decision. Interestingly, almost half of the respondents (41%) reported that they never listened to radio. Only 27% of the respondents reported listening to Radio but not regularly while the remaining respondents (22%) listened to radio regularly.

About two thirds (64.1%) of the S2 respondents wanted to see more advertisements on smart phones, laptops, iPads and similar other hi-tech products and entertainment; 21.3% wanted to see ads on cars, motorcycles and holidays computers, mobile phones and entertainment; 14.6% of the respondents would prefer more fashion information and ads on watches, books and magazines.

The advertisement volume in Bangladesh ranges from US\$250m to US\$300m and television shares two-thirds of it. Of the various types of advertising, the TV commercials appear to be the most popular vehicle of advertising promotion in the country (86%) followed by the print media, i.e., newspapers and magazines (27%). AC Nielsen 2017 survey also revealed TV to be the most viewed media in Bangladesh as viewership rose to 84 percent in 2016 from 74 percent in 2011. However, it saw a little decrease 80 percent in 2017.

### **Analysis of attitude statements among the new-generation Bangladeshis**

Reliability of the attitudinal scales was assessed by calculating Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the multi-item scaled measures ( $\alpha = 0.7017_{S1}$  &  $0.7269_{S2}$ ) and was found to have acceptable internal consistency according to Nunnally (1978). Table 1 presents the mean score (ms) of each of the statements under each of the five categories of beliefs about advertising computed from the responses of the S1 and S2 participants. Discussion of the responses are presented in the paragraphs below. The subscripts S1 & S2 denote 2008 study and 2018 study, respectively.

#### **Table 1 About here**

*Perceived personal beliefs about advertising:* In both S1 and S2, the new-generation Bangladeshis seemed to have agreed that advertising provided not only useful information ( $ms = 2.76_{S1}$  &  $2.17_{S2}$ ) but also helped them to make an important purchasing decision ( $ms = 2.79_{S1}$  &  $1.98_{S2}$ ). They also tended to believe that advertisements have occasionally mislead them ( $ms = 2.17_{S1}$  &  $1.94_{S2}$ ) and made them buy unwanted things ( $ms = 2.64_{S1}$  &  $1.59_{S2}$ ). They also felt that there was too much advertising today ( $ms = 1.59_{S1}$  &  $1.26_{S2}$ ).

The respondents in S2 appeared indifferent ( $ms = 2.89$ ) about the statement '*In this digital age, advertisements are not really necessary*'. However, they expressed strong agreement with the statement '*Repeated advertisements are truly annoying*' ( $ms = 1.43$ ) and "*I do not think celebrities used in ads use the product or service they promote*" ( $ms = 1.63$ ).

*Beliefs about the economic dimensions of Advertising:* Respondents in S1 as well as S2 seemed to have endorsed the view that advertising plays a vital role in promoting the economic growth of Bangladesh. Respondents seemed to have agreed that advertisement enhanced the overall economic development of Bangladesh ( $ms = 1.97_{S1}$  &  $1.94_{S2}$ ) and that advertising helped raise the standard of living of the people of Bangladesh ( $ms = 2.51_{S1}$  &  $2.42_{S2}$ ). They disagreed with the statement "*good products do not require advertisement*" ( $ms = 3.12_{S1}$  &  $3.43_{S2}$ ) and that advertising is a wasteful exercise ( $ms = 2.84_{S1}$  &  $4.21_{S2}$ ) However, while the S1 respondents appeared to be rather unsure as to whether advertising results

in the development of better products for the public ( $ms = 2.92$ ) the S2 respondents believed that they do ( $ms = 2.12$ ). Both the S1 & S2 respondents seemed to be unhappy with the fact that advertising was responsible for raising the prices of goods and service ( $ms = 2.21_{S1}$  &  $2.03_{S2}$ ).

*Social beliefs about advertising:* The new generation Bangladeshi consumers of 2008 as well as 2018 reflect a mixed attitude towards the social effects of advertising. The general positive attitude towards the social effects of advertising notwithstanding, they appeared to be sensitive to the possible negative social consequences of advertising. While most disagreed that advertising was silly and ridiculous ( $ms = 3.73_{S1}$  &  $2.98_{S2}$ .) or it insulted consumer intelligence ( $ms = 3.81_{S1}$  &  $3.03_{S2}$ ), they

seemed to be aware of the possible negative social consequences of advertising. For example, they felt that advertising affected children adversely by familiarizing them with things that they need not know about as a child ( $ms = 2.23_{S1}$  &  $1.71_{S2}$ ) and develops in children a sense of false need ( $ms = 2.05_{S1}$  &  $2.19_{S2}$ ). However, they had different beliefs about the issue 'Advertisements promote materialism' ( $ms = 2.12_{S1}$  &  $3.19_{S2}$ ), the view that '*many advertisements are insensitive to our culture and tradition*' ( $ms = 2.01_{S1}$  &  $3.12_{S2}$ ) and advertisements degrade women and corrupt our cultural value' ( $ms = 1.98_{S1}$  &  $3.12_{S2}$ ).

A new attitude statement in S2 '*Advertisement often control media*' dealing with an emerging social concern in advertising elicited resulted in a mean score of 2.87 implying very weak agreement with the statement.

*Ethical concerns in advertising:* Respondents in both S1 and S2 seemed to have ethical concerns about the ads. They did not agree with the statement *I really don't care about the ethicality of the advertisement*, albeit, the extent of disagreement varied ( $ms = 3.54_{S1}$  &  $3.01_{S2}$ ). Perhaps this is reflective of their response to the view that advertisements today promote unethical Western values ( $ms = 1.88_{S2}$  &  $2.39_{S2}$ ). However, both S1 and S2 respondents seemed to endorse the belief that advertisements are often false and misleading ( $ms = 2.17_{S1}$  &  $2.23_{S2}$ ); and '*advertisements make exaggerated claims*' ( $ms = 2.45_{S1}$  &  $2.31_{S2}$ ) and that '*Advertisements do not necessarily present the true picture of the product or service advertised*' ( $ms = 2.35_{S1}$  &  $2.46_{S2}$ ). There seems to be a general agreement among both S1 and S2 respondents that advertising tend to influence children easily and affects them adversely ( $ms = 2.43_{S1}$  &  $2.31_{S2}$ ).

*Beliefs about regulating advertising:* Respondents in both S1 and S2 expressed a positive attitude towards regulating advertising industry; they wanted to see more government regulation on advertising messages ( $ms = 1.78_{S1}$  &  $2.27_{S2}$ ). They also had agreement on the issue that advertising using children and women should be carefully monitored ( $ms = 2.25_{S1}$  &  $2.41_{S2}$ ) and advertisements aimed at children should be strictly regulated ( $ms = 2.29_{S1}$  &  $2.13_{S2}$ ). They wanted banning of advertisements of harmful and dangerous products ( $ms = 2.17_{S1}$  &  $2.33_{S2}$ ). Although S1 and S2 participants represented two distinctly different new-generation Bangladeshi consumers of two different time periods, interestingly, their responses to the statement '*Advertisements should not contain sexual suggestions*' were very similar in terms of strength as well as direction ( $ms = 2.21_{S1}$  &  $2.29_{S2}$ ).

## Discussions of Findings

Analyses of the two exploratory studies of the new generation Bangladeshis on attitude towards advertising obtained from two separate studies conducted ten years apart using the same instrument reveal interesting results and provide food for thought for marketers and advertisers. It seems that the overall attitude of the young, new-generation consumers of Bangladesh towards five different sets of beliefs did not significantly change over the last ten years. It appears that the new breed of consumers tends to agree with the need for advertising to provide information as an effective guide for them in making their purchase decisions. They also seem to be aware of the role and importance of advertisement toward economic growth and development. However, at the same time, they are also concerned about the social and ethical impact of advertising and the importance of regulating the ad industry. In both S1 and S2, the overall attitude towards advertising is somewhat mixed attitude towards advertising. Apart from 8 of the 29 items common in both S1 and S2 (see Table 2) all the

beliefs (statements/issues) have very similar responses in terms of their direction (positive or negative) although the relative strength of the responses somewhat varied.

When the study S1 was undertaken in 2007, consumers in Bangladesh were much less affluent than they are now, product availability was rather limited, marketing practices were based on product and selling concepts and advertising did not have much impact on consumers. But the situation has changed now. Because of globalization, adoption of market economy and rapid technological development many companies, both domestic and international, have been adopting marketing orientation. This has been instrumental in the development of advertisement industry in Bangladesh. Yet, attitude of the new generation consumers towards advertising has not changed much, the changes in mean scores are not statistically significant. One would like to think that given the wide range of choices of products/services available to them, the new generation consumers would represent a more informed, socially and ethically concerned but less traditional generation. But the results do not seem to support this; the responses were found to be significantly different in 8 of the 29 items as can be seen in Table 2.

### Table 2 About here

One way to analyse the differences would be to look at the beliefs themselves. It may be argued that the new generation of Bangladeshi consumers of 2018 are better educated than their 2008 cohorts, they have been exposed to more liberal ideas and are slowly trying to come out of the traditional, more conservative mindset and mode of thinking; they are perhaps viewing themselves as the trendsetters for the future and the differences in their responses reflect these realities. Dave McCaughan, strategic planning director of McCann World group, a leading marketing communication solution provider believes "...Bangladesh would be the next emerging market in the advertising sector in Asia after Indonesia and Vietnam" (Saha, 2012). It is imperative that marketers and advertisers understand the attitude of this group of consumers towards advertising and undertake research to determine what constitutes effective advertising campaigns in the context of Bangladesh and develop advertising campaigns that are likely to work better.

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**Table 1: Mean Score on statements showing attitude of new generation Bangladesh consumers towards advertising in 2008 and 2018**

Statements reflecting respondents' attitude towards various aspects of advertisements		Mean Score (ms)	
		2008	2018
Perceived personal beliefs about Advertising			
1.	Advertisements provide useful information for me to make purchase decisions.	2.76	2.17
2.	Advertisements made me buy unwanted things	2.64	1.59
3.	I have often been misled by ad messages	2.17	1.94
4.	Advertisements have helped me make important purchase decisions.	2.79	1.98
5.	There are too many advertisements these days.	1.59	1.26
N1	In this digital age, advertisements are not necessary.		2.81
N2	Repeated advertisements are truly annoying		1.43
N3	I do not think celebrities used in ads use the product or service they promote.		1.63



Beliefs about the economic dimensions of Advertising			
6.	Advertising is essential for the economy of Bangladesh.	1.97	1.94
7.	Advertisement helps raise people's standard of living.	2.51	2.42
8.	Advertising results in the development of better products for the public	2.92	2.12
9.	Because of advertisements prices of products/services go up.	2.21	2.3
10.	Advertising is a wasteful exercise.	2.84	4.21
11.	Good products do not require advertisements to sell.	3.12	3.43
Social beliefs about Advertising			
12.	Most advertisements are insult to consumers' intelligence.	3.81	3.03
13.	Most advertisements are silly and ridiculous	3.73	2.98
14..	Advertisements tends to degrade women and corrupt our cultural value	1.98	3.12
15.	Many advertisements are insensitive to our culture and tradition	2.01	3.12
16.	Advertising familiarises children with things that they need not know about	2.23	1.71
17.	Advertisements promote materialism	2.12	3.19
18.	Advertisement develops in children a sense of false need	2.05	2.19
N4	Advertisements often control the media		2.71
Ethical beliefs about Advertising			
19.	Advertising tend to influence children easily and affect them adversely	2.43	2.31
20.	Advertisements today promote unethical Western values	1.88	2.39
21.	Advertisements do not necessarily present the true picture of the product or the service being advertised.	2.35	2.46
22.	I really don't care about the ethicality of the advertisement	3.54	3.01
23.	Advertisements are often false and misleading	2.17	2.23
24.	Advertisements tend to make exaggerated claims	2.45	2.31
N5	Advertisements create and perpetuate stereotyping through its portrayal of various groups (e.g., women, minorities etc.)		3.16
Beliefs about regulating advertising			
25.	Advertisements aimed at children should be strictly regulated.	2.29	2.13
26.	Government should strictly regulate advertisement messages.	1.78	2.27
27.	Advertisements should not contain sexual suggestions	2.21	2.29
28.	Advertising using children and women should be carefully monitored	2.25	2.41
29.	Advertisements of harmful and dangerous products must be banned	2.17	2.33

**Table 2: Attitude towards advertisement: Items with opposite responses in S1 and S2**

Statements reflecting respondents' attitude towards various aspects of advertisements		Mean Score (ms)	
		2008	2018
Perceived personal beliefs about Advertising			
2	Advertisements make me buy unwanted things	2.64	1.59
4	Advertisements have helped me make important purchase decisions.	2.79	1.98
Beliefs about the economic dimensions of Advertising			
10	Advertising is a wasteful exercise.	2.84	4.21
Social beliefs about Advertising			
13	Most advertisements are silly and ridiculous	3.73	2.98
14	Advertisements tends to degrade women and corrupt our cultural value	1.98	3.12
15	Many advertisements are insensitive to our culture and tradition	2.01	3.12
17	Advertisements promote materialism	2.12	3.19
Ethical beliefs about Advertising			
20	Advertisements today promote unethical Western values	1.88/2.39	2.39

## Misconceptions About Indigenous African Music and Culture: the Case of Indigenous Bapedi Music, Oral Tradition and Culture

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### Abstract

Indigenous Bapedi music and oral tradition have been dismissed as myth, superstition and primitive stories. Such dismissal has been based on the misconception and assumption that indigenous Bapedi music and oral tradition are proletarian, steeped in evil religious experiences and unacceptable for worship. In Bapedi society, indigenous music and traditional oral stories are utilized to buttress and demonstrate the collective wisdom of Bapedi people, as well as to transmit Bapedi culture, values, beliefs and history from generation to generation. This article examines misconceptions about indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories. It argues that indigenous Bapedi music and oral tradition should not be dismissed at face value as practices overtaken by circumstances and hence irrelevant to the present Bapedi community developmental needs. The findings of the present study faithfully reflect that indigenous Bapedi songs and traditional oral stories resonate in people's personal lives, in religious rituals and in society at large. These findings suggest that Bapedi people should keep and perpetuate their valuable heritage, which is still needed for survival and for the welfare of our next generation. The main question the study addressed is: What role do indigenous Bapedi music and oral tradition play in Bapedi culture?

**Keywords:** Indigenous Bapedi music; oral tradition; culture; misconceptions; heritage.

### Introduction

Bapedi people are a Southern African people living mostly in South Africa in Limpopo province, but a large percentage is found in Sekhukhune district (**see figure 1**). They speak the language called Sepedi. It is one of the 11 official South African languages. Bapedi people have always managed to retain their cultural heritage. A little percentage of Bapedi people converted to Christianity under colonialism and missionary influence. However, although there are a few Christian converts, indigenous Bapedi music, oral tradition and culture have not disappeared, instead, there has been a mixture of traditional beliefs and Christianity. Cultural and religious beliefs are important in the Bapedi way of life.



played by indigenous Bapedi music and oral tradition in Bapedi culture. The article concludes with a reflection on the implications arising from the results.

### Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by African theory of knowledge and Ontology theory. Onyewuenyi (1976:525) argues that African theory of knowledge resonates well with theory of Ontology. Like in this study, the investigation of the misconceptions about indigenous Bapedi music, oral tradition and culture follows closely upon ontology. Another contribution to the literature on African philosophy<sup>1</sup> is Udefi (2014:109), who asserts that African mode of knowledge should pay due attention to the background of African spiritualistic and dynamic metaphysics. Udefi further argues that there are different mindsets, namely; Western mindset and African mindset, and it would be presumptuous to assess African thought on the criteria developed within the context of Western cultures (Udefi 2014:109). Furthermore, Udefi emphasizes how each culture interprets experiences can be explained by uncovering those assumptions and concepts which underlie its experience and world-view (Udefi 2014:112). Udefi's approach has strengths of being contextual and interrogating relevant questions challenging Western mindset. He seeks to destabilize the hegemony of Western approaches, while at the same time he re-appraises African theological thought and spirituality. Udefi's approach enriches African philosophy as it bridges the gap between previously marginalized communities and Western scholarship, as well as Western mindset and African mindset. The present study complies with this endeavor because it is making an attempt to examine misconceptions about indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories by Christianity, Westernization and colonization; b) challenge Western mindset; c) enrich African philosophy; and d) bridge the gap between Western mindset and African mindset.

Attesting to the observations above, Narh (2013:2) writes that Ontology is basic to all meaning in reality and knowledge construction. Narh asserts that Ontology refers to what is out there to know. According to him, it has to do with whether something exists as real (realism) or as perceived (subjectivism), (Narh 2013:2). Narh's views are in consonant with Lee's advocacy that Ontology is thus a theory of existence concerned with the nature of reality and that of human beings (Lee 2012). Narh (2013:7) gives a concise elaboration on the theory of Ontology and African theory of knowledge. Writing on *'The quality of ancestry in knowing'*, he states that, "in Africa, and for Africans, existence is made of past, present, and future generations as epistemic communities linked together as a community". He argues that, "the individual knowing person is a community that includes ancestors and future unborn generations (Narh 2013:7). The investigation of misconceptions about indigenous Bapedi music, oral tradition and culture in Bapedi cultural context is ideal for both theories because a large percentage of Bapedi people survived acculturation and continue to observe their culture, keep and perpetuate their valuable heritage, which is still needed for survival and for the welfare of our next generation. What will follow in the next section is a look at previous related studies.

### Previous Related Studies

In line with the perspectives of several other scholars (Mbaegbu 2015, Yoloye 1986, Nompula 2011, Dryness 1990, Bediako 1995, Nzewi 1999, Kwenda 2002), in this article the author upholds the thesis that many of the cultural traditions of African countries had been suppressed in colonial days and sufficient attention has not been given to the philosophy and latent human objectives that prescribed mass, informal music education in African cultures, and which determine the pedagogical strategies for music education, formal and otherwise because indigenous African music, oral tradition and culture were said to be manifestations of paganism.

Celestine Chukwuemeka Mbaegbu, for his part, argues that "undoubtedly, Africa has its own indigenous systems that deal with the metaphysical and the epistemological aspects of their existence" (Mbaegbu 2015:2012). Mbaegbu (2015:2012) correctly observes that despite the threat of epistemicide, these systems have persisted while coded in orality. Nzewi (1999:73-74) corroborates the above finding when he opines that "any human group that has a distinctive body of music knowledge and practice which is passed on from one generation to another as a process, has an operative system of music education, irrespective of its pedagogical manifestations". Furthermore, Nzewi argues that "in African traditions, opportunities for active participation in music making are abundant and certain philosophies guide the method of induction into the discipline and knowledge of formal ensemble performance".

The misconceptions that indigenous Bapedi music is regarded as proletarian, pagan, primitive, uncivilised, evil, and not sufficiently artistic and spiritual, has been challenged by scholars such as Nompula (2011:4), Bediako (1995:25), Hiebert

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<sup>1</sup> Ekanem (2012:54) describes philosophy as a discipline whose quest is to understand life which is common to all humans though with different approach and method.

(1994:55-57), La Roche (1968:289) and Tracey (1961:16). In particular, Nompula (2011:2) writes that in music and arts education in South Africa, there are still strong voices that stereotype indigenous knowledge as backward and proletarian. In similar vein, Mkabela (2005:178) observes that "since colonial invasions, African indigenous culture has weathered rapid change". Mkabela further elaborates that "many researchers made real attempts to get inside the African culture, but even so, there was a tendency to see culture in terms of the coloniser's precepts and to assess educational needs in terms of the coloniser's agenda". According to her "when establishing formal education, there was no adequate reference to the indigenous education that Africans already had or to the depth of the ancestral opinions that influenced African thinking" (Mkabela 2005:178). In the light of the above observations, Mkabela (2005:178) is concerned that as an African in South Africa, she has received education in a country that has openly marginalized African indigenous knowledge. Similar to what obtains in South Africa, Bapedi society in particular, Amlor (2016:63) highlights the impact of Western culture in Ghana, by stating that "unfortunately Western culture in contemporary Ghana, is speedily competing with, and almost stunting the growth and survival of African indigenous knowledge systems". According to Amlor, "this unpleasant situation has led to re-awakening among the Ewe ethnic society to go back to her roots to revive indigenous entertainment forms like play games to promote the teaching, learning and preservation of indigenous education" (Amlor 2016:63).

Within the African context, there have been several studies that have considered the impact of Christianity, westernization and colonization (Mkabela 2005:178, Nompula 2011:4, Amlor 2016:63). These studies have focused mainly on acculturation and the demise of indigenous African music, culture and oral tradition. It is worthwhile to mention here Hellberg's (2010:24) view on the impact of acculturation. According to him, in pre-colonial times, music making was embedded in the local way of life and related to the total cosmology of the people. Furthermore, Hellberg (2010:17) writes that many of the churches that were founded in Africa, Asia and Latin America through the global spreading of Christian mission during the colonial era have experienced considerable music-cultural change during the post-colonial period. According to him, in their early years the music cultures of churches founded by Western missionaries were often more or less dominated by spiritual music imported from, or modelled on, the Western art music tradition (Hellberg 2010:17).

Some studies reveal that the colonial powers used brutal policies and devious methods to subjugate the African people in order to acquire full control over their lands and resources (Adamo 2001, Aleaz 2003, Moila 1988, Mugambi 1994, Ukpong 1995). A number of studies have examined this, highlighting that these policies and methods included consistent inferiorization of indigenous cultures, and concerted efforts to erase existing systems of knowledge and their replacement with Western-driven belief and knowledge systems (Adamo 2001, Proglor 1999:1; Eyong 2007:131). In what follows, I will discuss the research design and methodology utilized in this study.

### **Research design and methodology**

The study utilized conversational<sup>1</sup> and storytelling methodology within an indigenous research framework on the experiences of selected Bapedi people on indigenous-settler and the powerful social relationships that marginalize indigenous Bapedi people, but also adopted the contextual approach as it considers the local context (Bapedi culture). Data from this contextual approach were analyzed guided by the research questions and objectives of the study. My contextual approach has led to the achievement of research objectives. All the subjects selected for this study live in Sekhukhune district, Limpopo Province in South Africa. During the course of the research for and the preparation of this article, I received assistance of many people. I am indebted to these people who permitted me to photograph them, their divination bones and their traditional medicines without reservation. The following procedures were followed in collecting data. Secondary evidence includes written sources like Masters and Doctoral theses, journal articles and books. The fieldwork involved participant observation on the part of the researcher. This means first hand observation of the role played by indigenous Bapedi songs and traditional oral stories in Bapedi culture. Ten (10) of the most knowledgeable and experienced traditional musicians and poets were purposively identified to participate in the research study because of their knowledgeable and informative qualities. Both personal and group interviews were conducted with the participants. The aim was to ascertain the conceptions about indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories and the role played by indigenous Bapedi music and oral tradition in Bapedi culture. During my association with the participants, they corroborated my data on the required information. Most of the interviews took approximately one hour each, and an initial as well as a follow-up interview was held with each participant. All personal and group interviews with the participants, as well as

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<sup>1</sup> Kovack (2010:44) describes conversational method as dialogic approach to gathering knowledge that is built upon an indigenous relational tradition. According to Kovack, it utilizes open-ended, semi-structured interview questions to prompt conversation where participant and researcher co-create knowledge.

observations, were captured with video and photo cameras. The poem and information on videotapes were translated into English. In the discussion that follows, I will concentrate primarily on the research findings of the study.

## Results

The results were obtained from all phases that is, interviews, direct observations and literature review. The commonly held misconceptions can be widely categorized into religious, spiritual, social and cultural misconceptions. The results of analyzing the misconceptions about indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories, as well as the vital role played by indigenous Bapedi songs and oral tradition in Bapedi culture, are described below.

### Misconceptions

The **first** misconception and the basis for this article is that indigenous Bapedi music is regarded as proletarian, evil and unacceptable for worship. In pre-democratic South Africa, indigenous African music and culture were thought of as proletarian, evil and unacceptable for worship (Nompula 2011:4). Consequently, they were excluded from school curricula. Instead, European music and instruments were introduced and promoted through churches and missionary schools. Thus, from the time of nineteenth-century colonialism, European music dominated the educational system in the "black" schools. Through the exclusive focus on western European music, learners came to believe that there is only one music system in the world, i.e. European music. African students were denied the opportunity to learn more about their own indigenous music and to recognize the values of their own culture.

The **second** misconception is that indigenous Bapedi oral tradition and culture are dismissed as myth, superstition and steeped in evil religious experiences. In the quest to convert the Africans, certain cultural practices were discouraged or ultimately prohibited by the early missionaries (Dryness 1990:11; Kwenda 2002:160). Traditional local customs and institutions such as indigenous music, circumcision, veneration of ancestors, tribal ceremonies, authority systems and polygamy, among others, were opposed and denigrated (Bediako 1995:25). It was reckoned that such practices are steeped in evil religious experiences, thus, they must be repudiated (Hiebert 1994:55-57). The result of these restrictions included Westernisation of converts. In some of these cases, converts were ostracised by their own people. Obviously, this negative impact resulted in disorientation of the converts. In other cases, due to the foreignness of the new religion, some Africans resisted, as they were not ready to break away from their aged practices (Kwenda 2002:169). However, conversion to Christianity needs not imply rejection of traditional culture (La Roche 1968:289). Another common phenomenon concerns the failure of Christian missionaries to address some of the cultural problems faced by their converts adequately.

The **third** misconception relates to indigenous Bapedi music, oral tradition and culture condemned as pagan, primitive, uncivilised, evil, and not sufficiently artistic and spiritual, that had to be dealt with, and an inferior system that had to be done away with. The attitude of early missionaries showed an unwitting ignorance of the positive values of the Bapedi way of life. Their actions were an unwarranted attempt to control the social situation and an unfounded attack upon the fundamental institutions of the traditional Bapedi society. Without first trying to understand the significance of traditional rituals, missionaries condemned most rites of passage and social ceremonies as pagan, whether they were contrary to the teachings of the scriptures or not. Bapedi people like dancing (movement), and dancing had no place in European church worship. As Bapedi people began to respond to the Gospel, they were forced to abandon their ancient customs, rites, cultural identities and even their names because all of these were regarded as 'pagan'. In these crucial initial encounters with powerful Western missionaries, the Bapedi people were made to feel inferior. Their previous way of life was condemned as totally unacceptable, wicked and pagan. This observation concurs with what Fabella (2003:105) and Lebaka (2017:117) similarly observe about the impact of Western culture on indigenous way of life of the African people. They concur with Yoloye (1986:164) who observes that indigenous African music, oral tradition and culture were systematically suppressed and repressed during centuries of Christianization, westernization and colonization.

The government's neglect of indigenous music was added to the historical influence of Christian missionaries on religious music in Bapedi society. Missionaries regarded drumming (see photo 1) as woven into the fabric of pagan life, so they were determined to exorcise it. Despite the scarcity of instruments, the Bapedi people refused to forsake their musical traditions and an outstanding vocal musical culture evolved over time.



**Photo 1.** Traditional healers-to-be; trainees (*mathasana*) playing drums. From left to right; Mavis Motha, Tshegofatšo Shai, Tshepo Magaela, Nogane Sete & Lekoba Masha (Kotsiri village; Sekhukhune district, Limpopo Province, 22.03.2019), Photographer: Morakeng Edward Kenneth Lebaka.

Historical evidence strongly indicates that ample indigenous African knowledge in music has been systematically suppressed and repressed during centuries of Christianization, westernization and colonization of indigenous Bapedi music (Yoloye 1986:164). This was predicated on the myth that the masses of African people and their progenitors had accomplished little or nothing musically worthwhile, that they could never become exemplars in the advancement of society, and that in the best interest of all, teaching about Western musical cultures to the exclusion of African musical legacy should be a unique role of the imported western school systems in South Africa. Fifty years ago, African schools started from the wrong end and instead of insisting upon a solid foundation of local traditional songs, educators recommended that promising African musicians should be taught European music only (Tracey 1961:16). The above views and observations are in consonant with Yoloye (1986:164) who observes that, “many of the cultural traditions of African countries had been suppressed in colonial days because they were said to be manifestations of paganism”. According to him, since early formal education was largely in the hands of the missionaries, songs, dances, drama and poetry associated with traditional African festivals or religions were forbidden in the schools. Yoloye (1986:151) further suggests that for the content of education in Africa to be relevant, the curricula, textbooks and methods must take into account the African environment, the African child's development, the African cultural heritage and the demands of technological progress and economic development.

The **fourth** misconception is that the mainline churches used to hold a very negative view of traditional medical practices and practitioners (many still do so today), and tried to discourage the use of traditional medicines (see photo 2) as much as possible. They did so for a number of reasons. Firstly, because it was felt that traditional healers encouraged the belief in witchcraft, which was considered one of the greatest hindrances to Christian missionary work (Yoloye 1986:164). Secondly, because early missionaries tended to regard the traditional healer as a rogue and a deceiver (Pawłoková-Vilhanová 2007:25). Moreover, the traditional beliefs of the people were discarded as pagan and superstitious, in accordance with the Western prejudices of the time. Christian education and mission hospitals had the effect of weakening these traditional beliefs (Strayer 1976:10). They proved effective instruments for conversion to Christianity.





**Photo 2.** Traditional medicines (Kotsiri village; Sekhukhune district, Limpopo Province, 22.03.2019), Photographer: Morakeng Edward Kenneth Lebaka

### **The role played by indigenous Bapedi music and oral tradition in Bapedi culture**

#### **Indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories as a communal participatory experience.**

Literary evidence has shown that in the Bapedi society, indigenous songs and traditional oral stories are a social practice and cannot be enjoyed in isolation (Lebaka 2001:131). According to Lebaka (2001:133), they bring people together for different purposes, and with their ancestors, but also spur members of a group towards achieving a corporative objective in a community. With regard to 'music as a communal experience' Lebaka further mentions that "music as a direct agency for social intervention helps expressing and exposing corporate truth, communal or personal views, agitations, as well as aspirations (Lebaka 2001:133). These observations are vividly corroborated by Lidskog (2017:25) who states that music provides an opportunity for the expression of identity, and it can facilitate the reproduction and transformation of established social identities. He observes that music can be used as a symbolic identifier of a social group, both by the group's members but also by the surroundings (its non-members (Lidskog 2017:25). In the same vein, Rice (2007:35) observes that Music has the ability to index different aspects of multiple identities through the multiplicity of its formal properties (melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre and so forth). He argues that musical performance provides the opportunity for communities sharing an identity to see themselves in action and to imagine others who might share the same style of performance. In consonance with the above views, Joseph (2007:102) confirms that "learning from each other impacts on and influences one's identity". Furthermore, Joseph affirms that "music making is, therefore, an index of a living community, and a measure of the degree of social cohesion among its respective units" (2007:103). This is in line with the finding of Amlor (2016:63) who writes that "indigenous knowledge, perceived as cultural norms and values that collectively inform, educate and give identity to people in a society, still remains an African cultural legacy".

Indigenous Bapedi music is characterized by song, text, speech and poetry<sup>1</sup>, and it is difficult to have one of these characteristics and not the rest. In Bapedi music performances for instance, the performers sometimes open a performance with an introductory speech. The information in this speech is usually not sung to any melody, but spoken directly. It informs the audience about the background of the song to be performed and prepares them toward the experience. This is evident in the Bapedi reed pipes' music ensemble (*kiba*) performances.

<sup>1</sup> Lebaka (2008:189) describes poetry as an organized form of communication whereby, words are skillfully knitted together in manners where only few words cleverly express a body of ideas.



### **Moral lessons behind indigenous Bapedi songs and traditional oral stories.**

In my fieldwork in Sekhukhune district, it was interesting and encouraging to observe how Bapedi people employ 'fable'<sup>1</sup> to teach some moral lessons. Informal discussions have revealed that the characters of the story are often animals or birds, which converse like human beings. With regard to the role played by indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories in the Bapedi society, it was found that indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories serve several functions in the Bapedi society, ranging from social to moral, and religious to political. Furthermore, it was found that they function so much in entertainment as most members of the society are normally intrigued to watch the performances, but also serve the purpose of correction, education, counselling and enlightenment. These observations are in consonance with Idang (2015:103) who observes that African culture is embedded in strong moral considerations and has a system of various beliefs and customs which every individual ought to keep in order to live long and to avoid bringing curses on them and others. We observe in the present study that indigenous Bapedi music does not give momentary joy that makes people forget about realities of life, and does not aim at providing just temporary happiness in entertainment, but rather presents issues of the moment and provides stimulus to re-thinking about behaviours that are contrary to the norms of the society and such vice that could even be dangerous to those who indulge in them and the society. Oral accounts and observations have also shown that Indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories prompt members of the society to examine and address facts about reality. These findings imply that indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories deal with frank issues of life, and there is no hiding in their practice. For example, when the composer-performer means to criticize, he/she does so directly and when it becomes necessary to praise he/she does so frankly. These findings also support Lidskog's (2017:33) assertion of music and identity. In his view, "music has an important role in identity formation in diasporic situations". He maintains that "music can serve both to stabilize and maintain identities and belongings – but also to destabilize them, providing new material and resources for identity formation (Lidskog 2017:33).

### **The utilization of cultural proverbs and parables in indigenous Bapedi songs and narratives**

It has become evident through interviews and observations that indigenous Bapedi music is vocal and word-based. Closer investigation has shown that it presents its symbols in skilled language that employs figures of speech, imagery and other poetic elements. Using videos, it was recorded that it is the use of these language techniques put together in tones and tunes that assist in conveying the messages that make the songs symbolic. During interviews it was also established that Bapedi people employ a personification in a proverbial manner and metaphorical descriptions using animals, birds and this physical world as well as the spiritual world to discredit the being of the assailed subjects. When analyzing the data material, it becomes evident that indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories play significant roles in educating and enlightening Bapedi people through their musical performances. Furthermore, it was found that indigenous Bapedi songs are characterized by proverbial and metaphorical expressions. Along similar lines, it is worthwhile to mention here Hlupi's view. In a personal interview with Makgoga Hlupi Nkwana (28<sup>th</sup> of September 2018) at Kotsiri village, Sekhukhune district in Limpopo Province, it was pointed out that "the Bapedi culture is richly vast in the use of proverbs both in speech and songs". According to her, "in proverbs issues are raised and a multitude of counsel is given in brevity". Ekanem (2012:57) emphasizes the above observations when he writes that proverbs are seen as the oil with which words are eaten. He further elaborates that proverbs are the most important aspect of language and it is in proverbs that we find the remains of the oldest forms of African religions and philosophical wisdom, thus proverbs are the defining features of African languages. All the interviewed persons feel that in Bapedi society, many traditional stories, poems and indigenous songs are associated with animals and birds. Effective teaching in these stories, poems and songs is realized by employing imagery<sup>2</sup> of birds and animals (Lebaka 2008:155). The following poem (**table 1**) based on divination bones is an illustration of this feature. The poem as translated into English is shown below.

<sup>1</sup> Idamoyibo (2006:6-168) describes 'fable' as a very brief story to teach some moral lessons.

<sup>2</sup> Imagery is a technique in poetry adopted to create pictures in the minds of the audience in order to stimulate their imagination of the objects and subjects described and represented, and to arouse their responses (Idamoyibo 2006: 169).

**Name of the poem of divination bones: Lewa la Hlapadima (a holotorous personality)**

**Poem text and translation**

Sepedi	English
<p>Ngwana tladi hlalefa, ge o ka se hlalefe o tla wela setung. Ke hlapadima e leme la maka, Ga go kubu, ga go kwena, ga go selomi se metseng, Hlapa o tšwe, madiba ga se eno, ke a bo kwera.</p>	<p>My child, please take care, and be on the alert. In case you are negligent and ignorant, you will suffer the consequences of what you are attempting to do, You will be confronted by hlapadima (a holotorous personality), a liar, and unreliable. It is not advisable to associate yourself with this type of a personality /character. The most dangerous, prominent and popular animals such as the crocodile and the hippopotamus, have failed to establish friendship with this character/personality. Take a bath, and get out of the water, you don't belong there, that's where the crocodile belongs.</p>

**Table 1: Interview, Lesufi (17 March 2019).**

**Explanation of the symbolism**

There is much wisdom in the above poem and divination bones (**photo 3**). The poem is a warning to the person diagnosed, either the female or male partner who is intending to cohabit with his/her partner. The message put across is that 'please ensure your safety before any action could be taken'. This simply implies that one of the partners is sick or has a sexual transmitted disease. In the case of a female partner, this may also apply to menstruation cycle/period. In the case of a male partner, this serves as a warning that he should be cautious and guard against being socially excited of the newly established relationship, as the female partner might be sick or experiencing a menstruation cycle or period. According to Tshogofatšo Shai; a traditional healer-to-be (personal communication, 22 May 2019), the divination bones serve as a warning that fornication before consulting with the traditional healer for the utilization of the divination bones is health risk if not life risk. Tshogofatšo further mentioned that in Bapedi culture there is a general belief that *mosadi o hwetswa dikgagareng*, meaning, the rightful woman or prospective wife is found in the divination bones. This simply implies that after a man has proposed love to a woman of his choice, and the consensus has been reached, he should not be socially excited and inform his parents about the new relationship before consulting with the traditional healer for the utilization of the divination bones to find out whether the woman is the rightful partner for the bright future and happy marriage. This enlightenment is significant to the diagnosed person and other people in the Bapedi society because it is true that *mosadi o hwetswa dikgagareng* (the rightful woman is confirmed by the divination bones). Since generally oral poetry in Bapedi society does not exist as mere recitation, it is performed by various traditional poets and musicians in different parts of Sekhukhune district without distortion of coherence and meaning in the messages communicated through the songs and poems. However, divination poems<sup>1</sup> do not exist for listening pleasure, but are intended to warn the diagnosed with frank issues of life. Sometimes the messages are presented proverbially or in parables and wide gaps are left for the diagnosed person to fill.

**Message**

In the above poem, the traditional healer's (poet) tone is very essential to the understanding of divination bones. The tone and diction suggest the meaning of what the traditional healer (poet) intends to communicate to the diagnosed person. The findings from this research correlates with the assertion by Lebaka (2001:64) who states that various methods of divination are used by Bapedi traditional healers (*dingaka*), and the most common method is the utilization of a set of divination bones (*dikgagara*). Lebaka (2001:65) further writes that the answer from the patient or whoever diagnosed is either 'Yes' or 'No' as a response to the question, 'Do you agree?' The question is asked by the traditional healer. Following next is the utilization of a set of divination bones (*dikgagara*) by Tshogofatšo Shai (**see photo 3**), interpreted by

<sup>1</sup> Whether short or long, the poems are memorable.

the poem in **table 1**. According to Tshegofats'o Shai (a traditional healer-to-be; trainee), the four divination bones he is pointing are associated with *hlapadima* (a holotorous personality).



**Photo 3/** Utilization of a set of divination bones; Tshegofats'o Shai – Traditional healer-to-be; trainee (Kotsiri village; Sekhukhune district, Limpopo Province, 22.03.2019), Photographer: Morakeng Edward Kenneth Lebaka

### **The pedagogical significance of indigenous Bapedi music.**

The body of evidence based inquiry and research have revealed that indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories, more than being the processes of social communication, are the products of the art themselves. As products, they exist to provide certain functions and as well serve as reference source in the Bapedi society. So far in this study, we have found that there is a clear indication that informal music education and traditional oral stories in Bapedi culture show remarkable interrelatedness of fields of learning such as literature, religion, sociology, history, philosophy and music, where they meet and unite to fulfil certain functions in the society. The exposition of this study has also shown that these fields of social, moral and spiritual experiences influence the philosophical thought processes of indigenous Bapedi music practitioners as they take cognizance of the cohesive art of communication. Attesting to the observations above, Nzewi (1999:73) observes that “sufficient attention has not been given to the philosophy and latent human objectives that prescribed mass, informal music education in African cultures, and which determine the pedagogical strategies for music education, formal and otherwise. Observations from Nzewi (1999:73) indicate that most researchers and analysts have often assumed that a systematic approach is non-existent simply because there is no unnecessarily verbal theorization or written tradition. Nzewi further argues that “to introduce Africans to modern music learning and appreciation of European music thoughts, contents, practices and pedagogy is a radical, de-culturating process which continues to produce the crises of cultural inferiority, mental inadequacy, and pervasive, perverse cultural-human identity characterizing the modern African person in modern social, political, educational and cultural pursuits”.

### **Discussion**

Several significant findings have emerged from this study. It was established that indigenous Bapedi songs and traditional oral stories resonate in people's personal lives, in cultural and religious rituals and in society at large. Based on the findings of this study, common misconceptions about indigenous Bapedi music, oral tradition and culture include the ideas that indigenous Bapedi religious and cultural practices are condemned as proletarian, myth, superstition, pagan, steeped in evil religious experiences and unacceptable for worship, primitive, uncivilized, not sufficiently artistic and spiritual, that had to be dealt with, and an inferior system that had to be done away with.

Data analysis shows that Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) of Bapedi people is quite rich in cultural heritage. The truth is that these misconceptions are rooted in misinformation, lack of knowledge and stereotypes. Another truth is that some

traditional Bapedi musicians are unemployed, live a hand to mouth existence and lack access to education and resources, but they make the most of what they have. While education and resources are often lacking, innovation and creativity are in abundance and plentiful supply. Closer investigation has shown that they are undoubtedly resourceful and innovative. Based on my experience and the findings of this study, while acknowledging the contribution of Western knowledge systems to the development of modern Africa, it is deeply regretted to realize that indigenous Bapedi oral tradition and culture are dismissed as myth, superstition and steeped in evil religious experiences. The findings of this study have revealed that in Bapedi society, indigenous music and traditional oral stories are utilized to buttress and demonstrate the collective wisdom of Bapedi people, as well as to transmit Bapedi culture, values, beliefs and history from generation to generation.

What has emerged thus far in this study, is that with so many fallacies about indigenous Bapedi music, oral tradition and culture, it is not true that indigenous Bapedi music is proletarian and not sufficiently artistic and spiritual. The truth, however is that indigenous songs and traditional oral stories have traditionally played (and still play) an important role in Bapedi culture. The findings also imply that most people who have never visited Sekhukhune district in Limpopo Province, are susceptible to fall prey to the widespread misconceptions about indigenous Bapedi music, oral tradition and culture. The results yielded thus far contribute to the notion that it is also a great religious misconception to assume that indigenous Bapedi music is pagan and steeped in evil religious experiences. This is another fact that is misconceived. It is a misleading misconception because indigenous Bapedi music and traditional oral stories are utilized to buttress and demonstrate the collective wisdom of Bapedi people, as well as to transmit Bapedi culture, values, beliefs and history from generation to generation.

From an identity perspective, the results of this study have shown that Bapedi people seem to maintain and perpetuate their social cohesion, cultural identity, personal and social identity. This finding implies that Bapedi people must have control over their own knowledge and its belief system. It also emerged during the study that in Bapedi society, indigenous songs and traditional oral stories are a social practice and bring people together for different purposes. Based on the literary sources consulted, observations, interviews and using videos, I am firmly of the opinion that indigenous Bapedi music, oral tradition and culture are in consonant with African theory of knowledge and Ontology theory and should not be dismissed at face value as practices overtaken by circumstances and hence irrelevant to the present Bapedi community developmental needs. Findings from the interviews also indicate that communal music making in Bapedi culture is more common than individual performance. Generally, what remains factual ground for this study is that indigenous Bapedi songs and traditional oral stories resonate in people's personal lives, in religious rituals and in society at large, and the performance of indigenous Bapedi songs incorporates several aspects of artistic-aesthetic communication such as song, dance, various visual and verbal arts that are integrated.

## Conclusion

The purpose of the investigation was threefold: a) to examine misconceptions about indigenous Bapedi music and oral tradition; b) to investigate the proverbs, parables and narratives that form the basis of the Bapedi songs which contain a good deal of interesting material that can contribute to a greater understanding of what indigenous Bapedi songs mean to the Bapedi people; and c) to highlight the role played by indigenous Bapedi music and oral tradition in Bapedi culture. This study described the missionary influence on the cultural impact of indigenous music and oral tradition, but also reflected on the demise of indigenous Bapedi music, culture and oral tradition. The findings of the study suggest that Bapedi people should keep and perpetuate their valuable heritage, which is still needed for survival and for the welfare of our next generation.

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## From the Soviet Union to Russia, the Fall and the Rise of an Empire

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### Abstract

The fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War incited the beginning of a new World order of international relations and the creation of new actor roles in this new stage. In the last 25 years Russia's role as a great power had a different context, from an empire in free fall to the revitalization of its international role. The main question this work asks is: Which is Russia's position in the international arena after the disintegration of the Soviet Union? The answer to this question is given by researching under the prism of the creation of a new vision, around what Russia represents in two and a half decades and how its role is represented in a different context of international relations. It will be also researched on the perspective of Europe as an instrument to balance and obstruct the Russian expansion. The work will be based on the analysis of the archival information of the period of time. The methods of historical, logical and comparative analysis have been used, together with various literatures from different researchers and politician. This study aims to explain the forms and weaknesses of the regime and the causes which brought to the disintegration of the Soviet Union, in other words the causes of the fall of the communist bloc: Yeltsin's presidency (1991-1999); Russia's new context in the international arena and the role of the new actors will be explained: Putin's presidency (1999-2008); and the explanation of the revival of Russia's international role as a great power (2009-2014). This work also highlights the foreign policy, the alterations and the contradictory character of the leadership, the change of presidency between Putin and Medvedev and the problems with Ukraine and Crimea. With the fall of the communism, which incited the divide of the balances from the bipolarity of the Cold War, the changing economic world, in the midst of other alterations, presented a new equilibrium of power. As a descendent of the communist empire, Russia is fully convinced that it has the right of rebuilding of the empire through expansion. It also knows that the main part is not the will, but the ability. If it can, Russia will rebuild the destroyed empire through a constant expansionist policy. And if they can, the USA and the west will hinder the building of this empire.

**Keywords:** geopolitics, international relations, Soviet Union (USSR), contemporary history, European Economic Community (EEC).

### Introduction

The fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War made the entry into the new world order of international relations as well as new roles of actors in this new scene.

In the last two decades, Russia's role as a great power gained another meaning from a falling empire to the resurgence of its international role.

And this should be done by focusing on "Russia" as a rational state of nuclear power, and not on Vladimir Putin as an irrational and aggressive person.

It is Russia that dictates Putin's actions and not vice versa. It was the military power of the Soviet empire that dictated the aggressive policies of its leadership during the Cold War, was the Russian inability that dictated Yeltsin's humiliating policies against the West, and it is the economic and military power that dictates the policies of the new Russian leadership.

As a successor to the communist empire, Russia is convinced that it "owns" the right to rebuild the empire through expansion. It also knows that the most important thing is not "if it wants" but "if it can."

If it can, Russia will rebuild the destroyed empire through a constant expansionist policy. And if they can, the US and the West will restrain the building of this empire.

For the US it is very important to stop the rise of Russia, and any other state, as a world power. In this context, the US can use two strategies;

**The first strategy** is to use neighbor countries and Europe as instruments to balance and stop Russian expansion. After all, Russia should be the first Europe's concern, then the concern of the United States. The US has many regions around the world to control, and it should be very cautious in using its economical as well as military resources and potentials.

**The second alternative strategy** to stop global Russian expansion would be the use of American power and tactics pursued during the Cold War. This strategy would be much more expensive than the first, but any how necessary. Given that Russia is a nuclear power, the only option is the destruction of the Russian economy. The Soviet empire is economically unstable not due to weak military power, but because of the economic powerlessness to keep itself and the army operational. It should be understood that Russia is willing to suffer economically for some strategic gains. The West must do the same and temporarily disconnect from neoliberalism. But the US must make Russia's suffering as big as possible, to the extent that Russia's strategic benefits become its disaster, as in the late 1980s. And that will only happen when the US, as in 1947, have understood, and there is no doubt about the sources of Russian conduct (The Sources of Russian Conduct).

Former United States ambassador to Russia, Thomas Pickering says that after 1991, the world developed in some ways in line with Russia's expectations and dislikes of the United States. He says:

***"The Russians at first spoke of multiple polarities, a term disliked in the United States. But in the end, Russia, China and India, and to a certain extent both Europe and Japan, are all players on the world stage, maybe here can be included also Brazil. We will have to work with them and find new ways of cooperation."***

**Geopolitics of Russian return** – Undoubtedly Russia's geopolitical power is rooted in its inherent geographical weaknesses. There are some natural barriers that protect the heart of Russia and this requires Russia to expand and consolidate in the territories around its center to provide a cover zone as protection from outside powers. When Russia devoured people and resources, it grew from a small Eastern European principality in the 13th century to the Great Duchy of Moscow, which became the Russian Empire and then grew to become the Soviet Union, one from the largest states in the world's recent history.

However, this enlargement has accompanied every Russian state with two fundamental problems: it has led Moscow to conflict with a number of foreign powers and has given the difficult task of ruling the occupied people (who were not necessarily happy for being ruled by Russia). Russia's geography asks her to expand to stay strong, but paradoxically, the more it expands, the more difficult and costly becomes the governance of its great territory. Meanwhile, Russia's lack of access to the oceans has cemented its position as a land force, but it has condemned it economically and has weakened its position compared to other powers that have direct access to the oceans of the world. These factors have created a cycle in which Russia's power grows and falls. When Russia is growing, it becomes a major regional power if not a global player, and when it falls, it's just a matter of time before it gets up again. So, when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 at the end of the Cold War and Moscow lost control over its constituent republics and fell into internal chaos, these circumstances did not guarantee that Russia was forever removed from the international scene and that a one-polar world dominated by the United States would last forever. Certainly by the end of 1990, Russia was severely weakened as a geopolitical power; her economy was in chaos and it faced a military defeat in Chechnya, which gained de facto independence and was threatened with similar moves within Russia.

But things began to change with the beginning of the new millennium. Starting with Vladimir Putin's presidency in 2000, Russia was able to turn its losses into another more successful war in Chechnya and Russia's position on the suburbs of the former Soviet Union began to grow steadily. A number of factors influenced this, including Putin's internal consolidation to overcome the chaos of the 1990s, high global energy prices, and American involvement in the Islamic world.

**Overview about Russia's return** – In the context of the factor's return, Russia's imperative has been to prevent external influence and reconstruct it. Of course, Russia's plans for realizing this imperative differ from one region to another in the former Soviet Union countries, in every state in Eastern Europe, the Baltic, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Russia's revival was not without problems. Since independence, every former Soviet state has developed its imperatives: Consolidating power within the country and maintaining a kind of sovereignty. Also, various foreign powers are competing with Russia for influence in any former Soviet country. Therefore, the imperative of Russia and other former Soviet states often crashes



and sometimes leads to ever-volatile relations, even with some of Moscow's most loyal allies. But power is a relative concept, and now most states in the former Soviet Union are too weak to remain independent of Russia and the outside powers in the suburbs can not reach Russia's power. With Putin's arrival in the presidency begins a new chapter for the Russian state and it is important to appreciate the progress that Moscow has made in its reestablishment in the former Soviet Union countries, and what does the projection of power mean in its future.

### **Russia's foreign relations.**

Here is an overview of the economic crisis in Russia and possible political and diplomatic implications. "Russia will never be as strong as it will be, but will never be as low as it would to others." Baron Otto Eduard Leopold von Bismarck (1815-1898). [1] During the first years of the twenty-first century, Russia had a longer and more prominent expansion cycle since the end of the Soviet Union in 1991.

According to the Lord of Kremlin, "Russia has a history of over a thousand years, and it has almost always used the privilege of conducting an independent foreign policy. We still do not know yet, if it now intends to change this tradition.

### **Russian foreign policy in today's world order**

The collapse of communism as a political, economic and social system and the breakthrough almost the close of the eyes of the Soviet Union marked the beginning of a broad political and academic debate on the country and the role of post-Soviet Russia in the world and on the consequences it would produce great transformation in the domestic and foreign politics of this country. Many of the pessimistic predictions made two decades ago remain so pessimistic today, if not to say more. Russia continues to remain outside the main institutions that manage today's Europe. However, it is vigorously engaged in issues of regional and global security, mostly through a diplomatic and political dimension with significant normative dimension that clearly fit the national interests of Russia in the international arena: preservation of its status as a great power and as a "sovereign democracy" in an "international pluralistic system of political regimes".

Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Moscow's foreign policy has followed a trajectory in which two major periods are distinguished: the period when the Kremlin Head was Boris Yeltsin (1991-1999) and that when, after Yeltsin, Vladimir Putin came to power (from 2000 to today). However, anyone who followed the developments in post-Soviet Russia after 1991 must have noticed that each of these two periods has had two phases, each of which has its own characteristics and features of a political philosophy, where Moscow was led for its strategy and foreign policy. These stages are analyzed below more or less in details.

**Russia's Foreign Policy Under President Boris Yeltsin** Russia's first post-Soviet foreign policy began with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1992 and with the introduction of Russia as an independent entity in the international arena.

### **Liberal internationalism**

Russia's foreign policy at this **first stage** could be termed a "liberal internationalism" policy. It was largely managed by *Andrei Kozyrev*, Russia's first post-Soviet foreign minister (October 1991-January 1996), under President Boris Yeltsin. This policy was mainly characterized by aspirations *for Russia's integration into the international community, but continuing to maintain the status of a great power*. Kozyrev tried to combine two seemingly contradictory principles: on the one hand, "guaranteeing the rights of Russian citizens and the socio-economic development of Russian society" and, on the other hand, Russia's behavior as "a great normal power in its relations with other countries, realizing its interests not through confrontation, but through co-operation. "Efforts to turn Russia into a democratic country, remaining a great force, characterized the Kremlin's foreign policy essence since the beginning of 1993, although these two objectives were not in harmony with each other. However, the main tendency of this policy was to favor rapprochement with the West and could be regarded as a continuation of the efforts of the late Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. The stated ambition of Russia at that time to join the "civilized" world was, in fact, evidence that for Moscow it was already clear that the Soviet experiment had disconnected Russia from the "standards of civilization" and from that part of international society that apply these standards.

### **Competitive Pragmatism**

The **second phase** of the first period can be said to have started in January 1996 when Yevgeni Primakov, a renowned international relations expert, was appointed as Foreign Minister and (in 1998-1999) became Prime Minister of Russia.

Primakov's arrival at these posts was conditioned - and provoked - by two important factors: the success of communists and populist parties in the 1995 parliamentary elections and the Kremlin's concern that Russia was losing its role and influence on the international arena, which was evident, particularly, with President Bill Clinton's policy of NATO expansion with Central and Eastern European countries. In such circumstances, Russia's foreign policy became more pragmatic, focusing more on "competition" with other major powers than co-operation with them. Such a "competitive pragmatism" can be said to resemble the Khrushchevian politics of "peaceful coexistence", which meant a continual struggle with the West, but that, in the nuclear weapons era, would not necessarily go to a military clash. Such a policy Primakov added a series of post-communist and "Eurasian" ideas, which had to do with the power of continental blocs. The basic principle of his foreign policy was therefore the idea of a continuous competitive dynamic in Russia's relations with the West in the framework of promoting a *multipolar global system*. This was, in fact, a reductionist vision of international society, limited to realistic notions regarding status and power. Although this vision did not exclude co-operation with other major powers, he took into consideration, first and foremost, Russian interests.

In short, Primakov's foreign policy, on the one hand, looked back in the Soviet period and, on the other hand, aimed to make Russia a place in the competition between the great powers in the new world order created after the end of the Cold War. What Primakov will be remembered mainly in the records of relations between Russia and the West was his return to Moscow in mid-flight as he was going to visit Washington on March 24, 1999, the day NATO began bombing Serbia, and only 12 days after Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic had been admitted as NATO members. These two events witnessed not only the endemic crisis in relations between the Kremlin on the one hand, and Washington of the North Atlantic Alliance on the other, but also the limitations of Primakov's approach to the conditions where Russia's role and influence on the global scale had fallen.

### ***Russia's foreign policy under President (and Prime Minister) Vladimir Putin***

These were the circumstances in which Russia was found by Vladimir Putin in May 2000, where he was elected president of the country. His arrival at the head of the Kremlin marked a new era in Russia's foreign policy, especially in its relations with the West. This policy aimed - and managed - to overcome the contradictions in Moscow's foreign policy management, inherited from the time of Kozirev, as well as the competitive logic of Primakov's pragmatic approach. Considering the collapse of the Soviet Union as the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century," Putin has tried -not without success- to accommodate Russia in the new global order created after the Cold War.

By his relatively young age (48) when he became president of Russia, the great popularity, especially among young people, nationalistic rhetoric (based on the idea of Russian national identity and national dignity) and his authoritarian methods, should be added another important circumstance that could help explain the success of Putin's longevity at the head of the Kremlin. Historically, all Kremlin leaders have taken the reins of power without the consent of their predecessors. Lenin did not want his ruling successor to become Stalin; Stalin would never have chosen to be replaced by Khrushchev; the latter, downed by coup, would not have chosen Brezhnev as his successor; Brezhnev would hardly have chosen to be replaced by Andropov; Andropov would not have chosen Chernenko, neither Chernenko Gorbachev nor the latter Jeltsin. Only Vladimir Putin was the choice of his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, and only Putin, after two mandates as president, put in Kremlin with his own hands for four years (2008-2012), Medvedev, to later remove him again from the post of president and to become the president of Russia himself again. With the extension of the president's mandate from 4 to 6 years (in 2008), if Putin is re-elected president even after his current mandate, in 2018, he will be in charge of Kremlin until 2024 (at that time just 72 years old), so a quarter of a century-longer than any Soviet leader, except Stalin. Putin's longevity and relative stability in Russian politics have had their influence on domestic politics and, especially, in Russia's foreign policy.

Putin's arrival at the head of the Kremlin, ten years after the end of the Cold War, can be said to mark the beginning of a period of "hot peace", which continues to characterize it even today, even more than a decade ago, Moscow's relations with both Washington and Brussels.

But in its foreign policy, Moscow follows two standards. In its relations with the former Soviet republics, namely those countries that are Russia's immediate neighbors, or its "outer closer world" (*blizhnoe zarubezhe*), Russia pursues other principles than those that seek to regulate relations with the United States and with the European Union. It seems to be following a new version of the Brezhnev Doctrine on the "limited sovereignty" of the former Soviet republics in Central Asia, considering them as its natural sphere of influence, or as the "area of Russia's interests". The war in Georgia, military intervention and the annexation of Crimea, and Russian engagement in violent developments in eastern and southern

Ukraine are vivid evidence of this policy. On the other hand, in its relations with the West, Russia maintains a formally normative attitude, seeking respect of international norms.

### **Conclusion**

It can not be denied that after Putin's arrival as head of Kremlin, Russia's foreign policy has taken on a truly global dimension. During this period, Moscow has become again interested and economically engaged in Latin America and Africa, while hydrocarbon prices in global markets have revitalized its traditional interests in the Middle East. However, once a great empire and, as part of the Soviet Union, one of the two superpowers of the world for nearly half a century, Russia can not be - today and in the future - more than a *proxy* empire, hence a power, the influence of which can only extend to those regions and in those countries, mainly of Central Asia, where it has "vital interests". In a world like this one today, there is no place for other neo-imperial ambitions by Russia, a country whose economy produces only 2 percent of the world's GDP.

### **Putin returns Russia**

It was logical that a man like Vladimir Putin would emerge from the 1990s chaos. Putin was deeply embedded in the KGB and the old security mechanism. During his time in St. Petersburg, he was integrated with the oligarchs, as well as with the new generation of economic reformers. Putin realized that in order to revive Russia, two things had to happen. First, the oligarchs had to be afraid of listing their activities with the Russian government. He owed much to those who he was trying to defeat - in fact he did an example or two - but he did not owe them so much as to allow them to continue to rob Russia until the end.

He also realized that he had to bring some sort of order into the economy for reasons of domestic and foreign politics. Russia had huge energy reserves, but it was incapable of competing in world markets in industry and services. Putin focused on the only advantages Russia had: energy and other primary goods. To do this he had to take a degree of control of the economy - not enough to turn Russia into a Soviet model, but enough to leave behind the liberal model that Russia thought it had. Or else, to leave behind the chaos. His instrument was Gazprom, a dominant government company whose mission was to use Russian energy in order to stabilize the country and create a framework for development. At the same time, overthrowing economic liberalism, Putin imposed controls on political liberalism, limiting political rights. This process did not happen overnight. This was something that has evolved over more than a decade, but its end result was a Russia that not only was economically stabilized, but also had an impact on the world. For Putin, the consequences of political and personal freedom were not a high price to pay. From his point of view, 1990's freedoms had greatly damaged Russia. Putin sought to create a viable platform for Russia to defend itself in the World. The dismemberment consternation, supported by Western powers in his mind, had to be overthrown. And Russia simply could not be ignored in the international system if Russia was prepared to continue its position as a victim.

## Fish Consumption in the Age of the Information Society - The Evolution of the Fish Sector in Portugal

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### Abstract

Portuguese consumers are an example to the world when it comes to eating fish. It is a fact that Portugal is EU's top nation consuming fish, and that the country ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in the world in that category. It is something to be proud of. Especially when so many countries are investing millions on/and implementing fish campaigns, in the attempt to increase the consumption of fish. Therefore, this article attempt to highlight some major aspects of fish consumption in Portugal, explaining how, where, and when fish is consumed. To be able to characterize the Portuguese fish consumer, this article had exclusive access to data from Docapesca Portos e Lotas S.A.'s data (a government owned company, under the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of the Sea). Two surveys were conducted (each with 1000 respondents - representative of general of the Portuguese population), one in 2017 and the other one in 2018, using plenty of variables that turned out to be extremely valuable data to market analyses and allowed a very strong comparative analysis. Results include the big impact of Information in the different channels of fish consumption, perceived value of fish, consumers' evaluation of the advantages of fish, expectation when consuming fish, and also the importance of consumer education (as a means to promote change in behavior, if wanted). By providing evidence from Portuguese fish consumption in two different years, this study offers valuable insights for both practitioners and researchers.

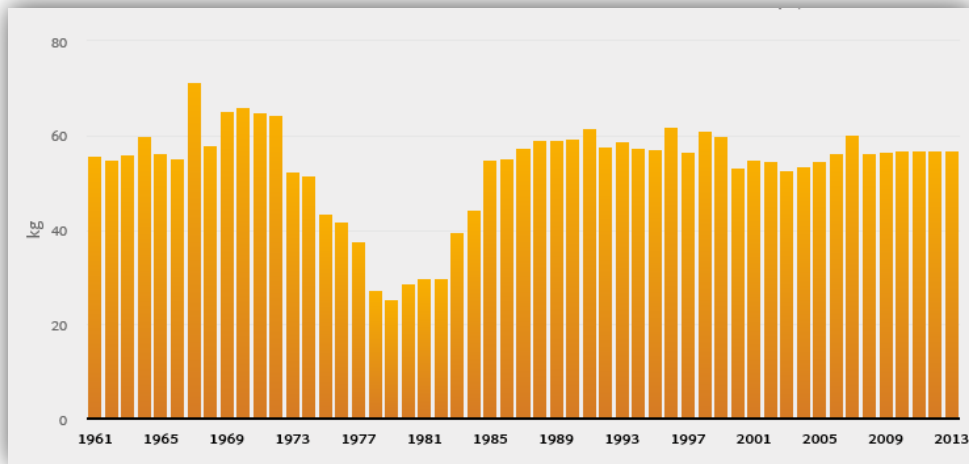
**Keywords:** fish consumption, evolution of consumption, fish sector, consumer behavior, information

### Introduction

The levels of fish consumption in Portugal have, for decades, been the highest in the world, with 59 kg per capita year (2016). Some justifications to these numbers include culture, tradition, governmental fish campaigns, big efforts from distributors, a very strong presence in the stores and even religion. For sure it is not dependent on the actual fish catches since Portugal does not catch more than 194,000.00 tons/year, a figure that puts Portugal in an insignificant place in EU (3%) and completely irrelevant worldwide (0,1%). In fact, most of the fish consumed in Portugal is imported, with cod fish representing (today) more than 44% of that figure. Main consumed products are salted and dried cod, canned tuna and sardines, salmon, hake, gilt-head seabream and horse mackerel (source: Eurobarometer 2018). Historically, fish consumption per capita in Portugal reached an all-time high of 71.4 kg in 1967 and an all-time low of 25.4 kg in 1979 (Graphic 1). When compared to Portugal's main peers, fish consumption per capita in France amounted to 32, Italy 25 kg, Ireland 21 kg and 39 kg in Spain (2013). The official figures presented on graphic 2 show that Portuguese consumers are on the top of the ranking consuming 59 kg of fish per year, distantly followed by the Spanish that consume 39 kilos per year. Following these two Latin countries we have Finland with 39 kilos and France with an average of fish consumption of 32 kilos; Sweden comes next with 28 kilos. Greeks eat 26 kilos of fish per year, while in Italy and Denmark (8th place) the average is of 25 kilos just above the United Kingdom with 24 kilos. Belgium and Luxemburg (aggregated) have a fish consumption average of 22 kilos per capita/year, and Ireland of 21 kilos. Eating less than 20 kilos per capita/year we have

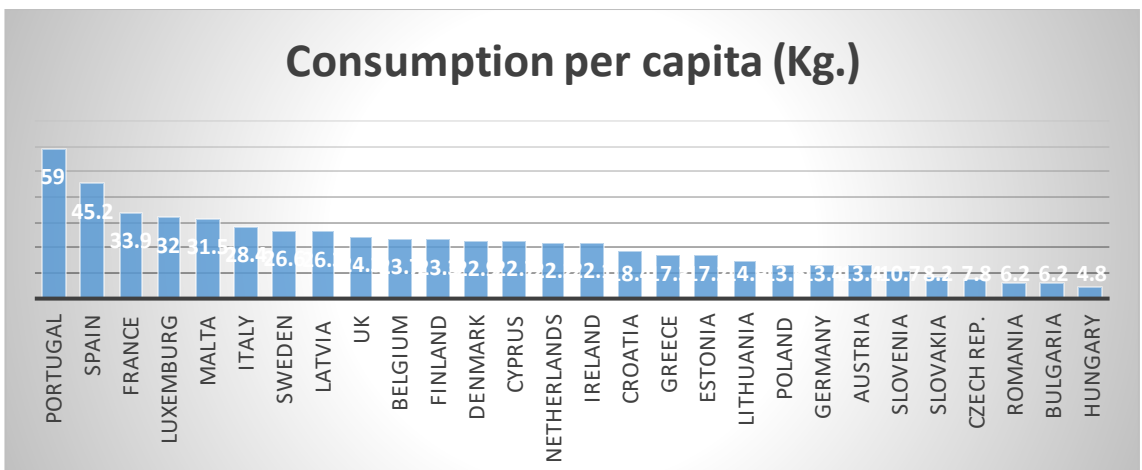
The Netherlands, Germany and Austria, with 15 kilos, 15 kilos and 11 kilos respectively. Worldwide, Portugal is the 3rd highest fish consuming country - topped only by Iceland and Japan (FAO Fisheries circular No. 821, 2002; FAO 2004; FAO Fisheries Circular No. 972/4, Part 1 2007, 20017). Regarding fisheries production, Portugal ranks 11th in the EU and has an even lower ranking for aquaculture production.

**Graphic 1 – Evolution of the levels of fish consumption in Portugal**



**Source:** FAO Fisheries circular No. 821, 2002; FAO 2004; FAO Fisheries Circular No. 972/4, Part 1, 2007; FAO 2015)

**Graphic 2 - Levels of Fish Consumption in the EU-28– Kg/Per Capita**



**Source:** FAO Fisheries Circular No. 972/4, Part 1 – “Future Prospects for fish and fishery products. Fish consumption in the European Union in 2015 and 2030; European overviews”. The EU -highlights, The EU in the world; EU market supply; Consumption trade EU landings; Aquaculture production. Maritime affairs and Fisheries – Fish market 2017 Edition

## Going back in time to understand Portuguese fish consumption habits

### The Portuguese Discoveries

In the 15th century Portugal surprised the world by transforming its small poor country into a platform for a global empire (Landes, 1999, pg 79). Portugal's far-flung network of domination stretched nearly three quarters around the world: from Brazil in the west to Japan in the Far East. New waters were navigated, and new economic opportunities were discovered. Even though the economic relevance of reaching Newfoundland (today northern Canada) or Greenland (today part of the Danish kingdom) cannot be compared to all the gold, diamonds, nor the spices, it became a source of fish - especially codfish. Diogo the Teive reached Newfoundland, and was amazed by the amount of codfish in its waters; In 1495 Portuguese navigators reach Greenland and again were surprised by the abundance of fish. 500 years later, almost 50% of the total fish consumed in Portugal is imported dry-salted-cod fish (Menezes et al., 2002). The discoveries were conducted in a period where faith dictated that meat and fats were forbidden during a total of 170 days per year: 40 days of Lent, the sacred Fridays, Saturdays and Wednesdays, the saints' days and Christmas (Aguilera, 1997, pp. 74; Montanari, 1994, pg 78; Deffontaines, 1948; Kurlansky, 1999 pp 24; Toussaint-Samat, 1992, pp. 315; Fieldhouse, 1986 pp 113). This renunciation indirectly confirmed the centrality of meat (Rozin 1998, pg 45) to the diet of the period and specifically illustrated that in the Christian rank order of food, fish was definitely below meat (Dichter, E 1964, pg 41-42). Christianity considered fish as melancholic, tranquilizing and humble food, all of which were perceived as good food. Clergy and its priests defended the numerous advantages of fish in the purification of the body and soul. Reaching Newfoundland and Greenland in the 16th century was seen as a fantastic opportunity to supply Christianity's demand for fish, as the fish available in continental Europe were insufficient in quantity and difficult to preserve, and therefore impossible to supply in the villages away from the coast<sup>1</sup>. Codfish from the northern Atlantic was soon seen as a market opportunity - Ships from Venice would come to Lisbon and Algarve in search for salted fish (Quental, 1871, pg 57). Discovered by the Vikings in their domestic waters, the abundant codfish was dried until it lost one fifth of its weight, and attained a form that would not allow the fish to rot. Soon enough, the Portuguese started to catch codfish themselves and submit it to a double process of preservation: on board salting and inland drying. Both processes were known and utilized since ancient times. The inland drying process allowed long term storage and pillage, and when salted the codfish could keep its nutritive properties for about 6 months. Therefore it could supply the Portuguese religious demand, reaching the small inland villages, without losing its quality, and staying a nutritious and appealing food to eat. Soon it became known as the prince of the oceans<sup>2</sup>.

### The years of the dictatorship

From 1910 until 1926, the republic faced a severe internal instability that produced 7 parliaments, 8 presidents and 50 governments in just 16 years (Barreto, A, 2002, pg 5). In 1926, a military regime took power and suspended political and individual freedom. In this regime Antonio Oliveira Salazar was made in control of the country's finances. He was so successful that, in 1932, he became president of the ministers' council. In the first year of his dictatorship, Salazar and the Church allied to transform an event from 1917 into a mass phenomenon. Soon, Catholicism began to be materially imposed on the conscience of the Portuguese. During the regime, illiteracy infected 80% of the population (Rosas, 1994, pg 59). By this time canned fish became a very important trade product<sup>3</sup>. Canned fish, namely sardines, already had a long exporting tradition to Germany and to the UK back as far as 1898. After 1925 Germany became a major buyer, joining France and the UK. In 1934 the regime created the Portuguese Consortium of Canned Fish to regulate and control the production of

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1 Cod fishermen left for the fishing grounds off Iceland and New foundland in September, and returned before Lent (middle February). The need for fish on Fridays, had a striking effect on the weekly rhythm of economic activity, and forced European fishermen to work particularly hard on Wednesdays and Thursdays to catch fish for Friday consumption (Simoons, 1994, p. 275).

2 In 1510, Portugal and England made a pack against French codfish fisheries and in 1532 English and Germans were in a war against each other over codfish. The codfish was later, again, the reason for a conflict between Spanish and English in 1585. All of these facts justify the codfish's nick name of "prince of the oceans".

3 Portugal important trade products included canned fish, cork, textiles, wine, wolframite and scheelite.

canned fish. In the same year, Lagos (south of Portugal) exported 33, 5% and Olhão (South of Portugal) 30% of its productions to Germany. During WWII, canned fish, with the exception of cork (in volume), became the most exported product (347.821 tons of the exported canned fish, worth of 3.563.839 contos (approximately 17.800 thousand Euros). In 1944 exported canned fish represented 31, 54% of the total Portuguese exports. The UK was the largest importer of canned fish, only majored by Germany in 1942 and 1943. Both countries signed contracts with the Portuguese Institute of Canned Fish. During WWII, Germany and the UK absorbed 60 to 95% of the Portuguese Canned Fish. On March 3rd, 1943, a telegram sent by a German officer, sent from Lisbon to Berlin read: "Contact with director of Fish institute gave good results (...) the institute will offer us (Berlin) again 200 thousand boxes. The institute considers possible the conclusion of another agreement". Important was also the Swiss market in 1941, as it was recognized as a food channel to Germany. This trade had a big impact on the fishing activity (Algarve had 70 factories of canned fish – in 2009 it has only 2 (TSF, 2009)), the number of people working in the sector; and the recognition of canned fish as a Portuguese icon product. Due to its importance to the economy, politics and religion, this pioneer subsector of the fishery, embraced by the regime, was going to be seen as one of the most well-known Portuguese products abroad in the XXI century. As we can see in the CocaCola Ad from 2008 (figure 1), sardines are a symbol of Portugal.

**Figure 1: Coca Cola's advertisement matching Sardines with Coca Cola**



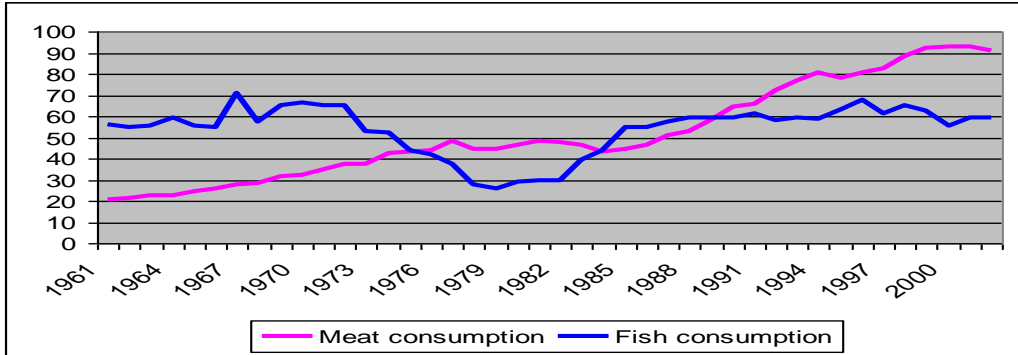
**Source:** See the whole advertising on Coca Cola's web-site: <http://www.cocacola.pt/CokeFood/V/ideo.aspx>

### **After the Revolution: Democracy**

In 1974, a military revolution put an end to Salazar's legacy and implemented a democratic regime. With a positive post-revolution mentality and the availability of more products in the marketplace, all seemed possible. As a consequence, consumers' euphoria occurred. For the first time in recorded history meat consumption surpassed fish consumption and from 1974 until 1980, fish consumption decreased dramatically and meat consumption began a growing path (Graphic 3). The interplay of five market occurrences might have led to this shift in consumption: Catholicism losing its power, the migration of the Portuguese living in the former colonies, the decrease of fishery catches<sup>1</sup>, the increase meat imports, and the increase of salaries.

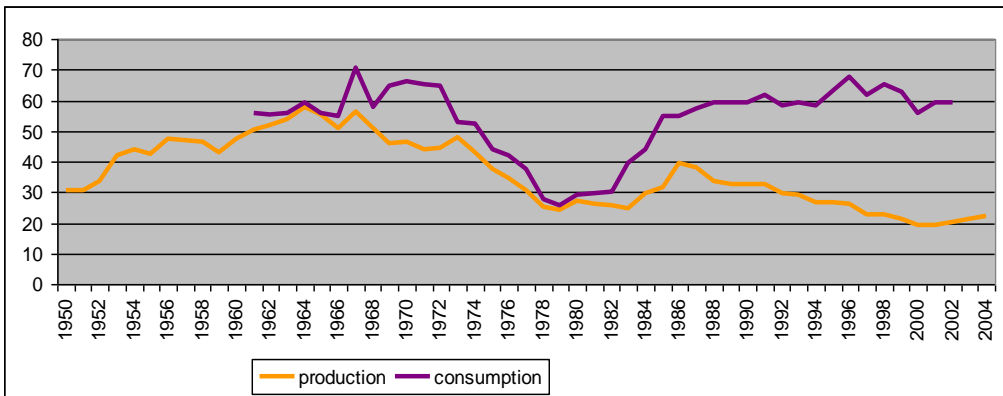
<sup>1</sup> The third reason could be the abrupt decrease of fish catches that occurred between 1973 and 1983. As can be seen in graphic 4, although fish consumption increased after the minimum 25,6 kilos per capita of 1979, production did not follow the same path. The production context reflected a social mobilization from the primary sector, fisheries, to the second and third sectors (industry and services) leaving less fishery workers and obsolete boats. The fishing industry could no longer compete with the attractive new sectors from the big cities, where a new lifestyle was being fashioned. This market occurrence, which was extremely relevant for regions along the 1,793 km Portuguese coast which considered fishing as an irreplaceable activity for maintaining the regional identity and providing incomes for many families, stated the beginning of the fishing industry's fall.

**Graphic 3: Evolution of Fish and Meat consumption levels- kilos capita (1961-2004)**



**Source:** Food Agriculture Organization Fisheries Circular No 821 Revision 6 1961- 2002; FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Information and Statistics Service - Food and Aquaculture Organization of the United Nations, FAOSTAT on-line – Earth trends World Resources Institute - Annual food supply per capita from fish and fishery products (2003).

**Graphic 4: Evolution of Fish production and Fish consumption levels- kilos capita (1961-2004)**



**Source:** Food Agriculture Organization Fisheries Circular No 821 Revision 6 1961- 2002; FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Information and Statistics Service - Food and Aquaculture Organization of the United Nations, FAOSTAT on-line – Earth trends World Resources Institute - Annual food supply per capita from fish and fishery products (2003).

Since the revolution the meat sector has more than doubled its production, and dominated consumers' preferences from 1977 till 1985. The dominance of meat was only temporary, and in 1985 the consumption of fish started to grow again. By the beginning of the 1990's, fish consumption achieved high figures similar to the ones registered in the 1960's, but now under a completely different political, religious and social context. What was once a rural country governed by a dictatorship, influenced by strict catholic directives, and with no freedom of speech was now a democratic society, with a separation between church and state and a fast-developing urban culture. The economic approach would argue that it cannot be a coincidence that from 1980 until 1984 when the salaries fell the consumption of fish went up. The positive correlation between developed countries and meat consumption (Nogueira, 2005; Mee, 2007) actually applies to Portugal where we



find a positive correlation between salaries and fish consumption from middle 1970's till 1984. When the democracy began, fish consumption decreased and salaries increased; then salaries decreased from 1980 until 1984 and (as a possible consequence) fish consumption increased. Somehow the explanation seemed to be salary correlated - lower salaries and higher fish consumption. But as revealed in a comparison between income levels and fish consumption in 27 European countries, no immediate correlation is found. The complexity of food consumption seems to warrant more than just a theoretical economic explanation.

After 1979 salaries decreased and fish consumption started to increase again, indicating that the attempt to break with the traditional identity no longer prevailed. A possible reason was the fact that the market, namely the meat sector, did not develop according to this new demand. There was no special attention given to by the Government, nor did the meat sector itself invest in modernizing its infrastructures, and no special attention was given by the media or by the distributors. This, together with the fact that food habits are extremely difficult to alter, led to the return of fish to consumers' tables. Farb, defended that people tend to eat what they learned to eat when they were young (Farb et al., 1980, pg 88) and habits are acquired early in life and once established are likely to be long lasting and resistant to change (Fieldhouse, 1986, pg 4). Fish consumption increased again in the 80's because it was part of the Portuguese identity. More important than politics or economic development, food – fish - habits are fundamentally cultural habits that are acquired during the process of socialization. Using Mary Douglas statement that children are trained all their lives to eat certain things can be a useful tool in demonstrating the role of the Portuguese family in supplying food habits. The generation of Portuguese in the middle 1970's was using food as a language to state a disagreement with the dictatorship's identity and then felt the need to go back to its food roots. When children, they were introduced (taught), by the family, to eating fish - the training mentioned by Douglas. Portuguese culture and ethnic preferences did not change; a sign of disagreement was sent but once the result was achieved, habits and traditions talked louder.

### **From EU till present days (1986-2019)**

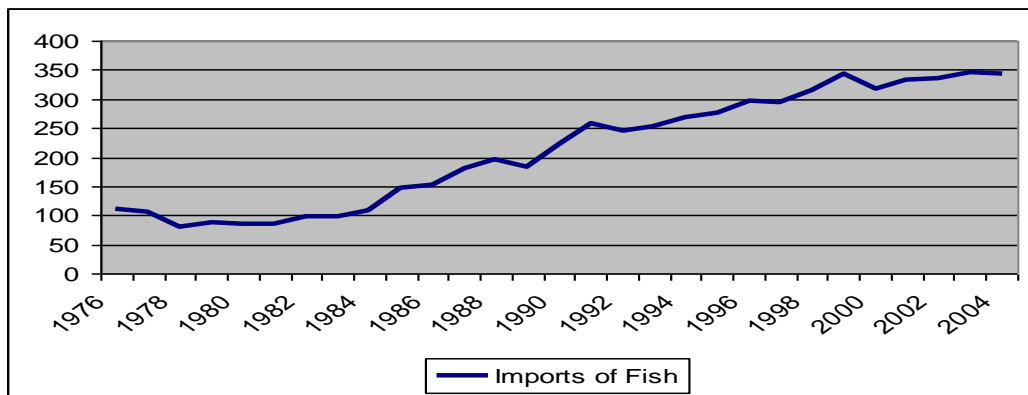
In 1986, when Portugal joined the European Community and its bilateral agreements were replaced by Community agreements<sup>1</sup>, the fish sector got into a crisis and fish consumption decreased almost immediately. As a consequence of the change and reduction of quotas, the fish sector had an abrupt decrease in its catches in the North Atlantic and cod fish, by far the most important fish species for Portuguese consumers, was no longer available in Portuguese waters. The high pattern of fish consumption in Portugal resulted (and still results) not only from the consumption of the most abundant species in national waters (small pelagic such as the sardine and the mackerel) but mostly from the consumption of dried salted codfish (*Gadus Morhua*). This fish created profound roots in the food habits of the Portuguese population being perhaps the most marking component of the Portuguese cuisine, achieving the level of national dish and a food category of its own. And so, even though Portuguese fishing activity was concluded in the Northern Atlantic, a significant change in the national consumption of cod did not occur. To feed the demand for this North Atlantic fish, distributors searched for foreign suppliers and the annual consumption of this species remained at high levels (Menezes et al., 2002). As national catches decreased, the national imports of cod increased (graphic 5). Portugal holds the first place in terms of worldwide import trade of wet salted cod (42%), the second place on frozen cod (13%), and the second place along with Brazil on

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1 In the mid-1970s an increasing number of coastal states decided to extend their exclusive economic zones (EEZs) from 12 to 200 nautical miles. Almost 90 % of exploitable fish resources came under the control of coastal States. The fleets of the EU Member States, which had traditionally fished in the waters of other countries, suddenly found themselves barred from them. These annual regulations controlled the amount of authorized captures per specie and that amount was the divided by all members of the EU. To ensure continuity of access for these fleets, fisheries agreements were concluded between the EU and the third countries concerned. Agreements were reached with northern countries (including Norway and the Faerøe Islands in 1981, Canada in 1982 and Iceland in 1994), and with southern countries (including Senegal in 1979, Guinea Bissau in 1980, the Republic of Guinea in 1983, and the Seychelles in 1984). The regulations were fundamentally based on an expert biological point of view and on forecasts about the species evolution. Portugal and its approximately 1.700.000 km<sup>2</sup>, due to the Açores islands, has the largest Exclusive Economic Zone of the EU-15, (Menezes, et al., 2002).

dried salted cod (27%); its major import sources are Norway, Denmark and Iceland, respectively with 49% and 27% and 19% over the period. Over the period from January 1988 to December 1999 Portugal imported a total of 457,000 tons of frozen cod (13% of the total), 2,179,000 tons of wet salted cod (60% of the total), and 989,000 tons of dried salted cod (27% of the total)<sup>1</sup>. For the national imports of wet salted cod, Norway holds the first place as supplying country (40% over the period), but its weight has been decreasing since 1994 in favor of Iceland (24% over the period). In 1999 the national imports of wet salted cod from both countries were rather close (60,000 and 55,000 tons respectively). Finally, the national imports of dried salted cod come fundamentally from Norway and Denmark, respectively with 49% and 27% over the period.

**Graphic 5: Evolution of fish imports 1976-2004**



**Source:** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Fishery Information, Data and Statistics Unit 2006. Commodities production and trade 1976-2004. FISHSTAT plus - Universal software for fishery statistical time series. Rome: FAO.

It was also in the middle of the 1980's that a new kind of market player was developed, the big supermarket groups – the biggest being Sonae and Jerónimo Martins - and with them, came a more efficient distribution systems (like the creation of their own fish warehouse centrals which was the turning point in logistics and sales) and alliances. This distribution systems pushed consumption forward, and fish consumption increased again. Distributors made heavy promotions of their brand name and trustworthy image to be linked with their unbranded products. Consumers started to be constantly confronted with small offers, contests, TV commercials, in-the-door- brochures, radio advertisements and attractive prices. In the 1980's fish consumption grew almost 34 kilos, (from 25, 6 till 59, 1 kilo per capita) higher than meat consumption (that in that period was around 50 kilos per capita), very similar to the days of the dictatorship. This supremacy of fish over meat was the result of the hard work by the distributors and producers (like the frozen fish brands Pescanova and Iglo). But this time, and to complicate the economic approach, salaries increased too. Joining the EU injected money into the economy.

The 1990's were a growing decade, where the country developed considerably. Consumers lived an economical euphoria, and consumption patterns of fish and meat reached similar figures as in the 1974 revolution except that now the population

<sup>1</sup> Between 1988 and 1999 cod imports increased about 10% in quantity. This increase was basically due to the explosive growth of frozen cod imports (multiplied by 100 in 10 years), and 22% increase of dried salted cod imports. The imports of wet salted cod, in turn, decreased 23% over the period. The effect of these variations on the structure of imports was important, with emphasis to the increase in the share of frozen cod (insignificant in 1988 and 21% in 1999), the reduction of the share of wet salted cod (76% in 1988 and 53% in 1999), and the relatively steady state of the share of dried salted cod (23% in 1988 and 26% in 1999).

was eating more proteins. Even though it was exceeded by consumption of meat, fish consumption kept growing, like the Portuguese economy. Consumers are now exposed to a series of governmental and EU fish campaigns, which intended to maintain fish consumption, now confirmed on national television by doctors and backed by scientific studies as a healthy product<sup>1</sup>. As a result, fish consumption reached 67.8 kilos in 1996. In 2000 the government embraced a campaign called ProPescas<sup>2</sup> which aired for 3 years. Results were very positive (Source: Pescanova, Continente, Jerónimo Martins). By the end of 2013 Fileira do Pescado/Row-of-fish - a nonprofit group that brings together the most representative organizations in the fisheries sector, aquaculture, processing and marketing of fish - introduced the *Portuguese-Fish* brand in the Portuguese market (figure 2). This new logo was a development from an already existing logo, which pretended to identify the fish that was/is caught in Portuguese waters, by Portuguese fishermen and sold in daily national fish auctions. This new version combines the Portuguese colors with the already known logo from the fish auctions. Fileira do Pescado's intention with this "adding of the Portuguese colors" was to bring the good perception and positive recognition of the Portuguese fish directly to its products.



**Figure 2: New/improved auction fish logo. Source: Docapesca, 2013**

By this time fish distributors/supermarkets invested in fish campaigns (TV, radio and brochures) so to give relevance to fish and maintain it part of consumers' chosen products. Jerónimo Martins and Sonae went even further and built platforms/fish-warehouses in the center of Portugal so to better accommodate and distribute the fish. Salted dry cod - being easy to preserve - became the most consumed fish species in Portugal and salted dry Codfish represented (in 2008) 50% of Sonae's fish sales<sup>3</sup>. On the other end, all the public feeding institutions were/are forced to follow government directives on amounts of vegetables, proteins, and carbohydrates; fish is logically present in alternation with meat. All of these private and national interventions had positive results.

It is a fact that Portugal has a strong cultural identification with fish but the figures presented before are also due to the work and strong investment of food distributors. Food distributors, supermarkets, hypermarkets, and frozen fish brands invest largely in door mailings, TV commercials and advertising in magazines. It is impossible to find a supermarket or a

1 When to buy fresh fish consumers should be aware of some cues that will make it easier to have a successful dish namely: a) the smell of the fish shouldn't be strong. Consumers should be able to "smell the Sea" and not ammoniac, or "strong fishy", b) the skin of the fish has to be shining, with distinguishable pigmentation. The color should be strong- not paled. When the fish is not fresh the skin gets a tarnished color and the scales start detaching from the fish, c) the eyes have to be prominent, transparent cornea and a black shining pupil d) the gill will be shining, reddish and with no mucus - with time gill gets yellow and with mucus e) the fish meat should be firm and elastic. When fish is no longer fresh the meat loses elasticity, softens and gets reddish around the main bone f) the fish spine can also cue freshness. When it breaks- making a "click"- the fish is fresh. If it detaches from the fish meat it means that it's been out of the water for a long time g) fish also has a membrane, in the abdominal, part that should adhere completely h) Fresh fish should be eaten within 1 to 2 days of purchase (In DECO Portuguese Consumer Defense Organization).

2 It had its equivalent in other EU countries, from 1996 till 2002.

3 Interview with Sonae in 2008.

hypermarket without a significant fish section; large assortments of fish are always carefully decorated and regularly advertised in the media.

Promotions are considered essential and crucial when it comes to fresh fish; every week the biggest distributors have advertisements of fish on prime time TV. A lot of investment is also directed to fish labels/logos. It is believed that labels can improve consumers' quality transparency of a product and also give consumers another means of inferring characteristics of that product (Johnson, et al., 2001). In Portugal fresh fish must be labeled with the commercial denomination of the specie, the production method (deep waters or nursery) and the capture zone. To further influence consumers with labels, Portuguese hypermarkets have created, in the 2000's the "Sea day" – and also the "meat day". In a winning attempt to bring consumers to the stores on the day that distributors receive these perishable products in the largest assortment, distributors have created a logo associated with the day of the week they want consumers to buy their fish. Then with heavy advertisements focusing on quality, freshness and variety, they present the fish to the consumer in an easy to purchase context.

According to AcNielsen, brands like PescaNova, Iglo, Geldouro, Gelpeixe, Frip or even the new-comer, Danish brand Royal Greenland, sold up to 9.000.000 kg of frozen fish in Portugal throughout 2006. As was evident in this example, investments in advertising are a priority to broaden the market for a product. The maintenance of the high levels of fish consumption in Portugal and the recognition of fish values comes as a consequence of hard work and heavy investments in fish campaigns for children (the creation of a consumer's club specially for children ex. PescaNova Clube do Grumete with its *Jornal de Bordo*). In 1974 Iglo created its very famous *Capitão* – something that, some years latter was copied by PescaNova, but it never reached the *Capitão's* recognition. So it is clear that 21st century media gives lots of space to fish; fish appears in all TV cooking programs, cookbooks, recipes distributed by female magazines; newspapers and it is the topic of prime time TV national news. As Simmons writes, it would be difficult for the food press media to avoid fish as in Portugal fish is such an important dietary element that it is difficult to imagine how people could survive without it (Simmons, 1994; p. 253).

### **XXI's century diet – what is the Portuguese fish reality nowadays?**

The Portuguese diet is widely recognized of offering a diverse selection of meat and fish products (Kittler, 1989). This can be confirmed in all Portuguese public subsidized feeding institutions like school cantinas, retirement homes, prisons, and hospitals; and also on restaurants' menus, which include as many fish meals as they include meat meals – thus, influencing individual and family food habits. Fish's constant presence in menus reinforces its consumption habit and turns eating it into something completely usual. Teaching children that this is the proper way to eat (otherwise, why would the school offer it in the first place?), helps forming mentalities and reinforces the families' teachings – or helps create them if not followed by the families. The fact that children cannot influence the food choices at home is also a fact that cannot be diminished when thinking about the influence that these cantinas. University cantinas help to maintain these habits as they offer alternatives for many students that lack the time and money to eat healthy food and resort to consuming pizzas, burgers, sausages and so on. Feeding institutions and social forces encourage people to continue to sample fish when eating at a cantinas etc, and to include prepare it at home. The pulley relation results from the aforementioned fish information, and therefore, forms habits and tastes.

### **Portuguese daily expressions are also a good example to understand the relevance (still) given to fish**

There are lots of expressions in Portuguese language that reflect the importance – and the centrality – that fish has in society. "Fish size does not mean quality"; "From the mouth dies the fish"; "Sardines are like women, we want them small and tasty"; "Truth is like a small fish, gets free between our fingers"; "To a given fish, we are not picky"; "The son of fish know how to swim"; "Cod, the loyal friend".

**To better perceive (and to make it simple) where the fish eaten in Portugal comes from, table 1 was made.**

**Table 1: Fish consumed in Portugal and its origins**

<u>Fish Name</u>	<u>Country of Origin</u>
Atlantic horse mackerel+Norway pout	Spain (Vigo)
Snook + Sea bream	Greece/Spain
Fresh Sole	Denmark
Salmon	Norway
Snapper	Brazil
Bream + Conger	Portugal - Açores
Angler	Northern Ireland, Scotland, Brazil, Spain
Mullet + Brazilian Snapper	Brazil
White grouper	Brazil, Morocco
Halibut	Morocco, Mauritania
Sardines	Portugal + Spain (Vigo)
Octopus	Portugal, Morocco, Filipinas
Shrimp	Madagascar, Mozambique, Brazil
Salted-Dry- Codfish	Norway, Denmark, Island
Squid	China
White fish + Ling	Argentina, Chile, Namibia, Australia, S.Africa
Grunt Snapper + Hake + +Croaker+	North of Africa, Morocco,
Grouper + White Scabbardfish	Mauritania, Senegal

**Source:** Data from Sonae, Jerónimo Martins, PescaNoca and Iglo (2008, 2010, 1013)

### Fish campaigns in EU

Whether carried out by public authority or by private operators or organizations, campaigns are a well-developed and widespread instrument to promote fishery and aquaculture products. Their objective is to increase the consumption of fishery and aquaculture products by raising consumer awareness of the products' health/nutritional benefits in the human diet. A total of 685 promotional campaigns and projects to promote consumption of fishery and aquaculture products and to improve the image of these products were carried out between 2007 and 2015 in 26 EU Member States. No relevant campaigns were carried out in 2 EU Member States (Austria and Luxembourg). France, Portugal, and Italy's many campaigns focused on strengthening the image of local fishery products, highlighting underutilized regional species as a potential driver of their regional and national economic development. Some of the conclusion regarding consumption in Portugal showed that in 2012 large scale retail became the most dominant sale channel (with 45,6% in value), mainly due to the 2010 legislation that allowed such stores to have more flexible opening hours (Source: EU consumer habits. Fishery and aquaculture products. Annex 3. Mapping of national campaigns. EUMOFA. 2017 European Commission)

### What will the future bring? Fish consumption in the age of the Information Society

New times, new ways of interpret consumption. When we talk about people born between 1980 and 1995 (Generation Y), we need to accept and comprehend that they do not know the world without having constant access to technology – they have grown up surrounded by smart phones, laptops, tablets and other gadgets. They were the first wave of the digital generation born into the world of technology. They are highly qualified in digital knowledge therefore it is easy for them to quickly acquire the use of new tools and devices in Information and Communication Technologies (Bencsik et al., 2016). Generation Y prefer to communicate more quickly and effectively via email, social networks or text messaging as opposed

to traditional means of communication. Generation Y's prefer communication via email whereas the baby boomer generation (two generations back) prefer to pick up the phone. They easily accept changes, they live for today and they do not like to plan for long periods; they rather want to enjoy themselves in their own world. Their circle of friends is virtual, they mainly nurse their relations on social sites, they easily accept cultural differences and they really like living a quick life (Krishnan et al, 2013). Generation Y is characterized by "multitasking", the multi-sided and shared attention (Schäffer, 2015). For them, the concept of success, career and money is of top priority - because they have learned that it is the only thing that can advance them in consumer society (Tari, 2010). Using modern technological devices, their communication mainly happens in the virtual space and their online presence is never-ending. They use social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc..., to create a different sense of belonging, make acquaintances, and to remain connected with friends (Woodman, Dan (2015). According to Neil Howe and William Strauss's book "Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation (2000)", generation Y are more open-minded than their parents on controversial topics and civic-minded. But what do they eat and what are the preferences/habits regarding fish?

### **Methodology**

To be able to answer the last question, we have studied/implemented the following:

#### ***Procedure and sample***

To analyze the evolution of the Fish sector in Portugal we used Docapesca Portos e Lojas S.A's data (a government owned company, under the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Sea). Two surveys were conducted (each with 1000 respondents - representative of general of the Portuguese population), one in 2017 and the other one in 2018, using plenty of variables that turned out to be extremely valuable data to market analyses and allowed a very strong comparative analysis.

Data was collected using quota sampling, representative of Portuguese population according National Statistics Institute (INE), as non-probability sampling technique, by using a socio-demographic variable such as sex (49,1% Male and 50,9% Female), age (16/24 years with 9,1% , 25/34 years with 16,8% , 35/44 years with 18,5% , 45/54 years with 18,1% , 55/64 years with 16,6% , 65 years or more with 20,9% ), and region according to Nuts II (35,2% of North, 25,0% of Centre, 27,7% of Lisbon, 8% of Alentejo, 4,1% of Algarve). In terms of the descriptive statistics it represents a demographic profile with following Education level 2017 vs 2018: Primary (19,2% vs 13,8% ), Secondary (48,8% vs 48,2% ) and Higher (32,0% vs 38% ).

The questionnaire was anonymous in order to guarantee a higher level of participation and honesty. Each question was debated by a multidisciplinary team composed of nutritionists, marketing and survey specialists, representatives of commercial companies, statisticians, and people experienced in the seafood sector. Furthermore, the attained preliminary questionnaire was sent to a group of twenty individuals outside the expert group with the purpose of assaying the clarity, simplicity, and appropriateness of the various questions. During this process, several alterations were introduced, but the overall architecture of five sections was kept in the final form of the questionnaire. The fish products were chosen on the basis of consumption importance in Portugal.

In order to reach a large universe and different ages and geographical regions of the country, a telephonic medium was the natural option. Survey for the general of the Portuguese population was contacted in order to understand an evolution of seafood consumption patterns in general.

#### ***Statistical analysis***

Statistical analysis was carried out using the SphinxIQ software (Sphinx Company, Montréal, Canada), which enabled to analyze the overall distribution of respondents as well as the consumption preferences and frequencies affected by the independent variables. The difference of means between pairs was resolved by using confidence intervals in a Tukey HSD test. Level of significance was set for  $p < 0.01$ .

## Results and Discussion

### *Place of purchase of the fresh fish in the Portuguese population*

Concerning place of purchase of the fresh fish, the universe of respondents clearly continuous to prefer supermarkets to local markets, 54.1% vs 17,6% in 2017 and 49,8% vs 24,2 % in 2018 ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $Khi^2=632.44$ ,  $dgl=3(MS)$ ). Although it is possible to notice a slight purchase transfer from supermarkets to local markets, which goes in line with fresh food purchase, in general.

### *Concern about the origin of the fish*

Portuguese population is more and more careful with the origin of the fish they consume. Concern ranged 3,37 by 5-point Likert type scale with 48,6% for TOP 2 boxes (agree/totally agree) answers in 2017 vs 3,62 with 59,3% for TOP 2 boxes in 2018 ( $p = 0.00$   $Khi^2=231.63$ ,  $dgl=4(MS)$ ).

### *Perception of the Portuguese fresh fish*

Portuguese consumers perceive Portuguese fish as the best fish in the world, ranged 4,05 by 5-point Likert type scale with 67,8% for TOP 2 boxes (agree/totally agree) answers in 2017 vs 4,37 with 81,2% for TOP 2 boxes in 2018 ( $p = 0.00$   $Khi^2=1158.19$ ,  $dgl=4(MS)$ ). This is a very strong reason why it is important to understand the sustainability issue for different species.

### *Availability for transfer of consumption for fish of lower stock*

Portuguese population is very traditional regarding fish consumption (Coelho et al, 2018) and at the same time Portuguese waters are abundant in different devalued species. That is why, it was important to understand an availability of transfer of consumption for fish of lower stock, which is a key point that guarantees a sustainability (Docapesca, 2018).

The data reveals that Portuguese population does not show availability of transfer of consumption for fish of lower stock yet, ranged 2,91 by 5-point Likert type scale, with 32,9 % for TOP 2 boxes (agree/totally agree) answers, in 2018 ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $Khi^2=39.51$ ,  $dgl=4(MS)$ ).

On the other hand, and as it was described previously (Madsen & Chkoniya, 2018), Cod is considered, by far, as the national fish – even though it does not swim in Portuguese waters. According to the Cod Industry Association, and according to the Norwegian Seafood Export Council, 20% of all the Cod captured in the world is consumed in Portugal – a total of 70.000 tones, 70% of which comes from Norway.

As a curiosity, Portugal is the only country in Europe that consumes more Cod than salmon.

### *Knowledge about the fresh fish market in the Portuguese population*

In 2017 only with 38,9 % for TOP 2 boxes (agree/totally agree) answers, considered themselves fish connoisseurs, ranged 3,24 by 5-point Likert type scale ( $p = 0.00$   $Khi^2=177.43$ ,  $dgl=4(MS)$ ). Even less of Portuguese population considered themselves fish connoisseurs in 2018, ranged 3,14 by 5-point Likert type scale with 37 % for TOP 2 boxes.

It is for this reason that it is so important to pay attention to the education of the Portuguese population regarding seafood.

### *The best source of information about seafood*

Various market reports indicate that population in Portugal often look for healthy food solutions and perceive seafood as a fundamental part of it (Coelho et al, 2018). This is why it is so important to give them the best source of information. The data collected indicates that TV continuous to be the most important source of information regarding seafood with 60.1% in 2017 vs 61,7% in 2018. It is then followed by the social media (Facebook, Instagram e etc.) with 33.9% in 2017 vs 38,4% in 2018, while other sources of information attract the least attention ( $p = 0.00$   $Khi^2=9852.88$ ,  $dgl=20(MS)$ ).

## Conclusion

The previous historical explanation serves as a background to understand how the market and its agents influenced actual food patterns. Food habits are established and maintained because there are effective, particular and meaningful behaviors in a particular culture (Fieldhouse, P, 1986). After centuries of imposition of fish -forbidding meat to be precise-, the Catholic religion has controlled food habits in the Portuguese society. It is true that the Catholic religion has no longer the power to influence the Portuguese diet, but once food habits are acquired, especially early in life, they are likely to be long lasting and resistant to change. In another words, fish became part of the Portuguese food basket, and became a domestic food product to the families. Families recognize value in fish, including it frequently in their meals; in turn, children learn to appreciate its taste. Many of the advertisements for fish are actually, and intelligently, targeted to the youngsters.

It is a fact that the fish sector, it represents less than 1% of the GDP, 0.6% of total employment and fish catches below average in EU and in an insignificant place worldwide; nonetheless it survives; Survives due to the efforts made by the distributors, frozen fish companies and the media, which supply Portuguese consumers with an important element of their culture, taking all the advantages out of that. And more, the market itself maintains this identification with fish into consumers' habits. Advertisements, either of a product or of a government national campaign, almost with no exception focuses on the sun, the beaches, the cork lands in the south, the mountains in the north and definitely the fish. Even Coca cola could not resist going also this way!

It is a part of Portuguese identity and a way that helps consumers understand themselves in the world. In the case of Portugal consumers are highly exposed to the very rooted fish products; history shows that religion and obedience have been a common denominator in this country for many centuries. Restricted by traditional religious ideologies (with its symbolisms and morals) the country's meat consumption never reached high levels, and created an imposed space for generations after generations to develop their skills on how to prepare fish, which created deeply rooted habits in the population - indirectly nurturing fish and its consumption. The Portuguese give high importance to fish products because they have always been present in their society, through, by example memories of old glories from the sea, statues to the fishermen, politicians dancing with fisherwomen, by including fish in their daily expressions, and more recently through the power of food distributors. Portuguese imagery is full of fish (Herbert Blumer 1969, pp 95 in Mennell et al., 1992, pp4), as is apparent through the high levels of fish consumption. Fish is a highly domesticated product and that is reflected in the actual consumption levels. Portugal is the 3rd biggest consumer in the world.

Consumers' combinations and mixtures of the market produced narratives, led to a tight consideration of them as part of their national identity. The Portuguese identity is full of fish - rituals, schools doctrines, and communicated acts. Political attention and economic investments that have built the market systems have been channeled to different products in both countries. The identity of the population, which was created consistently through time by the market system, has produced opposite fish consumption patterns.

In 2019 no one is afraid of not going to heaven by eating meat on Fridays, and no one will lent based on catholic religion like before 1974; fish is no longer consumed because of those reasons. Fish is available in all supermarkets, fresh, frozen, with bones and without. If historically it was religion diffusing the message, and people would design their diet with fear of being punished by God, nowadays it is the distributors of fish that make sure fish is always present in consumers' minds. Distributors sell up to 600,000,000 kilos of fish per year (2008): half of which is salted dry codfish, 70,000,000 is frozen branded fish, and 200,000,000 are of fresh fish and 30,000,000 bulk frozen fish. But to keep up with the tradition the distributors have to go and buy it all over the world.

The facts described in this paper give a good perspective of how the fish market system has changed, evolved, invested and rejuvenate all over the years, so to keep its levels of consumption high. It could have stagnated; it could have fallen; instead it has grown! 500 years have passed since codfish was introduced to Portuguese cuisine, and we can still find remarkable traces of the reasons why it became so popular.



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## The Dark Side of the Leadership: The Effects of Toxic Leaders on Employees

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### Abstract

Studies on leadership have been overwhelmingly focused on the positive aspects of leadership, and tried to reach certain conclusions on the positive effects of leadership in organizations. However, the dark side of leadership has been ignored. Those negative leadership styles in general, toxic leadership, in particular, may have extremely negative effects on organizations, which have the potential to overshadow the effects of positive leadership. Toxic leadership can create a decrease in workplace performance, productivity, and output, as well as its remarkable negative reflections on employees. So, examining the outputs of toxic leadership is inevitable. In this paper, we aim to examine the consequences of toxic leaders on employees by a quantitative search on the finance industry.

**Keywords:** Leadership, toxic leaders, negative attitudes.

### Introduction

For many years, leadership has been one of the most important topics in both academic studies and the business world. A large part of what has been written about leadership in management literature focused on how effective and successful leaders should be. Because in a system in which people who are living in an interconnected world, people should be led by various leaders/managers in both business and social life. Those managers, who make decisions that affect the lives of individuals in every field, are a fact of the social life. Most of the time those leaders are not chosen by the followers or subordinates. In this context, leadership, in general, can be defined as the behavior of influencing and directing the employees of the organization in line with the goals and objectives of the organization. On the other hand, recent studies have addressed the negative facet and types of leadership. Bullying leadership (Ashforth, 1994; Ferris, Zinko, Brouer, Buckley & Harvey, 2007), abusive surveillance (Tepper, 2000), poor leadership (Kellerman, 2004; Erickson, Shaw, & Agabe, 2007), weak leadership (Kelloway, Sivanathan, Francis and Barling, 2005), narcissistic leadership (Paunonen, Lönnqvist, Verkasalo, Leikas, & Nissinen, 2006), destructive leadership (Einarsen et al., 2007) deterrent leadership (Thoroughgood, Hunter, and Sawyer, 2011), toxic leadership (Lipman-Blumen, 2006) have been studied as the dark side of leadership (Conger, 1990).

Leaders can be defined with some common characteristics that they have. Some of the leaders can manage their subordinates very well and offer advantageous opportunities that can be useful for the group, while some others have "Toxic" characteristics which are already defined as "Toxic Leaders" in the literature (Lipman-Blumen, 2006).

It is obvious that the keeping costs low such as the personnel cycle, the training, the construction of institutional memory and institutional structure are extremely important at today's competitive atmosphere. Firms need to keep their profitability and reduce their costs as low as possible in order to ensure their sustainability. Many firms are trying to find ways of reducing those kinds of costs. By the introduction of the toxicity to the leadership studies (Lipman-Blumenn, 2006), increasing numbers of researches try to assess the between toxic leader's negative effects and indirect costs on both employees and organizations.

Especially in the US, toxic leadership studies are mostly addressed in the military and health sector (Paunonen et al., 2006, Reed, 2004). According to the 43-item Toxic Leadership Scale developed by Lipman-Blumen, we can clearly see that toxic leadership has negative effects on many areas within the organization, such as organizational commitment, organizational climate, organizational motivation, organizational culture (Lipman-Blumen, 2006; Erickson et al., 2007; Einarsen et al., 2007).

In this study, we aim to reveal the effects of toxic leadership on employees. Specifically, we try to understand the consequences of toxic leader's behaviors via qualitative analysis on the employees of the finance sector. The remaining of this paper is organized as follows. In Section II it is tried to show what are the common characteristics of toxic leaders and the scope of our qualitative research. Finally, the conclusion part reveals the results of our research which is analyzed by MAXQDA 2018.

### **A Qualitative Research on Employees of Finance Sector**

Toxic leader's destructive behaviors and characteristics can make individuals, groups, organizations, communities seriously and permanently damaged (Kellerman, 2004). In order to be named as a toxic leader, he/she has to show his/her toxic effect in a way that would affect the organization, not a particular employee (Reed 2004). Toxic, poisonous leaders are the leaders who lead and harm the employees, the business environment and the organizational climate. It is necessary to differentiate the toxic leader from the boss or manager who is bad and oppressive. Such leaders do not care much about what is outside of them. It is an approach that harms people by poisoning activities that are enthusiasm, creativity, autonomy, and innovation. Toxic leaders are spreading this poison with an excessive control mechanism (Karen 2003)

According to Frost (2003), toxic feelings in the work environment are an emotional state where negative feelings are more intensified and include psychological repetition, rupture, and depletion phases. In the psychologically repetitive phase, the individuals are unable to psychologically analyze a severe experience that affects them and they can't predict that the negative results of repeating experiences. When the transition phase is passed, the individuals are moving away from their social environment and colleagues. In the depletion phase, the mental and physical energy of the individuals are depleted due to those negative experiences. The recent studies show that a toxic leader's poison could spread to individuals, teams and the whole organization in a stealthy manner (Lubit 2004).

In this paper, we aim to understand the perceptions of employees regarding "Toxic Leadership" and effects of toxic leadership on employees in the finance sector. A qualitative research is conducted on 20 finance sector employees. Semi-structured interview method is carried out. Seven open-ended questions are asked with a voice recorder works on the interview table. After all of the interviews and voice records end up, transcriptions are coded. Some main themes were defined as:

- Perceptions of Toxic Leadership
- Perceptions of Toxic Leadership According to Generations
- Negative Effects on Workplace Performance
- Work Attitudes
- Organizational Commitment
- And some sub-themes were defined according to the dimensions of the "Toxic Leadership" (Schmidt, 2008) as:
  - Abusive supervision,
  - Authoritarian leadership,
  - Self-promotion,
  - Unpredictability
  - Narcissism

In our research, 20 employees provide answers to the questions asked about Toxic Leaders and their feelings in the workplace. Main Themes and Sub-Themes can be seen with their density of usage in the 20 Employee's transcriptions on Figure-1. All of the big squares on the figure show density of that theme on employee No.1-20.

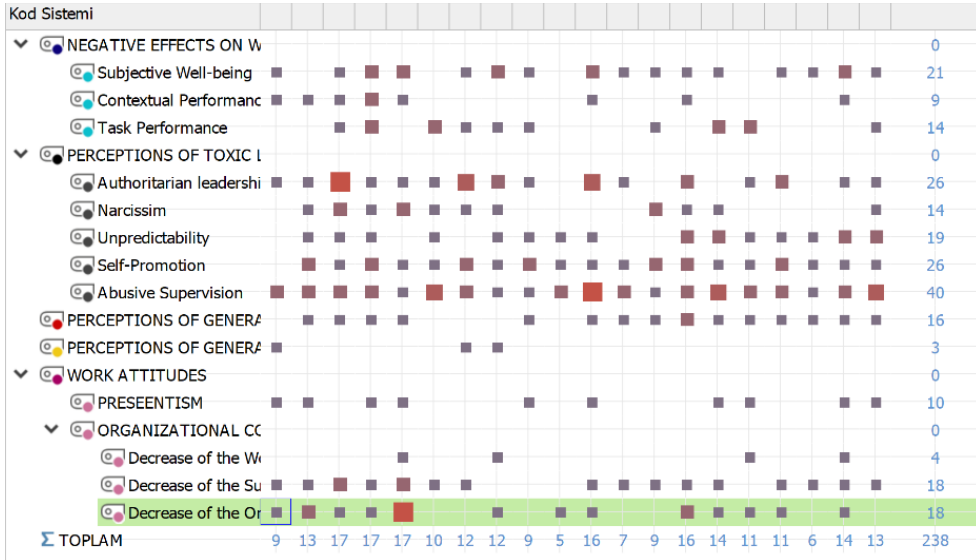


Figure-1: Main and Sub-Theme's Density of Usage in the 20 Employee's Transcriptions.

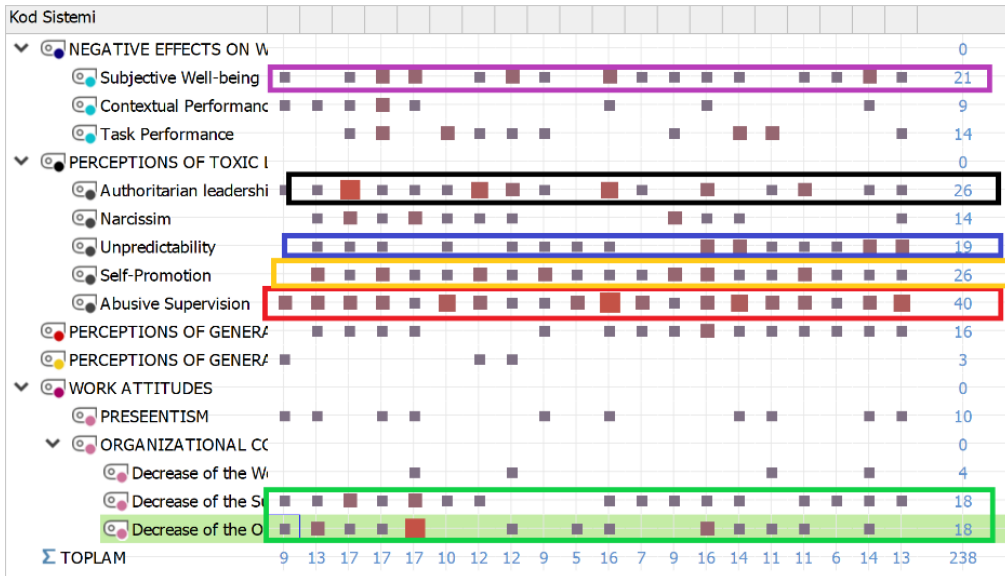


Figure-2: Main Focus of Themes in the 20 Employee's Transcriptions.

As a matter of fact, there can be seen an invisible line that converges with the big densed squares of the themes. As it can easily be seen at Figure-2, most of the employee's scope of their leader and their bad effects are a little bit more noticeable. When we look at the dimensions of Toxic Leaders, employee's perceptions about their leader are mostly converging at Abusive Supervision, Authoritarian Leadership, Self-Promotion and Unpredictability. So that the dramatical decrease of Subjective Wellbeing can be seen as the Negative Effects on the Workplace Performance. And also, if it is evaluated in terms of the dimensional decrease of the Organizational Commitment, the decrease of the Supervisor Commitment and the Organizational Commitment are dramatical. But it doesn't necessarily mean a decrease on the commitment of workmates.

There is also another point of view that MAXQDA 2018 provides. It is Code – Relationships chart (Figure-3). What can people understand from those convergences is which toxic leader dimensions are the most effective and dense on the employees. Which bad effects of toxic leader attitudes are influencing the employees most badly?

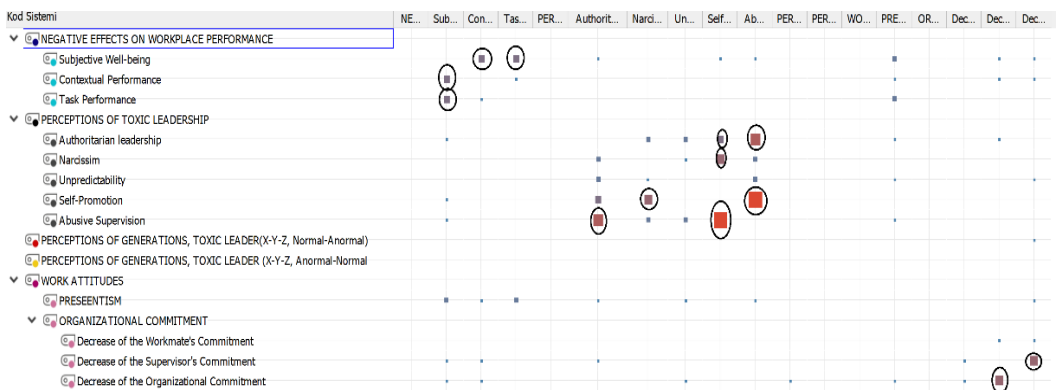


Figure-3: Codes (Themes) – Relationships Chart

From the Figure-3 we realize that there is a very strong correlation between Abusive Supervision and Self Promotion. Also, Abusive Supervision and Authoritarian Leadership has a less but strong correlation. Narcissim and Self Promotion, Contextual Performance and Subjective Wellbeing, Task Performance and Subjective Wellbeing have correlations according to the Figure-3.

**Conclusion**

The results of this paper reveal that negative attitudes and behaviors of Toxic Leaders leads to many negative outputs in the workplace, not only by means of the decreasing organizational commitment but also the decreasing workplace performance of employees. The findings also show that toxic managers do not realise their toxicity of themselves. They mostly focus on their up-to-date success while ignoring their long-term and permanent harm on the employees (Kusy, M. & Holloway, E., 2009).

Moreover, the results emphasize that Workplace Performance and Organizational Commitment are interconnected. Toxic Leader's basic and never-ending attitudes and behaviors seem to have some indicators. Taking into consideration all those indicators, researchers can widen the toxic leadership studies and methodologies. Constituting a strong organizational structure is very costly; thus, the decision makers generally may tend to perform toxic attitudes and behaviors for the short-term advantages; without considering long-term harmful effects (Reed, G., 2004). Thus, the managers and decision makers should realize the fact that toxic attitude and behaviors' burden on organizations cannot be easily demolished (Thoroughgood etal, 2012).

From this paper, four main results can be concluded;

Four dimensions of Toxic Leadership are the most prominent; Abusive Supervision, Authoritarian leadership, Self-promotion and Narcissism.

Toxic Leader behaviors mostly affects Subjective Wellbeing. After its effects decrease Task Performance and finally affects Contextual Performance.

Toxic Leader behaviors not directly affect workmate's commitment at the workplace. But has very strong negative effects on Organizational Commitment and Supervisor's Commitment.

There is a strong correlation between Abusive Supervision and Self Promotion of the Toxic Leader.

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## Evaluation of the Medical Interpreter and Patient Guidance Training in the Migrant Health Services: The Case Study in Turkey

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### Abstract

Turkey is a country that embraces many migrants from Africa and the Middle East especially in the last 10 years due to its geopolitical position. The number of Syrian refugees in Turkey as of February 2019 is reported to be 3.644.342. In particular, benefiting from the most basic human rights such as nutrition, education and health of migrants is an issue given the importance by the Republic of Turkey. In this context, important cultural differences arise for the immigrants. Language is an important obstacle to access to health services, especially in Arabic speaking patients. In order to facilitate access to health services and to improve the quality, a project has been developed covering the training and employment of medical interpreters and patient guides by the Turkey's Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization. With this project, 960 medical translators were employed and trained 2016 to 2019. The research provides an evaluation covering the training phase of this project. In this context, the aim of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the training program. In the study, an interactive training program, including medical terminology, health sector organization of Turkey, communication skills and medical ethics was implemented to the bilingual interpreters and patient guides. Participants completed a 50-question pre-test and post-test designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the training. Training was deemed successful as all participants scored higher on the post-test than the pre-test. The results obtained from the research include important lessons that guide the planning of similar trainings.

**Keywords:** Migrant, healthcare services, patient guide, training, Turkey.

### Introduction

Turkey is a country that embraces many migrants from Africa and the Middle East especially in the last 10 years due to its geopolitical position. After the Arab Spring uprising, Syria descended into a civil war in 2011. As the Syria crisis enters its ninth year, the magnitude of human suffering remains overwhelming, with 11.7 million people, including 6 million children, in need of humanitarian assistance. Up to 6.2 million people have fled their homes inside Syria and 5.6 million have been forced to take refuge in neighbouring countries. Without a political solution in sight, the conflict is likely to persist in 2019. The EU and its Member States have mobilised almost €17 billion inside the country and in neighbouring countries since the start of the conflict. According to European Commission data, the Syrian refugees migrated the most to Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt. Turkey is currently hosting the largest number of refugees worldwide, with more than 3.6 million registered Syrians (<https://multeciler.org.tr/turkiyedeki-suriyeli-sayisi/>). A limited number of refugees are living in camps settled around the border, and others are spread throughout Turkey (European Commission, 2019). In particular, benefiting from the most basic human rights such as nutrition, education and health of migrants is an issue given the importance by the Republic of Turkey. For example, until 2016, about 21 million outpatient clinics, 1 million clinics, 184.390 births and 797.450 surgical services have been performed within the scope of health services provided to Syrian foreigners under temporary protection ([http://www.goc.gov.tr/files/files/2016\\_yiik\\_goc\\_raporu\\_haziran.pdf](http://www.goc.gov.tr/files/files/2016_yiik_goc_raporu_haziran.pdf)).

This explosive and unexpected increase in the Syrian population in Turkey has had several negative impacts on health and social determinants (Doğanay and Demiraslan, 2016). In addition to these challenges to the Turkish healthcare system, Turkish healthcare providers currently have a large number of Syrian refugee patients with whom they have difficulty communicating because of language barriers (Doğanay and Demiraslan, 2016).

Only a minority of refugees speak Turkish before arriving. The inability to communicate fluently was a barrier, not only to integration, but also in managing the asylum process necessary to gain full access to the healthcare system. Language barriers also often present obstacles for refugees in obtaining quality healthcare. Accessing appropriate and quality healthcare is critical. Among refugee populations worldwide, language and translation issues are frequently cited as barriers to quality healthcare for both physical and mental health problems. Interactions with healthcare professionals, from discussing medical history to describing characteristics and duration of symptoms, can be daunting for those with limited language skills.

Refugees face language barriers to access to health services in every country they visit (McKeary and Newbold, 2010). Although this obstacle decreases spontaneously over time, considering the importance of health service, it is inevitable to produce a solution to the language barrier. The use of interpretation services to eliminate this obstacle in reaching their healthcare Syrian refugees in Turkey has been seen as a solution. However, the size of the refugee population and this population to be distributed to the different regions of Turkey, and also the lack of a sufficient number of Arabic translators is a significant challenge. This situation has forced the Ministry of Health and the WHO Regional Office of Gaziantep to find a new solution for refugees' health. In this context, with the project developed, it is aimed that bilingual people (Arabic and Turkish), who have received high school or university education, can undergo a structured short-term education and help the patients and healthcare workers to communicate. The project was planned in 2016 with the aim of raising 960 bilingual medical interpreters and patient guides and then employing them in the migrant health centres and health facilities.

The project "To provide and coordinate lecturers for the delivery of curricula developed by Ankara University and evaluation of the Adaptation Component for Refugee Health Trainings for Syrian Translators/Patient Guides", which was implemented between the years of 2016 and 2018, consists of three stages, including the preparation of educational materials, training and employment. The training phase of this project, which is the subject of this research, was carried out by faculty members of the Ankara University Faculty of Health Sciences. Training materials were developed by analysing the training needs of the participants. The same teaching staffs participated in 23 pieces of training with 1069 people. The training was carried out in six provinces which in Syrians' refugee live density such as Ankara, Izmir, İstanbul, Adana, Şanlıurfa and Gaziantep.

The people who will participate in the training have been determined by the exam made by the Department of Migration Health, the Ministry of Health and Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Department of Arabic Translation and Interpreting. The exam consists of open-ended questions to determine the level of speaking, writing and understanding in Arabic and Turkish languages. Although 960 people will be employed within the scope of the project, 1069 people have been invited to training due to the possibility that some participants may not be employed after the training.

Each of the training is five days and 35 hours and each participant was subjected to a test before and after the training. The training programme of bilingual interpreters and patient guide contains 4 modules. These are the Turkish health system, medical terminology, communication, and patient rights modules. Turkish health system module is a total of 7 hours training consisting of issues such as Turkey's healthcare organization structure, immigrant healthcare and health services. The medical terminology module is a practical training module that provides information about the basic structures of medical terms (prefix, suffix and roots) and medical terms about pathology, surgery, symptoms, and treatment. This module aims to provide the knowledge and skills that will help the patients and the healthcare workers in a short time and without mistake translating. This module consists of 10 hours of theory and 4 hours of practical training. The communication Module consists of 7 hours of interactive training. With this module, it is aimed to carry out activities that will improve the communication quality of patient guides with patients and healthcare workers. The patient rights module is a 7-hour training that includes information on patient rights and the ethical issues that may be encountered in healthcare. Each module was prepared by field experts in accordance with the learning objectives and the training was carried out by the same field experts. According to the results of before and after training examinations, participants who have at least 70% success are given a certificate of attendance. The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the training given to the bilingual medical interpreter and patient guide.

## Method

The aim of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the training program. A repeated measures design was used to test the program's effects before and after training examination results, participants' perception of the training and training organization. In this context, participants completed a 50-question before and after training exam designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the training (Table 1). The perception of participants on the training and training organization questionnaire

contains 12 statements on a 5-point scale (1=very inadequate, 2= inadequate, 3=neutral, 4=adequate, 5=very adequate). In addition to it was collected qualitative data from participants to be informed about their feelings about training and training organisation. In order to it was prepared an interview form which semi-structured and contains 12 questions that open-ended.

Table 1. According to the training modules, the number of pre-education and post-education exam questions and total score.

Training Module	Number of Questions		Total Score
	Pre-education Exam	Post-education Exam	
Turkish Health System Module	10	10	20
Medical Terminology Module	20	20	40
Communication Module	10	10	20
Patient Rights Module	10	10	20
Total	50	50	100

The quantitative data were statistically analysed using SPSS version 25.0. Data are described using mean and standard deviation or frequency and percentages. We used independent sample t-test and paired sample test analysis to explain differences before and after training exam results. The qualitative data were analysed by content analysis method. Between 2017-2019, a total of 23 pieces of training were completed and 1069 people were trained. Four people who did not participate in the before or after training exam were not included in the study.

The participants' rights were the first priority. Therefore, the participants were given written information about research. The anonymity of the participants was ensured by not collecting any personal identifiers.

### Findings

Participants in the training, 23.7% (n= 252) were women and 76.3% (n= 813) were men. According to t-test results, there is no statistically significant difference between the pre-education and post-education exam scores of two genders (Table 2). However, the difference between the exams' score of all participants was statistically significant ( $t=-76,61$ ;  $df=1064$ ;  $p=0,000$ ) (Table 3). This result shows that the bilingual interpreters and patient guides training has been successful.

Table 2. The t-test results of the difference between the means of pre-education and post-education exams score of gender

	Gender	N	%	$\chi \pm SD$	Independent Samples Test		
					t	df	P
Pre-Education Exam	Female	252	23,7	36,12±15,59	1,514	1063	0,130
	Male	813	76,3	34,56±13,94			
	Total		1065	100	34,93±14,35		
Post-Education Exam	Female	252	23,7	73,60±10,76	0,098	1063	0,922
	Male	813	76,3	73,52±11,72			
	Total		1065	100	73,54±11,50		
The difference between the pre and post education exams score	Female	252	23,7	37,4802±16,78	-1,252	1063	0,211
	Male	813	76,3	38,9643±16,33			
	Total		1065	100	38,61±16,45		

\* $P \leq 0,005$

Participants' opinions on education were asked with six questions. At the end of the evaluation, the mean score of the participants related to education (4.48) was quite high. According to the statements, it can be said that the participants found the training adequate and satisfying. The highest average score of the participants (4.61) was expressed in the

statement about the adequacy of the educators (Table 4). This result is also supported by the analysis of the qualitative data that the participants have responded with their own expressions.

Table 3. The findings of the paired sample test of the difference between pre-education and post-education exams score

	n	$\chi \pm SD$	Paired Samples Test		
			t	df	P
Pre-Education Exam	1065	34,93±14,35	-76,61	1064	0,000*
Post-Education Exam	1065	73,54±11,50			

\*P≤0,005

According to this, the common views of the participants were that the instructors were experts in their fields. The views of the participants can be summarized as follows. "The instructors were all experts in their fields. I learned a lot in a very short time. Topics were told in a nice and simple way." P1.

Table 4. Means of evaluation of the training programme

	Mean (1=very inadequate; 5=very adequate)
The questions of evaluations' the training programme	
Do you think the training has reached its goal?	4,32
Was the content/subjects of the training sufficient?	4,46
Was the teaching methods and techniques sufficient?	4,53
Were the lecture notes and visual materials used sufficient?	4,44
Were the trainers adequate?	4,61
Can you use this information in your work?	4,52
Total	4.48

When we look at the views of the participants on the duration of their education, it has seen that 50.7% (n = 540) stated that the education period was sufficient (Table 5).

Table 5. The participants' views on the duration of the education

Duration of the education	n	%
Too short	123	11,6
Short	270	25,3
Adequate	540	50,7
Long	97	9,1
Too long	35	3,3
Total	1065	100

When the views of the participants on the organization of education are examined, it is determined that the highest score is related to transportation (4,49) and organization of courses (4,48). The lowest score was found to be related to accommodation (room, service, meals, location of the hotel etc.) (4,31). The overall satisfaction rate about the organization was found to be quite high (4.41) (Table 6).

Table 6. The perception of participants on the organization of education

Expressions	Mean (1=very inadequate; 5=very adequate)
Information and communication before training	4,41
Training place	4,36
Organization of courses (starting on time and ending in time, order etc.)	4,48

Transportation	4,49
Accommodation (room, service, meals, location of hotel etc.)	4,31
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,41</b>

Participants' responses to open-ended questions support quantitative results. The vast majority of participants thought that education has reached its goal. In addition to this, they told that the subjects they did not know before in education, even that they even learned the subjects they thought would be hard to learn like medical terms and they could use this information in medical interpreting and guidance services. However, some participants complained about the shortness of the training period. In order to reinforce the information given, they indicated that the training period should be longer or should be repeated at regular intervals. Participants are highly satisfied with the content of the training, the trainers and the organization. Besides positive opinions about education, they have criticism and suggestions. They have often been related to educational materials and accommodation. Some of the interviewees said that the use of video content in the lessons could be more effective, the lesson hours could be shorter and social organizations could be added.

### Discussion and Conclusion

The health of refugees is a big problem all over the world. The fact that immigrants cannot speak the language of the host country is the biggest obstacle in accessing health services. As a solution for eliminating this barrier, the use of people who speak both languages could be as a useful option. However, in this context, it is not enough for the medical interpreter to speak and write only these languages. The interpreter's ability to provide accurate translation and guidance in the time of the patient's access to quality health service depends on own skills and knowledge such as communication, medical terms, healthcare organisation and medical ethics. In short, medical translation requires quite different knowledge and understanding than other translation services. First of all, this person, who will help the patient and the patient's relatives, should know the host country's health system, health organization and bureaucratic structure. The fact that immigrants cannot speak the language of the host country is the biggest obstacle in accessing health services. As a solution for eliminating this barrier, the use of people who speak both languages is used as an option.

However, the translator does not simply transfer the patient's problems to the healthcare workers when translating. At the same time, healthcare workers also inform the patient and his relatives. This information often contains medical terms. Therefore, the interpreter should be familiar with the widely used Greek and Latin medical terms.

The medical interpreter should be familiar with two different cultures, know the rules of verbal, written and non-verbal communication and be able to use them in communication. Another important issue that differentiates health services from other services is patient rights. In this context, the medical interpreter should be able to demonstrate the sensitivities of knowing the basic principles of medical ethics and legal situations such as autonomy and privacy of the patient.

To provide all of this knowledge and skills, as seen in Turkey example, has benefited from a short-term medical interpreter and patient guidance training program. In this context, 1069 people have been trained between 2016-2018 with the training program prepared in accordance with the training needs. In this study, in which we evaluated the effectiveness of the training program, it was observed that the results of both the male and female participants were significantly different before and after the training. On the other hand, it was observed that the participants achieved the aim of education with their statements, they were equipped with the information they could use in medical translation and guidance activities and they have found that the education and training organization is satisfactory in general.

As a result, bilingual medical interpreter and patient guides can be trained as a solution to improve migrant health in a short time with such training. However, repeating training at regular intervals and including audio-visual items in the materials used should be seen as another factor that increases the effectiveness of education. It is thought that these research results will contribute to the development of similar trainings.

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## State Educational Policy in the Sphere of Social Sciences in Latvia - Expert Perspective

Elīna Graudiņa

### Abstract

This paper explores whether the state educational policy in the sphere of social sciences fosters development of an educated and active civil society. This subject is topical as the political participation in relation to the election activity is gradually decreasing. The research aims to study the state educational policy in the sphere of social sciences which, according to the political participation theoreticians, is an especially important factor in the transition countries and new democracies for raising public awareness of the opportunities provided by democracy and the importance of participation. The theoretical part of the research is based on the theory of communicative rationality by J. Habermas, theory about the relation of education, active civil society and democracy by J. Dewey, and authors like Walter Parker and John Jarolimek expanding on the theoretical relation between mastering of social sciences and civic participation. The analytical part of the research is based on the country's long-term and medium-term planning documents. During the research, face-to-face surveys of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students were carried out, and education experts were interviewed. The study leads to a conclusion that in general the state educational policy in the sphere of social sciences gives theoretical knowledge about a democratic state system and its basic values. The expert interviews that were carried out allow concluding that the explanation for the above-mentioned survey findings is the preparation of teachers, the amount of time required for the acquisition of social sciences and the balance of.

**Keywords:** civil society, civic participation, youth, planning, policy, education.

### Introduction

#### Theoretical framework

Linking of social sciences to an active and educated civic participation and succession of democratic values is a rather recent phenomenon, and its theoretical base has gradually developed and established itself over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of the most influential 20<sup>th</sup> century authors is American philosopher, psychologist and educational reform creator John Dewey, who emphasized the importance of education in fostering of "thinking" and active citizens.<sup>1</sup> He believed that the precondition of democracy is active and educated civil society that is able to critically evaluate political processes and adopt such political decisions, which would serve the interests of the entire society.<sup>2</sup> Whereas critical thinking and information processing capabilities, understanding of the political processes in a democratic country and civic participation are based on the elements, encouraging civic participation, which have been integrated in the education and the program.

The ideas of J. Dewey, expressed in the work "*Citizenship and the Critical Role of Social Studies*" are conceptually close to Washington University professors Walter Parker and John Jarolimek. They emphasize that democracy is the only political regime, which is based on the civic participation, knowledge and critical opinion of the people, living in it, and the formation of civil society.<sup>3</sup> Whereas the social science studies allow accumulating the volume of knowledge and skills necessary for the democracy, looking at the values and development of democracy from various perspectives, encouraging critical thinking and information analysis skills and also creation awareness of the necessity to get involved in political and social processes. W. Parker and J. Jarolimek also emphasize the importance of the multiplying effect of education, namely – the individuals are passing over their knowledge to their families, friends and encourage them to learn and master the skills, which are needed to form an analytical opinion. This all enforces the ability of the civil society to make collective decisions

<sup>1</sup> Dewey, John. 1916. *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. New York: Macmillan, 23.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Parker, Walter, John Jarolimek. 1984. *Citizenship and the Critical Role of the Social Studies*. New York: The National Council for the Social Studies, 6.

in a structured manner, to get involved in processes and to choose most suitable candidates to represent the interests of the population.<sup>1</sup>

In order to embed democratic values in children and young people, J. Dewey stressed the role of schools and teachers in encouraging curiosity about the surrounding world, which is gradually focused on the main conditions of functioning of a democratic state. The American theoretician indicates that curiosity is a significant factor in stimulating the thinking process of the individual and encouraging the cognitive process. On the other hand, a teacher is the main contributor of curiosity. It is determined by the abilities of the teacher to induce thinking and critical assessment skills. The ability of the teacher to stimulate independent thinking among the children and young people on the issues, addressed during the lesson, directly depends on the presentation methods. He emphasizes the importance of practical linking, namely, children and young people should be provided with not only theoretical knowledge of politics, state, society and democratic features, but also should be given a physical link with the content of the teachings, for example, by meeting with politicians, representatives of non-governmental organizations, holding discussion panels and giving practical critical thinking and civic participation tasks. This means that both the teacher and the content of the education, which should have a practical aspect, plays an important role in the creation of active and educated citizens.

One of the axioms postulated by the aforementioned authors is that the main task of the social sciences is creation of "good citizens. Some authors differ on what it means to "be a good citizen". Civic participation theoretician Joel Vesthaimer states that a "good citizen" is socially active, able to reflect on current social and political subjects and get involved in resolution of problems. Other authors indicate also involvement of the individual in various social and political practices. Whereas J. Dewey expresses an opinion that democracy is "lifestyle, which is based on active interaction of citizens" and "a good citizen is the one, who is part of this citizen interaction".

Education and social science studies are particularly important aspects in "transitional" nations or in places, where there has been a recent transition from authoritarian or totalitarian regime to a democratic government. The Slovakian scholar Elena Bianchi has addressed linkage of social studies and democracy in the post-Soviet domain in her publication *Fighting With Post-Totalitarian Ghosts: Civic Education and Good Citizenship in Slovakia (2008)*. The outcome of her research emphasizes importance of teachers in the succession of democratic values and the process of formation of youth civic participation. Having conducted several interviews with civic education and political teachers in various Slovakian schools, E. Bianchi reveals that part of the interviewed teachers have indicated active civic participation as measure of a "good citizen", whereas others expressed an opinion that a "good citizen" in a democratic society is best characterized by law abidance, which, in accordance with the conclusions made by the Slovakian author, still indicates certain manifestations of totalitarianism in the Slovakian education system.<sup>2</sup> The role of the social sciences in transitional nations is also explained by the Freiburg University professors Denis Dafflon and Nicolas Hayoz. Authors express an opinion in their study *How Social Sciences Can Contribute to Changing a Society (2016)* that social science disciplines help developing the national transition regime models and identify the best course of development.<sup>3</sup> It is crucial to mention that representatives of social sciences are best positioned to identify and "measure" the problems, inherent to the society, to describe them and to offer corresponding solutions for the decision-makers and political actors. At last, representatives of social sciences are mostly those who inform the society with their analysis of whether the power processes can be interpreted as democratic and whether there are signs of returning authoritarianism, and students and teachers of social sciences are the ones, promoting democratic values within the society and ensuring their succession.

One of the most influential thinkers of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the German philosopher and sociologist Jurgen Habermas, who had studied such issues concerning power legitimacy, importance of civil society within the framework of democratic government and ensuring of democratic succession during his academic career and has also studied the factors, which create the discussion culture of the civil society and formulation of successful argumentation in the public domain. The public domain according to J. Habermas is defined as informal, dynamic, varying and interactive structures, present in the civil society, the activity of which results in creation of the critical opinion of the society on processes and

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Bianchi, Elena. 2008. *Fighting With Post-Totalitarian Ghosts: Civic Education and Good Citizenship in Slovakia*. Budapest: Central Eastern University, 37.

<sup>3</sup> Dafflon, Denis and Nicolas Hayoz. 2016. *How Social Sciences Can Contribute to Changing a Society*. Fribourg: Fribourg University, 3.



also ensuring power legitimacy and succession of democracy.<sup>1</sup> The basis of the concept of the public domain is formed by fundamental freedoms of democracy – the possibility of individuals to gather, unite and freely discuss matters related to the existing government and current inherent problems of the society. However, a certain amount of knowledge and skills, which allows for efficient involvement in the public domain, where education and social science studies play a crucial role, is required for the freedoms, offered by the democracy, to become implemented in practice.

Social sciences shape the understanding of the individual on the democratic state, duties of the citizen towards the state and society, and also helps mastering the necessary knowledge and skills so that the individual would be able to successfully collaborate with other members of the society, to implement his or her interests and demand responsibility from the persons in the possession of power. This thesis creates a close connection among the previously described theoretical statements of various authors on the link between the social sciences and the democracy, on which the empiric results of the study will be based.

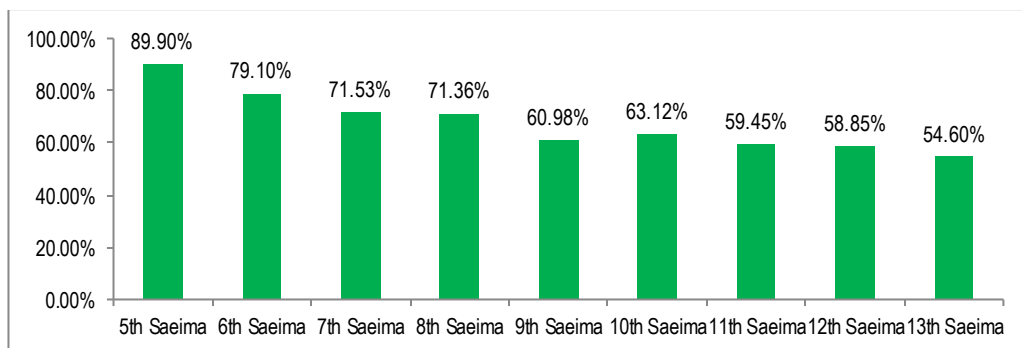
## Results

### Document analysis

Latvia is a relatively young parliamentary democracy, which restored its independence in 1991, by transitioning from a totalitarian regime to a democratic government. First section of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia stipulates that Latvia is an independent democratic republic.<sup>2</sup> It follows from here that preservation of national sovereignty and strengthening of democracy are the main goals of the state, to which all laws, planning documents, political initiatives as well as the activities of the politicians, mass media and the civil society are subordinate. Education and mastering of social sciences are one of the corner stones, ensuring strengthening of democratic consciousness and continuity of democratic values, since they allow the individual to gain understanding of both democracy and also be encouraged to active civic participation and taking regular interest in political processes. Since restoration of independency Latvia is experiencing gradual decline of electoral activity (see Chart No 1).

### Chart No 1

#### Proportion of voting residents from all eligible population



Source: Chart created by the author, using the data of the Central Election Commission.<sup>3</sup>

The displayed results indicate gradual decline of participation in the parliamentary elections during the period from the 5<sup>th</sup> Saeima elections in 1993 to the 13<sup>th</sup> Saeima elections in 2018. It also shows a prominent declining trend in the municipal

<sup>1</sup> Flinn, Jeffrey. Communicative Power in Habermas's Theory of Democracy. *European Journal of Political Theory*. 3, 440. SAGE Publications DOI: 10.1177/1474885104045914

<sup>2</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Latvia: Law of the Republic of Latvia. Chapter one. General provisions. 01.07.1993. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. No 43.

<sup>3</sup> Central Election Commission. Elections. Saeima elections. European Parliament elections. Municipal elections. See activity of all elections <https://www.cvk.lv/pub/public/27483.html>

and European Parliament elections (see Chart No8 and No9 in the annex).<sup>1</sup> The rapid decline of the political participation of the Latvian population has two explanations. First, political participation of Latvian citizens is closely linked to the trust of the residents in the government institutions, political parties and the fact that positive change in social-economic and political processes can be achieved through elections. If the people do not believe in the possibilities offered by the democracy and do not trust the government institutions, then it is understandable that a decline of political activity in the elections results. At the end of 2018 the public opinion poll, conducted by the research centre TNS showed that only 18% of the Latvian residents “fully” or “rather” trust the political parties; the Cabinet enjoyed the trust of 34%, whereas Saeima was trusted by 24% of the respondents.<sup>2</sup> Another explanation of the declining political participation is related to the civic education of the people and the understanding of necessity to get involved in the democratic processes. Part of the Latvian society acquired education during the time when Latvia was integrated in the Soviet Union, where democratic ideas and civic duties towards democracy were not allowed in the education content. Despite the fact that Latvia has been an independent democratic nation for almost 30 years, awareness of the possibilities, provided by the democracy is only gradually settling in the minds of the people. Therefore the educational and social science factor is of particular importance in the Latvian context, for it establishes understanding of the necessity to get involved in the politics among children and young people and also provides basis for knowledge of such important concepts as state, democracy, civic duties and responsibility. However, previous research on the civic education level of young people reveal that only 19% of the young people in Latvia understand what is democracy and civil society, while in Estonia this indicator reaches 43%.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, both the declining electoral activity and level of trust to the government institutions and the level of civic education level of young people indicate existence of faults in the educational policy in the sphere of social sciences in Latvia.

Pursuant to the first section of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, Latvia is an independent democratic republic.<sup>4</sup> Therefore both the state and the education planning documents and the content of education should be formed in accordance with the aforementioned norm of the law with the purpose of strengthening democracy and ensuring sovereignty of the country. The top ranking long-term development document of Latvia “2030 Sustainable Development Strategy” (SDS) defines the development vision of Latvia, to which the development priorities and courses of action are subordinate. The long-term planning document presents several factors, which have close link to the critical thinking and social sciences as a significant factor in the understanding, which the people have of the current situation, their effect on the society and development of the state, as well as the modelling of the potential solutions and the public discourse.

2030 SDS stipulates that human capital is the basis of the development of Latvia.<sup>5</sup> The necessity to invest in population stems from here, which mean access to education for all population groups regardless of the age and abilities, which would mean performance of dedicated reforms in the education system. The purpose of the reform would be to encourage such qualities and skills as creative and critical thinking at the level of general education – argumentation skills, which would drive the student towards creation of new ideas and involvement in a reasoned discussion to encourage development of their ideas. The study undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Science „Analytical description of the ecosystem of social and humanitarian sciences (SHS)” (2016) specifies that the due to increasing labour market competition, large amount of information available in the Internet and other factors the knowledge, offered by the social and humanitarian sciences, as well as the skills in critical and analytical thinking, communication, innovation capacity and creative approach towards problem and conflict resolution become increasingly important.<sup>6</sup> In this sphere the state should ensure education content and preparation of teachers in accordance with the aforementioned transformations of the labour market and information exchange, at the same time reinforcing the democratic awareness of the population. 2030 SDS emphasizes the important of the social science disciplines – political science, sociology, anthropology and economics in the promotion

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Reference from LETA.

<sup>3</sup> Čakse, Ireta. Civic-educated citizens are a matter of nacional security. 24.07.2018. *Lv Portāls*. <https://lvportals.lv/viedokli/297506-pilsoniski-izgloti-iedzivotaji-ir-valsts-drosibas-jautajums-2018>

<sup>4</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Latvia: Law of the Republic of Latvia. Chapter one. General provisions. 01.07.1993. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. No 43.

<sup>5</sup> Communication on approval of 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia: Law of the Republic of Latvia. 29.06.2010. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. 2010/101, 8.

<sup>6</sup> Kunda, Ilona et al. 2016. Sociālo un humanitāro zinātņu (SHZ) ekosistēmas analītisks apraksts. Rīga: Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija, 5.

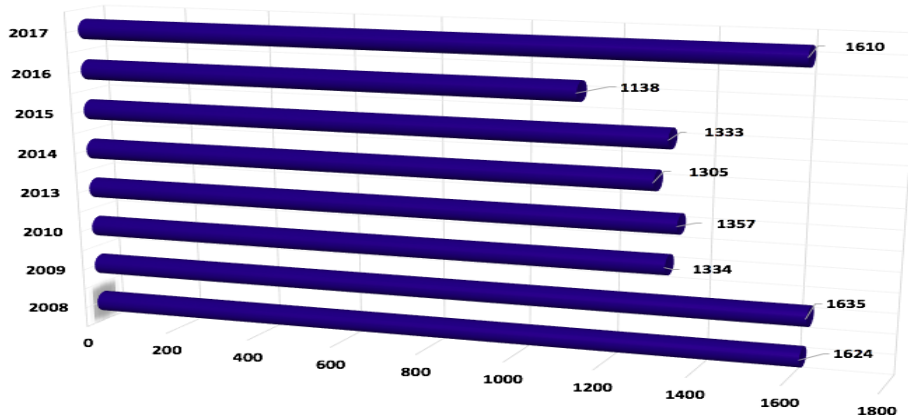
of understanding of democratic and national processes.<sup>1</sup> This planning document emphasizes that studying of social sciences encourages creativity, develops critical thinking skills and provided people with the volume of knowledge and skills, required by the democratic society.

The next top ranking planning document is the *Latvian National Development Plan* (hereinafter in the text – the NDP), which formulates the medium-term development vision of Latvia. The goal and priorities of NDP should be closely linked to the 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy; however, NDP states other priorities as the long-term development document. The main purpose of the medium-term development, defined by the NDP, is national economic advancement that could be achieved by mastering information technologies, exact sciences and languages, which would encourage competitiveness of Latvian economics and allow creating products and services with high added value.<sup>2</sup> The priorities of encouraging civic participation and developing of creative and critical thinking, included in the Latvian long-term development document, **fail to appear** in the medium-term planning document. This means that a gap is forming at the highest development planning level between the long-term and the medium-term development priorities, where the importance of social and humanitarian sciences is emphasized in long-term perspective, whereas the medium-term planning document focuses on the so called STEM (*science, technology, engineering, mathematics*) or exact sciences.

Reduction of the state-financed study places for social sciences at the higher education level serves as one of evidence of the fact that social science studies are enjoying less attention as the exact sciences (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Number of state-funded study places in social science programs



Source: Ministry of Education and Science.<sup>3</sup>

The number of state-funded study places in the social science programs has decreased over the course of ten years, which contradicts the importance of social science disciplines in encouraging of civic participation and creativity, mentioned in the 2030 SDS. Data in Figure 1 demonstrate that in practice the Latvian education system is rather subject to the medium-

<sup>1</sup> Communication on approval of 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia: Law of the Republic of Latvia. 29.06.2010. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. 2010/101, 8.

<sup>2</sup> On the 2014-2020 National Development Plan of Latvia: Law of the Republic of Latvia. 09.01.2013. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. 2013/6.11, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Education and Science. *Education. Higher education. Higher education financing model. State-funded study places in 2018*. <http://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/izglitiba/augstaka-izglitiba/augstakas-izglibas-finansesanas-modelis/valsts-budzeta-finansetas-studiju-vietas-2018-gada?highlight=WyJidWR6ZXRhliwidmldGFzliwyMDE4LjNjYWRhliwJ2dhZGELCjIdWRcdTAxN2VldGEgdmIldFw1MDEwMXMlLCJ2aWV0YXNmMjAxOCIsInZpZXRhcyAyMDE4IGdhZGElClYmDE4IGdhZGEXQ>

term planning document than the national long-term development strategy. Expert interviews were conducted to provide a more inclusive view on the subject at hand. Education expert Aija Kļaviņa explains the increasing role of the exact sciences with the assumption that social sciences seem less “attractive” from the perspective of national economy than IT specialists, engineers and mathematicians, since the actual contribution in the form of the gross domestic product from the social sciences is probably distinctly less. The expert revealed that exact science studies, as well as information technology programs have a powerful lobby in Latvia, as the banks and the leading IT companies are lacking in employees with corresponding qualification, therefore the companies invest a lot of money to have this issue resolved at national level. Next factor, which affects a better mastering of social science disciplines, is also the attitude of the parents toward social sciences and the understanding of whether in-depth studies of social sciences (this applies both to school and university level) will enable the young person to create a career and earn a decent living; namely, the expert believes that the parents often assume that young people can earn more with exact science programs. Considering the gradual decrease of state-funded places in the social science programs and increasing emphasis on the exact sciences, the role of the civic education gained in primary and secondary schools is increasing – the primary and the secondary schools have to provide a sufficient volume of knowledge and skills in relation to the critical thinking and civic participation to enable the young people to understand the basic elements of functioning of the state, democratic values and would be aware of themselves as part of an active civil society regardless of the chosen study program. Senior school specialist of the General education school department, Ludmila Margeviča states that school provides individual with theoretical knowledge of the state. In turn, basic knowledge of the state is expected at the university. Civic position of the individual is formed at the university, just as the first notions for those, who intend to get involved in politics in the future – they will be our future national leaders or government officials, who will have to bear great responsibility for their actions as a politician.

Education Law stipulates that primary education is mandatory in Latvia, while secondary education is a voluntary choice of young people and their parents, based on availability of secondary education and social-economic circumstances. It follows from here that, upon graduating from 9<sup>th</sup> grade, the knowledge and skills of young people should be sufficient to allow them efficiently getting involved in the national and social processes. One of the most challenging aspects in this context is the fact that a young person becomes a lawful member of the civil society at the age of 18, which is regulated in Latvia by the Law on Elections of the Republic City Council and Municipality Council,<sup>1</sup> the Law on Elections of Saeima,<sup>2</sup> as well as the Elections to the European Parliament Law.<sup>3</sup> This means that there is a gap between the graduation from 9<sup>th</sup> grade and first active participation in elections.

In regard to the content included in the social sciences and the applied teaching methods, the National Centre for Education has developed guidelines on the subjects to be included in the study process and the competences and skills to be mastered, putting emphasis on the necessity to involve students in the exchange of opinions. Education expert Aija Kļaviņa, who was interviewed within the framework of the study, states that the content of the social science disciplines to be mastered both in primary and in secondary school has been designed so that theory makes up for one third of the total time specified for these study subjects, whereas the remaining two third are intended for practical participation, for example, discussions, group works, excursions, which largely depend on the personal initiative of the teacher. At the same time the expert expresses an opinion that one of the most problematic issues in the general education system of Latvia at the moment is preparedness of teachers and motivation to seek new solutions, oriented towards practical involvement, which would encourage their interest in political processes and also promote civic participation in long-term perspective. Specifically, the vision of the teacher, applied methods and creating interest in events that take place around and involvement in them determines the attitude of the students towards information consumption, cooperation with other people and attitude towards their own place in democratic society. Senior officer of the National Centre for Education Sandra Falka suggests development of an individual course on different public administration, political and law elements, designed specifically for the teachers, as one of the possible solutions.

A separate study subject “Politics and Law” has been developed for the Grades 10 to 12, the purpose of which is to promote interest in politics among young people and encourage understanding of the importance of civic participation in the process

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<sup>1</sup> Law on Elections of the Republic City Council and Municipality Council: Law of the Republic of Latvia. Chapter two. Election rights. 25.01.1994. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. No 10.

<sup>2</sup> Law on Elections of Saeima: Law of the Republic of Latvia. Chapter one. General Provisions. 06.06.1995. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. No 86.

<sup>3</sup> Law on Elections of the Republic City Council and Municipality Council: Law of the Republic of Latvia. Chapter two. Election rights. 25.01.1994. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. No 10.

of formation of society and state.<sup>1</sup> Mastering this study subject ensures that the knowledge, gained at primary school level, is reinforced and avoids the three-year gap between the mastering of theoretical knowledge up to 9th grade and the first participation in any of the elections at the age of 18. However, it should be noted that the aforementioned study subject has not been included in the education content as mandatory teaching material. Mandatory study subjects from Grade 10 to 12 are Latvian language, two foreign languages, mathematics, history of Latvia and the world, chemistry, biology, physics, sports, computer science, literature and music or visual arts.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, during the high school period emphasis is put on exact science disciplines and languages. At the same time the social and humanitarian science subjects are assigned the status of optional study subjects, namely, the high school students may master at least three of the optional courses, which include economics, philosophy, geographic, psychology, politics and law, home economics, ethics, health studies and cultural studies.<sup>3</sup> One of the intermediate conclusions of the study is that the content of secondary education is closely related to the national development priority, postulated by NDP – the “economic advancement”, namely, the students mostly strengthen their knowledge in exact science disciplines and in languages with the purpose of pursuing the relevant studies at higher education level later.

The education expert Aija Kļaviņa revealed in an interview that one of the problems with mastering of social science disciplines at high school level is insufficient number of academic hours, allocated to the social module. Therefore students, who are taught the study subject “Politics and Law”, possibly, are unable to master the knowledge on various issues, related to the civic education, in a complete manner, because the time allocated to the study process is insufficient. The expert suggests combined approach to study content as one of solutions, namely, that the social, humanitarian and exact science subjects would be combined to the extent possible, as a result of which the students would gain a comprehensive view of the socially and nationally significant topics.

Third planning document, related to the education content and civic participation, is the “*Guidelines for National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy 2012-2018*” (GNICSIP). The purpose of this medium-term planning document is strengthening of the national community of Latvia, promotion of democratic values in the Latvian society and creation of an active, educated and inclusive civil society.<sup>4</sup> GNICSIPY2012-2018 address three important aspects in terms of civic youth participation. These are – the content, which is mastered during the lessons, the used teaching methods and the interaction between the teacher and the young people; the second element is extra-curricular activities and involvement of young people in these activities, and the third element is the general environment of the school, participation of the school in social events, volunteer work and attitude of the school management towards such activities in general. The objective and priorities stated in the aforementioned planning document comply with the priorities, set by the 2030 SDS regarding the role of the social sciences in the process of creation of active and educated civil society and also correspond to the theoretical aspects of the study and the opinions of the Latvian education experts on the necessity to have the content of the social science studies based on practical examples and physical involvement of the students.

Summarizing of the intermediate results of the study leads to the conclusion that civic participation of the population and civic and critical thinking skills are significant part of the long-term national development vision, emphasizing in particular the role of the social science disciplines in shaping of the aforementioned skills and encouragement of the economic creativity. At the same time it may be concluded that the long-term and medium-term planning documents demonstrate discrepancies of priorities, since the NDP is oriented towards economic advancement of Latvia, which is based on mastering of exact sciences, information technologies and languages, while no focus is paid in this planning document to the contribution of social sciences. The increasing role of the exact sciences and information technologies is reflected by the number of state-funded study places, available in the social science programs in the higher education institutions in Latvia, which has gradually decreased over the last decade, therefore contradicting the contribution of the social sciences to the national economy of Latvia and understanding of the society of democracy and importance of civic participation, emphasized by the Sustainable development strategy. As the emphasis of the exact science disciplines at the higher

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<sup>1</sup> Regulations Regarding the State General Secondary Education Standard, Subject Standards and Sample Education programmes: Cabinet Regulations No 281. Politics and Law. Standard of the subject study of general secondary education. 06.06.2013. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. No 2013/107.2.

<sup>2</sup> Education Law: Law of the Republic of Latvia. Section four. Mandatory education. 17.11.1998. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. No 343/344.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Guidelines for National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy 2012-2018: Cabinet Regulations No 542. Civic education. 21.10.2011. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. No 167 (4565).

education level grows, the importance of the primary and secondary education increases in terms of political participation perspectives and understanding of democracy of the young people. One of the most controversial intermediate conclusions of the study is that the offer of high school education complies with the priorities of the NDP, namely, to have exact science subjects, languages and art subjects as mandatory study subjects, while the social and humanitarian science disciplines shall have the status of optional subjects. Thus, the nine grade education in Latvia should ensure sufficient amount of knowledge and civic skills to allow the person to successfully participate in the public sphere, critically evaluate the political processes, discuss the principles of democracy and participate in the elections, however, the increasingly low electoral activity and low trust to government institutions rather indicate an opposite trend.

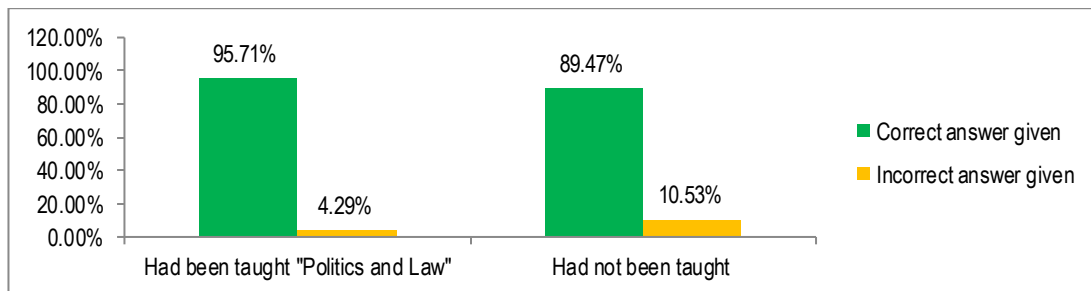
One of the most important problems of general education in Latvia according to the expert interviews is the lack of education monitoring in regard to the quality of the teachers' work, which especially concerns the social science disciplines at high school, considering the fact that both the mastering of the study subjects of the social module and passing of the relevant final examination depends on the initiative and individual interests of each student.

#### Survey results and expert view

12<sup>th</sup> grade students were questioned within the framework of the study to determine the knowledge of the young people on the state, politics, understanding of democracy and social sciences, as well as the perspectives of political participation of the young people. In order to verify the role of the social science disciplines in the knowledge on politics, possessed by the young people, the study compared young people, who had mastered the study subject "Politics and Law" during the high school period, and those, who did not have this study subject in their curriculums. In addition the expert interviews provided an expanded and in-depth view on the state educational policy in the sphere of social sciences in Latvia.

The intermediate results of the study demonstrate that majority of the questioned students have an understanding of the concept of democracy regardless of whether the student had mastered the study subject "Politics and Law" at high school. In total 91.6% of respondents gave a correct explanation of democracy from the offered answers, however, at the same time 8.4% of the respondents noted that democracy is a form of government, in which the power is implemented by the oldest party or that the power is implemented through a small group of selected people. Chart No 2 summarizes the analysis results regarding the respondent answers to the question of what democracy is.

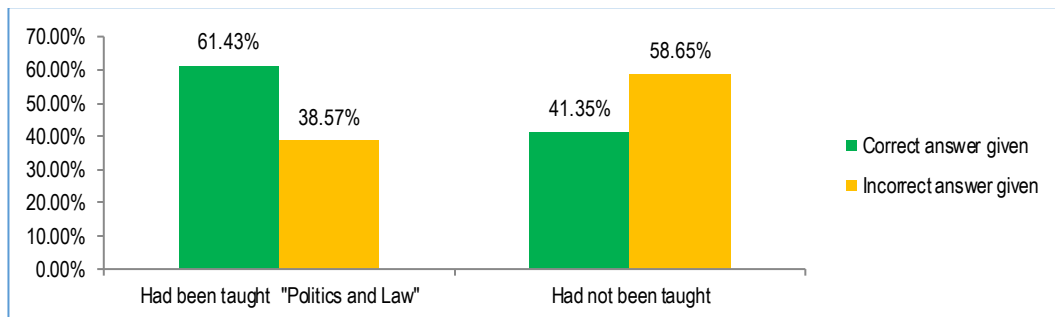
**Chart No 2. Summary of students' answers on the explanation of democracy**



Source: Chart created by the author, using the results of the questionnaire "Role of social sciences in functioning of a critically thinking society".

The results displayed in the chart confirm that the students, who had been taught the mentioned subject at school, show slightly better knowledge of explanation of democracy than the young people who had not been taught this subject. While the young people demonstrated rather good knowledge of the concept of democracy in its general context, the understanding of specific elements, characterizing democracy, is much poorer. The students were asked in the questionnaire to name the branches of power in a democratic state. 48.3% of the respondents responded correctly by indicating that branches of democracy are legislative power, executive power and judicial power. 20.2% of the respondents replied that the branches of power in democracy are constituted by Saeima, executive power and judicial power, which is not an entirely wrong answer under the context of Latvia, but is not exactly an accurate formulation of the answer.

**Chart No 3. Answers of students to the question regarding the braches of democratic government and mastering of study subject „Politics and Law” at school**

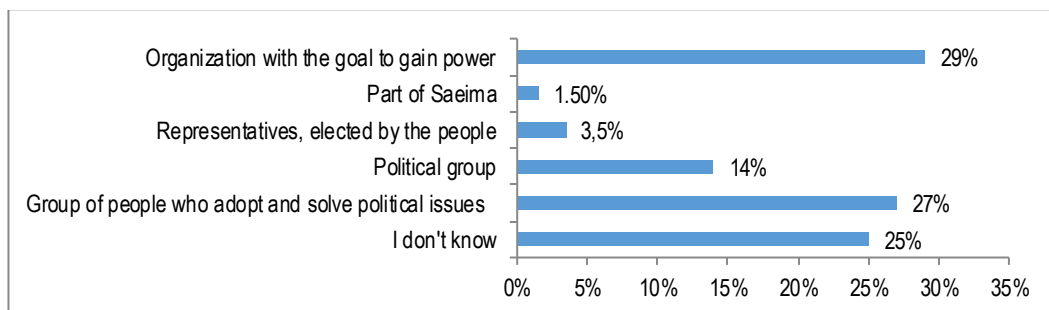


Source: Chart created by the author, using the results of the questionnaire “Role of social sciences in functioning of a critically thinking society”.

Education expert Aija Kļaviņa believes that one of the problems is caused by the lack of good materials for mastering of social sciences at high school. She states that current materials are outdated and should be updated on regular basis, since the content of the social sciences constantly changes in response to global events. That way theoretical knowledge, too, would be more related to actual social-economic and political events.

The first results obtained from the study show that in some issues there is a distinct discrepancy between the actual knowledge of the young people on various politics-related issues, and the objectives, set by the national education programs. For example, the Regulations Regarding the State Standard in Basic Education, the Subjects of Study Standards in Basic Education and Model Basic Educational Programmes stipulate that students upon graduating from the 12<sup>th</sup> grade shall understand and be able to describe main principles of functioning of a political party, however the obtained survey results indicate otherwise (see Chart No 4).<sup>1</sup>

**Chart No 4. Explanation of the political party by the respondents**



Source: Chart created by the author, using the results of the questionnaire “Role of social sciences in functioning of a critically thinking society”.

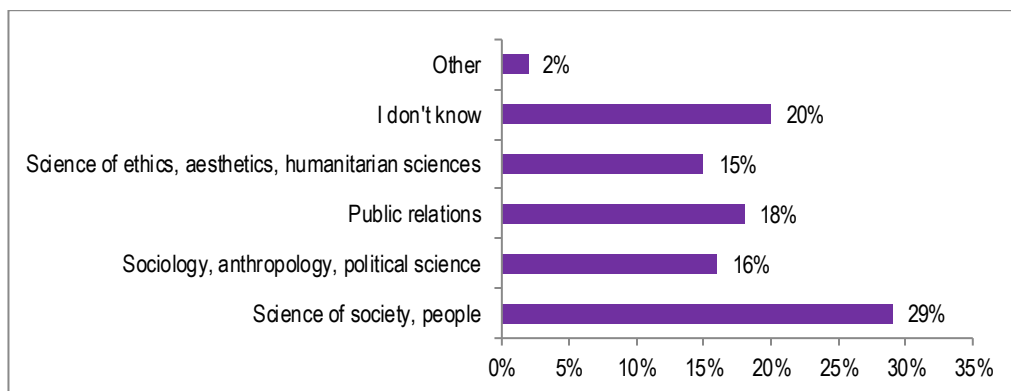
In total 29% of the questioned 12<sup>th</sup> grade students explained the essence of a political party as an organization with the goal to gain power, while every fourth student was unable to give a description of a political party. 27% of the respondents linked political party to the activity of Saeima deputies and fractions, namely, the party adopts and solves political issues within the framework of legislative power.

<sup>1</sup> Cabinet Regulations No 281. Politics and Law. Standard of the subject study of general secondary education. 06.06.2013. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*. No 2013/107.2.

Extracts from the answers of the respondents indicate that already during the school period young people have developed negative attitude towards political parties, namely, in some cases the parties are perceived as criminal organizations, which try to steal from the state and its people. Attitude towards political parties has a fundamentally important role in the civic participation of the people and the attitude towards the state in general. Negative feeling towards the parties diminishes the wish of the people to get involved in the parties and also weakens the electoral activity. The negative attitude of the young people towards the political parties can be explained by the negative feeling towards political parties, prominent in the society in general, namely, this aspect reveals the influence of both family and mass media on the understanding and opinions of the young people on the activity of political parties.

In order to understand whether the young people are aware of the importance of social sciences and their relation to democracy and understanding of the role of active and educated citizens, they were given the task to describe social sciences. The answers of the respondents were divided into several categories, which have been summarized in Chart No 5.

**Chart No 5. Answers of the students on what social sciences are**



Source: Chart created by the author, using the results of the questionnaire “Role of social sciences in functioning of a critically thinking society”.

The obtained intermediate results reveal that social sciences are mostly linked to the study of society and people, 16% of the respondents have linked social sciences to certain disciplines of science (sociology, anthropology and political science), while 18% have linked the social sciences with public relations. Both the quantitative results and the extracts of some answers lead to the conclusion that only around 45% of young people demonstrate at least minimal understanding of the social sciences. It shows that the importance of social sciences, which is emphasized in 2030 SDS of Latvia, is not reflected in the actual knowledge and elementary understanding of the young people regarding contribution of these sciences to the democracy, civil society and national economy in general.

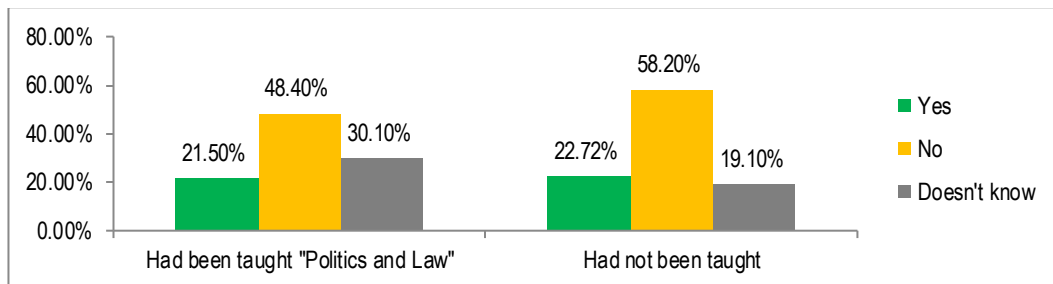
The available data show that only 1% of the total population of Latvia are involved in political parties, which is the poorest indicator among the member states of the European Union (EU).<sup>1</sup> For comparison 4.3% of the population in Estonia are involved in political parties, 4.1% in Lithuania, while the average indicator in the EU is 4.7%.<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the first intermediate results of the study indicate that the students, who had been taught the study subject “Politics and Law” at school, do not demonstrate higher potential involvement in the activity of political parties (see Chart No 6).

<sup>1</sup> Karlsonē. Līvā. In Latvia, the least people in Europe are involved in political parties. 12.08.2017. *Latvijas Sabiedriskie mediji*. <https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/latvija-vismazak-iedzivotaju-eiropa-iesaistas-politiskajas-partijas.a246474/>

<sup>2</sup> Klūga, Māris. In Latvian political parties, least people involved than in Estonia and Lithuania. Why is it? 02.02.2018. *Latvijas Sabiedriskie mediji*. <https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/latvija-partijas-daudzkart-mazak-biedru-neka-lietuva-un-igauņija.-kapecta.a262825/>



**Chart No 6. Potential involvement of young people in political parties and mastering of the study subject „ Politics and Law” at school**



Source: Chart created by the author, using the results of the questionnaire “Role of social sciences in functioning of a critically thinking society”.

The results, summarized in the chart, reveal that the young people, who had been taught the study subject “Politics and Law” at school, do not show higher potential involvement in political parties as the respondents, who had not been taught this subject at school. The revealed phenomenon can be viewed and explained from several perspectives.

Senior officer of the National Centre for Education Sandra Falka emphasizes that democracy and civic duties have been integrated in several study subjects both at primary school and high school, therefore viewing the democratic values from different perspectives. Nevertheless, despite the fact that Regulations Regarding the State Standard in Basic Education, the Subjects of Study Standards in Basic Education and Model Basic Educational Programmes stipulate that the student, having mastered this subject, shall gain understanding of the functioning of political parties and shall also acquire necessary knowledge and skills for practical political participation, the obtained study results do not show differences in perspectives of political participation between the students, who have mastered the study subject “Politics and Law”, and those who haven't.

Participation in elections is the result of civic education and confirmation of the fact that the young person is aware of his or her duty in the democratic state to participate in making of political choices. In-depth study of the perspectives of political participation of young people is important, if only from the point of view of electoral activity performance, where gradual decline of participation is observed both in Saeima and European Parliament elections (see Chart No 8 and Chart No 9 in annex).

Vice-Rector of Riga Stradiņš University professor Tatjana Kože stated in the interview that schools have vast opportunities and teachers also have been given rather great freedom in creation of the practical content, for example, by meeting representatives of municipal and governmental institutions, journalists and getting involved in the activities of non-governmental organizations or municipalities, where there might be some practice programs for young people introduced.

### Conclusions

Previous intermediate results of the study allow drawing conclusion on the existing contradictions in the list of the national development priorities, stated in the 2030 SDS and the NDP. In the long-term planning document the role of social sciences has been emphasized both in terms of civic participation and improvement of critical thinking abilities of the people and promotion of creativity. Respectively, mastering of social sciences is an important precondition to both strengthening of democracy and development of national economy and international competitiveness. Whereas the NDP puts more emphasis on the mastering of exact sciences and information technologies, which would ensure economic advancement of Latvia, while social sciences have been assigned a secondary role. The real situation in both high school period and the higher education is closer to the NDP priorities than the development directions, included in the 2030 SDS, since exact science disciplines, languages and also art have been defined as mandatory study subjects at high school, while social and humanitarian science disciplines have been assigned the status of optional subjects. At the level of higher education the number of state-funded study places has been gradually reduced for social sciences over the last decade, which increases the importance of civic knowledge and skills, mastered at the primary and high school period. Pursuant to the Education Law only primary education is mandatory in Latvia, while acquiring of secondary education depends on the

student and the parents. It only reinforces the role of social sciences at the primary school level, namely, the civic participation knowledge and skills, acquired during the nine years' time have to be sufficient to enable the person to actively participate in the public sphere. Therefore the education policy, implemented by the state, is not consistent in regard to the priorities and development directions, stated in the SDS, where social sciences are mentioned as one of the preconditions of civic participation and development of national economy. The opinions of the experts, interviewed within the framework of the study, allow concluding that the biggest problem in teaching of social science subjects is the lack of teacher monitoring, namely, at the moment it is not possible to determine, what proportions of the content of social science studies are constituted by theory and practice.

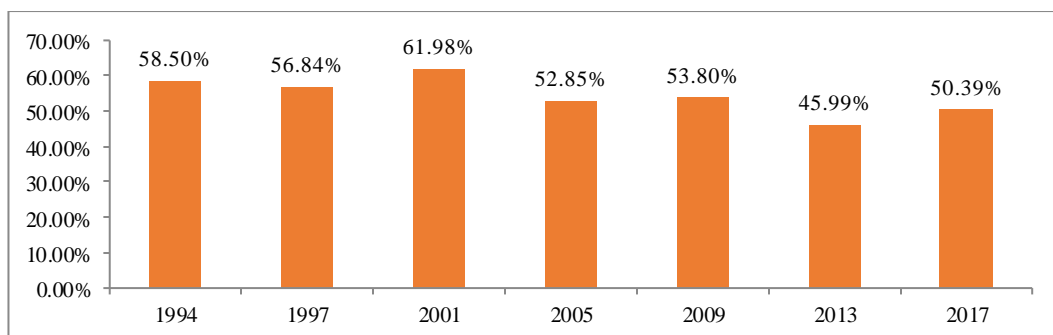
The survey results allow drawing the conclusion on both the knowledge of the young people on national and political issues and on the perspectives of their political participation. In general the young people have understanding of what democracy is in the broadest sense of this concept. No significant differences have been observed between the young people, who have mastered the study subject "Politics and Law", and those, who had not mastered this subject at school. Nevertheless, the differences in the level of knowledge are manifested by more specific questions, related to the description of democracy, for example, the young people, who have mastered the study subject "Politics and Law", are better at explaining of branches of democracy, compared to those, who had not mastered this subject. Respectively, within the framework of theoretical knowledge there is a positive link between the knowledge of the young people and the fact of whether the students have mastered the study subject "Politics and Law".

The study results clearly demonstrate that a young people, who have mastered the study subject "Politics and Law", do not show higher political participation perspectives than those, who had not mastered politics at school. There are no significant percentage differences in potential electoral activity and political party involvement between the students, who have mastered politics at school, and those who had not. This means that the objective of the study subject "Politics and Law", specified in the state education standards, has been achieved only partially, as the young people have been given provided with theoretical knowledge in general, but the practical political participation performance is the same as for the young people, who had not mastered this study subject. Therefore, judging from the perspective of political participation of the students, the state education policy in the sphere of social sciences fails to encourage participation of young people in political processes. This finding contradicts the theoretical assumptions, presented in the study, which specify that mastering of social sciences at school not only provides theoretical knowledge but also gives an impulse to real political involvement, which include participation in parties and non-governmental organizations, participation in elections, involvement in public discussions and other forms of participation.

The education experts, interviewed during the study, explain that the aforementioned finding can be related to the linkage of theory and practice within the framework of the study subjects, preparedness and involvement of teachers, as well as the interaction of parents, teachers and the school in regard to the development of civic knowledge and skills of the young people.

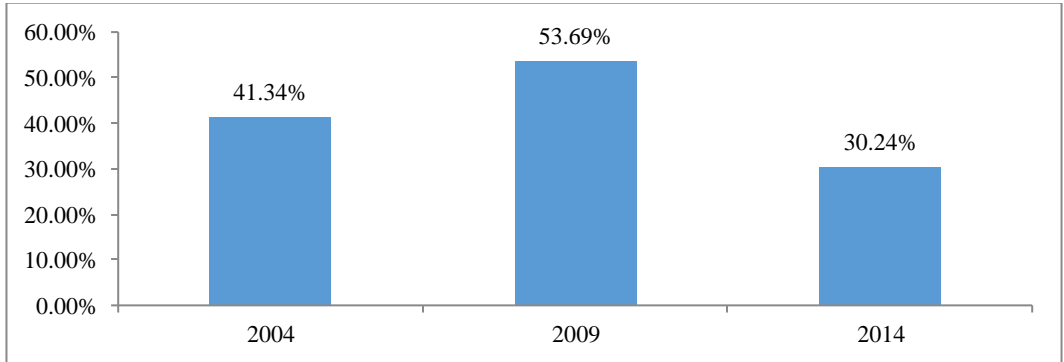
## ANNEXES

**Chart No 8. Proportion of persons who have voted in municipal elections**



**Source:** Chart created by the author, using the information, available on the website of the Central Election Commission.

**Chart No 9. Proportion of persons who have voted in European Parliament elections**



**Source:** Chart created by the author, using the information, available on the website of the Central Election Commission.

## Identity Security in Romania from Concept to Implementation in the Public Policies of Integration of Minorities / Roma Population

Mihăiescu Oana

### Abstract

The preoccupation for the field of social security / identity security ("a particular form of security of human communities in the absence of which it would not be possible to survive in history, protecting the memory and collective identity, maintaining social and cultural-symbolic cohesion in a society" identity security has been steadily increasing over the last decades as a result of the European Union's enlargement and the interest shown by the European institutions for the protection of ethnic and religious specificities, the ethno-cultural identity of the communities and the prevention of democracy, exclusion and discrimination. The concept of social security belongs to the constructivist current (the current trend in which ethnicity is a phenomenon of continuous development built in everyday life that is manifested throughout life) and was developed in the early 1980s, starting with redefining security by certain such as COPRI - Copenhagen. Social security refers to the survival of a community as a cohesive unity; his referent object is "large scale collective identities that can function independently of the state". Societal security is concerned with the ability to sustain, within acceptable acceptability conditions, the traditional elements of language, culture, identity, cultural and religious customs. Ole Waever's identity security (social security) refers to "preserving, in acceptable conditions of evolution, the traditional patterns of language, culture, association, and national, religious and customary identity." Thus, we can say that social security refers to situations where companies perceive a threat to identity. Regarding the situation of Romania, though, during the two decades of transition to a democratic regime, the responsibility of the Romanian citizen has come to be pursued with minority integration (wishing to ensure the identity security for them), adopting 200 decreets by setting up institutions to deal in the areas of minority inclusion and allocating funding to support an organization that considers the role of the intrusional civil society to be more effective is still deficient in this area. The purpose of this article is to explore the concepts of minority, ethnicity, social integration, public minority integration policies, citizenship, integration and identity security, starting from the idea that identity should be understood both as a social process and as a power instrument. It will also review the impact of minority integration policies focusing on the Roma minority on identity security and outline the possible threats / opportunities for understanding and implementing the concept of identity security in public policies for minorities / Roma.

**Keywords:** security identity, minority, social integration, social process

### Introduction

Any debate about security / insecurity should leave the social perception of risk if we admit that security / insecurity is a construction socially massive perceptions. For a sociological approach, common knowledge, responsible for how various risks are decrypted, is encapsulated in social representations specific to a social group. In the view of security studies, social representations to which sociology refers are conceptualized as a security imaginary, a concept that has both a formal and an informal dimension. From a formal point of view, the security imagination refers to the elite's perception of the position of a state in the distribution of world power. This perception, strongly influenced by the experience of statehood, is reflected in the security culture of a state, through which exploration can draw conclusions about the doxes (the automatism of thought) interleaved in the perception of the elite, which strongly influence the geostrategic decision in a state. From an informal point of view, the security imagination focuses on how an ethno-religious group is in the state, as well as on interactions with other ethno-religious groups on the territory of a State or outside that State. The two levels of security imagery are fundamental components of any collective identity. The central endorsement of the article is that identity security can be studied either formally, focusing on strategic narratives that reveal the elite's security imagination, or from an informal point of view, in order to highlight the perceptions of an ethno-religious group in relation to its relative

power. More specifically, studying identity security as an informal security imaginary involves shifting the emphasis from the security policy area and security discourse to day-to-day or day-to-day security, starting from the premise that security is "a social construct based on certain connections, emotions, trust and intimacy.

### **Theoretical and methodological aspects**

In the framework of this subchapter, I will present the minorities, ethnicity, integration and social integration notions and the main sources regarding ethnicity and the main models of integration, pluralism / multiculturalism, assimilation, marginalization, formal inclusion.

### **Ethnic minority and ethnicity. The main currents of ethnicity.**

Ethnicity has been defined as: "the social group a person belongs to, and either identifies with or is identified with by others, as a result of a mix of cultural and other factors including language, diet, religion, ancestry and physical features traditionally associated with race" (Bhopal, 2004, p. 442).

It is important to make a distinction between the concepts of 'race' and 'ethnicity'. Race is a socially meaningful category of people who share biologically transmitted traits that are obvious and considered important. In contrast to the idea of race, ethnicity simply means a shared cultural heritage (Goodfriend, 2010, p. 19).

Ethnic minorities are people with ethnic origins different from the majority of the public. People of first, second or later generations, who can be distinguished from the majority of people living in a specific country or region, through their color of skin, family names, specific habits or behavior and who can be identified as a minority in regard to most inhabitants of a specific country. Ethnic minority covers a wide range of people in certain situations: historical national minorities, migrants, immigrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers or people from former colonies and people with trans-national identities.

In the European area, "ethnicity" is not perceived like a synonymous of "ethnic minority", but as a determinant element of the nation<sup>1</sup>.

Making an inventory of the main definition and concepts regarding ethnicity, there are four main theoretical approaches that underpin the study of ethnicity. These are primordialism, instrumentalism, materialism and constructivism.

The theory of Primordialism, in relation to ethnicity, argues that "ethnic groups and nationalities exist because there are traditions of belief and action towards primordial objects such as biological factors and especially territorial location".<sup>2</sup>

This argument relies on a concept of kinship, where members of an ethnic group feel they share characteristics, origins or sometimes even a blood relationship. "Primordialism assumes ethnic identity as fixed, once it is constructed".<sup>3</sup>

Instrumentalist theory is based on the idea that national identity, nationalism and ethnicity were created by elites and that ethnicity is a phenomenon that can be changed, built or even manipulated to achieve economic benefits and to achieve certain political goals. According to the Elite Theory, the leaders of a modern state use and manipulate the perception of ethnic identity in order to promote their own goals and to maintain the power. Thus, ethnicity, according to this approach, is determined by the struggle of elites within a particular entity, in a certain political and economic context.<sup>4</sup> In line with this concept, ethnic groups are considered to be policy creations, created and manipulated by elites' culture to gain access to power and resources.

Materialist approaches to ethnicity are relatively underdeveloped in the literature. 'Crude' Marxist theories, including the work of Michael Hechter (1978), view ethnicity as an epiphenomenon, or a result, of class relations. These crude Marxist theories also suggest that violence between ethnically aligned groups is the result of economic inequalities and elite exploitation. The claims of crude Marxists received heavy empirical criticism from a wide range of scholars. It is now

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1 John Milton Yinger, (1994), *Source of strength? Source of conflict?*, SUN Y Press, p.10.

2 Alan Barnard, Jonathan Spencer, (2002), *Encyclopedia of social and cultural anthropology* (Taylor & Francis, p.192

3 Mark Robert Kreitzer, (2003), *Toward a covenantal understanding of ethnicity: an interdisciplinary approach* (Reformed Theological Seminary), p. 40.

generally 2002). Acknowledged that ethnicity is not a product of class relations and that there is no one-to-one relationship between the two categories.

Constructivist theory is based on the idea that ethnicity is a constantly changing phenomenon, not being a basic human condition. The supporters of this trend claim that "ethnic groups are only products of social-human interaction, maintained only to the extent that they are sustained in quality of social constructs. The idea of ethnicity serves as an umbrella for different communities because individuals as part of an ethnic group can obtain additional rights."<sup>1</sup>

The existence of these notions regarding the concepts of "ethnicity" and "ethnocity" allows for a multidimensional interpretation of these enormous enomens. The approach through the three conceptual trends allows a better structure of the main theoretical perceptions. Thus, according to primordialist theory, ethnicity is determined at birth and remains unchanged throughout life. Instrumentalist theory addresses ethnicity as a phenomenon based on symbols and myths that is exploited by leaders for the purposes of pragmatics and for achieving their own interests. The third approach is illustrated by the constructivist theory, which claims that ethnic identity is something that people "build" in specific social and historical contexts to promote their own interests, ethnicity being fluid and subjective. Therefore, each of these currents shows that ethnocity and ethnicity remain basic elements in the constitution of the nation-state.

### **Integration. Social integration**

Integration was first studied by Park and Burgess in 1921 through the concept of assimilation. They defined it as "a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitude of other persons and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life."<sup>2</sup> While some scholars offered an assimilation theory, arguing that immigrants would be assimilated into the host society economically, socially and culturally over successive generations, others developed a multiculturalism theory, anticipating that immigrants could maintain their ethnic identities through the integration process to shape the host society with a diversified cultural heritage. Extending from the assimilation theory, a third group of scholars proposed a segmented integration theory, stressing that different groups of migrants might follow distinct trajectories towards upward or downward mobility on different dimensions, depending on their individual, contextual and structural factors.

Social integration is a complex idea, which means different things to different people. To some, it is a positive goal, implying equal opportunities and rights for all human beings. In this case, becoming more integrated implies improving life chances. To others, however, increasing integration may conjure up the image of an unwanted imposition of conformity. And, to still others, the term in itself does not necessarily imply a desirable or undesirable state at all. It is simply a way of describing the established patterns of human relations in any given society. Thus, in the latter view, one pattern of social integration may provide a more prosperous, just or humane context for human beings than another; but it is also possible for one pattern of social integration to be markedly different from another without being either better or worse.

### **Sociological theories of social integration**

The rapport of an individual, as social actor and society, as intrinsection order, also affirms the role of the individual actor and the intriguing statesman of the intrinsection order. Social theorist moves between the order of the divine, on the theme of integrating the individual in a rallied state in the institutions through the "effector of the soldier" of the establishment / instilance of the analysis. Autors give the alliance a complete move, indicating that they have the ability to operate / distribute the infrastructure in a sustainable manner, allied to the breakaway.

#### Functionalist sociologists

As a theoretical orientation of a traditionalist approach to social phenomena, functionalist analysis was mainly grounded in the work of American sociologists (B.Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown) with a broad development in the concept of American functionalist structuralism represented by T. Parsons și R.K. Merton.

#### Constructivist sociologist

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<sup>1</sup> Santosh C. Saha, *The politics of ethnicity and national identity* (Peter Lang, 2007), p.45

<sup>2</sup> Gans, Herbert (1992). "Second Generation Decline: Scenarios for the Economic and Ethnic Futures of Post-1965 American Immigrants". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 15: 173–92

The analysis of the type of struggle that has been achieved in the protection of the earth has given rise to an individual capable of dispersal in the retreatment, endeavoring and rhetoric of the rulluri, of the extraordinary procession of the eu and the univier. They involve the idea that the individual and the group to be integrated are equally actors and agents of action, actors capable of selecting to spawn to produce and communicate information in the practical form so they become transmitters and simple recipients of the message. Social actors are considered capable of thinking, always aware of what they are doing, free to pots for an behavior or another.

### **Main social integration models**

Human rights always refer to relationships between members of a social group. These are perceived as a command that tells what is "normal" what is expected in relationships he state of "normality" is characteristic of historical and cultural variations. Modern law describes the relationships and cooperative behavior of individuals living in a community, group. These relationships ensure the stability and continuity of the community and are therefore "fixed" and transmitted from one generation to the next through different forms of collective social memory: custom or tradition, knowledge, values and ideologies, jurisprudence, customs, moral-legal norms, interpretation. By favoring ommunity groups and different cultural traditions, different phenomena of regional integration and globalization transform sociological and anthropological analysis into direct sources of law. States that promote the minority rights of the minorities can enjoy several advantages, such as: effective assumption of values, such as recognition and pluralism, in terms of institutional practices; ethno-linguistic accommodation of ethno-linguistic minorities involving an increase in internal political stability, increasing political rating on the international arena in terms of assessing the liberal nature of democracy, increasing citizens' trust in the various institutions of local or central administrations; a reduction in the situations of subjective discrimination

### Multiculturalism

In the multiculturalism the cultures, races, and ethnicities, particularly those of minority groups, deserve special acknowledgement of their differences within a dominant political culture. That acknowledgement can take the forms of recognition of contributions to the cultural life of the political community as a whole, a demand for special protection under the law for certain cultural groups, or autonomous rights of governance for certain cultures. Multiculturalism is both a response to the fact of cultural pluralism in modern democracies and a way of compensating cultural groups for past exclusion, discrimination, and oppression. Most modern democracies comprise members with diverse cultural viewpoints, practices, and contributions. Many minority cultural groups have experienced exclusion or the denigration of their contributions and identities in the past. Multiculturalism seeks the inclusion of the views and contributions of diverse members of society while maintaining respect for their differences and withholding the demand for their assimilation into the dominant culture. Some more-radical multicultural theorists have claimed that some cultural groups need more than recognition to ensure the integrity and maintenance of their distinct identities and contributions. In addition to individual equal rights, some have advocated for special group rights and autonomous governance for certain cultural groups. Because the continued existence of protected minority cultures ultimately contributes to the good of all and the enrichment of the dominant culture, those theorists have argued that the preserving of cultures that cannot withstand the pressures to assimilate into a dominant culture can be given preference over the usual norm of equal rights for all. Multiculturalism is closely associated with identity politics, or political and social movements that have group identity as the basis of their formation and the focus of their political action. Those movements attempt to further the interests of their group members and force issues important to their group members into the public sphere. In contrast to multiculturalism, identity politics movements are based on the shared identities of participants rather than on a specifically shared culture. However, both identity politics and multiculturalism have in common the demand for recognition and a redress for past inequities. Multiculturalism raises important questions for citizens, public administrators, and political leaders. By asking for recognition of and respect for cultural differences, multiculturalism provides one possible response to the question of how to increase the participation of previously oppressed groups.

### Pluralism

Pluralism assumes that diversity is beneficial to society and that autonomy should be enjoyed by disparate functional or cultural groups within a society, including religious groups, trade unions, professional organizations, and ethnic minorities. Arend Lijphart considers that only a certain form of democracy, the consociational one, makes it possible to maintain democracy in a plural society. In such a democracy, "the centrifugal tendencies inherent in a plural society are neutralized by the attitudes and cooperative behavior of the leaders of different segments of the population." In modern democratic

society, the connection between people is a political one. Living together does not mean sharing the same religion, culture, or obeying with the same authorities, but assuming to be a citizen of the same political organization "Citizenship is the source of social bonding." Only citizens of a democratic nation see their political rights fully recognized.

### Marginalization

Marginalization is the process of pushing a particular group or groups of people to the edge of society by not allowing them an active voice, identity, or place in it. Through both direct and indirect processes, marginalized groups may be relegated to a secondary position or made to feel as if they are less important than those who hold more power or privilege in society. Individuals and groups can be marginalized on the basis of multiple aspects of their identity, including but not limited to: race, gender or gender identity, ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, sexuality, age, and/or religion. Some individuals identify with multiple marginalized groups, and may experience further marginalization as a result of their intersecting identities. Gery Roggers has identified categories or patterns of social exclusion present in various definitions, with the statement that their use varies depending on the regional specificity, ie the continent where the definition is being developed. The top five categories are marginalization from goods and services, the labor market, land ownership, security and human rights. The sixth category is more vaguely formulated, namely the marginalization / exclusion relationship - economic and social development strategies and refers to the social costs of the social adjustment programs. In Romania, the definition proposed in the Social Policy Dictionary refers primarily to the failure to fully achieve citizens' rights, both due to structural causes of socio-economic nature and individual causes.

### Assimilation

Assimilation is the one-way process by which a group receives, internalizes and shares values, norms and patterns of behavior or lifestyles specific to another group they are in contact with, the process of which the first group is absorbed in the dominant culture and its cultural identity is replaced by that of the dominant group.

### Social inclusion

Social inclusion is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society—improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity. An inclusive society should be based on mutual respect and solidarity, with equal opportunities and decent living standards for all - where diversity is seen as a source of strength and not as a divider. In every country, certain groups—whether migrants or minorities—confront barriers that prevent them from fully participating in their nation's political, economic, and social life. These groups are excluded through a number of practices ranging from stereotypes, stigmas, and superstitions based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity, or disability status. Such practices can rob them of dignity, security, and the opportunity to lead a better life. There is a moral imperative to address social exclusion. Left unaddressed, exclusion of disadvantaged groups can also be costly. And the costs—whether social, political, or economic—are likely to be substantial. One study found that exclusion of the ethnic minority Roma cost Romania 887 million euros in lost productivity. In addition, exclusion also has damaging consequences for human capital development.

### Citizenship

Citizenship is the status of a person recognized under the custom or law as being a legal member of a sovereign state or belonging to a nation. A person may have multiple citizenships. A person who does not have citizenship of any state is said to be stateless, while one who lives on state borders whose territorial status is uncertain is a border-lander. Nationality is often used as a synonym for citizenship in English<sup>1</sup> – notably in international law – although the term is sometimes understood as denoting a person's membership of a nation (a large ethnic group).[3] In some countries, e.g. the United States, the United Kingdom, nationality and citizenship can have different meanings (for more information, see Nationality versus citizenship).

Comparing the models of integration presented above under the legal (citizenship), social, religious aspects the following occurred:

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1 Weis, Paul (1979). Nationality and Statelessness in International Law. Sijthoff & Noordhoff. p. 3. ISBN 9789028603295.



Integration model	Pluralism/Multiculturalism	Assimilation	Marginalization/ formal inclusion
Legal/political aspect	ethnic minorities have the possibility to obtain the citizenship of the host state the political formations of ethnic groups are supported ethnic minorities participate actively in the political life of the state	ethnic minorities can acquire the citizenship of the host state the state does not encourage the formation of political organizations of ethnic groups the political mobilization of ethnic groups is discouraged	the possibility of ethnic minorities to acquire citizenship is reduced or even impossible ethnic groups lack political rights. ethnic parties are forbidden
Social – economic aspects	public institutions are encouraged to introduce the principles of ethnic pluralism into their policies and programs ethnic minorities have equal access to health care, education, etc there are equal opportunities for minority workers in the labor market	educational integrationist policies equal access to social services	living conditions that encourage the segregation of ethnic groups unequal access to the labor market, education or social services
Cultural – religious aspects	state support for the promotion and expression of cultural and religious specificity school curriculum is based on the principles of multiculturalism and there are teaching programs in ethnic minority languages	there is opposition from society and the state regarding the public manifestation of cultural and religious beliefs is forbidden and / or discouraged the construction of monuments and religious buildings	no measures have been taken to facilitate the access of ethnic groups to the social sphere and to education segregation policies in educational institutions

**Integration public policies of minorities / ethnic groups from the perspective of the three main institutions of integration, namely education, employment and civic participation.**

Romania has created the legal framework to guarantee and secure the rights of national and ethnic minorities, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, adopted by the Council of Europe, being ratified since 1995. Since 1993, based on the Copenhagen criteria, Romania has started the preparations to join NATO and the EU. That socio-political context has allowed the politics of the Government to be reoriented towards various categories of population that were severely affected by the transition from the planned economy to the market economy, for example the Roma minority. The Roma minority from Romania is the most exposed to the risks of social exclusion, is discriminated and has an unequal access to education, to the labor market, to decent housing conditions, to social and health services. Mainly influenced by the evolution of the Romanian and international political scene, the method of approaching the Roma minority was put into legislative and institutional practice and meant the enacting of some solutions, such as: the set up of some institutions to represent the Roma minority and to observe their rights, the drafting of some public policies explicitly for the Roma or implicitly for the vulnerable groups, attracting and managing funds from the European Commission, World Bank, BIRD and other international organizations. In the period 2001-2011 several public policies were drafted, where the Roma represented the target group (targeting). (ex. The national strategies for the Roma from the year 2001 and 2011, the Inclusion Decade).

Education

The access to education for all members of society irrespective of their psycho-physical, intellectual, socio-economic, family, ethnic or religious particularities is a priority objective for all education systems in most countries, but none can demonstrate that it has managed to meet. In Romania, the most affected category of population are the children from the rural areas, especially the Roma children. The rate of kindergarten enrollment of the Roma children is 40% smaller than the rate of the majority population<sup>1</sup>. 44% of Roma children aged between 7-11 years present a risk of school dropout<sup>2</sup>. In

1 World Bank Study. Toward and Equal Start: Closing the Early Learning gap for Roma Children in Eastern Europe, 2012, page 12.

2 UNICEF Romania, Country programme action plan 2013/2017, pag.3.

2012, approximately 400.000 Roma children from primary school were not going to school on a regular basis<sup>1</sup>. Over 75% of Roma children do not graduate from gymnasium<sup>2</sup>. Two of ten Roma children do not go to school, and the most frequently reason invoked by the parents is related to the lack of financial resources. One of six Roma parents explains the weak participation of the children in schools through ethnic discrimination.<sup>3</sup> The schools do not have efficient strategies to prevent the dropout phenomenon, they take action only when it is already too late and also, in the moment when the share of Roma children in schools is growing there is the occurrence of a segregation phenomenon at the class level, accompanied by a decrease in the quality of education and of the material endowments of the respective institution.

The Ministry of National Education (MEN) has identified in the Roma inclusion strategy in 2011 a set of 11 measures that refer to including the preschool and the school aged children in some form of education, reducing the absenteeism in the pre-university education, at the same time with the measures that ensure the quality of the education with an emphasize on the management of the inclusive education. The disaggregation, non-discrimination, the continuation of the affirmative measures and the monitoring of the educational system structures would respond to the indicator of the 2020 Strategy that has as objective to include until the year 2020 all the children in the education system.

Alongside the measures from the 2011 Roma strategy, other measures to promote the participation of the children in schools, applied according to the Law of education, are as follows: summer camps for the children aged between 3-6 years old; "The second chance" for those who exceeded the school age; "School after school" for the pupils included in the primary education; "Functional teaching"; "Bagel and milk" for preschool and school children; Scholarships for high school students; Affirmative measures for high school and university students; The network of inspectors, professor and teachers for the Romani language and the history of the Roma people; Summer schools for the Romani language; School contests for the Romani language; Distance learning; The school mediator The school counselor and assistant; Scholarships for the Roma students (in general).

### Employment

Along with the process of joining the European Union, Romania has adopted strategies and measures to ensure the achievement of the first objective of the European Employment Strategy. The Roma people from Romania have a reduced participation on the official labor market, but have a high participation on the unofficial labor market, without social security mechanisms. The INS data from 2002 are showing that <sup>4</sup>the employment rate was 36%, while other 36% were looking for a job and 28% were inactive (in comparison with an employment rate of 58%, and an unemployment rate of 7,7%, at national level). Regarding the situation of the unemployed people and of the people looking for a job, the share of Roma unemployed people is 21%. <sup>5</sup>As employed persons, the Roma work on their own, only 10-15% of them are wage workers. Of these, most of them have no formal qualification, they either carry out activities that do not require a qualification, for example cleaning lady, janitor, garbage man or park worker. Per total, of the employed population, the young Roma of 15 years and over, 38% work as unqualified workers, 32% hold qualified jobs (workers, salespersons), 9% work in agriculture and 13% have traditional Roma jobs.<sup>6</sup> The economical activities that the young Roma carry out are mostly temporarily, seasonal or occasional, fact that indicates a massive underemployment at the level of this population category.

Part of the Roma inclusion strategy from 2011 Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Protection and Elderly has enacted 22 measures such as active measures, according to Law nr. 76/2002 regarding the insurance system for unemployment and the incentives for employment, updated (information, counseling, qualification courses) and measures in the field of social economy (the law project on social economy is in the process of being approved) for developing of businesses, setting up SME, schemes for micro-grants and activities that produce income, apprenticeships and tutorships, job opportunities for

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1 UNICEF Romania, Country programme action plan 2013/2017, pag.3.

2 UNICEF Romania, Country programme action plan 2013/2017, pag.3.

3 Cace, S., Preoteasa, A. M., Tomescu, C. and Stănescu, S.M. (coord.) (2010) Legal and equal on the labor market for the Roma communities. A diagnose of the factors that influence the employment level of the Roma population in Romania, Bucharest, Editura Expert, 2010

4 Country Report. The situation of the Roma people in Romania, 2011 between social inclusion and migration, published by the Soros Foundation, Bucharest, 2012, project POSDRU.

5 The comparative analysis data report from the Inclusion Barometer, drafted by the Community Development Agency "Together", 2010.

6 ICCV (2010). A research carried out in July 2010. Project POSDRU.

women based on flexibility, including partnerships between the MMFPSPV through its local structures and the relevant players on the labor market.

### Civic participation

The representation of ethnic minorities is an important mechanism for accommodating diversity at national level. Active participation in political decisions, especially in areas that concern them directly, is one of the essential rights of persons belonging to national minorities. This principle is also enshrined in the most important international treaty on minorities, the Framework Convention for the Protection of Minorities. Romania ensures the participation of national minorities in the decision-making process that does not otherwise represent. This mechanism was considered to have mainly symbolic value because it offers the possibility of representing the National Minorities in the Parliament.<sup>1</sup>

### **The theory of identity security**

The concept of social security belongs to the constructivist trend (current ethnicity is a phenomenon of continuous development, built in the day-to-day life with a lifelong manifestation) and was developed in the early 80's, starting with the redefinition of security by some institutes for example COPRI - Copenhagen. In the paper "Security: a new framework of analysis, Buzan et al" delimited state security in 5 distinct sectors, conceptualized around objects and actors (military, environmental, economic, social and political). Societal security is influenced by the other four sectors of state security (the military which concerns the dual interaction of the state of offensive and defensive army capability, a policy aimed at organizational stability of states, governing systems and ideologies that legitimize them, economic regarding access to resources, finances and markets, necessary to support the state at an acceptable level of welfare and power, environment that refers to the maintenance of local and world biosphere as the essential support on which all human actions depend) but does not overlap with them. Social security refers to the survival of a community as a cohesive unit; its referent object is "large scale collective identities that can operate independently of the state".

Societal security is concerned with the capacity to support traditional language, culture, identity, cultural and religious customs within acceptable conditions.

According to Buzan, "The organizational concept of the social sector is identity. Societal insecurity exists when communities of any kind are defining an evolution or potential as a threat to their survival as community [entities]. Social insecurity occurs when "a society fears that it will not be able to live as such" and comes from:

- Migration: The influx of people will "overcome or dilute" the identity of a group, the need to define Britishness;
- Vertical competition: Integration of a group into a wider organization, Euroscepticism in terms of EU integration, national-separatist claims;
- Horizontal competition: The group is forced to integrate more influential identities into their own identities, minority groups in a country.

The first researcher to use the term identity for the first time is Barry Buzan in 1994 in his work "Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe" with reference to "collectives and their identity". According to him, identity security emerged as a result of interethnic conflicts in the 1990s in the former socialist countries, the states of East Africa and the former Soviet republics of Central Asia and Caucaz. This term of identity security (social security) referred to "the ability of a society to maintain its essential character in a context of uncertainty and real or potential threats" and referred to the threats that may arise in the collective identity of social groups large, from peoples and nations to civilizations. Ole Waever's identity security (social security) refers to "preserving, in acceptable conditions, the traditional patterns of

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<sup>1</sup> Monitorizarea activității parlamentare a reprezentanților minorităților naționale, 2004-2007, CRDE, Septembrie 2007, Activitatea parlamentarilor în sesiunea februarie-iunie 2007, IPP, 2007

language, culture, association, and national, religious, and habitual identity." Thus, we can say that social security refers to situations where companies perceive a threat to identity.

## Conclusion

Regarding the situation of Romania, though, during the two decades of transition to a democratic regime, the responsibility of the Romanian citizen has come to be pursued with minority integration (wishing to ensure the identity security for them), adopting 200 decreets by setting up institutions to deal in the areas of minority inclusion and allocating funding to support an organization that considers the role of the intrusional civil society to be more effective is still deficient in this area. The dialogue between all the targeted actors that would be needed to achieve these objectives would ensure the settlement of the national minority regime in Romania on the basis of solid consensus and social acceptance, preventing the risks of a vulnerability that could demolish in the event of political changes an important part of the achievements so far. The highlighted measures involve effort, patience and costs but would certainly contribute to strengthening a tolerant interethnic climate based on acceptance, mutual respect and interethnic co-operation in Romania. The desideratum at the European Union level regarding ethnic integration is the further development of the objectives set in 2000: increasing the number and quality of jobs, developing flexibility and security in the context of a changing working environment, modernizing social protection, promoting gender equality, combating poverty, discrimination and social exclusion.

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## Global Challenges of Social Policy on the Example of the Labor Market: The Experience of Kazakhstan

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### Abstract

The processes of globalization affect many economic and social processes, and the labor market is no exception. The situation in the labor market is always the center of attention for the state, business, and society as a whole. It determines the economic development of the country, social policy, the competitiveness of enterprises, and human capital. This article discusses global challenges such as the fourth industrial revolution, the digital transformation of society and industry, migration processes and informal employment, the problems of identifying social status for the population, and the system of accounting for social benefits. Because the labor market is experiencing the strongest impact of political, economic, social, and demographic processes, it has its own characteristics in each country, and this article discusses the internal problems of the Kazakhstan labor market. In addition, the article provides suggestions for improving social policy issues, employment through the automation of social processes and services, the digitalization of the public and private sectors, and the creation and development of information infrastructure of the labor market.

**Keywords:** digital technologies, digital government, social policy, social status, employment, labor market, unemployment

### Introduction

Currently, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO), more than 192 million people in the world are unemployed, which is 5 million people less than in 2016. The average unemployment rate is 5.6 percent (see Table 1.), and in 2019, this situation will remain unchanged. More than 700 million people in the world live in poverty. This causes severe problems of social insecurity in the population and an increase in labor-based migration. In 2013, international movement amounted to more than 232 million people, of which 89 percent of the working-age population and according to preliminary forecasts will grow.<sup>1</sup> Due to military conflicts, migration has critically affected the labor market in Europe.

The lack of employment opportunities for young people under the age of 25 is another severe global problem. The youth unemployment rate in the world is 13 percent, or 3 times higher than that of the adult population (4.3 percent). Due to demographic trends, the labor market is replenished annually by 40 million people, which requires the creation of more than 600 million new jobs in the global economy until 2030. At the same time, this is mainly in the services sector, which today accounts for about 50 percent of all employed people in the world compared with 29 percent in agriculture and 21 percent in industry.<sup>2</sup>

One of the global challenges of the labor market is the fourth industrial revolution (which includes robotics, digital technologies, process automation, nanotechnology, 3D printing, and biotechnology). On the one hand, innovation contributes to improving the productivity and efficiency of enterprises, lowering prices for products, increasing demand, expanding production and creating jobs. On the other hand, it reduces the need for labor resources, causes a reduction in the number of enterprises at enterprises using automation, and, in general, inflicts an increase in the so-called "technological" unemployment. Since 2017, the State Program "Digital Kazakhstan" has been launched in Kazakhstan, within which the digital transformation of the country's economy, the development, and creation of new modern automated

<sup>1</sup> International Labour Organization. (2018). Trends 2018. World Employment and Social Outlook

<sup>2</sup> World Development Report. (2019). The changing nature of work, World Bank

production facilities, the creation of a digital society, and the implementation of the next stage of e-Government - Digital Government are provided.

It is predicted that, on average, about 30 percent of jobs in the world may disappear because of a new wave of automation. This risk is mainly to those with professions with low and medium level qualifications (such as drivers, cashiers, attendants) because they concentrate mostly on the routine work functions.

For example, scientists Karl Frey and Michael Osborne in 2013 determined that 47 percent of the professions in the United States are at high risk of automation for 10–20 years.<sup>1</sup> Continuing this study with Citibank, in 2016, the authors extended the findings to more than 50 countries; on average in OECD countries, algorithms will replace people in 57 percent of all occupations.<sup>2</sup>

World Economic Forum experts (WEF) analyzed 15 developed and developing economies of the world covering 65 percent of the workforce and concluded that about 27 percent of jobs in the world will disappear as a result of a new wave of automation, and by the end of 2020, the number of posts will decrease by 5, 1 million units, two thirds of which are office and administrative.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, according to the OECD report, the conclusions on the reduction are somewhat conservative, as only 9 percent of employees can be replaced with algorithmic solutions.<sup>4</sup>

Globalization and technological changes have contributed to the growth of the transition from “traditional” to non-standard employment (partial, temporary, and self-employment). The number of employed in part-time jobs is increasing by about 11 million per year. This is facilitated by employer initiatives to reduce costs, as well as the very desire of employees to be more mobile and independent freelancers.

In the US, 50 million people (45 percent of the workforce) are employed with the ability to work from home at least from time to time, and 2.9 million people work remotely permanently. For example, at IBM, 128 thousand specialists (29 percent) work remotely worldwide. An employer saves an average of \$10,000 per year per employee when transferring an employee to remote work. It is estimated that by 2020, there will be a new freelancer every second in the United States.<sup>5</sup>

This type of employment is attractive because there is no hard work schedule, the employee can find a “family-work” balance, and he or she can get several sources of income from the implementation of various projects in different countries. However, there is another problem. Temporary workers are less likely to receive training sponsored by the employer, which means their skills are becoming obsolete. Besides, the growth of partial employment calls into question the existing social insurance system, which provides for only two types of work (full-time and unemployed). As a result, freelancers face difficulties in obtaining a loan and are not entitled to social and pension contributions. Therefore, a revision of social policy is now required, taking into account structural shifts like employment to ensure equality of all workers.

In Kazakhstan, this type of employment was not sufficiently widespread. Only less than 5 percent of workers in Kazakhstan are hired based on fixed-term contracts, and only 2.7 percent of employees work less than 30 hours a week, which is the lowest rate compared to OECD countries.<sup>6</sup> This is due to the legal regulation of the labor relations of the Republic of Kazakhstan and undeveloped legislation regarding fixed-term contracts and part-time employment.

### **The current state of the labor market in Kazakhstan**

Currently, according to the international classification of employment status (ISCE-93), there are two types of employment employees and self-employed. In Kazakhstan, the number of employees increased by 1.8 million people (to 6.6 million),

<sup>1</sup> Frey C.B., Osborn M.A. (2013). The future of employment: how susceptible are jobs to computerisation?

<sup>2</sup> Frey C.B., Osborn M.A., Holmes C. (2016). Technology at Work v2.0.: The future is not What it used to be. Citi GPS: Global Perspectives & Solutions

<sup>3</sup> World Economic Forum. (2018). The Future of Jobs. Report 2018

<sup>4</sup> OECD, Arntz, M., T. Gregory and U. Zierahn. (2016). The Risk of Automation for Jobs in OECD Countries: A Comparative Analysis, OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 189, OECD Publishing, Paris.

<sup>5</sup> Rashid B. (2016). The Rise of Freelancer Economy. Forbes

<sup>6</sup> OECD. (2017). Building Inclusive Labour Markets in Kazakhstan: A focus on Youth, Older Workers and People with disabilities.



the number of unemployed decreased by 184 thousand people (to 441 thousand), and the number of self-employed workers increased by 563 thousand people (up to 2.1 million).<sup>1</sup>

In the last 8 years the overall unemployment rate fell in the previous 8 years 1.6 times to 4.9 percent, and youth unemployment (15-24 years) fell 3.1 times to 3.8 percent, which is one of the lowest in the world, with the other statistics being the United States (8.7 percent), Australia (11.8 percent), Canada (11.3 percent), and Sweden (16.4 percent). Over the past eight years, there has been a positive trend in reducing unemployment in Kazakhstan. In the Global Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum for the Labor Market Efficiency component, Kazakhstan ranks 35th with an average score of 4.6, ahead of China (38th) and Russia (60th). According to official statistics, over the past eight years, the share of the informally employed population decreased by more than two times, from 37 percent to 16 percent. The related indicators for such developed countries as Finland (18 percent), Germany (16 percent), Austria (16 percent) and France (15 percent).<sup>2</sup>

As of 1 July 2018, 1.2 million people or 14 percent are employed in agriculture, 1.7 million people (20 percent) in industry and construction, and 5.7 million people (66 percent) work in the service sector in Kazakhstan. A similar trend is taking shape all over the world. In the United States, the share of the service sector in the overall structure of employment is 81 percent, as it is in the United Kingdom; in Canada, it is 79 percent, in Finland, 74 percent, and South Korea, 70 percent.<sup>3</sup>

Against the background of global trends, the internal processes of Kazakhstan influence the further development of the Kazakhstan labor market.

**First, 28 percent (about 589 thousand people) of self-employed people work “in the shadows”,** as they have no official social status. In Kazakhstan, there is no separate legal form for the self-employed, and they automatically receive an “informal” status. Also, accounting for self-employed persons is complicated due to the lack of an information system for identifying the social status of a citizen of Kazakhstan. This is a huge problem, as information changes daily, and statistics are collected only once a year. It does not show a clear operational picture and causes difficulties in calculating social benefits and compensation, which causes the possibility of abuse of public authority and manifestations of corruption violations. It also impedes the introduction of Compulsory Social Health Insurance, more accurate budget planning, and tax reforms of the universal declaration. As a result, these reforms were postponed until 2025.

**Secondly, there is a relatively low level of labor productivity in the economy.** Insufficient use and development of modern technologies in the economy of the country restrain the growth of labor productivity. Kazakhstan still lags behind developed countries by an average of four times in this indicator.

**Thirdly, there is also a low level of competence in labor resources.** In the conditions of a new economy and technological revolution, the requirements for skills and qualifications of labor resources are growing. In Kazakhstan, only 11 percent of the country's population is employed in the field of the knowledge economy; in the employment structure of advanced countries, people of such a formation now make up at least 25 percent.

In the annual Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) in 2018, the position of Kazakhstan compared to 2013 started to deteriorate, the country dropped from 46th to 51st place out of 118 countries. Indicators on global knowledge and skills improved (+28 positions in the ranking). The leading positions in the ranking are occupied by the states of Switzerland and the United States.

The quality of education and the system of personal training do not correspond to the real requirements of the labor market, by inertia, humanitarian specialists produce (over 60 percent), and there is no system for flexible analysis of the labor market and the formation of state order. Grants are allocated according to the old scheme mainly to national and state universities.

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<sup>1</sup> The official statistical information. (2018). Committee on statistics. Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan

<sup>2</sup> OECD, (2017). Building Inclusive Labour Markets in Kazakhstan: A focus on Youth, Older Workers and People with disabilities.

<sup>3</sup> OECD, (2017). Building Inclusive Labour Markets in Kazakhstan: A focus on Youth, Older Workers and People with disabilities

Besides, there is a very poorly developed system of learning throughout life. Many specialists who graduated from higher educational institutions several years ago are forced to relearn skills since new technologies, and innovative approaches place their demands on employees of organizations. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen the integration of education, science, and production for the formation of updated educational programs and standards.

With the introduction of new technologies in traditional industries, there are risks of the release of obsolete occupations. There is an evident shortage of specialists with new competencies, such as IT, information security, cloud solutions, and so on.

**Fourth, there is a need for digitization in labor market infrastructure.** The lack of a systematic approach to the development of the labor market, digitalization of this area, and single electronic labor exchange, integrated with all information systems for the provision of vacancies, social benefits, and employment, causes problems of an objective analysis of the labor market. As a result, the majority of citizens are trying to find work independently, employers are experiencing a shortage of qualified specialists, enterprises do not have access to a database of job seekers, and the Ministry of Education does not see a real demand for personnel to form a state order. The measures are taken to modernize the employment services, establish an electronic labor exchange, and involve private employment agencies in the employment process require the involvement of all stakeholders and the development of joint solutions.

Consideration of unemployment and employment are based on the system of identification of the social status of a citizen of Kazakhstan. Unfortunately, the leading economic and social indicators are based on statistical data, preferably collected manually and on analytical reporting forms of enterprises and organizations. Moreover, the frequency of collecting such data is carried out once a year. Due to the lack of information systems, the digitization of this sector, the change of social status from the category of workers to the unemployed is done manually, without cross-checking data, and this generally distorts the overall picture of this problem. This causes the ambiguity of the appointment of social benefits and the possibility of corruption violations. As a result, the lack of targeted social assistance to the population, the inefficient use of public funds, the provision of inaccurate information about social policy in the country. For example, the number of self-employed people, according to official statistics, is about 2.1 million people, and in fact, over 3 million people have an indefinite social status. This problem is resolved by the complete digitalization and implementation of Digital Government in this sector, the creation of information systems, and social status identification databases with the provision of adequate access to all labor market stakeholders (employees, employers, social services, employment agencies, etc.).

## Conclusion

An essential condition for the development of human capital is training, taking into account the real needs of the labor market, not only for the current moment but also for the future.

To obtain the real needs of the labor market and conduct high-quality planning for the future needs of the economy, it is necessary to continue working on the creation of the National Labor Market Forecasting System of Kazakhstan, which will be integrated with all information systems in the sphere of employment, a single labor exchange. This system will make it possible to form a likely need for the number and composition of the required labor resources in the medium and long term. It should take into account migration and demographic processes, market conditions, and global trends. It is necessary to unite the efforts of state employment centers for private recruitment agencies to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the development of the labor market.

The second prerequisite is the creation of an information system for identifying the social status of each citizen, with providing access to this system to employers, social services, and employment agencies. This opportunity will allow for a clear identification of social status, implementation in the targeting of social benefits, and the registration of self-employed and informally employed workers. This system will become the basis for the provision of social services in an automated mode, implement proactive public services, and implement social reforms, such as Mandatory Social Medical Insurance and per capita financing.

In order to ensure a balance between supply and demand of working places, work should be intensified on the development of the National Qualifications System, which should take into account the real requirements for labor resources, their qualifications, and quality, and the education system will provide training for relevant specialists to carry out advanced training systems. In order to provide targeted support to the least productive and low-skilled categories of citizens, it is necessary to continue implementing and improving state employment assistance programs, including tools for short-term

training, developing entrepreneurial initiatives, and stimulating the migration of labor required of the population from densely populated regions of the country.

Thus, for the active development of the labor market, it is necessary to take into account the impact of all factors and to involve all stakeholders in solving this issue, providing a systematic solution to this issue. Concurrently, a set of incentive and awareness-raising measures with the population of the country must be carried out. The new systematic approach in the field of employment will increase the percentage of jobs and the competitiveness of the country and its citizens.

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**Table 1. The dynamics of the main indicators of unemployment in Kazakhstan for the period 2010- 01 July 2018**

Indicators	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	July 2018
Unemployed population Thousand people	496,5	473,0	474,8	470,7	451,9	454,2	445,5	442,0	441,4
Unemployment rate, %	5,8	5,4	5,3	5,2	5,0	5,1	5,0	4,9	4,9
Female unemployment rate, %	6,6	6,2	6,5	5,9	5,8	5,6	5,5	5,4	5,3
Youth unemployment rate (15-24 years), %	5,2	4,6	3,9	3,9	3,8	4,2	3,8	3,8	3,8
Youth unemployment rate (15-28 years), %	6,6	6,1	5,4	5,5	4,2	4,4	4,1	3,9	3,9
The level of long-term unemployment, %	2,2	2,1	2,5	2,5	2,4	2,5	2,2	2,2	2,2

Resource: Committee on statistics. Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan

## Economic Contribution of Ecotourism, Motivations and Satisfaction: the Case of Puerto El Morro (Ecuador)

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### Abstract

The scientific review of Natural Protected Areas as sites to perform economic activities related to tourism is recent. It is well known that ecotourism is a leading generator of business, the level of employment in certain sites depends upon it, and also helps to strengthen the household economy of vulnerable communities while preserving it. This paper presents an empirical research carried out in Puerto El Morro (Ecuador-South America). The purpose of this paper is to identify the socio-demographic profile of the visitors, their motivations and the level of satisfaction declared after the tourist experience. This analysis is based on 585 surveys collected from hikers after the visit. The results provide evidence and describe a majority of young and educated visitors who declared having obtained a university degree and a monthly income of less than US \$ 1500.00. The results highlight that contact with nature and bird and dolphin watching were respectively the main push and pull motivational factors. A high level of satisfaction is reported, which generates positive actions after the visit, such as: repetition of the visit, recommendation of the place and positive word of mouth. These findings are essential for the design or adaptation of tourism marketing strategies that respond to this segment, so that this site becomes a suggestive place as a natural destination that allows expansion in economic output and leads to positive impacts on gross capital formation for sustainable development within the community.

**Keywords:** economic impact, motivation, satisfaction, tourist marketing.

### Introduction

Tourism, as such, has a very important weight in the economy of any country due to actions, mainly associated with the demand for goods and services that must be produced and offered to the large flows of people going to a certain destination (Ursache, 2015). The collection of foreign currency allows the investment in infrastructure necessary to provide tourism services and the diversification of the economy in general (Dzhandzhugazova, 2013). That is why, for decades, tourism has experienced a continuous growth and a deep diversification, until becoming one of the economic sectors of fastest growth in the world, forming part of one of the economic activities that generates more income in the destinations (Brida *et al.*, 2011). Tourism contributes, directly and indirectly, to an increase in the dynamism of economic activity, directly affecting the economy of the place (Gao, 2017). In addition to influencing society and local culture, it also generates strong impacts as a result of the various interrelationships maintained during the stay of visitors at the destination (Thomé Ortiz, 2008) and has an important role in raising human awareness regarding environmental protection (Ursache, 2015).

The development centered on tourism is based on the improvement of competitive advantages that are created under innovation capacities, the provision of quality services, safety levels, environmental quality and strengthening of tourism (Lillo-Bañuls *et al.*, 2007); the latter should be able to attract and satisfy tourists (Torres Bernier, 2003, Lillo-Bañuls *et al.*, 2007).

Tourism can be conceived as a main tool to improve the socio-economic conditions of determined rural communities. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) (2013) describes tourism as a mass social phenomenon that is increasingly important for the economy of countries worldwide. The World Tourism Organization (2002) program named Sustainable Tourism - Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) searches, through tourism, to reduce the poverty of these rural and urban areas through the establishment of small businesses managed by the community of the site, which can provide goods and services to travelers and allow the enhancement of their cultural and environmental resources. This would imply the possibility of

generating jobs, especially for women and young people (Casas Jurado et al., 2012). In this sense, community-based tourism is a good manner to achieve these objectives.

The literature has advanced towards the concept of development achieved through tourism, expanding attention to related concepts such as equity, sustainability and obtaining benefits from tourism by the resident community (Scheyvens, 2002, Reid, 2003, Weaver, 2014). Alvarez Litben (2016) highlights sustainable tourism, responsible tourism and experiential tourism as a resource to reduce poverty, promoting the imaginations and practices of host populations on ancestral cultural heritage. Edgell (2016) states that sustainable tourism, properly managed, can be a vehicle for the realization of the highest aspirations of humanity, in the pursuit of economic prosperity while maintaining social, cultural and environmental integrity. The sustainability of a tourist destination depends on economic, ecological and socio-cultural sustainability (Rivas García & Magadan Diaz, 2012). Sustainable tourism tries to harmonize the interests of the local community, the environment and the benefit of the tourism industry (Inostroza & Cánoves, 2014). In this sense, ecotourism activities are a useful and sustainable strategy for the alleviation of poverty by improving the health of the communities (Bauer, 2017) and show a positive impact on the environment through the protection, preservation and management of natural resources (Chirenje, 2017). In the case of Ecuador, there is some academic research that deals with this economic sector. The most relevant are from Ruiz-Ballesteros (2011), Erskine and Meyer (2012), Ruiz-Ballesteros and Brondizio (2013), Everingham (2015) and Gascón (2015).

Powell and Ham (2008) determine the four E's of conservation: Ecology, education, equity and economy. In this regard, Miele Cevallos and Zambrano Burgos (2015) emphasize the need to maintain cultural and environmental pureness, the efficient use of natural resources that help increase biological diversity; this will minimize the impact of tourism operations and the existence of large infrastructures, but at the same time maintain the maximum satisfaction of visitors to promote the welfare of the local community in search of social equity and economic prosperity. In other words, nature tourists must, implicitly, be positively motivated to consume responsibly and have appropriate behavior during the experience.

This paper aims to present the analysis of the situation of tourism that is planned and managed by the local community in a natural protected area: Puerto El Morro, located in Ecuador (South America). This paper purports to identify the economic contribution of this type of tourism to the community, and also to identify the socio-demographic profile of the visitors, their motivations and the level of satisfaction declared after the tourist experience; this manner contribute to cover an area little discussed in the literature in the region through the discussion of a field study based on a survey conducted throughout the year 2018. In addition, the material may foster the debate about the tourist structuring in this geographical zone. The rest of this paper is organized as follows: After this introduction, we provide the theoretical framework; the third section presents a description of the area; the fourth section introduces the methodology used in the research; a fifth section reports the results of the empirical study and, the last section provides conclusions about the objective proposed.

### Theoretical review

The economy bases its activity on supply and demand, which arises from a need to cover (Palacio, 2018). In the tourism sector, the tourist offer refers to the goods and their satisfiers that are located in the place where consumers or visitors attend, which in turn interferes with the tourist activity that intervenes specifically in their preferences of the destination selection (Serrano & Pucha, 2017). In this way tourism is considered an economic activity, independent of its classification. This is an activity that has allowed the development of vulnerable sectors (Velandia, 2016). From natural richness such as flora and fauna, it creates a tourist attraction for the visitor, offering not only landscape but also different commercial transactions such as food, lodging and excursions (ESPAE, 2016). The economy directs their efforts in supporting a system within a political framework, regulation and institutional strengthening of the place where sustainability arises (Doen, 2016).

The economic impact caused by tourism is obtained through the consideration of supply and demand captured, which in turn triggers the activities heading to obtain a greater profit. In turn, the magnitude of this impact will depend on the development of these receiving communities where they are measured: attractive offers, volume of tourist' expenditure, economic development of the sector, size of economic base, recirculation of tourist spending within the area and seasonality adjustment (Payeras & Sastre, 2015). The entry of foreign currency from tourism benefits people linked to this activity and proposes a multiplier effect of interdependence of several economic sectors, the demand for goods or services that the tourism sector generates and an increase in demand for services or goods from other sectors (World Tourism Organization,

1998). In this way tourism encompasses a value chain started from the starting point towards the tourist attraction, involving other actors that benefit from this activity.

In economic science, ecotourism is related to the theory of public goods (Samuelson & Nordhaus, 2016). Tourism continues to generate positive effects in the local economy (Diaconu et al., 2016). The work of Zhou et al. (2015) emphasizes the protection of ecological resources through its moderate and sustainable development through a multidimensional approach between economy, society and customs.

The responsibility for preservation is a concern of tourists in parallel with that of the providers of tourism services in the host communities, who should be concerned to control both the economic results and the conservation of the natural environment, its traditions and cultural values. In this sense, sustainability in an ecotourism site within a protected area is possible when providing tourist facilities that maintain a high level of care and satisfaction to visitors, ensuring a meaningful experience that responds to their needs, motivations and perceptions of a territory with unique value in itself, recognized for its extravagance and scenic beauty (Benson, 2014).

Tourism in protected areas is essentially motivated by the desire to spend time in a clean, quiet, less populated space to live an experience that includes adventure, cycling, natural photography, bird and animal observation and cultural learning (Newsome et al., 2013). Also, Minciu et al. (2012) considered the determinants in the purchasing decision and the effects of consumption of ecological vacations where the tourist profile also reflects the motivation to travel. At the same time, the characteristics of the location define a specific image of it. Minciu et al. (2012) consider the determining factors in the purchase decision of the tourists, their profile and the attributes of the place. Plog (2002) and Ryan (2003) emphasize motivations rather than behavior, so they describe a motivation for the novelty of the destination and the motivation to venture.

The growing number of tourists visiting natural protected areas is a consequence of the development of ecotourism; therefore, it is of great importance that travelers perceive the authenticity of the area as a necessary condition to satisfy tourist expectations about a natural place (Ryan et al., 2012). It is necessary to identify the different profiles of tourists who visit the natural areas, the motivations that lead them to prefer them compared to other tourist destinations and the frequency of visits and degree of loyalty that motivate future actions to repeat the stay (Do et al., 2015). Ecotourists, in general, have a university education and a high income which results in a greater willingness to spend money in the country of destination (Cheung & Jim, 2013). Its psychographic characteristics include the possession of an environmental ethic and the will to conserve the natural resource. This indicates the strong potential of ecotourism to nourish not only the income for conservation, but also the awareness among people who often visit these areas, generating and adopting conservation patterns after living an ecotourism experience (Coghlan et al., 2017).

Cheng et al. (2014) suggested that ecotourism is a type of alternative tourism that is closely related to areas that are sensitive in cultural and environmental spheres, and that ecotourists would positively influence the intention, interest and willingness to pay a higher price for ecotourism products and services; even, Kostakis and Sardanou (2012) reported that most tourists are willing to tolerate additional fees for technologies and services that could help offset the environmental impacts of their activities. Given that people's attitude towards ecotourism is considered one of the most important precursors of their intention to visit nature destinations or to participate in ecotourism activities (Lai & Nepal, 2006), understanding their purpose requires academic understanding and categorization of the attitudes that reflect the structural diversity with respect to the expectations and experiences of said individuals (Weaver, 2014). Although individuals have a high interest and favorable attitudes towards pro-environmental behaviors, many of them may not necessarily be willing to adopt them and pay relatively higher prices for activities and services that benefit environmental conservation (Min et al., 2017) such as reducing the consumption of water or electricity. In fact, some users may be reluctant to perform eco-friendly activities outside their home while staying in hotels (Han et al., 2017).

Motivation is an aspect of great importance in the tourist field, it is the trigger of the behavior of the individual and the explanatory factor of the design of tourist activities. Motivation allows us to answer three essential questions of the tourism cycle: (1) the reasons to travel (why), (2) the specific choice (where), and (3) the results obtained (level of satisfaction) (Castaño et al., 2003). If the expectations of the visitor do not harmonize with the image of the place, the experience is unsatisfactory. This topic is especially important for birders and specialized visitors who need to find the specific attractions

for which they have come, as otherwise their expectations would be frustrated, creating a disappointment that is difficult to restore, although there are other opportunities and attractiveness in the place (Viñals-Blasco & Alonso-Monasterio, 2016).

Devesa Fernández et al. (2010) analyze the relationships that may exist between three important components of the tourist decision-making process, such as travel motivation, satisfaction and loyalty, highlighting that there are multiple reasons that influence individuals when visiting a tourist destination. Likewise, it is emphasized that the influence of motivation on the behavior of individuals is not limited only to this previous phase of decision making, but transcends further, influencing the subjective perception of the experience and its assessment after consumption. Satisfaction is the emotional state of the tourist after having been exposed to that quality, which seems to show that there is a relationship between the quality, the level of satisfaction and the success of a tourist site. It is known that satisfaction can be influenced by a socio-psychological state that a tourist brings to the site (mood, disposition, needs) and by external agents (weather, social interactions) that are beyond the control of the provider.

It is perceived that a high quality and high level of satisfaction result in a high level of loyalty and future visit, a high level of tolerance to an increase in price and a good reputation (Oliver, 2015). It is reported that the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty is essential for the survival of an organization (Moliner-Velásquez et al., 2010) and that consumers expect tangible benefits in exchange for that loyalty, it is important to understand consumer satisfaction as the trigger of loyalty and to link it as a generator of profitability, then it is evident that different clients must be treated in different ways (Reinartz & Kuman, 2002). Through the knowledge of the profile of the tourist, the reasons to choose a natural protected area as an ecological destination and the satisfaction that they have behind the view, we try to contribute with the emerging literature in the region.

### **Description of the geographical area**

In recent years, Ecuador is becoming a more appealing destination in Latin America, mainly because of its patrimony richness (with two cities recognized as Cultural Patrimony of Humanity by UNESCO-Quito and Cuenca-), its variety of gastronomy, its natural protected areas and its cities with some relevance for business activities (the case of Guayaquil). In the year 2018, Ecuador received 2'428,000 foreigners, mainly coming from Colombia, United States, Peru, Argentina, Chile, Spain and Germany. This implies that tourism represents a great economic engine for this country with a level of contribution to the economy of \$ 2,392.10 million in 2018 (Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador, 2019). Tourism is the third contributing sector for the national economy after banana and shrimp, without considering the oiling sector. The evident economic importance of tourism and its development has been reflected in the academic researches performed by Erskine and Meyer (2012), Everingham (2015), Gascón (2015) and Croes and Rivera (2015), Diaz-Christiansen et al. (2016,2017,2018).

Puerto El Morro-Ecuador is a National Protected Area located at 106 kilometers from the city of Guayaquil. The territory covers an area of 270.1 km<sup>2</sup>. This port is divided into two sectors: 2,094 hectares of continental space of halophytic vegetation, flooding forest and tropical dry forest between the estuaries El Morro and El Salado which provides a habitat to various protected-by-national legislation species of animals and biological diversity; and 8,000 hectares of insular space that includes the Morro Canal and the surrounding water. The local community at Puerto El Morro is considered as ancestral inhabitants which protect wildlife that refuge at the four types of existing mangroves in Ecuador: red, white, jeli and black.

The designation of the port as protected area has incited an Environmental Management Plan dependent on the conservation and sustainability of the location. Thus, policies and objectives were set in order to control the interventions of the community over the estuary. In the framework of national policies of environmental protection, it was declared as National Patrimony of Protected Areas in 2011 (Ministry of Environment of Ecuador, 2012). With the purpose of preserving this habitat, the Ministry of Environment of Ecuador regulates and allocates the sustainable usage of the estuary, where around 1500 inhabitants distributed in 260 houses, with an average of five to six members per house reside and are in charge of the conservation (Ministry of Environment of Ecuador, 2013). The majority of population is within a range of age of 18 to 25 years (Medina, 2017). In the absence of schools of secondary and higher education, only 15% of the inhabitants attended secondary education; while 53.40% have only primary education, and 5% of the population remain illiterate (Mite et al., 2017). Their source of economic income is artisan fishery and crustaceans gathering such as crabs and shells. It is a coastal marine area provided with countless marine and bird species. Tourist activities are also offered, such as bird sightings of various types (e.g. pink herons, frigates) and dolphin watching (Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador, 2017). In 2012,

Puerto El Morro inaugurated its pier, this new infrastructure corresponds to the urban renewal of the Municipality of Guayaquil. The construction has an extension of 120 meters, is based on a concrete-style platform and a rustic wooden structure where tourist agencies operate, the interpretation center and 5 restaurants. Puerto El Morro received around 16000 national visitors and 250 foreigners during 2017 (Ministry of Environment of Ecuador, 2017)

Although there is a previous study conducted on 2016 about the economic contribution from community-based tourism at Santay Island-Ecuador, this represents only a closer approximation to the territory of study. The monetary range used for this type of hiking denoted an average of spending per visit of \$ 6.50, which positively influences the monthly income of the island, demonstrating the tourists contribute to the economic growth of the community (Díaz-Christiansen et al., 2017).

## **Methodological aspects**

### *Data collection and instrument*

The research material for the study about the tourists' opinion at Puerto El Morro was obtained through surveys carried out from May to September 2018. The self-administered and anonymous questionnaire was distributed in Spanish and filled by national hikers with total independence. Nevertheless, researchers were present in case of any difficulties that arose. The first question made to the selected persons asked if their habitual residence was in Ecuador, excluding them if the answer was negative. A pretest of 15 surveys was done in order to detect possible deviations and errors. A convenience sample of 585 respondents among randomly selected visitors took part in the study, and the refusal rate was very low and of no significance. The population of this study is the 15,776 visitors to the site in 2017. The margin error for the investigated population, estimated for a significance level of 95% is  $\pm 3.98\%$ . Therefore, the results may be extrapolated to the entire population without reticence.

The analysis of tourism performed at Puerto El Morro has been conducted through a survey applied to a representative sample of visitors. The survey was based on previous papers related to the analysis of tourists' motivations (Yang & Wall 2009; Dodds, Gracia & Homes 2010; López-Guzmán, Sánchez-Cañizares & Pavón 2011; Do et al. 2015; Diaz-Christiansen et al., 2018) and responds to a group of variables with respect to the tourist's socio demographic profile, average expenditure, information sources, motivations to go, and satisfaction after visiting the destination. In this sense, respondents were asked to rate the importance of each of 7 different items connected with the motivations to visit the site and 12 items pertinent to the perceived satisfaction. To this end, both closed and Likert scale questions were included in the survey,

Data is analyzed by using statistical techniques: First, the Cronbach's Alpha as a statistical test of reliability to evaluate the metric properties of the instrument applied; second, the factor analysis and cluster analysis to reduce and group the set of variables in a dataset; and third, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) in order to compare groups of quantitative variables. The collected data is organized, tabulated and interpreted using the IBM SPSS Statistics 22.0 program.

## **Results and discussion**

### *Socio-demographic profile of the tourist*

The socio-demographic profile of the tourists is shown in Table 1. The first data of interest is the age of the tourists visiting Puerto El Morro (Ecuador), as the average age is lower than 40, visitors were 48% female and rest were male. The employees stand out from the categories of professions, followed by independent workers and directors which are deeply related to the high level of education of the visitors. Also, when analyzing the level of education in relation to the age, there is a positive association between them (gamma statistic = 0.228;  $p = 0.000$ ).

In regard of the tourist's region of origin, 74% of them come from the province of Guayas, evidently due to its proximity from the destination whilst the rest are mainly coming from two big provinces named Pichincha and Azuay and represent 12.65% of this category.

In the findings obtained in this research, 26% of respondents acknowledged a monthly income lower than US\$ 500 compared to the 11.5% that declared that they earn more than US\$2,000. There are differences on the declared income in relation to gender, a significant association has been detected (contingency coefficient= 0.234;  $p = 0.000$ ) that implies



that the level of income declared by women is a 18% lower than men's. The minimum wage in Ecuador for 2018 was US\$ 386.00 and the average monthly income was US\$ 892.

Table 1: Socio-demographic profile of tourist

Variables		Percentage		Variables		Percentage	
		Male	Female			Male	Female
Age (N = 585)	Less than 30	15.9%	18.63%	Educational level (N = 585)	Elementary	0.34%	3.5%
	30-39	19.83%	16.24%		Secondary	12.48%	15.38%
	40-49	10.94%	6.84%		University	29.06%	25.13%
	50-59	3.76%	3.59%		Postgraduate	9.91%	7.35%
	60-69	1.20%	2.56%				
	Older than 70	0.17%	0.34%				
Profession (N = 585)	Student	6.84%	8.03%	Province of origin (N = 585)	Guayas	37.09%	36.60%
	Independent professional	11.79%	9.91%		Pichincha	3.76%	3.42%
	Employee	15.56%	10.43%		Azuay	3.25%	2.22%
	Public servant	4.79%	5.47%		Manabí	1.88%	0.85%
	Household chores	0.17%	5.30%		Santa Elena	1.20%	1.54%
	Director/Entrepreneur	9.91%	5.13%		Los Ríos	0.68%	0.34%
	Retired	1.03%	2.05%		El Oro	0.51%	0.51%
	Unemployed	1.71%	1.88%		Tungurahua	0.17%	0.51%
Monthly Income in US dollars (N = 583)	Less than 500	8.7%	17.5%	Chimborazo	0.34%	0.68%	
	500 - 749	7.4%	5.7%	Esmeraldas	0.0%	0.17%	
	750 - 999	9.6%	5.8%	Napo	0.17%	0.0%	
	1,000 - 1,249	8.2%	5.8%	Imbabura	0.17%	0.34%	
	1,250 - 1,499	4.3%	4.5%	Cañar	0.17%	0.34%	
	1,500 - 1,749	2.7%	2.4%	Cotopaxi	0.0%	0.17%	
	1,750 - 2,000	4.1%	1.7%	Loja	0.17%	0.17%	
	More than 2,500	6.9%	4.6%	Other	2.44%	0.34%	

Source: Own elaboration

The average expenditure during the visit to Puerto El Morro is US\$ 18.5 per person; there is not a positive association between the monthly income and the expenditure (gamma statistic = 0.130; p = 0.037), which means that tourists that earn more, do not necessarily spend more. Considering the number of tourists that visited Puerto El Morro during 2018 and the expenditure, we have calculated the estimated annual income derived from the tourist activity in this natural protected area. In this sense, the annual demand is estimated at US\$ 296,000, predominantly corresponding to national visitors.

### Motivations of the visit

The reasons why a hiker chooses a destination such as Puerto El Morro and travels there may be miscellaneous. On that matter, we designed a question in the survey with different items trying to know the most frequent and relevant motivations analyzed in previous investigations (Lee, Lee & Wicks, 2004; Yuan & Jang, 2008; Devesa, Laguna & Palacios, 2010), adapting them to the characteristics of this tourist destination and its visitors. After the pretest, we selected 12 items on a Likert-type scale of 5 points in which 1 means "Unimportant" and 5, "Very important" in order to determine the relative importance of a series of factors in their decision to visit the protected area (all the items are shown in Table 2). Internal and external factors were included, as established by Crompton's theory (1979) between pull and push reasons. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the final scale reaches a value of 0.835, which indicates a commendable internal consistency among the scale items. The critical level (p) associated with the F- statistic (362.909) in the analysis of the

variance to test the null hypothesis that all items on the scale have the same mean (ANOVA) is less than 0.001. This reveals that it is not possible to maintain the hypothesis that the means of the elements are equal.

An interclass correlation analysis lets us, in general terms, identify four of the items that showed low correlations. Those items are omitted in the factor analysis, without implying a significant reduction of the level of consistency of the motivational variables (Cronbach's alpha= 0.777; F=259.662, < 0.001). A factor analysis is made using the reasons to visit or motivational variables as shown in Table 2. This made possible the extraction of 2 motivational dimensions to visit the ecosystem. While the interest lies in the factor scores derived from these components as a tool to establish the strength of the motivations of each visitor, it is useful to characterize each of the extracted factors.

Table 2: Rotated factor matrix – Motivation of the visit to Puerto El Morro

Motivational variables	Components		Dimensions
	1	2	
Contact with nature	0.772		Naturalist
Dolphin and bird sighting	0.597		
Disconnect from routine	0.541		
Search of tranquility	0.471		
The fame and reputation of tourist destination		0.661	Rational
Affordable tourist destination		0.587	
Closeness to the place of residence		0.4156	
Auto values	3.895	1.368	
% of variance	29.99	10.52	
Cumulative %	29.99	40.52	
KMO	0.842		
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Chi-square = 2134.149 Sig. < 0.001		
Extraction method: Principal axis factoring. Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser normalization.			

Source: Own elaboration

According to Table 2, the first factor is associated with the nature motivations, which are usual reasons in tourist destinations that have a diverse and rich ecosystem motives. This factor represents the tourists who see the visit as an instrument to expand their knowledge about nature and, at the same time, find a way out from the stress of everyday life. We have called this first factor as *Natural Reasons*, and it explains almost 30% of the total motivations' variance matrix. Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.73) of the four items that make up this dimension of motivation reveals the reliability of the subscale. The second of the factors found, called *Rational Reasons* explains almost 11% of the total variance matrix of motivations and relates to a tourist who chooses to visit according to the knowledge he/she has about the destination. The value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.616) is also a reliable subscale. These results demonstrate the existence of various motivational schemes to attend Puerto El Morro as a nature tourist destination, which are in line with the socio-psychological reasons, where the trip or the visit is a means of satisfying psychological type of needs from individuals; and, tangible reasons, where satisfaction would be obtained from the own attributes of the destination (Crompton, 1979).

#### Motivation and satisfaction of the visit

The satisfaction level declared by the visitors at Puerto El Morro is very high. It was measured in a scale from 1 to 5, being 1 "unsatisfactory" and 5, "very satisfactory", over the 12 items that aim to value different aspects related to the visit to the

site. We could study their satisfaction deeply by analyzing the relationship that may exist with the experienced sensations after the visit. A large majority of hikers agree that the best is the landscape beauty and the sighting of birds and dolphins (Table 3), this indicates that hikers appreciate nature above other material factors built by man such as the museum or the other infrastructure of Puerto El Morro. This result has a clear implication for tourism management of the local community concerning the efforts to increase and maintain the satisfaction and loyalty of visitors. They must be based on an analysis of the reasons for the trip to encourage the attendance and appropriate provision of the tourist product.

Table 3. Perceived satisfaction of tourists at Puerto El Morro.

Motiv ational Variables	Male	Female	F	Sig.
The landscape beauty.	4,49	4,54	,883	,348
Birds and dolphin sighting	4,46	4,49	,202	,653
Conserv ation of natural patrimony.	4,36	4,34	,076	,783
Service of tourists guides and operators	4,20	4,32	2,919	,088
Boat ride	4,25	4,31	,883	,348
Kindness of the residents	4,23	4,3	,961	,327
Diversity , quality and service of the restaurants	4,08	4,08	,001	,970
Cleanness and care of the v isited places	3,91	4,01	1,662	,198
Citizen security	3,89	3,98	1,195	,275
Information points and signs for the visitor	3,81	3,9	1,140	,286
Conserv ation of the infrastructure: pier and w alkways	3,76	3,77	,015	,903
Interpretation center	3,3	3,23	,333	,564

source: own elaboration

It is noticed from table 3 that all motivations, except the one related to interpretation center, received a high score. We consider that these results reinforce the quality of this tourist destination. The three most valued motivations for both men and women are the landscape beauty, birds and dolphin sighting and the conservation of natural patrimony. As for women, the rest of motivational variables such as service provided by tourist guides and operators, boat ride, kindness of residents, etc, are more appreciated motivations than for men, and the quality of restaurants remains equal. Of these findings, we note that there is no significance between gender and the motivations to visit Puerto El Morro.

## Conclusions

The tourist that visits Puerto El Morro is mainly an Ecuadorian young person that expend an average of US\$ 18.5 per visitation; this may imply an annual estimated economic direct revenue of US\$ 296,000 to the community coming from the tourist activity. In respect to the satisfaction variable, the results indicate that the tourists have enjoyed the visit to Puerto El Morro. The visitors make a significantly different valuation of the experience depending on the reasons that motivated the visit. This fact has a clear implication on the management of the zone and the initiatives to increase the tourist satisfaction, which should be created from the analysis of the reasons that motivate the trip in order to influence the decision to travel to a place and the correct tourist service offering.

Knowing the main motivational factors become essential, since they allow adapting and modifying existing tourism products in order to improve the consumer experience. From the results obtained, it was possible to identify that people go to this destination mainly with the aim of connecting with nature (push motivations). It was also determined that the main attraction of this place is the sighting of birds and dolphins, this being the pull motivation that received a higher score.

On the other hand, the research also allowed us to identify that there are pull motivational factors that do not generate a great boost in hikers. The interpretation center is the first factor, followed by the maintenance of pier and walkways. Through the study, it was also possible to identify that the motivations of the hikers cannot be classified based on gender. Only two variables of the 12 investigated showed a level of significance, less than 0.05, this being the coefficient that allows to reject or accept the hypothesis. That is to say that if the level of significance exceeds 0.05 this will establish the hypothesis as null.

On the other hand, it was possible to identify that the motivations can be grouped into two main groups, the rationals and the naturalists ones. The rationals, select destinations that are recognized and offer an excellent experience at low rates. While the naturalists are those who seek to visit a destination with the aim of connecting with nature, flora and fauna, disconnecting from their daily routine and reaching a maximum level of relaxation.

It can be concluded that the hiker is satisfied with what is offered at Puerto El Morro, especially with the landscape, nature conservancy and the sighting of fauna. Puerto El Morro is a small but ambitious tourism project that matters be worked on in the long term, aiming to be self-sustaining. The results of this investigation guide the planning of a management model based on sustainable economy initiatives that may help the preservation of this protected area natural wealth, as well as increase and maintain the high satisfaction and loyalty of the naturalist tourists. For these purposes, the study gives direction to the planning of programs that minimize the negative impacts of tourism and to deal with human and economic resources for this site conservation. These programs on environmental monitoring, maintenance and preservation of the natural beauty, correct waste disposal, water treatment and pollution control to avoid fuel spills and noise control, will allow for peace and tranquility of fauna and the one searched by tourists and contribute to maintain the attributes that are most valued and which provide more satisfaction.

The organization and implementation of these actions must be performed through community involvement and cooperation of the tourists in pro of conservation of all ecosystems. The natural wealth existing in the natural space, which provides visitor's tranquility and relaxation from every day's routine demands such investment on natural protection. Management of this tourist destination may include the control of its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the plans in order to search continuous improvements that reinforce the positioning of Puerto El Morro as a place to visit, therefore those visits will yield in greater income to the local community. In any study of this nature, there are certain limitations in the data gathering. This work is centered in the information obtained from a sample of visitors to a specific zone in Ecuador. This limits the possibility of generalization and at the same time constitutes a motivation for contrasting with other comparable destinations. Despite these limitations, the results contribute to literature by offering key aspects of economic impact of tourism in a natural protected area.

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## Interculture; Concept, Use and Ethics between Equality and Difference

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### Abstract

In this article, the concept of 'interculture' is investigated from different angles. We start out with the theme of migration and move on to a discussion of literature as a tool to increase cross-cultural understanding. In the first part of this article, the theoretical perspectives of Salman Rushdie and Richard Rorty are central. Since similarity and difference constitute an underlying issue in both cases this leads to a discussion about equality and difference at the end of the paper, in which ethics represent a key perspective. In this last section, we explore an important point addressed in Charles Taylor's discussion of culture and ethics that can also be seen as a critique of the intercultural project and the way it balances similarity and difference, equality and difference.

**Keywords:** Interculture; concept, use, ethics, equality, difference

### Introduction

In recent years, the term 'interculture' has been increasingly used to describe situations in which people with different cultural backgrounds interact, challenge each other and collaborate. The concept can be connected to a number of theoretical discussions about how a multicultural society is best able to function despite differences. However, because difference has been an important basic premise in multiculturalism, this concept overlooks what one could call a 'fusion of cultures'. Interculturalism differs from multiculturalism by focusing on this latter perspective.

In his book *Interkultur* (2010), the German expert on migration Mark Terkessidis points out that interculture is based on the notion of 'Kultur-im-Zwischen' (Terkessidis, 2010, p.10), which highlights what happens between cultures. Thereby, a difference-oriented concept of culture is diminished in favour of an interest in what people create together, and thus 'interculture' is also interpreted as a practical concept. It refers to the way we do something. For example, at an institutional level, we can strive to establish conditions for participation that ensure that discrimination is avoided: in this way, the individual can function 'barrier-free' within the institution's framework (Terkessidis, 2010, p. 9). The term 'barrier-free' is originally derived from the context of disabled people's access to buildings, but here it more broadly emphasizes the value of providing people with an equal opportunity to participate in societal, organizational and institutional contexts. Thus, in this model, the difference between people does not necessarily disappear, but it fades from focus: the ultimate goal is a future common culture.

The American education researcher James A. Banks, who is primarily known for the development of a multicultural pedagogy, has highlighted that interculture is 'a term used to recognize the desirability of people from different cultures to interact in dynamic and complex ways' (Banks, 2011, p. 14). Therefore, when it comes to intercultural practice, dynamic and complex interaction is, first, an essential part of any intercultural project and, furthermore, it is greatly wanted (desirability). The desire to meet the other through complex interaction must assumably be based on a willingness to obtain mutual understanding. Understanding is also always a process of integration in which new perspectives are integrated into one's own preconceptions of the world. In such a process, the clear lines between 'my' and 'your' culture disappear, because what parties bring into an encounter with voluntary and benevolent interactions becomes a new, common point of departure for further communication (Riis, 2006, p. 105). The concept of 'interculture' thus contains a duality - because the



participants come from different backgrounds, they may start with different viewpoints, but the desire for interaction creates another focus and erases differences.

In this article, we examine how the perspective of interculturality can be promoted. The examples are taken from different theoretical perspectives where themes such as migration, literature and ethics are bound together by a focus on the intercultural project. However, this does not mean that the intercultural project can not be criticized. At the end of the article, we take a closer look at an important aspect of such criticism.

### **Migration in an intercultural perspective**

Institutions around the world must be able to accommodate a large variety of people with different cultural backgrounds. A phenomenon such as migration - in this article defined as changing one's country of usual residence - can concretely exemplify the central importance of the concept of difference in today's societies where the phenomenon has statistically increased. In any case, one must assume that people who are socialized in a different national and therefore generally also a different linguistic and cultural context often experience and represent differences in their ways of thinking and acting.

This highlights the potential difficulties of practicing intercultural values such as involvement and participation where the focus is on creating common human spaces (Kultur-im-Zwischen). Therefore, this approach requires a strong association between the individual and the group. One way of doing this is to look more closely at how individual migration stories can be linked to the universal human experience. The inspiration for this perception of the subject is taken from the Indian-born author Salman Rushdie (b. 1947). Based on the theme of discontinuity, Rushdie shows how the migrant's experience of lack of coherence can be linked to a more general human experience.

In his article *Imaginary Homelands* (1992), Salman Rushdie describes the experience of returning to his childhood city, Bombay, India, after about 20 years away from it. When he was 13 years old, Rushdie was sent to a boarding school in England. A few years later, his parents moved to Pakistan, and an obvious reason for Rushdie to visit Bombay disappeared (this was moreover compounded by the war between India and Pakistan). Nevertheless, the connection to the places we leave - and perhaps in particular one's childhood home - is based on more than a mere geographical affiliation. A recurring theme in Rushdie's writing is immigration and identity. His desire to return to Bombay and the house he grew up in is also an attempt to put his own history and thus identity into perspective. Through this process, Rushdie manages to describe a number of fundamental issues of the migrant, which can resonate in principle with any human being. We all have the ability to associate with the situation of the migrant, even if we have not moved across national borders: we all have experienced situations in which the context is new and our knowledge and our life experience do not seem to be an asset. Rushdie writes, 'It may be argued that the past is a country from which we have all emigrated, which is part of our common humanity' (Rushdie, 1992, p. 12). In other words, based on a personal story, he formulates an experience of universal character - "of universal significance and appeal" (Rushdie, 1992, p. 12).

Here, we must first dwell some more on the experience of discontinuity as a central theme. The experience of fracturing and a lack of coherence goes hand in hand with the need for - and the expectation of - coherence. The German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer uses the phrase 'Vorgriff der Vollkommenheit' (anticipation of completeness) to describe this expectation. This anticipation not only accompanies the migrant but also everyone else's attempt to comprehend their universe, and thus it exists in all human beings. In our encounters with the world around us, the new is always interpreted through our preconceptions. We can revise these preconceptions, adjust or confirm them, but the process of understanding always strives to create meaning and coherence (Gadamer, 2004, p. 280). Thus, discontinuity always represents a challenge.

Within social psychology, the term 'cognitive dissonance' is used to describe the experience of inconsistency. Leon Festinger was one of the first to investigate this phenomenon experimentally, and he has, since the 1950s, inspired countless other studies. According to Joel Cooper, everything suggests that cognitive dissonance is actually a common

human trait we all experience discomfort when we experience dissonance, the discrepancy between knowledge and expectations on the one hand and events and actions on the other (Cooper, 2007, p. 156). For example, the disappointment when something has not turned out as expected prompts a need for explanation. Social psychology here substantiates what is also Gadamer's point with the concept of 'Vorgriff der Vollkommenheit'.

The link between an individual's experience and the common human anticipation of completeness represents an argument in favour of the intercultural project. How this connection is addressed in the daily meetings between people from different backgrounds depends, of course, on the context, but one example is taken from a German day-care institution. It is derived from the book *Midt i en mangfoldighed af børn - Pædagogiske svar på en multikulturel samfundsudvikling* (a Danish book about diversity in multicultural day care institutions) by Vibe Larsen. In this text, Larsen explains that 'All parents were asked if they wanted to describe, why and how their child got its name'. She notes, 'The stories created a picture of different stories, but also of common stories across ethnicity, culture and social background' (Larsen, 2008, p. 103). The individual stories are here connected through the common human phenomenon, that of parents naming their children. In principle, every narrative has the potential to connect people despite differences in cultural background. In the following section, we explore the potential of literature as another way to connect the individual with the collective.

### Literature as an intercultural tool

The above-described experience of and reaction to discontinuity is thus a common human challenge, which the intercultural project can refer to in creating common standpoints or common understanding. However, the likelihood that the migrant has an extraordinary experience of the phenomenon of discontinuity is significant. Rushdie argues that 'the writer who is out-of-country and even out-of-language may experience this in an intensified form' (Rushdie, 1992, p. 12). In so doing, he not only emphasizes the perspective of the migrant but also the migrant writer. This is firstly because he relies on his own story as a migrant and author in *Imaginary Homelands*. At the same time, this text implicitly suggests that authors have an expanded ability to convey their experiences (because they have an audience). Authors can 'meet' their readers in many ways, but some sort of resonance with the latter's own life is an important condition for their interest in the text. Rushdie often uses detailed, individualized accounts, but they are always linked to the common human experience. For example, in describing his novel *Midnight Children* (1981), he formulates his purpose as follows: 'What I was actually doing was a novel of memory and about memory' (Rushdie, 1992, p. 10). Specific memories in this book are connected to the concept of memory as a phenomenon. The narrator in *Midnight Children*, Saleem, struggles to remember things properly and therefore to make sense of his own fragmented story. Thus, the reader is drawn into the construction of a narrative that speaks to the common human expectation of coherence (Gadamer - *Vorgriff der Vollkommenheit*) and subsequently to the experience of discontinuity (Festinger - cognitive dissonance). In this way, readers have the opportunity to link the narrative to their own preconceptions. Rushdie appeals to his readers through implicit references to their own lives, and ideally, they are able to relate to some element that transcends the individual.

This poses the question of whether literature - in contrast to, for example, academic writing - has a special potential to bolster the intercultural project. The American neopragmatist Richard Rorty (1931-2007) was a strong advocate for the view that literature is especially suited to making what at first sight seems strange and foreign understandable and familiar. Rorty highlights that the process of understanding our fellow human beings does not solely concern rational or intellectual activity - this understanding can also arise based on emotions. He provides the example of Charles Dickens (1812-1870), who contributed to an increased social engagement through his portrayals of poor and vulnerable people, their history and their situation. In his writing, readers are moved by his grim stories and realize that people whom they do not know nor think they have anything in common with nonetheless suffer and feel in the same way. In this way, literature can activate what one might call a human sympathy.

This 'access' to insight into other people's lives can also be seen as a critical comment on the purely theoretical approach to interpersonal understanding: 'To say that it [literature] is more fruitful is just to say that, when you weigh the good and

the bad that the social novelists have done against the good and the bad that the social theorists have done, you find yourself wishing that there had been more novels and fewer theories' (Rorty, 1999, p. 120). In other words, literature's ability to touch us emotionally activates empathy for our fellow human beings, even if these fellow human beings are perceived as fundamentally different. Literature provides an insight into our common humanity. As Rorty puts it, 'shared pains and pleasures' (Rorty, 2000, p. 16) are enlightening when it comes to genuine interpersonal relationships. This element is also relevant to the intercultural project when it remains on the outlook for ways to connect people with different cultural backgrounds.

Although Rorty's work addresses the common features of the human experience, his view on cultural difference is different to the one presented in the intercultural project. Unlike in the latter concept, Rorty also finds it important to focus on cultural differences. In a discussion with the Indian-born philosopher Anindita Nyogi Balslev, he notes that in cultural encounters where both parties are seeking to understand each other, they tend to focus on similarities and familiar concepts (Rorty, 1999, p. 110). Rorty suggests that if people stay solely within the framework of similarity, their worldview does not change. In this vein, he views literature as a way to increase cross-cultural understanding, but insists it must first emphasize differences. In institutional and educational contexts where literature is used, it is important to be aware of and reject the natural inclination for similarity. Rorty recommends that we seek out the literature that is most alien to us (Rorty, 1999, p. 112). The goal is primarily to change stereotypical notions of 'the others' by avoiding the tendency to understand otherness through predefined patterns.

From the perspective of the intercultural project, Rorty's arguments can be used to discuss the role of similarity and difference in human thinking in general. The discussion not only concerns different perspectives but also entails a basic ethical evaluation of the role of equality and difference. However, there is no consensus on how to prioritize these two dimensions when different cultures fuse into one in the context of the intercultural project. In the following section, we explore the debate about 'difference blindness' from an ethical perspective.

### **Equality and difference as ethical categories**

In his well-known book *The Politics of Recognition* (1992), Charles Taylor highlights Kantian thinking as one of the more explicit examples of difference blind equality thinking. The philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) builds his ethics on the fundamental idea that what is right and wrong is based on general criteria, which ensures that everyone are considered equal (Kant, 1965, p. 5). This foundation is formulated through 'the categorical imperative': 'Act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law' (Kant, 2002, p. 56). One example of this notion in practice involves lying: although we can have many reasons to lie, when we do, we contradict the fact that we must trust each other if our society is to function. Therefore, it seems logical to enact a general law stating that one must always tell the truth despite the fact that in some situations it may be tempting, obvious or even right to lie. When we lie, we usually do so because of personal goals - it can be anything from one's own, selfish inclinations to attempting to protect others. However, the categorical imperative always considers individual desires suspicious. Based on this principle, it becomes difficult to be aware of difference as an important element. Kantian thinking suggests that our first interest in other people must be of a more general nature and therefore focus on what we have in common as human beings.

The categorical imperative follows a logical train of thought: for example, it is contradictory to take care of oneself first whilst at the same time claiming that everyone must be treated equally. Thus, the categorical imperative imposes a type of self-control ensuring that all humans are respected as equals. In this way of thinking, ideals such as equality and respect become two sides of the same coin. Seen from a historical perspective, the ideal of equality promoted during the French Revolution, the notion of fraternity and the concept of freedom coincide with Kant's thinking. Nevertheless, Kant describes his moral philosophy as a historically independent principle, which every thinking human should be able to perceive (Kant, 1965, p. 5). However, philosophical thinking as well as thinking in general is never entirely independent of historical circumstances. If the intercultural project is also founded on an ethical concept of equality that is culturally based, it may

be useful to take this point into consideration when it comes to arguments against difference-blind positions. As previously mentioned, the educational theorist Banks states that interaction and the desire for mutual understanding are central to the intercultural project. At the same time, he notes that the concept of 'interculture' is primarily used in Western Europe (Banks, 2009, p. 14). Banks is a prominent representative of multicultural pedagogy, which primarily evolved in an American context. Historical circumstances can be a concrete reason for placing different emphasis on similarity and difference (Rorty) and on equality and difference. One of the critics of a too equality-minded perspective is Taylor. In the final section of this paper, we explore his arguments.

### Balancing between equality and difference

When Taylor discusses 'the politics of equal dignity' (Taylor, 1992, p. 44), he highlights Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) and Kant as early exponents of this thinking. In his criticism, he does not question equality as a basis for human coexistence, but he is skeptical about the way it is managed: there is a risk that the predominant focus on making everyone equal could lead to a blindness to the differences between people. Sometimes, it is necessary to discriminate in order to respect people's equality.

The concept of identity is the starting point for Taylor's discussion. It is linked to the concept of recognition. The need to be seen as one's true self and respected for it is related to the fact that identity is something that is shaped by interactions with the environment. Being able to maintain a particular identity requires an acceptance from other people. Other people's ideas about who we should be can therefore feel as an attack. It follows that a lack of proper recognition of the peculiarity of individuals and groups can lead to harm (Taylor, 1992, p. 25). Respecting equality can thus necessitate treating people differently. Taylor summarizes the conflict between these two ways of thinking: 'These two modes of politics, then, both based on the notion of equal respect, come into conflict. For one, the principle of equal respect requires that we treat people in a difference-blind fashion. The fundamental intuition that humans command this focus is on what is the same in all. For the other, we have to recognize and even foster particularity' (Taylor, 1992, p. 43).

### Concluding remarks

The focus of the intercultural project is to establish equal possibilities for participation in groups, institutions and society. By focusing on similarities, the common features of human beings, the intercultural project can ensure that this is the case. Examples of how this can be achieved despite the many differences between people can be seen in the writings of Rushdie and in Rorty's perspective on literature. However, a more explicit theoretical criticism of the intercultural project can also be brought into the debate, when the balance between similarity and difference points in the direction of an ethical debate of equality and difference. The intercultural project also has its limitations. Even though it appears to be an effective means of connecting people across cultural divisions, it also entails the risk of blind spots.

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## Albanian Legislation on Restitution of Property Confiscated During the Communist Regime: Its Structural Inconsistencies and a Negative Social Perspective for Achieving an Effective Domestic Remedy

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### Abstract

Following more than two decades of failures to implement an efficient system for the recognition, restitution and compensation of property to owners expropriated by the communist regime, in 2015, the Albanian Parliament passed law no. 133/2015 "On the Treatment of Property", which aims to build an efficient mechanism to complete the already delayed process, within a reasonable timeframe. Now, more than three years since its enactment, the law and the enforcing authorities have failed to uphold a number of crucial deadlines and tasks, rendering many facets of the process essentially unfeasible and jeopardizing the possibility of a positive evaluation of the new mechanism by the ECtHR. This paper will examine the objectives set out in the law, the procedures foreseen for the successful completion of the property compensation process and the numerous problems experienced so far in the process, among which the deficient financial funds for the compensation procedure, the excessive delays in the examination of applications on the merits, as well as the ineffectiveness of the administrative procedures envisaged in the law. The analysis will show that, despite the new implemented remedies differ greatly from the provisions of previous laws and the expected positive results, these structural failures have inevitably undermined the social and economic interests of former owners, and failed to meet the Convention standards set out in the numerous ECtHR judgments against Albania.

**Keywords:** property compensation, ECtHR, legal certainty, compensation mechanism, administrative act

### Introduction

The subjective right to ownership is a civil property right, the content of which lies in the assertion that the owners of the right are recognized by the prescribed law, the possession, enjoyment and the disposal over their immovable property. *Proprietas* (ownership) is a technical term that means full ownership upon its literal meaning (physical and legal power over the object). This term appears to be used for the first time, in the late Republican period in Rome. For some lawyers, this term replaced the previously used, *dominium*, while for others it is a new term, with a wider meaning than the previous term (*dominium*). *Proprietas* means the right of use, enjoyment and disposition of your item, to the extent permitted by the judicial order "*Dominium / proprietas est ius utendi, fruendi, new abutendi sua, quatenus patitur ratio juris*".

The sense of ownership is the property right of enjoyment and disposition of the property within the limits provided by Albanian law, more precisely under article 149 of the Civil Code, which provides for "the right to possess and to use the item (*ius utendi*); the right to collect all natural and civil goods (*ius fruendi*); and the right to destroy the item eventually, to alienate it, or to establish any ownership rights in the interests of other persons (*ius abutendi*)". Ownership has never been an absolute right, a full and exclusive right of the owner. This means that along with the right of ownership restrictions remain on the use, enjoyment or its destruction. The existence of these kind of restrictions shows that the purpose of the law is not only the recognition of the rights of individual property on the one hand, but also the determination of the limits of their exercise, in order to safeguard the right of joint usage of objects such as a good created by nature and people for the purpose of mutual co-existence.

The right to private property has been of great importance, especially after the downfall of the communist regime in Albania, under which following a number of reforms and legal and constitutional amendments, private ownership was all but abolished (Albania, 1976, p. 4). The great injustices that took place during this regime continue to constitute today a great legal and practical challenge to providing a final solution to this systematic and ongoing problem (Manushaqe Puto and Others v. Albania, 2012). There are a number of difficulties, both legislative and a lack of funds for the compensation of all dispossessed subjects, mainly due to the lack of a clear vision of the appropriate means and procedures for restituting and compensation property to the rightful owners, and partly due to the financial toll this issue has caused to the state finances (European Commission for Democracy Through Law, 2016, p. 9).

This right constitutes a fundamental human right sanctioned in Article 41 of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, which stipulates that: "*The right to private property is guaranteed. The law provides for expropriation or restriction on the exercise of property rights solely for public interest. Expropriations or limitations of property rights that are equal to expropriation are only allowed against fair remuneration. Disagreements over the amount of remuneration can be appealed to the court.*" Likewise, Article 42 provides that: "*Freedom, property and other rights recognized by the Constitution and by law cannot be violated without a due legal process.*"

The right to property is envisaged as a fundamental right also by the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, its Protocol No. 1 providing that: "*Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law. The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.*"

This provision contains three main rules which are:

1. The enjoyment of private property (Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions)
2. Deprivation by the right of property (Exceptionally and only in justified cases)
3. Control of the use of property (in the case of taxes, contributions or fines)

The European Court of Human Rights has also defined in the sense of this article three main principles:

1. The principle of legality;
2. The principle of a justified purpose in the public interest;
3. The principle of a fair balance.

The right to enjoy property in the interpretation of this article is guaranteed not only to natural persons, but also to legal persons. The Court has emphasized (Kopecky v. Slovakia, 2004) that the object of this article is only existing property and the provision and the case-law of the court do not include guarantees to acquire property in the future. This article protects individuals or legal persons from arbitrary state interference in their property, with the exception of exceptional case the Convention itself provides for, such as public interest. These principles enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, as well as the case-law of the Court were the basis of the laws enacted by the Albanian Government for the remedy of the crime committed against former owners by the communist regime. However, despite Albania becoming part of the Convention System only in 1996 (Parliament, 1996) and the obligations stemming from it, the principles were first met in a number of laws tackling the issue of private property at the beginning of the 1990-s.

Despite the positive intention of the legislative power and its initial initiatives to reconstitute the property to the original owners, these efforts were consistently undermined by the socioeconomical conditions of the time (de Waal, 2004, p. 20) and the need for new legal measures to regulate them.<sup>1</sup> With Law 7501/1991 "On the land" started the process of distribution of more than 420 agricultural cooperatives to 365,000 rural households (Stanfield & Jazoj, 1995), land which in practice belonged to the formerly expropriated owners. The majority of the population of Albania (50% of the workforce and 65%

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<sup>1</sup> Law 7501/1991 "On Land"; Law 7592/1992 "On Privatization of State Housing"; Law 7512/1991 "On the regulation and protection of private property, free initiative, private and independent activity, as well as privatizations (amended); Law no. 7665, dated 21.01.1993 "On the development of priority areas for tourism"; Law no. 9482, dated 3.04.2006 "On legalization, urbanization and integration of illegal constructions (amended).

of the population) benefited in one way or another from this form of land redistribution (Cungu & Swinne, 1999). In order to minimize the issues created by the Law on Land, in April 1993, Parliament passed the Law on Restitution and Compensation of Property to Former Owners (Parliament, ikub.al, 1993), for the property unjustly expropriated by the state during the communist regime. The implementation of the law was plagued by delays in the decision-making process as well as a total lack of implementation of the decisions held by The Commissions on the Restitution and Compensation of Property.

This law was followed by the new Law on Restitution and Compensation of Property (Parliament, drejtesia.gov.al, 2004) adopted in violation of the deadlines set out in Article 181 of the 1998 Constitution of the Republic of Albania, further contributing to the prolonged deadlines for the completion of the process of restitution and compensation of property. It also suffered from a lack of emphasis on technical capability, financial and human resources for its full implementation (Manushaqe Puto and Others v. Albania, 2012, p. 16). This led to an increasing number of former owners who began addressing the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) to resolve their cases. Following a number of considerable financial penalties for the Albanian state in relation to this issue, the ECtHR in 2012 issued the Pilot Judgment Manushaqe Puto and Others v. Albania, emphasizing the need for general measures as an urgent matter to effectively ensure the right to compensation with a certain margin of appreciation for the state. For the purposes of the successful implementation of a new legal policy and initiative on this issue, it was important for the Government to implement an accurate database on the number of decisions on property restitution and compensation to owners, a new compensation scheme based on the provisions of the Convention and ECtHR case-law, a transparent process, and realistic binding timeframes, with respect to each step of the compensation process, to be achieved after a public consultation with the interest groups.

With regard to the process of restitution and compensation of the property, both these laws, in contrast to the provisions of the current law and its compensation methodology provided for the full restitution and compensation of property to former owners, and where not possible for objective reasons, its compensation. Law no. 7698, dated 14.03.1993 "On Restitution and Compensation of Property", provided in Article 4 that:

*"Former owners or their heirs are recognized and restituted all the properties, which at the moment of enactment of this law were in the form of free unoccupied real estate or unchanged buildings, with the exception when it provided differently herein."*

The law also provided for a number of limitations with respect to the quantity of property to be restituted, limiting the full compensation/restitution of up until 10,000 sqm. When properties were from 10,000 sqm to 100,000 sqm, compensation/restitution would provide for an additional 10% of the property (over 10,000 sqm). When the property was over 100,000 sqm, +1%.

Conversely, Law 9235, dated 29.07.2004 "on Restitution and Compensation of Property" in Article 6 provided that:

*"Expropriated subjects are entitled to the right of ownership and are restituted the real estate without restriction, with the exception of agricultural land, which is restituted or compensated up to 100 ha, if the expropriated subject (his heirs) have not benefited from the application of Law No. 7501, dated 19.07.1991 on "Land"."*

One underpinning element of the 2004 law was the provision of the right to compensation at market value of the property, something not previously expressly stipulated in the preceding law (Parliament, drejtesia.gov.al, 2004, p. 6). This provision was followed by the issuance of a number of Land Value Maps by the Council of Ministers, which set the value of land in a number of circuits of the Republic of Albania, land value maps which are still in use by the European Court of Human Rights as a reference for the just satisfaction of applicants to the court with cases relevant to the issue of compensation of property (Halimi and Others v. Albania, 2016). Further to these stipulations, the law also provided for the right of the expropriated subjects and their heirs to benefit interest based on the time from the recognition of the property until the time of the full enforcement of the decision, stating that *"For the period from the recognition of the right of ownership to the receipt of the remuneration in the form of cash compensation, the expropriated subject also benefits the banking interest, according to the annual average issued by the Bank of Albania"* (Parliament, drejtesia.gov.al, 2004, p. 10).

Despite the best intentions, this rendition of the property restitution framework was not effective either. It was amended numerous times through: Law No. 9388, dated 04.05.2005; Decision of the Constitutional Court (CC) No. 26, dated 02.11.2005; Law No. 9583, dated 17.07.2006; Law No.9684, dated 06.02.2007; CC Decision no.11, dated 04.04.2007; Law No. 9898, dated 10.04.2008; Law No. 10095, dated 12.3.2009; Law No. 10186, dated 05.11.2009; Law no.10207, dated



23.12.2009; CC Decision No. 27, dated 26.5.2010; Law No. 10308, dated 22.07.2010; CC Decision No. 43, dated 06.10.2011; Law No. 55/2012, dated 10.05.2012; and up until just months before the enactment of the current law, with Law No. 49 / 2014, dated 08.05.2014.

### **The law of 2015 On the Treatment of Property and the Completion of the Property Compensation Process**

Law no. 133/2015 "On the Treatment of Property and the Completion of the Property Compensation Process" was guided in its merits by the Pilot Judgment "Manushaqe Puto and Others v. Albania", where the ECtHR imposed the general obligations for the Albanian state, to take concrete measures to enforce the unenforced decisions recognizing the right of compensation of former owners and examine pending applications on the matter.

The problems noted by the ECtHR in this judgment, which were also found in other similar cases (see Ramadhi v. Albania, Beshiri and Others against Albania, Hamzaraj v. Albania, Nuri v. Albania, Driza v. Albania, etc.), were the frequent changes to the legislation related to property restitution and compensation (at least seven times between 2004-2010); the fact that none of these laws or any other domestic provision provided for the manner in which the decisions of administrative bodies for restitution and compensation of property would be implemented; the fact that there was no time limit for appealing these decisions to domestic courts or any specific means for their implementation; as well as the fact that these laws again awarded the Council of Ministers, namely the executive power, the right to determine the form and manner of compensation, by defining the relevant rules and methods. The previous activity of property restitution and compensation bodies, in most cases, did not include the issue of assessment of property, but aimed only at the recognition of the former owner's status, the recognition of the property rights of the former owners to restitution or compensation, allowing in this manner for binding decisions to be left pending indefinitely. Thus, the legitimate expectations of former owners were determined by decisions which in most cases recognized the rights to the real estate property but did not determine the financial value of the compensation. The transitory compensation scheme according to the market value of the compensation time was considered by the ECHR in Manushaqe Puto and Others as an ineffective means of enforcing decisions recognizing the right to compensation. Likewise, the non-execution of the final decisions in favor of the former owners, who were granted the right to compensation, had also violated their rights to a fair hearing within the meaning of Article 6/1 of ECHR.

Law 133/2015, entered into force on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2016, in parallel with a new Property Value Map (Albania C. o., 2016), which was instrumental to the implementation of the law due to it being the reference document for the land prices in the process of evaluation of compensation decisions. It has as its main object: the regulation and just satisfaction of property rights arising from expropriation, nationalization or seizure, in accordance with Article 41 of the Constitution and Article 1 of Protocol 1 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; the establishment and administration of the Compensation Fund, which would serve for the purposes of property compensation; and would determine the procedures for the treatment of property and the completion of the completion of the property process as well as the administrative bodies charged with their realization.

Article 3 of the Law stipulates that this law acts on all claims that are under review at the PRCA [Property Restitution and Compensation Agency, precursor of the current Property Management Agency] on the day of its entry into force as well as on all those applications that will be submitted within the terms of this law as it pertains to the recognition of the property rights. In addition, this law extends its effects, including in the financial assessment, to the: a) execution of all decisions that have not been implemented, for the recognition of the right of compensation provided by the administrative or judicial bodies in Albania; b) applications that are under consideration in the courts of all levels, at the Supreme Court as well as at the European Court of Human Rights, regarding their financial assessment.

This law, in contrast to the previous iterations of the legal framework on property restitution/compensation, provides for compensation as the only remedy for the rights of former owners and their heirs, substituting restitution with the concept of compensation in the land previously recognized as property of the former, a new and untested alternative, which was not welcomed by many of the interest groups (Top-Channel, 2015). In Article 8 of Law, the forms of compensation provided are: a) financial; b. with other immovable property of any kind, of equal value, owned by the state; c) in shares in state-owned companies or in which the state is a co-owner, having an equivalent value to the immovable property; d) with the value of objects, which are subject to privatization. The basic property value indicators under this law are assigned separately for land and construction objects (Article 8). When a property is a land union with a construction object, its value is derived per unit, as the sum of the values of the construction object and the land on which it sits. The value of the compensated property in this case is derived for the land based on the land value map, and for the building/facilities, on

the Decision of the Council of Ministers on the methodology of valuation of immovable property in the Republic of Albania (Ministers, 2012).

Further, contrary to the straight forward concept of previous laws of compensation/restitution at 100% of the land previously owned at market value, it introduced a new compensation mechanism, where the property to be compensated is to be evaluated based on the cadastral index that it had at the time of expropriation. The restituted property is evaluated by determining the differences that will result between its value pursuant to the current cadastral index and the value of the property pursuant to the cadastral index at the time of expropriation.

Put into a simplified explanation, the process is as follows:

$$Sp \times Vp = FVp$$

Where:

**Sp** - the surface of the property recognized for compensation

**Vp** - the value of the property (based on the land value map) according to the cadastral index the property had at the time of expropriation

**FVp** – Final financial value of the property to be compensated to the former owner or the heirs

Simplified Explanation on evaluation of property already restituted

$$Sp \times AVp - Sp \times VP + VRp$$

Where:

**Sp** - the surface of the property recognized for compensation

**Vp** - the value of the property (based on the land value map) according to the cadastral index the property had at the time of expropriation

**AVp** - value of property based on the actual cadastral index

**VRp** – Restituted property value

This new methodology was sanctioned in the law as irrefutable in court, leaving room to owners for challenges only with respect to the value calculated by the Property Management Agency, and not the manner in which it was calculated (Article 19/1).

The law provides also for the cases where in cases in which the expropriated subjects have benefited through a decision compensation or restitution, the difference calculated as per the letter "b" of paragraph 1 of Article 6 of the Law is deducted from the assessed value of the property recognized for compensation, calculated according to letter "a" of paragraph 1 therein. When this assessment shows that the subject receives a property that has a value greater than the property he had at the time of expropriation, then the subject is compensated in nature with the surface corresponding to the evaluation and the rest of the property is transferred to the land fund through a decision of the PMA. This provision, which would provide for the backbone of the land compensation fund for the state, was found unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Albania (Decision no. 1, dated 16.01.2017, 2017).

However, the Constitutional Court failed to consider two of the most problematic and most disputed provisions of the law, failing to reach a majority in its ruling:

*"Article 7, Item 2/ a and b:*

*If the assessment of the property restituted through a final decision is higher than the estimate of the land recognized for compensation, then the expropriated subject is considered as compensated in full.*

*b. If the assessment of the property recognized for compensation is greater than the evaluation of the restituted land, then the subject is compensated for the difference, pursuant to the provisions of this law."*

These provisions have been seen by many parties, from the interest groups on property issues, the President of the Republic, the Ombudsman and Members of Parliament, as a violation of the right of former owners to legal certainty and unfair interference with their right to positive expectations on the issue.

The Albanian government justified the use of this new compensation scheme based on the characteristics and value of the property of origin, where most of the properties expropriated by the communist regime were agricultural land, forest land, and meadows and pastures, with the plot land surface being an extremely limited area; the numerous demographic, civic and geographical changes occurring during this regime and subsequent years, turning many of these areas, specifically those in the vicinity or boundaries of existing cities from agricultural land into plots of land, due to the natural extension of the boundaries of these inhabited centers; and the lack of financial value added to these areas by the owners themselves, but by the gradual and natural evolution of society. Consequently, this led to the financial impossibility of the state and the nation as a whole to pay the very high financial bill for full compensation of the owners on the basis of the current form of the land and market value.

The basic principle on which the Government relied on the conception of this methodology was that "return" is not an absolute right, but may be subject to numerous conditions and limitations (Maria Atanasiu and Others v. Romania, 2010), applying the principle of possible restrictions directly onto the property issue itself.

As a novelty to the compensation scheme, the law provides that applicants may apply for special compensation, waiving part of their claim for the benefit of a speedy enforcement.

- a) When the subject requests to be financially compensated within 1 year, then he receives 20% of the compensation value and foregoes the rest of this value.
- b) When the subject requests to be financially compensated within 3 years, then he receives 30% of the compensation value and foregoes the rest of this value.
- c) When the subject requests to be financially compensated within 5 years, then he receives 40% of the compensation value and foregoes the rest of this value.

According to the official figures of the PMA, for the year 2017 (Agency, 2017) there have been 12 such applications with a total value of properties at 348,631,590 ALL. The financial value awarded after waiver to the owners has been that of 97,343,259 ALL, saving the state the financial burden of 251,197,331 ALL. For the year 2018 (Agency P. M., 2019) there have been 129 such applications with a financial value awarded after the waiver of 1,507,504,425 ALL, saving the state the amount of 3,010,751,266 ALL. This norm has been seen as a positive step towards not only the speedy and full enforcement of the decisions held by the applicants, but also as a means of providing a lighter financial burden to the state finances.

### **The problems observed in the practical implementation of new framework**

Despite the finding of the law and methodology as an effective remedy by the Committee of Ministers of Council of Europe (Europe, 2018), many of the procedures envisaged for obtaining compensation were seen and are still seen as flawed legal projections by many domestic actors who have objected to the draft law and the successive law adopted by the Albanian Parliament (SotNews, 2019), culminating in the submission of a request to the Constitutional Court on the non-compliance of the Law 133/2015 with the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and the European Convention on Human Rights.

The process of reviewing the submitted petition continued for more than 9 months, at which time the Constitutional Court requested legal assistance from the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) on the conformity of the law with Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 to the Convention and the relevant case-law of the European Court. In its assessment, the Venice Commission maintained a highly realistic position on the then situation of the property issue, where more than 230 cases are pending review by the ECtHR (European Commission for Democracy Through Law, 2016, p. 3); 40,000 issues before competent local authorities; and the financial cost for full compensation of about 814 Billion ALL, estimating that a proportional solution was needed between the right of owners for just satisfaction and the financial burden for the Albanian state. Considering Albania's specific situation, the Commission considered that the new legal framework, which could bring lower compensation to former owners, met the requirement of proportionality (Ashingdane v. The United Kingdom, 1985), as set out in Article 1 Protocol No. 1 of the ECHR. Despite this, the Commission assessed that this opinion was issued to assist the Constitutional Court to evaluate the new law in an abstract manner.

Following this opinion, the Constitutional Court partially accepted the petition of the applicants, repealing Article 6, items 3 and 5 of the Law as unconstitutional, and rejecting the request for the abrogation of Article 6, item 1, letter "b", and Article 7, item 2, letters "a" and "b".

Even after the Constitutional Court's decision to abrogate Article 6, items 3 and 5 of the Law, the latter and its supplementing bylaws have presented a number of fundamental and procedural shortcomings that have affected its effective application, and have effectively halted the process to a standstill. With more than 40,000 decisions awaiting evaluation and later compensation as well as more than 16,000 unexamined applications pending before domestic institutions, the work started slowly and current statistics do not show promising results.

Pursuant to the aforementioned reports of the Agency before the Parliamentary Commission on Legal Matters, Public Administration and Human Rights, for the year 2017, the Property Management Agency has evaluated financially 4,038 decisions of the years 1993-1194, 6,941 decisions of 1995, and 4,877 decisions of 1996, totaling 15,856. The total financial fund awarded to the applicants for these assessed decisions was 1,959,411,055 ALL. The total physical fund used for compensation for 2016 was 65,9 hectares and for 2017, 257,5 hectares. In total, only 881 requests for compensation have been deposited near the agency, contributing in this way to the stagnation of the process. With regard to applications pending recognition, only 2529 of them were administered, with 2164 being returned to the applicants for need for supplemental documentation and 365 of them being refused by the Agency.

Meanwhile, things started to pick up for the Agency in 2018, when it evaluated financially 9458 decisions, where 8642 of the latter were evaluated financially at 34,156,228,643 ALL, 632 being found to have been compensated pursuant to Article 7 of the law and 184 decisions being awarded the right to first refusal. However, even in 2018, the number of applicants actually being awarded just satisfaction is considerably low for the number of pending decisions, with only 429 applications for compensation and only 18 of them awarded a final enforcement decision in the amount of 35,521,553 ALL and ~56 hectares in compensation in kind.

Despite the pick-up in the pace of examination of decisions and dissemination of compensation, in the three years allotted by the law for the process (Article 15), the PMA has evaluated financially only 25,314 decisions out of more than 40,000 pending applications, with the local courts now taking over the process.

The timeframe for the evaluation of already issued decisions pursuant to the law is 3 years. If the process is not concluded by this timeframe, interested parties may address the Tirana Administrative Court of First Instance, to carry out the evaluation pursuant to the law. Currently process has reached the deadline and as such applicants can only continue through judicial review, which in itself presents a further burden considering that Albania is undergoing the transitory evaluation of professionals of the judiciary, with a large number of the judges who have undergone the process having been let go of their position, contributing in this way to the backlog of cases pending examination (Commission, n.d.).

Even with regard to the examination of new applications for recognition, the law provides a binding timeframe of 3 years, deadline which has been passed with the 2018 report of the Agency stating that in the period of January-December 2018, there were 12,950 new applications administered by the Agency, of which 3000 have been dealt with, and the remaining 9,950 case files being processed currently. However, now that the deadline has passed the Agency has suspended the examination process and waiting for the pending cases to be examined by the Civil Court of First Instance (Article 34). One main question which has risen in the last months is in what capacity is the PMA taking part in the court proceedings of certification of fact by part of the applicants for the recognition of their right to property. The passive legitimacy of the PMA to be part of this proceedings has been questioned, but so far it has been impossible for the question to be answered as currently Albania does not have a functioning Supreme Court, nor a functioning Constitutional Court to rule on the matter.

The courts tasked by the law with the duty to review the applicants' challenges to the decisions of the PMA as well as the requests for recognition once the deadlines for the procedure have passed, in themselves exhibit serious problems in the efficiency of the examination of deposited casefiles. From the most recent data deposited by the Albanian Government to the CoE (Advocature, 2018), it is evident that the Administrative Courts of First Instance at country level for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017 had 21,540 registered cases and only 17,927 cases administered and examined; 24,606, registered cases and 20,365 examined cases; and 21,477 registered cases and only 17,451, examined cases, respectively, in this way contributing year after year to the buildup of a considerable backlog. For the Administrative Appeals Court, the situation is quite similar for the same years. At the same time, even the Civil Courts where the requests for recognition are poised

to be deposited from now on, the situation is quite similar. For the years 2015, 2016, and 2017, 89,416, 92,120 and 94,388 filed cases and only 71,589, 75,189 and 78,200 examined cases, respectively, showing the same pattern of backlog buildup which would pose a significant threat to the effectiveness of the mechanism envisaged in the law and the objective ability of applicants in reaching a satisfactory solution to their claims, depriving them of the rights guaranteed under Article 6/1 of the Convention, a core element of the Manushaqe Puto and Others judgment.

Even with regard to the funds made available to the Agency for the finalization of the process, the law has been breached from the outset. In its appendix, the law provides for a budget of ALL 50 billion made available to the Compensation Fund, with a specific amount for the PMA's annual activity (see Annex of Law 133/2015). Despite the provisions in the law stating that the budget for the years 2016 and 2017, pursuant to the Agency's reports, in total, would amount to 6,033,000,000.00 ALL, the fund available and used by the Agency was only 3,426,701,399.00 ALL. The same can be said for the year 2018, where despite the law providing a budget of 3,690,000,000 ALL, the PMA has used only 1,543,025,978.56 ALL. It is true that Article 10 of the law provides that the remainder of unused budget funds for a specific year are to be passed to the following year, the initial trends show that there is a failure to use the financial funds available and a delay in the compensation process, raising questions to the effectiveness of the mechanism.

One final remedy provided in the law as a means for the speedy compensation of applicants, as well as a means of providing the state with leeway in accumulating funds for the financial and physical compensation fund, was the procedure of compensation through auction (Article 13). The law provides that the PMA, in order to increase the financial resources for the compensation fund, would organize auctions for the sale of a property, part of the land fund. All owners holding a compensation decision financially evaluated by the PMA could participate in the auction. The owners holding an assessment on a final compensation decision could participate in the auction if they express their will to benefit from the physical compensation fund. The PMA would announce the winner in accordance with the legislation in force for public auctions, based on the highest bid. So far, not a single procedure of compensation through auction has been initiated and this process is seen as a failure and unnecessary step in the overall mechanism for the compensation of former owners.

## Conclusions

The legal framework for property restitution / compensation, in the 27 years following the collapse of the communist regime, has undergone frequent and fluent changes with laws and bylaws that most times either don't complement each-other or are objectively unable to be implemented in full, a systematic problem that has been found to violate the rights of former owners both by the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Albania and the ECtHR. The most recent and current law has encountered many problems and challenges, among which non-participation of interest groups in the formulation of the new law, disregard of budget projections for the financial fund at the disposal of the process, passing of restrictive deadlines set in the law, possible delays in the examination of claims by of the competent institutions or the effective impossibility of the applicants to have access to the judicial system in order to finalize the process of review of their claims.

The present law is a law which does not base the compensation of property at current market value or size in origin other than the provisions of previous laws, thus creating a relatively high loss for entities still pending return and compensation for their lawful properties. This mechanism was accepted as being proportional by a number of actors, but it was contested by those groups of interests directly affected by its implementation, seeing it with skepticism and controversy, which has led to the official complaint of many associations and The President of the Republic of the Council of Europe and the ECtHR.

Despite the finding of the law as an effective mechanism by the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the many challenges faced by the executive bodies charged with the implementation of the law, as well as the breach of deadlines for the examination of new claims and evaluation of already issued decisions has raised serious questions on the new mechanism. So far, the European Court for Human Rights has refrained itself from issuing a judgment examining the new remedy set in place by the Albanian Government, despite the Government submitting the request for examination in 2016, this due also to the lack of an Albanian judge in the panel to examine the case. Recently, a new Albanian judge was appointed to the Court, and the examination of the case seems to draw to a close. However, the most pressing issue remain on what will happen if there is a negative decision by part of the Court. In general, the Court, due to the principle of legal certainty, does not provide for measures of retrospective effect in its judgments, unless the state wishes to give such effect to the case (Marckx v. Belgium, 1979).

However, chances are that it will find the new mechanism incompatible with the Convention System and the case-law of the Court, guiding the state in finding a new methodology and domestic remedy in tackling this long-standing systematic issue. Nevertheless, all this remains speculation until the moment the Court itself issues a binding judgment, which will determine the fate of more than 40,000 already issued domestic decisions and more than 16,000 still pending applications for the right to property.

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