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SECTION IV
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

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STRATEGIES TO COMBAT ORGANIZED CRIME AT EUROPEAN UNION LEVEL

Dănciulescu, Laurenţiu-Andrei[1]

Abstract

Organized crime is one of the main threats to the security of the European Union and can cause serious social and economic damages. In order to prevent this phenomenon and avoid its rapid expansion, further proactive measures are needed to combat and prevent.

At present, organized crime takes advantage of certain legal breaches, which makes it difficult for the competent bodies, to combat the scourge, to react quickly against criminal groups who use highly developed methods to hide their activities and products from criminal offences, taking advantage of globalization and using information and communication technologies.

Organized crime is a crucial issue in many EU Member States as it represents a major threat to the rule of law and has very serious consequences for victims, for the economy and for the social development. According to the latest studies, over 3600 organized crime groups are active in Europe.

Keywords: *organized crime, strategies to combat crime, European Union, threat, globalization*

JEL Classification: H8

Introduction

The last years had as main feature the change, both in the economic and social field, leading to changing the lifestyle and way of thinking of the individual and of various organizations.

The discussion of the general idea of organized crime is closely related to both legal and sociological issues. The old principles on citizens' rights disappear, being replaced by some of the opposite, a phenomenon that has grown over the globe, starting from North America, Asia, Europe and Africa.

As it was natural to happen, this change took place in organized crime as well.

With the phenomenon of globalization, there were two relatively simultaneous phenomena:

- the disappearance of all boundaries between national and international.
- mixing social, economic and political issues to a level where no differentiation can be established between them.

These two phenomena have led to the emergence of transnational and transcontinental organized crime.

Thus, organized crime has focused its attention on certain areas of activity, including: electronic fraud, theft and smuggling of patrimony goods, money laundering, drug trafficking, trafficking of firearms and nuclear products, prostitution and, last but not least, terrorism.

Forms of manifestations of organized crime have seen very rapid changes, if traditional organized crime is based on usury, prostitution and gambling now has become the scams through credit cards, theft and sale of patrimony objects, possession and trading of rare and endangered animals.

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1. Trends in Organized Crime

The notion of "trend" in organized crime consists of two elements, distinct at first, but which are often factually mixed. The first is the evolution of the way of organizing the offenders and the relations they have, here referring to the organized part of their activity. The second element refers to the evolution of forms of crime, quantitative importance and repercussions on society, here referring to the aspects of crime and prejudice.

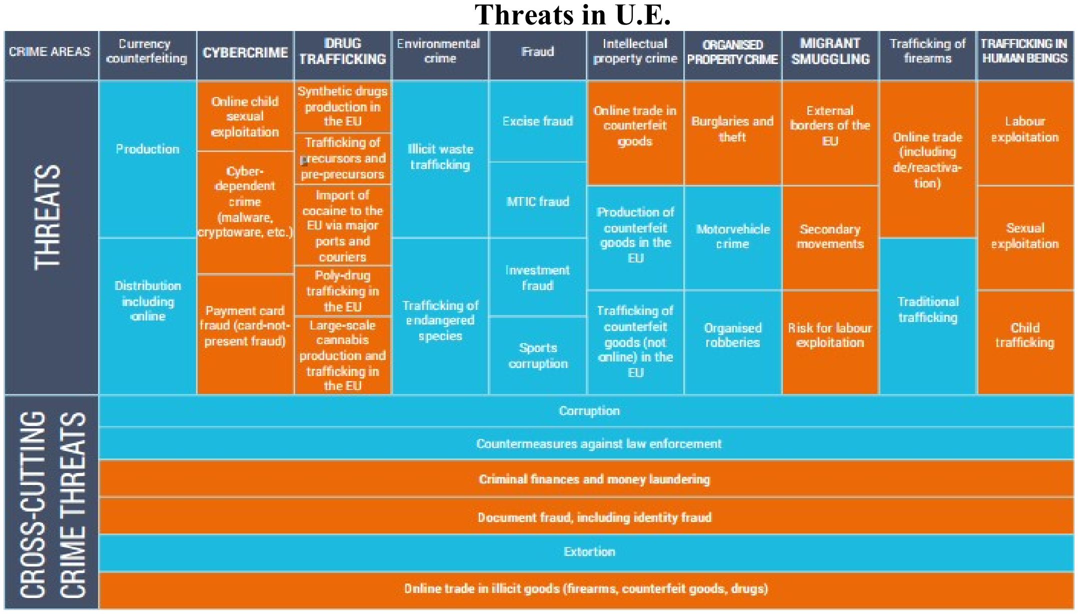
When we want to classify the evolution or trends of organized crime, the apparent change in activities or forms of crime leads to a change in our way of perceiving the phenomenon. The widening of knowledge about trends depends only on the clarity of the data on which they are based, coming from the information obtained from the competent institutions and sometimes from the university studies and civil society. Information activities on criminal organizations differ from one state to another, and access to this information is sometimes limited.

Organized crime in Europe, as is commonly understood, mainly refers to trafficking in human beings, the theft of art objects and antiquities, blackmail, fraud, robbery as well as consensual offenses and criminal transit activities such as certain forms of corruption, clandestine passage, drug trafficking and money laundering.

Available data are limited to most of these offenses and are characterized by large areas of shadow of unreported or undetected offenses. In order to have a good insight into the trends of organized crime, it is therefore necessary to combine official and academic resources and those from investigative journalism and civil society. Reuniting reliable and homogeneous data on offenses related to organized crime at European level plays a vital role in developing strategies to combat these crimes (fig. no. 1).

Figure no. 1

Threats in U.E.



(Source: www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/main-reports/european-union-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-2017)

2. Strategic Particularities in Combating Organized Crime - European Perspective

If, in the classical field of international criminal justice assistance governed by conventions, the uniformity of the criminal laws of member countries of the Council of Europe encounters inherent difficulties, caused by their traditional national specificity, it is appreciated that, with regard to the new forms of transnational organized crime, such as cybercrime, environmental, nuclear, etc. crime, this alignment will be much easier to achieve, as the experience of the European countries is still suffering, and a unitary regulation at the continental level will be convenient for everyone, easy to implement at national and international level.

This will only reinforce the words of the French visionary politician Robert Schumann, who, in 1950, said: "Europe will not be made at once, not in an overall construction, but by concrete achievements that would first create solidarity fact".

The increasing complexity of organized crime, the diversity of its forms of manifestation, the wide area of enlargement in the economic, social and political fields impose drafting and developing adequate strategies to prevent and combat this phenomenon.

The systematic approach to this issue necessarily implies considering two main elements: the objectives pursued and the methods used. This is all the more so since a community or a particular country will have to prioritize its objectives, while be at the same time ready to accept certain concessions and opt for the least costly methods involving minimum political and legal constraints. Thus, in the following, we will make the necessary reference to the objectives to be considered and the strategies needed to achieve them.

In general, the objectives to be considered when developing prevention and repression strategies for organized crime are:

- reducing the vulnerability of the society to the infiltration of criminal organizations;
- reducing the possibilities of accumulating and using profits from illicit activities;
- identifying, dismantling and liquidating criminal organizations by prosecuting and condemning their members, confiscating goods obtained from crimes and those used for such purposes.

Essentially, these are the objectives and, for their realization it is necessary to develop, adopt and implement adequate prevention and repression strategies through efficient methods and means. In this respect, a great importance in elaborating strategies for combating the phenomenon of organized crime is considering the objective and subjective elements that characterize that territory, country, region.

Thus, as objective elements we can mention:

- the level of available resources;
- the qualification and competence of cadres, especially those working in the criminal justice system and in the structures for the suppression of organized crime.

As subjective elements, can be considered:

- corruption level and vulnerability to this phenomenon;
- existing complicity connections between the organized criminal groups and certain elements of the political, economic and administrative system.

3. Priorities in combating Organized Crime for the period 2018 – 2021

The 10 priorities adopted by the Council of Europe are mainly based on the recommendations made in the Europol report, such as the assessment of the threat posed by the serious forms of crime and organized crime in the European Union.

3.1. Cyber Crime

Every year, cyber-attacks have generated global losses of over € 400 billion. The European Union is trying to intensify their fight against cyber-crime by focusing on three main areas:

- Combating attacks against information systems;
- Combating fraud with no cash means of payment;
- Improving children's safety online, including combating the production and distribution of child abuse related content.

3.2. Drug trafficking

Drug production and trafficking remain some of the most profitable actions for criminal organizations at the level of the European Union. The main objectives are:

- Reducing production and trafficking in synthetic drugs such as ecstasy and LSD;
- Undermining the criminal activities of organizations that illegally enter the territory of the Member States of the European Union cannabis, heroin and cocaine.

3.3. Facilitating illegal immigration into the European Union

The illegal introduction of migrants into Europe is, for the most part, in the hands of traffickers. Currently, over 90% of migrants pay traffickers to reach the territory of the Member States of the European Union.

The European Union seeks to combat criminal networks exploiting vulnerable migrant groups, especially those that:

- Use methods that endanger people's lives;
- Offer their services online;
- Use methods to fraud documents within their activity.

3.4. Theft and organized burglaries

The European Union intends to undermine the activity of criminal groups that exploit the lack of interoperability of cross-border surveillance tools to commit business, housing or automobile burglaries.

3.5. Trafficking in human beings

- The European Union wants to combat trafficking in human beings, especially sexual exploitation and labor exploitation, as well as all forms of child trafficking, the main objective being to identify and protect the victims..

3.6. Fraud with excise products and intra-community fraud through ghost companies

Every year, € 60 billion are stolen by criminal groups that use VAT in cross-border transactions. The experience gained in the past years will add to the fight against criminal groups.

3.7. Trafficking of firearms

The EU is determined to undermine the work of criminal organizations that:

- smuggle firearms
- distribute firearms
- use firearms

3.8. Environmental crime

Environmental crime has become one of the most profitable organized crime activities worldwide. This affect not only the environment but also the society and the economy as a whole. The EU will focus its combating actions on:

- undermining the criminal organizations involved in the trafficking of wild fauna and flora
- combating those who deal with illegal waste trafficking.

3.9. Funds from offenses

Making a profit is the primary target of offenders, and financial service innovations - such as virtual coins and anonymous prepaid cards - have created new opportunities for money laundering and crime financing. The EU aims to:

- confiscate the profits generated by criminal networks by laundering money
- target businesses offering money laundering services
- targeting criminal organizations using new payment methods to launder profits from criminal offenses.

3.10. Document fraud

The security of travel documents is important for combating terrorism and organized crime and helps protect borders and manage migration. The EU aims to combat the criminal organizations involved in producing and supplying false documents to other offenders.

Conclusion

Organized crime is a major threat to the security of the European Union. Organized groups and individual offenders continue to generate losses of billions of euro in the Member States.

The impact of technology on crime extends beyond the internet and involves all sorts of technical innovations such as drones, advanced printing technologies, etc.

The European Union should have a key role in creating a new pan-European network of judicial cooperation in criminal matters, as well as in establishing connections between the various existing networks, in order to be able to fight on an equal footing with organized crime networks.

The mutations/changes that occurred at the political and socio-economic level led to the emergence of new forms of criminal organizations, situation where there are a number of risks and threats but also vulnerabilities that must alert the state authorities responsible for preventing and combating the organized crime.

In an attempt to annihilate this scourge, the competent authorities should consider not only the punishment of the culprits, but also the development of a prevention and combat program. This program should be based on measures to raise living standards, improve living conditions, leading to a balance between the national and international environment, respectively the diminishing of the major social differences.

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DIGITALIZATION OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY VIA SIVECO SOFTWARE

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Abstract

The new information systems within organizations are increasingly systematizing the information transmission, decision-making process, and interpersonal communications. Their dissociation consists of the indicators system and people along with the entire interrelations system, although they become different from the classical information systems, in which only the collection and processing were automated. The extraordinary progress achieved in the information and communications technology industry has led to the automation of many components of the information system. Therefore, the tendency is for them to progressively overlap. This article presents how human resources management activities are managed within a regional branch in the field of railway transport.

Key words: *human resources, IT system, rail transport*

JEL Classification: M15, M12

1. Introduction

Because of the instability of the current economic environment, railway companies are determined to organize in a new way, seeking management methods to control crisis situations, which turn the existing theories upside down. An important feature of all modern approaches is the idea that all human resources must be mobilized to achieve organizational goals. According to the data provided by UIC (The International Union of Railways), in 2018 the European railway network had 238,600 kilometers, and Romania, with a railway network length of 10,820 kilometers had a share of 4.53% and ranked eighth in Europe (*International Railway Statistics, 2019*). Each activity pertaining to human resources management requires special attention, especially that of the digitalized personnel management, under the conditions of current management actions, preparing changes modeling and adjustment of the railway transport system to the constantly changing environment.

Currently, the railway companies in our country, like most Romanian organizations, are facing a recession influenced by the global economic and financial crisis. In this context, taking into account only the aspects related to technology and the requisite of economic recovery, without taking into consideration the social consequences, employees' individual and collective motivations, fails to lead to a rapid solution to the economic and social issues at the present time when the effects of the economic-financial crisis overlap the requisite of aligning the Romanian railway system to the standards and requirements imposed by Romania's membership in the European Union.

The Romanian labor market has undergone significant transformations manifested by the decline of the active and employed population, a consequence of the demographic decrease generated by the negative natural increase corroborated with an unfavorable migratory balance, by fluctuations of the unemployment rate and the increase of long-term unemployment. Moreover, the limited capacity to create new jobs was especially affected. The changes in the professional status are a direct consequence of the change of the property nature, in what regards the extension of the private property to the detriment of the public one (Patache, 2010, p.147).

The effects of rail transport are important, this being a key component of the economic and social development process of any country, often absorbing an overwhelming proportion of national budgets. From this point of view, there is a strong correlation between kilometers

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traveled by rail and the gross domestic product of a country (Simut, V., 2010, p.65). This helps development by facilitating trade, both nationally and internationally, by improving people's access to jobs, education, health care and other services.

2. Presentation of the company subject of the case study

Given the artificial intelligence creation and development as well as the paradigm of modeling with the help of objects, expert systems and systems for executive management appeared. Unlike management systems, which analyze information, generate reports and solve structured problems, systems for executive management allow the assessment of the situation in a timely analysis and intelligent manner at the top management (Tudoroiu, N, 2009, p. 37). According to the definition given by a group of authors, expert systems are computer programs based on artificial intelligence techniques, which store the knowledge of human experts in a well-defined field and then use them to solve difficult problems in said field (Zaharie, D., Năstase, P., 1999, p.9).

The *information system* implies a set of elements and relationships for data collection, transmission, processing and archiving, along with flows, compartments, people and indicators subsystem that contribute to the organization managers' decision-making. The automated component of the information system forms the *computer system*. It can be defined as the totality of automated methods and means for data collection, transmission, processing and archiving.

The "CREIR CF (Rail Operation, Maintenance and Repair Regional Centre)" branch in Constanta, object of this research, is one of the eight regional subunits of the national company CFR SA and has as object of activity the railway infrastructure management and safe train traffic organization in the southeastern part of the country on the railway main eight - Bucharest - Constanta. The railway main no. eight together with the traffic sections, which represent the traffic distances between two important stations called terminals, are schematically represented in figure no.1.

The total number of employees of the CFR Constanta branch, at the end of 2019, was 1895 people, out of which 175 employees with management and execution positions in the central unit of the branch and 1720 employees in the subunits throughout the territory. The staff of the CFR Constanta branch amounts 7.4% of the total number of employees of the CFR national company.

For the proper unfolding of the railway infrastructure management and train traffic organization activities, in the conditions of applying the new restructuring and reorganization measures, the "CREIR CF" Constanta Branch management must ensure the required human resources, both from a quantitative and qualitative perspective.

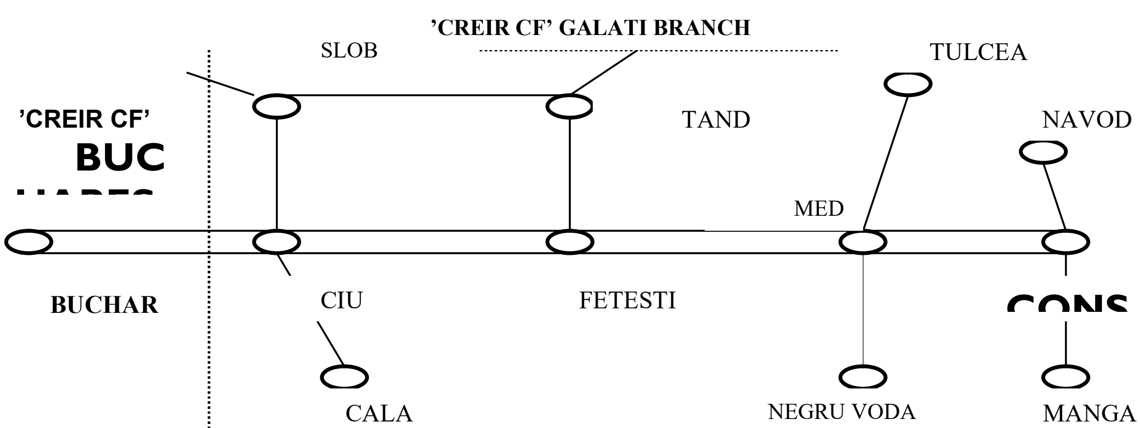

Figure no.1. *Traffic sections of "CREIR CF" Constanta Branch*

This implies, on the one hand, the ensuring of the necessary human resources overall demand and by categories of personnel with a level of training and professional specialization consistent with the specifics of the activity carried out, and on the other hand, a competent management of these resources (Daneci Patrau, 2013, p.76). Within the “CREIR CF” Constanta Branch, human resources information management is performed using the Siveco HR application, which is a software product entirely designed by the Siveco Romania SA specialists, under the Windows XP or W7 and NT 4.0 operating system, using the Oracle database.

3. Siveco_HR application for personnel activity management

SIVECO Romania is the leader of Romanian business software developers and one of the successful software integrators in Central and Eastern Europe. The company develops and exports IT solutions and high-value-added consulting projects to 19 countries in the European Community, the Middle East, North Africa and the Commonwealth of Independent States [6]. The company was established in 1992. The shareholders of SIVECO Romania are Intel Capital, Polish Enterprise Fund V (investment fund managed by Enterprise Investors), SIVECO Netherlands B.V and SIVECO Management Team [8]. Experienced and specialist IT providers manage to successfully oversee the complexity and difficulties of public automation projects, to contribute to the increase of interaction and economic productivity, to the activation of the overall access in a world where interconnection is of essence.

The application allows the computerization of human resources management activity by providing a common platform to connect people, processes and information. The system accelerates and increases the efficiency of organizational processes by intelligently managing workflows and all types of documents, regardless of how they enter the system or their nature.

The application has been designed such as to allow:

- record of employees with numerous professional and personal details;
- personnel selection and recruitment management;
- record and participation in professional training processes;
- evaluating the efficiency of employees with the help of quantitative and qualitative indicators;
- pursuing an individual career;
- statistical reporting of different managerial indicators;
- comparative and statistical analyses in graphic format, performed periodically, upon request.

A very large number of functions provide information on staff recruitment and management as shown in the diagram in Figure no 2:

- analysis and monitoring of employees' evolution
- training and career development
- management of salaries and timesheets, wage payment system.

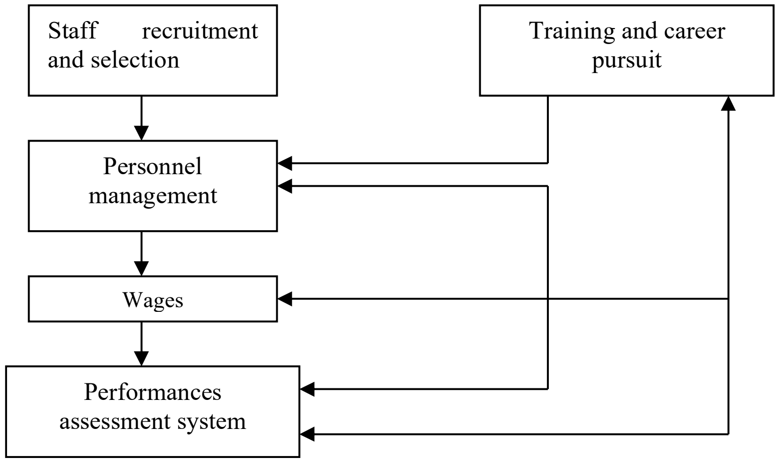

Figure no 2. *Overall structure of Siveco application*

The employees register keeps all the information regarding the staff necessary for the identification of all categories of employees. Simple and comparative analyses, examples and statistics displayed in a proper graphical way are an important means of supporting the decision, the system meeting the short, medium and long term needs of the company (figure no. 3).

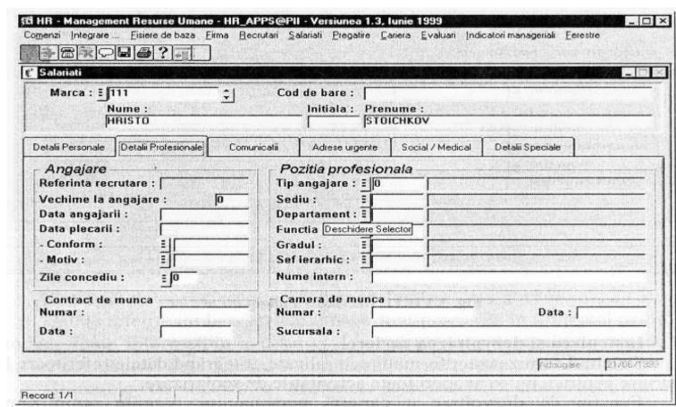

Figure no. 3. *General characteristics of Siveco app*

3.1. Staff recruitment and selection

Figure no.4 shows the data entry box for staff recruitment. The human resources system provides the necessary means to make the recruitment process the most important component of the human resources development strategy by:

- identifying the different phases of the activities to be performed - job fairs, agencies, recruitment campaigns;
- multiple possibilities to define the characteristics to be fulfilled for the respective position;
- efficient procedures for monitoring the different stages of the recruitment process - accepting or rejecting candidates, following tests, interviews.

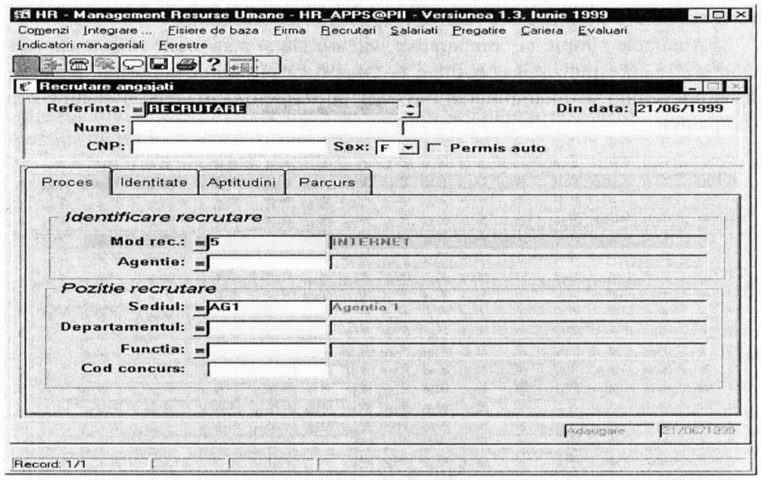

Figure no. 4. *Data entry box for staff recruitment*

3.2. Training and career pursuit

The system provides centralized information, integrating the training data to be able to cover all training activities (Figure no. 5).

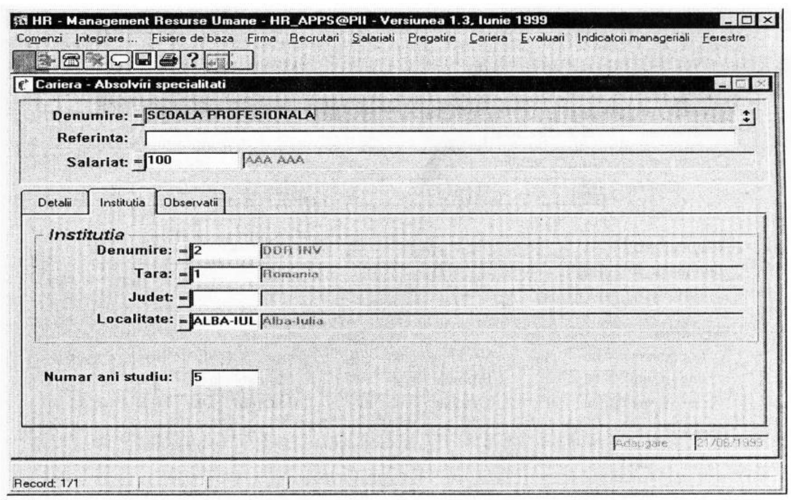

Figure no. 5. *Training and career development*

The staff career development function allows the optimization of human resources potential. The information considered is specific - career history, individual goals, individual and global skills assessing criteria. The training function essentially targets two main aspects, namely, the inventory of the previously carried out activity (graduations, titles, works), as well as the career evolution aspect based on tree diagrams for hierarchy and different professional specialties ascent.

3.3. Performances assessment system

Data regarding human resources is processed in real time to produce all the necessary information - a wide range of analyses, such as: employees' analysis, non-attendance, productive hours, staff costs. The personnel evolution analysis functions allow the determination of the percentage that will be transformed into real data for the wage payment system (figure no. 6). The *Evaluation* sub-module facilitates the attribution of some indicators and percentages of assessing the activity conducted and the efficiency in their solving. The evaluations also refer to the current stage of the employee based on individual tests and evaluation references.

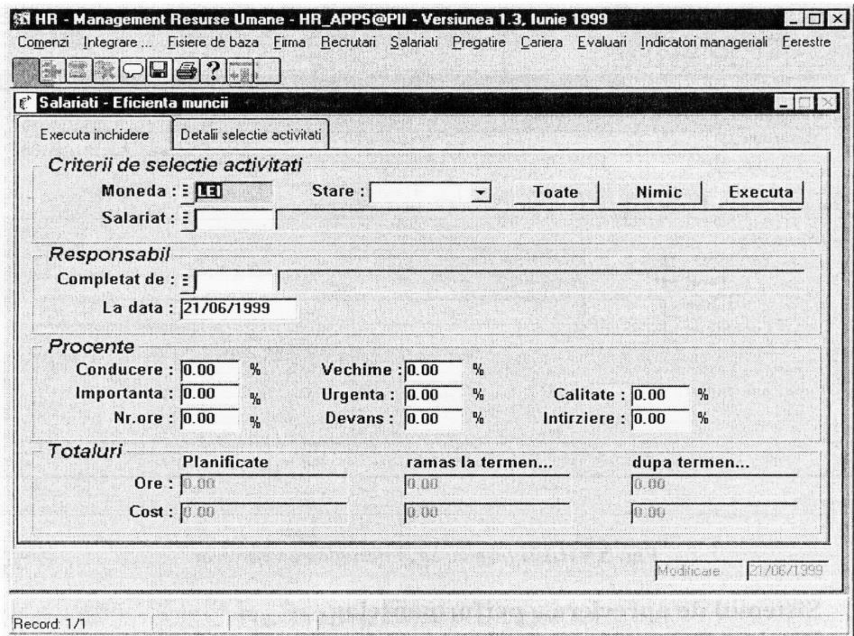

Figure no 6. Performances assessment system

3.4. Wage payment system

Payment procedures and cost management in relation with staff salaries, from beginning to end, perform a set of checks to ensure the promptness and accuracy of the remuneration process.

Having a high degree of delimitation and being easy to customize, the salary procedures are performed with great precision, according to the data presented in Figure no.7.

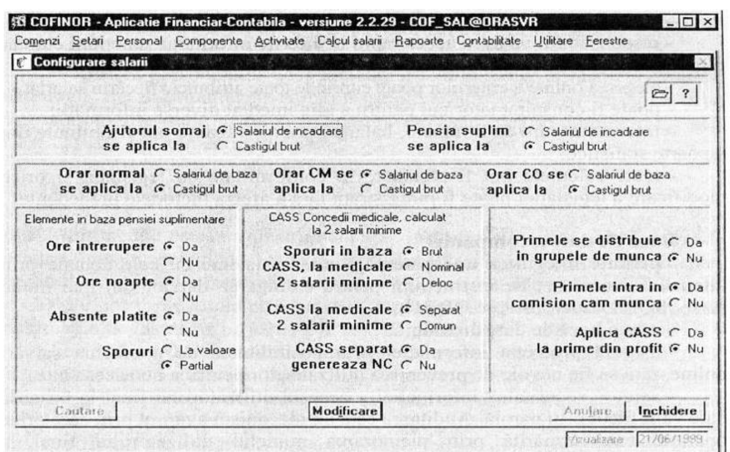

Figure no. 7. Wage payment system

4. Application description

The Siveco_HR application boasts the following features:

- the Human Resources component benefits from the implicit mechanisms: it allows access into the system using encrypted passwords, access levels for each type of user: “Personnel Manager”, “Payroll Manager”, “Payroll Operator”, “manager”, etc.;
- anyone can have controlled access to the application, the actions of the operator being monitored;
- skills can be accurately recorded or inferred from the responsibilities, positions and promotions log;
- the responsible user will have quick access to various information and actions such as: extra pays, bonuses, sanctions, downgrading;
- all calculations can be performed in accordance with the legislation and any amendments in the legislation can be recorded without affecting the previous methods.

Under these conditions the company database:

- allows the transparent integration of new systems along with the existing ones through a set of instructions for extracting data from several sources;
- it is a distributed database, which ensures the information safety, likewise offering the possibility to perform online backups, without having to prevent users beforehand not to access the database;
- ensures information security - the end user's access to the database will be made by password. Auditing is an advanced mechanism by which any operation is tracked by memorizing the end user's name, time, and type of operation.

The use of the Siveco_HR software system has the following advantages:

- the *Human Resources* component offers solutions to the current IT standards, with a low degree of risk, its modules being already verified through numerous implementations;
- the *Personnel Management* module automatically models the business process, both financially and operationally, and provides informational support for financial analysis, forecasts and decision-making in the field of human resources;
- program and database management is performed with powerful services that ensure data protection and reliability, using a system of profiles and access premises;
- the software package bears any modification of the hardware solution now or in the future, having a high level of portability.

The impact of new information and communication technologies on companies has a myriad of forms, ranging from relations with the economic and political environment, to the organizational, functional or personnel level. IT has a major influence on dissolving companies’ typical borders, transforming, on the one hand, the nature of relations with other companies and institutions, and on the other hand, delivering a profound mutation of institutional forms, increasingly complex to match integration in the information society.

5. Conclusions

The integrated Siveco_HR IT system implemented at the “CFR” Branch in Constanta, adapted to the specific business requirements of the company, covers all areas of activity and ensures the modeling of processes to optimize the entire human resources management activity. The system can be replicated in companies with complex production activity, its implementation within a company like CFR SA being an important reference in this sector.

Following the evolution of the staff number and structure, the professional reconversion from some trades that become redundant to others where the training process takes longer, as well as the supervision of the retirement perspective are the main aspects that contribute to the development of a relevant, efficient personnel policy materialized in:

- elaboration of the forecasts regarding the necessary personnel (numerical, qualitative, by specializations, qualifications), which should also take into account the changes occurred according to the transport market, the competition, etc.;
- recruitment and staffing;
- selection of staff with promotion perspectives;
- procedures for assessing employees and establishing the need for professional training;
- elaboration of the training and professional improvement plan for the employees.

In order for the efforts made in terms of correlating the number of staff with the level of benefits to be followed by appropriate results, it is necessary that the employees within the company be wisely used. The professional training activity carried out so far by the Human Resources Department aimed ensuring the necessary qualified labor force, the professional reconversion of the surplus staff, the improvement of the professional training of a significant number of employees and the elaboration of specific regulations.

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THE CONDITIONS OF DELIVERY IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE - INCOTERMS 2020

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Abstract:

The conditions of delivery issued by the International Chamber of Commerce control the essential obligations of the buyer and of the seller in the international trade, such as the transfer of goods to the buyer, transport costs, the liability for the loss and damage of goods and the insurance costs.

The delivery conditions (INCOTERMS) apply to the parties of a sale contract (national or international) and refer to - but are not limited to - special rights and obligations under this contractual relationship. Based on a guaranteed constant definition in this way, subsequent problems of interpretation or discrepancies between the parties of the sale contract must be avoided.

These conditions do not represent legal dispositions and thus they become legally binding only if they have been effectively agreed between sale contract parties by means of an appropriate reference. Regardless, in individual cases, conflicting legal dispositions still have priority over an INCOTERMS clause.

Keywords: *export-import, trade, commercial terms, goods*

JEL Classification: F13, L81

The delivery is an important component of foreign trade activity. The parties involved in the sale-purchase contract (exporter and importer) are interested in determining the place and time of the transfer of the goods, but with this activity there is a transfer of costs and risks involved in delivery. This can be done with the help of delivery conditions.

The delivery conditions are regulated by the prudences of the sale-purchase contract, by international laws and by international commercial practices.

The reference to an INCOTERMS delivery condition in a commercial contract expressly defines the obligations of the parties regarding: risks, costs, transport and customs clearance, thus reducing potential complications from a legal point of view.

1. General elements regarding the delivery conditions

In 1936, the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris published a series of international rules known as INCOTERMS 1936 (International Commercial Terms), which were revised several times, respectively in 1953, 1967, 1976, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 and in 2020.

The possibility of using INCOTERMS facilitates the trade of goods, especially for imports and exports, as it unifies the rules that the law of different jurisdictions may regulate differently. These rules have established forever that:

- the exporter is obliged to deliver the goods;
- the importer is obliged to pay the value of the goods;
- the carrier is any person who under the transport contract has to perform or ensure the execution of transport by rail, road, water (sea, river), air or multimodal.
- the seller / exporter is responsible for the costs up to delivery, and the buyer / importer is responsible after this point.

The content of the delivery clauses must be known both by companies' employees who operate in the departments of export, import, sales, marketing, legal, financial-accounting, as

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well as by the staff from transport and logistics companies, insurance companies, customs declarants. , etc. The clauses also concern the banking staff in the departments of external payments, guarantees, international trade financing, the legal department, but also by network employees who interact with IMM customers and corporations.

2. The need to perfect the delivery rules in INCOTERMS 2010

As international economic exchanges have evolved, it has become increasingly necessary to amend and refine the rules regarding the delivery of goods and keeping up with the trade. Thus, INCOTERMS 2010 brought a series of changes:

- The first major change was to reduce the number of terms / delivery conditions from 13 to 11.
- Substantial changes occurred in the former D class:
  - the DEQ (Delivered Ex Quay) condition was replaced by the DAT (Delivered at Terminal);
  - the delivery condition DAF (Delivered at Frontier), DES (Delivered Ex Ship) and DDU (Delivered Duty Unpaid) have been replaced by a single delivery condition DAP (Delivered at Place).

Since then, since 2010, delivery conditions have been rearranged in only two groups, compared to four (how many they were in INCOTERMS 2000), namely:

- Clauses applied to all modes of transport:

  EXW - EX Works
  FCA - Free Carrier
  CPT - Carriage Paid To
  CIP- Carriage and Insurance Paid To
  DAT - Delivered At Terminal
  DAP - Delivered At Place
  DDP - Delivered Duty Paid
- Clauses that apply only to maritime and inland waterway transport:

  FAS - Free Along Side
  FOB - Free On Board
  CFR - Cost and Freight
  CIF - Cost Insurance and Freight

3. Particularities and novelties brought by INCOTERMS 2020

The new version of the delivery conditions entered on the 1st of January 2020 and includes a number of changes. With the adaptation of INCOTERMS 2020 to current global business practices, they are updated and practice-oriented.

The purpose of the review was to make the INCOTERMS clauses easier to use. For example, their presentation has been revised to facilitate the selection of the appropriate clause for users. In addition, the order of the clauses has been changed and the instructions to the user have been revised and added to each clause.

Delivery clauses are recognized worldwide and are used in more than 30 different languages, being reviewed by 500 experts from more than 40 countries.

In terms of content, the INCOTERMS 2020 clauses come with significant changes:

- *Different levels of coverage in CIF and CIP*

As in the past, the seller is still obliged to take out transport insurance at his own expense under the CIF (Cost Insurance Freight) and CIP (Carriage Insurance Paid) clauses. The two clauses now predict different minimum coverages.

The minimum rate which must be respected when the CIF clause is agreed upon remains unchanged. The transport insurance to be concluded by the seller must correspond at least to the coverage in accordance with clauses (C) of the Cargo Institute Clauses or similar clauses (insurance of the named risks).

If the CIP clause is agreed upon, the seller must now provide insurance coverage in accordance with clauses (A) of the Cargo Institute Clauses (risk coverage).

Both the CIF clause and the CIP clause allow the parties of the contract to agree on the degree of insurance coverage that derives from them.

- *Including security requirements*

The security requirements for the carriage of goods have now been included in Rules A4 and A7 of each INCOTERMS 2020 clause. Just like in the case of other Incoterms clauses, it should be noted that these apply directly to the parties of the sale contract and are not the subject of the transport contract.

- *INCOTERMS 2020 contain regulations regarding personal means of transport in FCA, Delivery at Place (DAP), Delivery at Place Unloaded (DPU) and Delivered Duty Paid (DDP)*

For goods sold in accordance with the FCA (Free Carrier) clause and intended for sea transport (such as containerized goods), the FCA sees a new option in the future. The buyer and the seller can agree that the buyer will instruct the carrier to issue a bill of lading to the seller after the goods have been loaded. At the same time, the seller is obliged to hand over the bill of lading to the buyer. This is usually done through the participating banks.

- *The redenomination DAT to Delivered at Place Unloaded (DPU)*

According to the DAT clause of INCOTERMS 2010, the seller delivered the goods as soon as they were unloaded from the means of transport to a "terminal". However, according to the notes included in Incoterms 2010, the term 'terminal' was not to be understood from a technical point of view, but it actually meant any location of unloading. This was taken into account in the Incoterms 2020 rules by renaming the DAT clause as DPU (Delivered at Place Unloaded) for clarity. This means that, in the future, any (agreed) place can be the place of destination.

Table no. 1. The content of INCOTERMS 2020

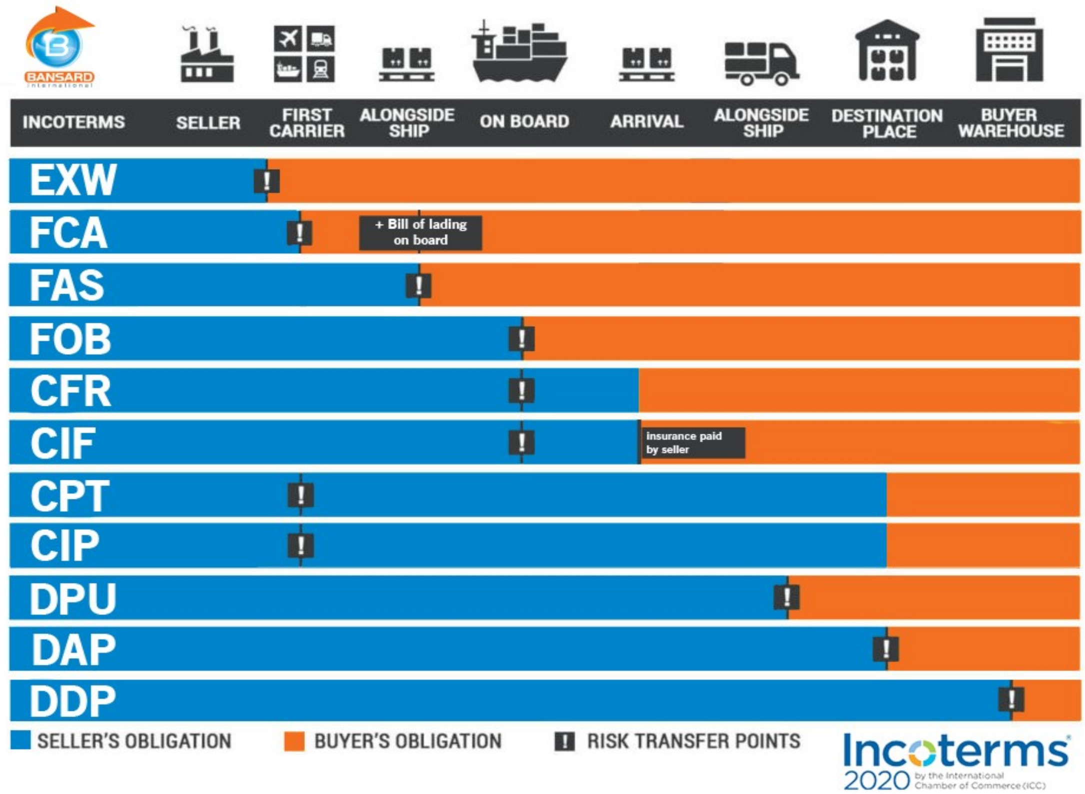
CLASS (CONDITIONS)	DELIVERY CONDITION	EXPLANATION
RULES FOR ANY MODE OR MODES TRANSPORT	EXW	EX Works
	FCA	Free Carrier
	CPT	Carriage Paid To
	CIP	Carriege and insurance paid to
	DPU	Delivered at place unloaded
	DAP	Delivered at place
	DDP	Delivered duty paid
RULES FOR SEA AND INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT	FAS	Free Along Side Ship
	FOB	Free On Board
	CFR	Cost and Freight
	CIF	Cost Insurance and Freight

Source: created by the authors

4. Obligations of the parties under INCOTERMS 2020

In summary, the obligations of the seller and the buyer, as well as the time of transfer of risks from one to the other, can be found in the figure below.

Figure no. 1. Obligations and risks in INCOTERMS 2020



Source: https://www.bansard.com/en/news/incoterms-2020

EXW - Ex Works

- It constitutes the minimum obligation for the exporter who is obliged to provide the goods to the importer, in his places or in other designated places. The place of delivery must be clearly determined;
- It is used regardless of the selected means of transport or in the case of multi-modal transport;
- The exporter is not obliged to load the goods in any means of transport, the exporter does not carry out export formalities, but all are the responsibility of the importer;
- No express obligation is provided for in the insurance contract, each party of the sale-purchase contract has obligations only towards himself, the insurance covering the risks only when the goods are in his possession.

FCA - Free Carrrier (named place)

The exporter and the importer consider using their own transport instead of using a third party. It also allows invoices to be issued after the loading.

In the case of this delivery condition there are no express obligations regarding the insurance of the goods.

CPT - Carriage Paid To (named place of destination)

The exporter shall pay the transport costs to the agreed destination.

The risks borne by the exporter shall be transferred when the goods are handed over to the first carrier or to another person nominated by the exporter.

The exporter does not guarantee that the goods will arrive at the place of destination in good condition, in the mentioned quantity or not at all.

The exporter bears the customs clearance of the goods for export.

There are no express obligations regarding the insurance contract.

CIP - Carriage and Insurance Paid To (named place at destination)

The exporter has the same obligations as in the case of the CPT delivery condition, but he/she must pay in addition the insurance of the goods to the destination.

DPU - Delivered at Place Unloaded (named place at destination)

The exporter shall deliver the goods and transfer the risks to the importer when the goods, once unloaded from the arriving means of transport, are made available to the importer at a designated place of destination or at the agreed point.

The exporter assumes all risks involved in bringing and unloading the goods at the place of destination. Thus, the exporter must ensure that he is able to organize the unloading at the agreed location.

In this delivery condition, the delivery and the arrival at destination are identical terms.

DAP - Delivered at Place (delivered place at destination)

The exporter shall deliver the goods when they are placed at the disposal of the importer on the means of transport, ready for unloading, at the designated place of destination.

The exporter assumes all risks involved in bringing the goods to the designated place of destination or to the agreed point, without unloading the goods.

It should be noted that the exporter and the importer arrange their own transport instead of using a third party.

In this delivery condition, the delivery and the arrival at destination are identical terms.

DDP - Delivered Duty Paid (named place at destination)

The exporter fulfilled his obligation to deliver the goods when they were at the disposal of the importer, and they were cleared through customs, at the agreed place in the importer's country.

We also mention that the exporter and the importer arrange their own transport instead of using a third party.

Under this condition of delivery, the costs are maximum for the exporter and minimum for the importer.

There are no express specifications regarding the insurance, either party can end it.

FAS - Free Alongside Ship (named port of shipment)

The exporter has fulfilled his contractual obligations when the goods are placed along the vessel (on a quay or in a barge), a place determined by the importer.

Customs clearance for export and insurance of the goods are the responsibility of the importer.

It is a delivery condition which is specific to maritime and river transport.

In the case of the transport of goods in containers, the exporter will deposit the goods to the carrier at a container terminal and not along the vessel.

FOB - Free On Board (named port of shipment)

The exporter fulfilled his delivery obligation when the goods were passed without the hull (railing) of the ship, in the port where it is anchored.

The importer shall bear all the costs of customs clearance for export and insurance of the goods.

It is also a delivery condition specific for the sea and river transport.

The FOB delivery condition does not apply to the transport of goods in containers.

CFR - Cost and Freight (named port of destination)

The exporter shall bear all costs until the moment the goods arrive on board of the ship. He clears the goods for export and, regarding the insurance, he only communicates the necessary data and information to the importer. Therefore, the insurance of the goods is an obligation of the importer.

The risk of losing or damaging the goods from the time of the transhipment to the destination is the responsibility of the importer.

CIF - Cost Insurance Freight (named port of destination)

The difference from CFR is that, in addition, the exporter also bears the cost of insuring the goods up to the destination port.

5. Conclusions

The INCOTERMS 2020 edition pays increased attention to the security of the goods circulation, to the flexibility of insurance coverage depending on the nature of the goods and the transport modality, as well as the requirement of banks to present a bill of lading on board in the case of financing goods delivered under FCA.

INCOTERMS 2020 also offers a simpler and clearer presentation of the delivery conditions, with a revised language, an extended introduction and explanatory notes, and the items are rearranged to better reflect the logic of a sales transaction.

The current version of the delivery clauses is the first edition that includes a "horizontal" presentation, grouping similar articles in order to allow users to clearly see the differences in dealing with the particular problems of each of the 11 INCOTERMS rules.

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STRESS IN RELATIONSHIP WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF PERSONALITY

Ghiță Ioana Cătălina[1]

Abstract:

To efficiently manage human resources, we need to understand the factors that influence how employees behave in the work environment. For this we must take into account the fundamental characteristics of human beings. Personality refers to the individual's behavior and the way it is coordinated and organized in the interaction of human beings with the environment. Personality traits are moderators of the relationship between stress factors and stress reactions. Well-being, employee behavior and performance are strongly influenced by the work environment, being related to a new concept of organizational health. The research carried out in the organizational area also concerns the occupational stress, the individual differences being especially important in the relationship stress factors / constraints of stress.

Keywords: *Stress, behavior, human resources, personality*

JEL Classification: *I15, J24, O15*

Introduction

A syndrome of the new millennium, the word "stress" has become one of the most pronounced words, as an American study places it as the second most frequent in human language after „communication'.

Seldomly seen as something positive (eustress), the stress has become an usual culprit for all ailments, being used more and more often for most diverse cases.

Different types of personalities can turn, in some cases, in stress-generating sources. Unfortunately, according to the latest statistics, personality disorder tends to grow even larger, society today seeking to develop and maintain a collective neurosis through the values and principles it promotes [http://www.consultanta-psihologica.com/influenta-factorilor-de-personalitate-asupra-stresului/ (Accessed on September 16, 2018, 11:13)]

Vulnerability to stress is not only an algebraic sum of personality data that facilitates, more or less, the "stress entry" or amplitude of an individual's reaction to stress. It is constituted by a dynamic, interactive pattern of these stable personality traits but often required as part of a relatively stereotyped behavior [http://www.umfcv.ro/files/c/u/Curs%205%20Psihologie%20Medicala%20-%20Vulnerabilitatea%20psihica%20la%20stres.pdf (Accessed on September 16, 2018, at 11:16)].

Methodology

As I have studded and I have bases my studies on various sources o information (specialized literature, case studies, media articles, various organization reports and so on).

In this paper I have attempted to summarize the relationship between types of personality and stress, how the personality of the employees influences workplace behavior, the implications for human resources specialists and for the management of the company, implications resulting from the stress approach as being closely related to the personality of the individuals.

1. The notion of personality

The notion of personality has a broad meaning and refers to the behavior of the individual and the way this behavior is coordinated and organized in human interaction with the environment. Personality can be described in terms of personality types or traits [Amstrong, 2003]

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Authors such as Kobasa (1979), Cronkite, Moos (1984), Lazarus, Folkman, Goldberger (1986) consider that individual differences are the result not only of environmental factors but also of personality factors in their struggle with stress sources.

The main mediators in determining potential activators or stress factors are: the character, defense mechanisms, personality predispositions, conflicts, cognitive style.

Personality factors that help maintain health under pressure at work:

1. *awareness of its own value*, which is a buffer between stress and its impact, reducing workplace stress factors, especially role conflict and labor overload..

Awareness of one's own value is *"persuading a person of his / her capacities to mobilize the cognitive and motivational resources necessary for the successful accomplishment of the given tasks*" [Stoica, 2007]. It therefore refers to the individual's confidence to have skills that enable him to achieve performance in a certain behavior.

A correct perception of its own value leads to the expectation of success, which generates perseverance in the face of stressful situations. It is associated with focus on the problem and increased motivation.

crescută.

2. *locus of control* is the individual's perception of the forces that determine the rewards / punishments associated with the behavior he approached. The locus of control is the extent to which the individual thinks he can control the events that influence his life [https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Locus_de_control (Accessed on August 9, 2017; at 12:50)].

The place of control, depending on how we perceive the causality of events in our lives, can be:

1 *internal locus of control (LCI)* – the belief that the merit of success / responsibility for failure lies in the qualities, abilities / errors, faults of the person, not related to pressure factors or external events.

Power and control of the person have the ability to influence life′s events and work results.

2 *external locus of control (LCE)* – refers to the idea that the source of positive / negative events is the power of others, destiny, fate.

Most people are between the two LCI and LCE situations.

3 *the sense of coherence* that on a higher level leads to a less threatening assessment of stress factors, a reduction in emotional and physiological reactivity, the adoption of coping mechanisms appropriate to the situation, etc.

The sense of coherence is defined as a global cognitive orientation that expresses the degree to which a person is convinced that:

4 has sufficient resources to cope with stimuli;

5 requests have purpose and meaning;

6 internal and external stimuli are predictable and explainable.

The way we interpret workplace stress factors is influenced by the feeling of consistency, which has a protective effect in interacting with labor pressures. But in the absence of features such as skills and abilities, this feature is not a useful tool in stress management.

3. *robustness,* allows to overcome unfavorable circumstances through a transformative and active adjustment style.

Robustness is defined by: locus of internal control (LCI), persistence for the intended purpose, addressing change in a positive manner.

4. *extraversion* is the ability of the person to orientate himself towards the outside, an individual's preference for the outside world of things and people, the need to share

the ideas and problems of others, the need for communication, interaction, sociability, expansiveness.

Eysenck (1967) considers biology to play an important role in each person's personality, the personality being constituted by provisions and behaviors arranged in a certain hierarchy. He also says that everyone's nervous system reacts to environmental stimuli in a manner that influences personality.

5. *self-confidence* is an indicator of well-being, describing the degree to which an individual tends to self-assess positively and minimize negative attributes. This tendency intervenes in moderating the effects that stress affects the body.

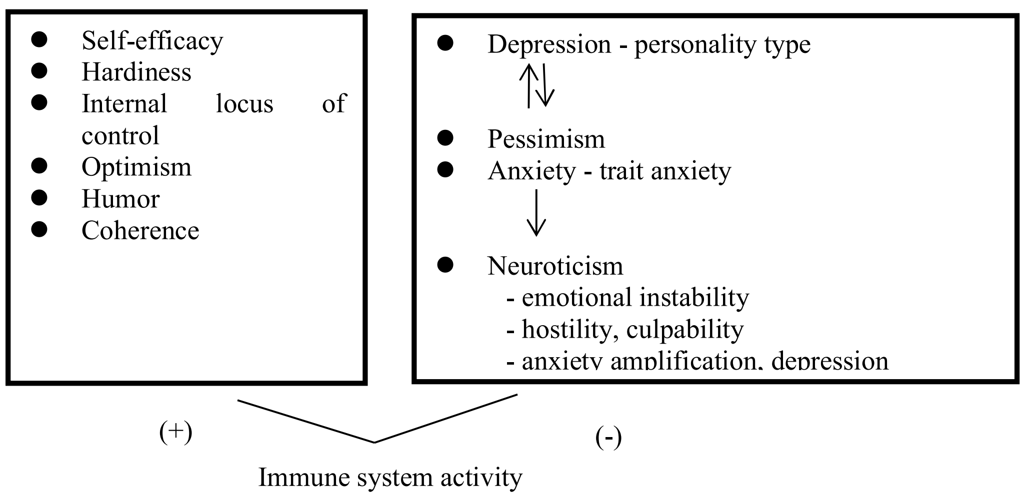
People who are confident in their own will set higher goals and take advantage as much as possible of professional opportunities in the way, while those who are unbelievers are fearful and insecure. Trust in our own forces is closely linked to the relationship between the self-perceived self and the desired self (as we would like to show our person in multiple ways).

Self-confidence affects the assessment of coping resources, stimuli, modeling the effects of confronting with stress-generating circumstances.

6. *optimism*, confidence that everything will be good in the future, positive thinking.

Figure no. 1

Immunogenic and dishomogenic features of personality



Source: "Psychic vulnerability to stress", University of Medicine and Pharmacy Craiova, Faculty of Medicine - Medical Assistance Section, 4th year, Medical psychology, 2012

2. Influences on behavior at work

Personal characteristics (attitude and personality) as well as the situation in which they work are the ones that influence the behavior at the workplace. These factors are in a situation of interaction, and such a theory of behavior is called "interactionism".

The psychological significance and importance of a situation is given by the way individuals perceive the situation. To describe this way of perception, the term *psychological climate* is used.

The most important environmental variables are:

• the characteristics of the work group;
• role characteristics;
• job features;
• organizational policies;

• managerial behaviors.

When the stress level is high or very high, there are changes in the behavioral area:

Table no. 1

Behavioral area under conditions of high stress

Behavioral area (behaviors and attitudes)	
Characteristics	**Effects**
Language	Stuttering, reducing speech fluency, reducing the ability to respond satisfactorily to others
Interests	Reduce / lose of interest in passions, hobbies
Absence	Increases the number of absences at work
Stimulus	Increasing consumption of tobacco, alcohol, various substances
Energy	The energy level fluctuates, but the trend is decreasing
Sleep	The phenomenon of insomnia appears / intensifies
Relationships	There is a tendency to suspect, to find a guilty
Behavioral changes	There are unexpected or even strange reactions, tics
Suicide	Suicidal ideas appear, sometimes put into practice

Source: Melgosa J. 2000 : 45

3. Type A and B personalities and their behavior at work

In principle, there are categories of people:

• who feel good when they have a stressful lifestyle;
• who can only handle a quiet, calm lifestyle;
• who adapt to both stressful and stress-free situations.

The Type A and Type B personality theory dates back to the late 1950s. Then it was developed by cardiologists Meyer Friedman and Ray Rosenman, having as a starting point the observation of a connection between the different types of behavior and the incidence of heart disease. They noticed that the seats in the waiting room showed signs of uneven wear, only visible on the arms of the seats and on the front edge. This suggests a nervous behavior from the patients who were folding in the chair and were actually only standing on the edge of the chair [http://www.amcor.ro/menu/Comisii-profesionale/Professional-Corner/Personalitile-de-tip-A-i-de-tip-B-i-comportamentul-lor-la-locul-de-munc.html (Accessed on August 9, 2017; at 13:20)].

Table no. 2

The features of the A and B personality types

Type A personality	Type B personality
They live in a constant state of stress and have a false sense of urgency	Relaxing lifestyle
Projects and objectives must be met as urgently, the notion of dead time being non-existent	Have more patience and attention to detail, focus more time on the project they are developing; are more flexible and creative
Anxious and often hostile to their colleagues	Have a good attitude towards those around him or her
Exaggerated, independent, ambitious, eager for rapid promotion	Pleased with what they do
Competitive, eager to be first	Avoid competition, go with the wave
Unaffected	Influenced by others
They plan his day rigorously, noting everything on the agenda	They do not have activity planning
They become nervous when they have no activity	They can sit for several hours uninterrupted
They work even when relaxing	They respect the rest program, they like to relax
They speak loudly, have no patience to listen to others	Listen patiently, do not get too involved in conversations

Source: Friedman and Rosenman, 1974

Individuals with A-type behavior experience a permanent time crunch, carry out several activities at the same time, and try to achieve results in short periods of time. The toxic component of the patter is impatience. Type A respondents consider that they are operating in a very demanding environment, and they do not have the resources to deal with. They can become cynical and apathetic during the occupational trac. These people are most vulnerable to stress, identifying themselves with the neurotic outburst. Stress affects to a greater extent the physical, mental or physical health of people who correspond to Type A of behavior than other people, and they have increased irritability.

Opposite type A behavior is type B behavior. Type B people are less confrontational and relaxed, they do things slower, their stress-fighting is less frenetic.

Although job requirements are the same, the way Type A and Type B individuals perceive it is different. These differences of perception make A-type more out-of-control than those of type B.

Both types of personalities have strengths and weaknesses, both of which can be as productive. The ideal job is where there is a proportional combination of A and B type people, because both types can learn from others, the diversity of perspectives being a stimulating factor of creativity. The type A perfectionist can be complemented by Type B Flexible. Type A individuals can teach B-type to become more prompt when needed, B-type giving calm and support in tense situations.

Type A or B personalities represent behavioral tendencies, not absolute data of the human personality. Each of them can build on their positive foundation and improve their performance at work. A mixed team of both Type A and Type B individuals is beneficial to the organization, although creating a pleasant atmosphere and managing individual differences is a challenge. But with investment in training and professional development of employees, as well as promoting the need for stress management and time management courses, the team can become a team with outstanding performance.

4. C-type personality

Unfortunately, in the face of stress, we are all vulnerable. We can become C type personality if we do not master the way our body reacts to stress-generating factors. The letter C defining behavior type C refers to Cortizol, the main stress hormone, and its level increases in stressful periods. When we face a stressful situation, the level of cortisol increases. If we are constantly stressed and unable to remove stress-generating factors, then the cortisol level will always be high, going beyond the normal limits.

It seems that individuals with type C personality are more likely to get cancer than others. Studies show that the disease is associated with anxiety, depression, introversion, hostility [http://psihoterapieintegrativadiana.blogspot.ro/2015/01/tipul-de-personalitate-ne-influenteaza.html (Accessed on September 5, 2017, at 10:10)].

Characteristics of individuals with type of personality C: overly cooperating, always want to fulfill their promises, insecure, very patient, avoid conflicts, does not express negative emotions, feel inferior, anxious, adapts quickly.

***5.* Personality psychodiagnostic**

In order to determine the personalities of the employees, psychological evaluation, now called psychodiagnostic, can be used and encouraged. Psycho-diagnostics is a precious tool for human resource managers within companies, especially when it comes to employee selection processes.

Personality psychodygnosis involves psychometric testing for the purpose of hiring staff, career guidance, facilitating performance at work, and obtaining certifications. Practitioners can use a large number of personality questionnaires, their number being huge, but it is worth mentioning the most important [Iliescu & Sulea 2015]:

Classic Personality Inventory of the "Golden Age": California Psychological Inventory (CPI), 16PF (16 Personality Factors), Eysenck Adult Quizzes (EPQ-R and IVE), FPI (Freiburger Personlichkeitinventar).

Big Five Inventory: NEO PI-R (NEO Personality, Revised), NEO Five-Factor Inventory, Big Five Questionnaire (BFQ), BFA (Big Five Adjectives).

Nonverbal personality inventories: NPV (Nonverbal Personality Inventory), FFNPQ (Five-Factor Nonverbal Personality Inventory), SL-TDI (Singer-Loomis Type Deployment Inventory).

Domestic questionnaires of personality: ABCD-M (Mihaela Minulescu - Bucharest), Big Five Plus (Ticu Constantin - Iasi), DECAS (Florin Alin Sava – Timisoara).

Conclusion

What's stressful to one person may be all in a day's work for another. The difference appears to lie in our perceptions of various events. Mental health professionals believe personality plays a significant role in how we perceive stress.

In their work, management and those in charge of the organization's human resource must take into account i*ndividual differences* (in the definition of posts, staff assessment, counseling, training programs, it is necessary to keep in mind that people are different). We do not have to judge the personalities simplistically, people are complex, we do not have to rely on clichés. Leaders need to understand that the pressure they exert on employees creates stress, so they will become counterproductive. Our assumptions about the reasons and causes of other people's behavior are seldom true. Employees need to know what behavior is expected of them, and there should be no incompatibilities in the definition of jobs. In order to minimize workplace stress, we also need to be aware of the potential of conflict between roles.

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HEAD HUNTING FOR TOP MANAGEMENT, ECONOMIC AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Florin Iordănoaia[1]

Abstract

Currently, the world economy is facing a great challenge, related to those who lead now and especially, those who will run companies, in the conditions of the COVID19 pandemic. A very large number of companies, from small to multinationals, face an acute shortage of highly qualified staff with adequate training in the field. Due to this situation, there is an increase in "brain hunting" or "head hunting" campaigns, as an easy way to cover staff shortages.

This paper analyzes the situation of recruitment of this kind, by comparing recruitment sources from three countries, in two main directions, with direct and indirect implications on the labor market and the evolution of professions.

Keywords: *manager, management, marketing, head hunting*.

JEL classification: J 53, M 12.

1. Introduction

The situation of the lack of highly qualified staff, for many years, is considered to be critical. A number of areas feel the lack of qualified staff, prepared to run businesses, and the challenges of this period are even greater, as some companies have stopped their activities, passed the staff into unemployment or technical unemployment, and others went bankrupt. The situation is ongoing and estimates of economic recovery are skeptical. A small part of the companies caught a favorable moment of the business and increased the production or sales capacities.

These companies have faced a shortage of qualified staff, with a certain reluctance to hire, especially where staff have to change homes or commute. The very fact that the number of managers in our country amounts to only 103,000 people and represents only 1.8% of the total employees, is significant for the situation I am analyzing, and this percentage is well below the European average of approx. 5%, (1).

2. Research methodology used

In order to carry out this work, I studied the specialized works of human resources, published in volumes, magazine articles and especially, studied the situations published by the companies specialized in staff recruitment. I systematized the information, and then centralized the most important ones for this study. The methodology used consisted of a systematic, oriented and coherent study, in connection with the principles that govern a scientific investigation in the field of human resources.

As a research method we used the "concept transfer" method. This consists in taking from the scientific papers, those ideas, concepts and methods important for the study, and then made their transfer in the field of research on the recruitment of highly qualified staff.

3. Study and analysis of the situation of highly qualified jobs

In this study followed, in particular, the situation published by a series of specialized companies from Romania, France and Great Britain. The areas followed in March-October 2020 are: Top Management, Logistics and Marketing. I have found that the "classical" division of our professions is already outdated (2), compared to the names of the positions and the requirements of the two western countries. Practically, there are no limits in defining professions and even, compared to the nomenclature of trades in Romania, they have many additional trades and functions.

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In France there is a general nomenclature, drawn up by the government (3) and a separate nomenclature of public functions from those in the private sector. That is, the employer of a public institution, owned by the state, has a list of functions, which they must respect when they needs staff (4). The list is prepared by the Ministry of Decentralization and Civil Service.

In the United Kingdom, the situation is regulated by the Office for National Statistics, which has a 'Standard Professional Classification' code, which sets out four levels of competence for public administration and private functions (5).

Management functions are generally defined in accordance with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08), (6), which is administered by the International Labor Organization (ILO). Managers have the role of planning, coordinating and evaluating the general activities of companies, also formulating and reviewing policies, strategies, tactics, rules and regulations within companies. These, as a rule, in large companies, are part of a Board of Directors. The members of the Board of Directors represent the decision-making body of the company, in this category are included: the president, the vice-president, the general manager, the executive directors and the deputy directors. According to the definitions used in this standard, Executives are considered the directors of the company's decision-making body (the Board of Directors) or other collective management bodies (the Executive Committee, the Steering Committee or the Supervisory Board).

Studying the situation of a number of over 1400 jobs, published by specialized companies in Bucharest, Paris and London, between 1.03-31.10.2020, I chose a number of 60 positions, 20 positions from each company, 10 each from “Top management” and “Logistics”, and then another 10 from “Marketing”. The positions were listed in the tables, in the order of their appearance during the period of 8 months, the first position being the oldest, and the last one entered in the table, being the last position published by the respective company. Table 1 shows the situation of the positions for the positions of “Top management” and “Logistics”, in Bucharest.

Table 1. TOP MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS IN BUCHAREST

No.	FUNCTION, LEVEL, DEPARTMENT	EMPLOYER, LOCATION, INDUSTRY
1.	Operations Manager, Senior.	“Puratos Romania”, Bucharest, Food / Horeca / Production.
2.	Logistic Buyer, Middle, Logistics.	“Ericsson Romania”, Bucharest, IT / Telecommunications.
3.	Operations Manager, Senior, Logistics.	“GI Group Staffing Company” Ltd, Bucharest, Trade/ Retail.
4.	Procurement Specialist, Middle, Acquisitions.	SC “Havi Logistics” Ltd, Bucharest, Food / Transport.
5.	Operations Executive Sea/Air fright, Middle, Transport/Distribution.	“Yusen Logistics Romania”, Bucharest, Transport.
6.	Transport Operations Supervisor, Middle, Transport / Logistics.	“Zentiva” SpA, Bucharest, Pharmacy.
7.	Customer Experience Lead Specialist, Middle, Customer Support.	“GI Group Staffing Company” Ltd, Bucharest, Trade/ Retail.
8.	Logistics Manager, Senior, Logistics.	“BM Real International” Ltd, Bucharest, Eco-friendly paint / Retail.
9.	National Sales Manager, Senior, Logistics.	“Biocrop” Ltd, Bucharest, Agriculture/ Wholesale trade.
10.	Warehouse Manager, Senior, Logistics.	“Orbico Beauty” Ltd, Bucharest, Luxury cosmetics.

Source: author’s study, https://www.ejobs.ro.

Table 2 shows the situation of the positions for the "Marketing" positions in Bucharest.

Table 2. MARKETING FUNCTIONS IN BUCHAREST

No.	FUNCTION, LEVEL, DEPARTMENT	EMPLOYER, LOCATION, INDUSTRY
1.	Influencer Marketing Manager, Middle, Internet & Marketing.	"Nuelyfe" Ag, Bucharest, IT.
2.	Health Care Marketing Manager, Senior, Marketing.	"Danone", Bucharest Health.
3.	Digital Marketing Manager, Senior, Marketing.	"MagnaPharm Marketing & Sales Romania" Ltd, Bucharest, Pharmacy.
4.	Senior Marketing Manager, Middle, Internet & Marketing.	"Retargeting Biz", Bucharest, IT, Telecom, Advertisement.
5.	Influencer Marketing Strategist for US Market, Senior, Internet.	"Overheat Agency", Bucharest, IT.
6.	Trade Marketing Manager, Senior, Marketing & Sales.	"Trk Professional" Ltd, Bucharest, Food.
7.	Marketing Manager, Middle, Marketing.	"Rokabo HR Soluţii" Ltd, Bucharest, Trade / Retail.
8.	Marketing Manager Dental, Senior, Marketing.	"Seedent Partners" AG, Bucharest, Health.
9.	Digital Marketing Manager, Middle, Marketing & Sales.	"Black Tech Group" Ltd, Bucharest, IT / Trade / Retail.
10.	CRM Marketing Specialist, Middle, Marketing.	"Novart Engineering", Bucharest, IT / Services / Constructions.

Source: author's study, https://www.ejobs.ro.

Table 3 shows the situation of the positions for the positions of "Top management" and "Logistics", in Paris.

Table 3. TOP MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS IN PARIS

No.	FUNCTION, LEVEL, DEPARTMENT	EMPLOYER, LOCATION, INDUSTRY
1.	Directeur Général, Senior.	"Haxio"* SPL, Paris, Constructions. * SPL = Société publique locale (Local public company).
2.	Directeur Général Adjoint, Senior.	"Day Advisor", Paris, Retail.
3.	Directeur General, Senior.	"De Graet Consulting", Paris, IT / Maintenance.
4.	Directeur Commercial, Senior.	"Impactup", Paris, Retail.
5.	Directeur Export / Futur DGA Commerce, Global purchasing leader, Senior.	"Robert Walters Supply", Paris, Services / Maintenance.
6.	Global Accounts Sales Director, Senior.	"Securitas France", Paris, Retail.
7.	Directeur Supply Chain, Senior.	„DL Partners", Paris, Furniture / Retail.
8.	Transport Manager, Transport, Middle.	"PepsiCo" Groupe France, Paris, Transport / Retail.
9.	Directeur logistique, Logistics, Senior.	"Amalo", Paris, Foodtech / Retail.
10.	Responsable Logistique National, Middle.	"Hunteo", Paris, Building Materials / Retail.

Source: author's study, https://www.cadremploi.fr/emploi.

Table 4 shows the situation of the positions for the "Marketing" positions in Paris.

Table 4. MARKETING FUNCTIONS IN PARIS

No.	FUNCTION, LEVEL, DEPARTMENT	EMPLOYER, LOCATION, INDUSTRY
1.	Chef de Produit Marketing, Middle, Marketing Department.	"Gedeon Richter France", Paris, Pharmaceutical production / Retail.
2.	Business Communication Project Manager, Middle, Communication Department.	"Hermes International", Paris, Production / Retail.
3.	Responsable Marketing, Middle, Marketing Department.	"Fyte Sales & Marketing", Paris, Retail.
4.	Digital Customer Experience Manager, Middle, E-Business Department.	"Arvati France", Paris, IT / Retail.
5.	Chef de Produit Marketing, Middle, Marketing Department.	"Expectra IDF Ouest", Paris, Food / Retail.
6.	Customer Director - Influence Marketing, Senior, Communication Department.	"Uptoo", Paris, FMCG / Retail.
7.	Strategy and Marketing Manager, Middle, Marketing Department.	"Le Groupe La Centrale", Paris, Automotive / Retail.
8.	Directeur Commercial et Marketing, Senior, International Trade Department.	"Chantal Baudron SAS", Paris, Cosmetics / Retail.
9.	Client Manager, Senior, Journal de Dimanche.	"Groupe Lagardere", Paris, Mass-media / Retail.
10.	Directeur Marketing, Senior, Marketing Department.	„Robert Walters Supply", Paris, Agricultural and Food / Retail.

Source: author's study, https://www.cadremploi.fr/emploi.

Table 5 shows the situation of the positions for the "Top management" and "Logistics" positions in London.

Table 5. TOP MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS IN LONDON

No.	FUNCTION, LEVEL, DEPARTMENT	EMPLOYER, LOCATION, INDUSTRY
1.	Operations Manager, Senior, Operations Department.	"Future Engineering", London, Production.
2.	Area Director, Middle, Responsible for the southern area.	"Spicehaart", London, Financial services / Consulting.
3.	Senior Manager, Senior, Digital & SI Client Department.	"PwC", London, Financial services / Consulting.
4.	Managing Director, Consumer Packaged Goods, Google Cloud, Senior, Google Cloud Platform Department.	"Google", London, IT / Services / Retail.
5.	Managing Director – Consumer Products, Senior, Corporate Transformation Services Department.	"Alvarez & Marsal", London, Financial services / IT.
6.	Strategic Program Management Director, Senior, Planning Department.	"MasterCard", London, Financial services / IT.

No.	FUNCTION, LEVEL, DEPARTMENT	EMPLOYER, LOCATION, INDUSTRY
7.	Director of Project Management, Senior, Projects Department.	“Brandon James” Ltd, London, Services / Consulting.
8.	Managing Director Restructuring, Senior, Accounting Department.	“Duff & Phelps”, London, Services / Consulting.
9.	Senior Tax Director, Senior, Accounting Department.	“Marks Sattin”, London, Services / Consulting.
10.	Managing Director, Senior.	“Vitl”, London, Health / Nutrition / Retail.

Source: author’s study, https://www.ziprecruiter.co.uk.

Table 6 shows the situation of the positions for the “Marketing” positions in London.

Table 6. MARKETING FUNCTIONS IN LONDON

No.	FUNCTION, LEVEL, DEPARTMENT	EMPLOYER, LOCATION, INDUSTRY
1.	Senior Product Marketing Manager, Senior, Marketing Department.	“Ramsey Portia”, London, Fashion / IT / Retail.
2.	Digital Marketing Manager, Senior, Newton Department.	“BNY Mellon Investment Management”, London, IT / Services / Retail.
3.	B2B Performance Marketing Manager, Middle, Marketing Department.	“Totaljobs Group”, London, IT / eCommerce / Retail.
4.	Marketing Manager Demand Generation, Senior, Marketing Department.	“SaaS Tech Company”, London, IT / Social Media / Retail.
5.	Display Marketing Manager, Senior, Marketing Department.	“Farfetch”, London, IT / Retail.
6.	Senior Activation Marketing Manager, Senior, Marketing Department.	“Depop”, London, Fashion / Retail.
7.	Insights and Analytics Marketing Manager, Middle, Marketing Department.	“Randstad Business Support”, London, Pharmacy / IT / Retail.
8.	Digital Marketing Manager / App Marketing Manager, Middle, Marketing Department.	“Intelligent People” Ltd, London, IT / eCommerce / Retail.
9.	B2B Marketing Manager, Middle, Tech Scale-Up Department.	“Global Pharma”, London, Pharmacy / Retail.
10.	Marketing Manager, Middle, Marketing Department.	“Twentyfour Recruitment Group”, London, IT / Social Media / Consulting.

Source: author’s study, https://www.ziprecruiter.co.uk.

4. Comparisons, similarities and differences between the functions sought

In order to understand the “head hunting” situation, of the differences between this type of search of the top employees and the regular recruiters, in table 7, the main aspects of the two ways of working are listed.

Table 7. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CLASSIC RECRUITMENT AND HEAD HUNTING

"Classic" Recruitment	"Head Hunting"
- Classic recruiters promote jobs in various ways and then wait to be contacted by potential candidates or use an active search to find a large number of candidates.	- Head hunting specialists approach only a few candidates, very carefully selected, who fit or are very close to the job requirements.
- Classic recruiters usually serve both candidates and "firm" clients fairly.	- Head hunting specialists are only interested in meeting the requirements of the "firm" client.
- Classic recruiters are actively trying to match the existing group of candidates with the vacancies of companies, regardless of the sector or the specific requirements of the position.	- Head hunting specialists focus first on the requirements of the job and then, they will look for the right candidate for their client.
- Classic recruiters do not place much emphasis on knowing the target market, having a wider recruitment area.	- Head hunting specialists place great emphasis on the specific knowledge of the target market, of a client, considering that it is much more important than in traditional recruitment.
- Classic recruiters are oriented according to customer requirements, making multiple recruitment.	- Head hunting specialists usually specialize in an economic (industrial) sector or sub-sector.

Source: author's study, (7).

The differences between "classic" and "head hunting" recruitment, presented in Table 7, help us first of all to understand the different ways of approaching recruitment activities. But the most important aspect of "head hunting" is to understand what is being sought through this type of recruitment and what are the economic and managerial implications? It is clear that this recruitment, for the top management of the company, is much more expensive compared to the other, that it involves a consistent financial effort on the part of the company. This financial effort is based on the justification of the fact that the future employee, in a position of great responsibility, will bring added value to the company, through innovations and initiatives in strategic and tactical plan, will contribute substantially to growing the business, the company's profit. A particularly important aspect for the top management in Romania, compared to the one in France and the United Kingdom, is that of the type of positions available, for which highly qualified staff is sought, top staff. Table 8 presents the main functions, for which employees were sought, during the period in which the research was carried out.

Table 8. TYPES OF MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS, COMPARISON, BETWEEN THE 3 COUNTRIES

MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS	ROMANIA, BUCHAREST	FRANCE, PARIS	GREAT BRITAIN, LONDON
1. Company management	- National Sales Manager	- General Manager	- Managing Director
	-	- Deputy General Director	- Strategic Program Management Director
2. Logistics	- Operations Manager	- Supply Chain Director	- Operations Manager
	- Logistics Manager	- Logistics Director	
3. Marketing	- Trade Marketing Manager	- Marketing Director	-Senior Product Marketing Manager
	- Digital Marketing Manager	- Customer Director – Influence Marketing	-Digital Marketing Manager

Source: author's study.

Table 9 presents the middle management positions for which employees were sought, during the period in which the research was carried out.

Table 9. TYPES OF INTERMEDIATE LEADING, COMPARISION BETWEEN 3 COUNTRIES

"MIDDLE MANAGEMENT" FUNCTIONS	ROMANIA, BUCHAREST	FRANCE, PARIS	GREAT BRITAIN, LONDON
1. Logistics	- Logistic Buyer	- Transport Manager	- Area Director
	- Procurement Specialist	- National Logistics Manager	-
	- Transport Operations Supervisor	-	-
	- Warehouse Manager	-	-
2. Marketing	- Influencer Marketing Manager	- Marketing Product Chief	- B2B Performance Marketing Manager
	- Marketing Manager	- Business Communication Project Manager	- Insights and Analytics Marketing Manager
	- Digital Marketing Manager	- Marketing Chief	- Digital Marketing Manager
	- CRM Marketing Specialist	- Digital Customer Experience Manager	- Marketing Manager

Source: author's study.

A particularly important aspect, which I found analyzing the functions of "top management" and "middle management", is the incidence of functions related to the digital field, internet commerce and mobile communications. Table 10 shows the management functions for Internet and mobile communications businesses.

Table 10. TYPES OF MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS FOR INTERNET BUSINESS AND MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS, COMPARED BETWEEN THE 3 COUNTRIES

FUNCTIONS	ROMANIA, BUCHAREST	FRANCE, PARIS	GREAT BRITAIN, LONDON
1. Internet business	- Digital Marketing Manager	- Digital Customer Experience Manager	- Managing Director, Consumer Packaged Goods, Google Cloud
	-	- Customer Director – Influence Marketing	- Digital Marketing Manager
	-	-	- Display Marketing Manager
2. Business through/with mobile communications	-	- Business Communication Project Manager	- Marketing Manager Demand Generation

Source: author's study.

From the point of view of the tasks established for the presented functions, in general, the companies have established the same type of attributions, tasks and obligations, depending on the specifics of the activity, by the department in which those who will be employed will carry out their activity. I did not find any major differences between the leadership positions in the three countries. In addition, in companies in Paris and London, there are no restrictions on the citizenship of those who can participate in the selection and no restrictions between men and women. At some companies in Romania, it is specified that the job is for a male or female person, but it cannot be appreciated that it is a discrimination related to the person's gender.

Conclusions

Given the large number of functions pursued in the three cities, a number of conclusions can be drawn regarding “what is sought” in these cities during this period. There are a number of differences, but also similarities between positions, between what is sought, between the professional and personal characteristics of those who must correspond to the profiles required by companies. The most important aspects are the following:

- Paris is looking for people for the company's management positions, general manager and deputy general manager. This proves that there is a certain dynamic of change in senior positions, which is not observed in Bucharest or London. The situation is due to the fact that most national companies have in their management positions, as general manager, the owner or main shareholder of the respective company. On the other hand, the multinational companies, which have activity in Bucharest, have as first leader, foreign persons, usually having the nationality with that of the main shareholders or owners.

In this sense, it can be understood that there is still a certain reluctance to hire people with Romanian citizenship in the positions of general manager or national branch. This may mean that: Romanian citizens do not have the level of training required by the respective position; does not have a high level of confidence; also, many Romanian citizens, in a relatively short period of time, worked for several companies, changed several companies in a few years. Stability in office and especially in the company is an “unwritten” criterion in the evaluation of management staff, for employment or promotion.

- In Bucharest, proportionally, there are the fewest positions available, at the level of “top management”, compared to Paris and London. This helps us to understand that in Bucharest, on the one hand, there is a certain stability in management positions, which is not found in other cities, and on the other hand, that business “goes well” because top managers do not change. Following the overall situation of the national economy, for the analyzed period, it is found that the Romanian economy had a contraction of approx. 6% during this period in the second and third quarters. For a “healthy” economy, many companies would have to make management changes, change those executives who are not performing, who have failed to innovate, to keep companies profitable and not lay off staff.

Another characteristic of the lack of general manager positions is given by the fact that the major investments, which would require highly qualified staff, were not made in Bucharest during this period. It can be appreciated that there is a certain saturation regarding the new investments, that in Bucharest, at present, it is difficult to make large-scale investments, regarding the production or the integrated logistics. The causes of this situation are more related to the national economy as a whole, to the investment stimulation policy promoted by the government, but also to a certain tendency to wait for certain signals regarding financial stability.

- Regarding the functions in Logistics, it is found that there are still many differences of approach between the three cities. Most of the available functions, as director of logistics, are in Paris, where a great emphasis is placed on the functions related to the “Supply chain”. This proves that in Paris the development of the concept of “Logistic Hub”, of expanding the supply chains, of their diversification continues. Compared with the situation in Bucharest, it can be stated that here, Logistics is still at a low level of development, even if large investments have been made for the infrastructure necessary for logistics, however, the way of conducting activities is still far from having efficiency that companies in Paris and London have. The great emphasis on Logistics, in Paris, is a proof that linking production to advanced logistics is an imperative, and the search for properly trained staff is a fact proven by the high salaries that companies offer for Logistics positions.

In London and Paris, investments in Logistics have been geared towards new technologies, the use of Artificial Intelligence, to help manage cargo flows, to minimize the need for low-skilled staff, which usually working in warehouses goods. In Bucharest, the working methods of the ’80s and ’90s are still maintained, with a large number of people employed, in low-skilled or unskilled positions. Very few companies have invested in advanced logistics systems, assisted by specialized computer programs, close to those that use artificial intelligence, for warehouse management.

- Regarding Marketing, I found that in London, new, sophisticated functions related to digital marketing and social media appeared, at the top management level. Which is not found in Bucharest, and in Paris such positions have appeared at the middle management level. This is a proof of the rapid orientation of British companies towards the new market segments, which appeared with the development of “online” commerce and social networks. In Bucharest, we still do not have this orientation at the top management level, but the positions of “Influencer Marketing Manager” and “Digital Marketing Manager” have started to appear, at the average level of company management.

Many functions of “specialized product marketing” or “product marketing” have appeared in Paris. This means looking for people who have experience and are specialized in order to promote and find customers, for a small number of products or services. In fact, they are looking for over-specialized people to solve marketing problems for those products or services that require it. As a rule, the functions are of medium level, which means that the companies give a special importance to these functions. In this regard, a relevant aspect is that in all advertisements, it is specified that “experienced people” are searched.

Finally, it can be appreciated that the “top management” functions in Bucharest are lagging behind the dynamics and meaning of those in Paris and London, which cannot be explained only by the different level of development of the economies of the three countries, but also through different mentalities, through differences in approach to management in crisis conditions and the emergence of new challenges.

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COVID-19 INFLUENCE IN THE EUROPEAN ECONOMY AND THE IMPACT AT NATIONAL LEVEL

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Abstract:

The humanitarian crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has also triggered a global economic crisis. The total impacts on European and national economy will depend not only on the duration of the pandemic, but also on the speed of response, and on the measures taken. However, the serious situation is also a major, evolving challenge.

The economic indicators analyzed at European and national level highlight the 'fragility' of the economy, which will lead to the perpetuation of the crisis during 2021, with major effects on companies and job losses.

One possible solution to the crisis is to adapt the economy to the conditions imposed by the pandemic, while putting the COVID-19 vaccine on the market or an effective treatment that will reduce the risk of infection of the population. Another key element that will lead to economic recovery is the digitization of industrial and commercial processes, an effect of the crisis being the emergence of telework globally.

Keywords: economic crisis, covid-19 pandemic, economy, financial indicators, recession.

1. Introduction

According to Moody's, the health system will undergo a process of structural transformation following the COFID-19 pandemic.

Telemedicine or the practice of using technology to treat patients remotely will play a much more important role in the health system, even after the pandemic will diminish in intensity. Patients quickly adopted telemedicine during the pandemic and will probably continue to practice it, given the convenience it offers.

As far as providers are concerned, telemedicine has the potential to reduce costs and increase efficiency. Health insurance companies will be affected in terms of financial performance, with the pandemic accelerating many of the trends that were already changing the way they worked, such as: high costs of patients with chronic conditions; increasing the adoption of telemedicine and remote monitoring; and the transition from the traditional payment-based model for services provided to the value-of-care model. The ability of insurance companies to adapt to these trends, which the pandemic has accelerated, will affect their credit profile over the next 3-5 years.

Hospitals – if outpatient centres were preferred by patients, many patients are expected to take care of themselves outside hospitals after the pandemic, given the benefits and convenience of doing so. Sponsors of these services acknowledge that many services previously provided by hospitals can be performed elsewhere.

Medical products -their suppliers will adapt them to consider remote monitoring. The pharmaceutical industry will face modest pressures on earnings, with changes unlikely as a result of the pandemic.

The second "lockdown" imposed in many countries has contributed to considerable uncertainty among investors. The level of stress within the European financial system, according to the composite indicator calculated by the European Central Bank, has increased and is around 0.158.

In March 2020, trading conditions were significantly damaged because of COVID-19, but since the end of April 2020 there has been a return of international markets. Conditions in the US and Euro area financial markets are currently being seen, according to indices calculated by Bloomberg.

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Worldwide, an assessment of the evolution of the economy can be carried out on the basis of turbulence in international stock markets calculated by Bank of America Merrill Lynch which increased significantly in the first decade of November 2020, amid concerns about the effects of a new wave of COVID-19.

2. European Context

Europe is hit hard by the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic and states are forced to take further protection against the virus. COVID-19 is forcing more and more countries to adopt containment measures, measures that will negatively affect the economies of states. For this reason, euro area finance ministers are specifically discussing how to respond to the worsening economic outlook.

On 23 April 2020, EU leaders decided to work towards establishing an EU recovery fund to mitigate the effects of the crisis. They have commissioned the European Commission to urgently submit a proposal which, among other things, clarifies the link between the Fund and the long-term EU budget. The proposal, a recovery plan for Europe, was presented by the European Commission on 27 May 2020.

On 21 July, EU leaders agreed on a €750 billion recovery effort, Next Generation EU, to help the EU address the pandemic crisis. The recovery package is currently going through the legislative steps to be completed in 2021.

In addition to the recovery package, EU leaders agreed on a €1074.3 billion EU long-term budget for 2021-2027.

Together with the EUR 540 billion in the form of funds already in place for the three safety nets (for workers, businesses and Member States), the EU's overall recovery package amounts to 2. EUR 364.3 billion.

"*We are united and determined to use our full force to cope with the second wave.*", said the President of the Eurogroup, Paschal Donohoe.

The video conference of eurozone finance ministers comes two days before the publication of economic forecasts for the European Union, which is expected to indicate a decline in the region's GDP in the fourth quarter of 2020.

A eurozone official involved in preparing the videoconference told Reuters that he expected active talks on the effects of the pandemic, but there are no plans yet to announce further EU-wide support measures.

Analysts estimate that eurozone finance ministers are in favor of maintaining the national fiscal support measures adopted so far, especially after the EU suspended the deficit and debt ceiling in the context of the pandemic.

"*Obviously, the fiscal momentum will have to be maintained next year, and its withdrawal will take place only gradually, so as not to affect the recovery of the economy. The new restrictions will significantly affect economic conditions,*" explained the European official.

The EU has put in place a tool to provide temporary support to mitigate the risks of unemployment in an emergency (SURE) to help people keep their jobs during the crisis. The instrument provides Member States with loans on favorable terms to cover part of the costs of creating or extending national technical unemployment programs. In September and October 2020, the Council approved the granting of €87.9 billion in financial support to 17 Member States: Belgium: EUR 7.8 billion; Bulgaria: EUR 511 million; Croatia: EUR 1 billion; Cyprus: EUR 479 million; Czech Republic: EUR 2billion; Greece: EUR 2.7billion; Hungary: EUR 504 million; Italy: EUR 27.4 billion; Latvia: EUR 193 million; Lithuania: EUR 602 million; Malta: EUR 244 million; Poland: EUR 11.2 billion; Portugal: EUR 5.9 billion; **Romania: €4.1 billion**; Slovakia: EUR 631 million; Slovenia: EUR 1.1billion; Spain: EUR 21.3 billion.

Other Member States can still submit their applications for financial assistance. Up to €100 billion can be made available under this EU instrument.

Corrections to the EU budget for 2020

In an immediate response to the consequences of COVID-19, the EU has amended its 2020 budget, adding €3.1 billion for:

- purchase and distribution of medical materials, including protective equipment and mechanical fans;
- increase the production of test kits;
- building campaign hospitals;
- transfer of patients for treatment in other Member States;
- repatriation of EU citizens stranded abroad.

On 11 September 2020, the Council agreed to supplement the EU budget for 2020 by an additional EUR 6.2 billion.

The revised budget shall supplement payments for:

- development and distribution of a vaccine against COVID-19: The European Commission will use this amount to pre-order doses of the vaccine (EUR 1.09 billion);
- Investment initiatives in response to coronavirus (RII and RII+): redirecting money from the EU budget to address the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (€5.1 billion).

Redirection of EU funds

The EU has rapidly redirected cohesion funds to help Member States cope with the COVID-19 crisis:

- EUR 37 billion from the EU budget available to support health systems, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and labour markets through the Coronavirus Investment Initiative (ICMI);;
- up to EUR 28 billion from structural funds available in national financial packages for 2014-2020 but not yet allocated to projects are eligible for crisis response;;
- up to EUR 800 million from the EU Solidarity Fund are directed to the countries most heavily affected, due to the extension of the scope of the Fund to public health crises.

The EU has also adopted measures to provide additional flexibility in the use of structural funds. Thanks to the so-called Plus Investment Initiative in response to coronavirus (RII+):

- Member States may transfer amounts between different funds to meet their needs;
- resources may be redirected to the regions most affected by a suspension of the conditions under which the regions are entitled to funding;
- Member States may apply for funding of up to 100% of the EU budget between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021 for programs dealing with the impact of the pandemic.

The initiative also includes support for fishermen and farmers and a review of the European Aid Fund for the Most Deprived (FEAD).

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), funded by the Horizon 2020 Framework Program, has also launched a crisis response initiative. The Institute will provide additional funds of EUR **60 million** for innovators who promote high-impact solutions that contribute to solving social and economic problems.

Flexibility in applying EU rules

The EU has allowed maximum flexibility in the application of EU rules on **public finances and budgetary policies,** for example to meet exceptional expenditure.

In order to protect jobs and businesses, the EU has adopted **temporary state aid rules,** which allow Member States to provide financial support to businesses and citizens facing difficulties due to the negative impact of the COFID-19 pandemic on the economy.

According to data from October 2020, the total amount of support from national budgets amounts to 4% of GDP and will continue in 2021.

The EU has suspended airport slot requirements, which oblige airlines to use at least 80% of the slots allocated to them for take-off and landing to keep them in the coming year. The temporary derogation, applicable until 24 October 2020, **helps air carriers cope with the sharp decrease in air traffic** caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

ECB measures to support EU Member States

At the end of the meeting of the last meeting of the Governing Council of the ECB clearly announced that it was preparing new support measures for December 2020, as the new restrictions raised concerns about a double recession in the euro area. However, ECB officials continue to ask governments to do what is their duty to revive the economy- explaining that the role of monetary policy is limited.

"*We must consider the possibility of an increase in budget support in the current circumstances, as it is not the duty of monetary policy to increase the appropriations to individual companies. This is a budgetary mission, and we must encourage the fiscal side to expand its intervention,*" said Yves Mersch, a member of the ECB's governing board.

While most euro area governments have developed loan guarantee mechanisms to keep healthy firms afloat, the level of indebtedness has risen sharply, and some countries are now discussing being more selective when it comes to providing public aid.

But this caution could also force banks to be more selective with lending, which risks triggering a credit crunch even though liquidity in the banking sector is at a record high.

At the same time, the European stability mechanism has put in place support measures in the context of the pandemic crisis, based on an existing preventive credit line, adjusted taking into account the crisis caused by COVID-19. Loans can be made available to all euro area Member States up to 2% of their GDP, up to a total of EUR 240 billion.

3. National Context

Current macroeconomic developments

According to the signal estimates published by Eurostat, in the third quarter of 2020, still marked by a series of measures imposed by states to prevent the spread of COVID-19, seasonally adjusted GDP increased by 12.7% in the euro area and by 12.1% in the EU compared to the previous quarter. However, compared to the same period of the previous year, seasonally adjusted GDP decreased by 4.3% in the euro area and 3.9% in the EU, which represents a partial recovery from large contractions in the previous quarter (-14.8% and -13.9% respectively).

The share of government debt in GDP is 95.1% in the euro area for the second quarter of 2020, up from the level recorded in the fourth quarter of 2019 (84.0%). At EU level, there is considerable heterogeneity of the level of indebtedness, with the share of public debt in GDP ranging from 18.5% (Estonia) to 187.4% (Greece). Romania ranks among the EU Member States with low indebtedness (41.1%), below the leverage average of EU Member States of 87.8% of GDP. In August 2020, Romania's public administration debt stood at about 450 billion lei, up from the end of 2019 (373.5 billion lei), representing about 42.8% of GDP. According to data published by Eurostat, the budget deficit (seasonally adjusted series) stood at 11.6% of GDP for the euro area, i.e. 11.4% at EU-27 level in the second quarter of 2020, up from the previous quarter (2.6%). Romania's budget deficit accounted for 11.1% of GDP compared to 7.9% in the first quarter of 2020 (seasonally adjusted data). According to BNR, direct investments by non-residents in Romania (FDI) amounted to 1.40 billion euros, compared to about 4.4 billion euros between January and August 2019. On the other hand, the current account of the balance of payments registered a deficit of EUR 5.8 billion in the first 8 months of 2020, compared to around EUR 7.10 billion in the same period of the previous year. The current account evolution was accompanied by an increase in total external debt of around 6.34 billion euros between January and August 2020 to more than 116 billion euros.

According to the data published by the INS, in the first 8 months of the year, FOB exports decreased by 15.3%, while CIF imports by 11.2% compared to the same period of the previous year, which led to an increase of around EUR 642.0 million in the trade balance deficit (FOB/CIF) to a value of around EUR 11,516.3 million.

Among the EU Member States, for which data are available for the third quarter of 2020, France (+18.2%) recorded the largest increase compared to the previous quarter, followed by Spain (+16.7%) Italy (+16.1%). Lithuania (+3.7%), Czech Republic (+6.2%) and Latvia (+6.6%) the smallest increases.

Romania's gross domestic product registered, according to the National Statistical Institute (NSI), a decrease of 10.3% on the gross series, i.e. 10.2% on the seasonally adjusted series compared to the same period of the previous year. Compared to the previous quarter, the decrease in GDP was more severe, at 11.9% (seasonally adjusted series).

The National Strategy and Forecast Commission (CNSP) revised downwards the projected economic growth for 2020 to -3.8% (from -1.9% in the previous scenario), against the background of declining activity in industry (-8.6%), agriculture (-7.1%) and services (-2.7%) compared to 2019. According to the CNSP forecast, construction will make a positive contribution to GDP this year, with an estimated growth of 5.8%. For the following year, the CNSP expects a return of the Romanian economy, with an advance of 4.9%. The IMF revised economic growth for 2020 to -4.8% (from -5.0% in the previous scenario), and for the following year the IMF expects a return of economy for Romania with an advance of 4.6%.

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in the euro area stood at 8.3% in September 2020, at the same level as in the previous month. At EU level, the unemployment rate was 7.5% in September 2020, the same amount as in August 2020.

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Romania was 5.2% in September 2020, down 0.1 pp from the previous month (5.3%), according to data published by ins.

The trend remains that the unemployment rate among men (5.7%) higher than the female unemployment rate (4.6%).

Evolution of GDP and GDP forecast in 2019 - 2021

Taking into account the main components of inflation in the euro area, food, alcohol and tobacco will register the highest annual rate in October (2.0% compared to 1.8% in September), followed by services (0.4%, compared to 0.5% in September). Prices of non-energy industrial goods (-0.1% compared to -0.3% in September) and energy (-8.4% compared to -8.2% in September) remain in negative territory. The Economic Sentiment Indicator (ESI) remains low in the European Union in October (90 points), similar to that recorded at the end of 2009, keeping unchanged the perception of the future evolution of the economy compared to the previous month (90 points). The ESI indicator has decreased since February due to a significant deterioration in confidence in the EU economy amid the crisis caused by COVID-19 and high uncertainty about future economic developments.

In October 2020, confidence in the industry sector increased by 1.7 points from the previous month but continues to be at a low level. Confidence in retail and construction also contributed positively in October 2020 to improved perception, increasing from September 2020 (+1.5 and +1.0 points respectively). In Romania, the indicator of economic sentiment is lower than the EU average, at 86.9 points in October, down from 88.8 points in October. There is also a stable perception in Romania in all sectors, but the biggest contribution was confidence in the retail sector, an increase of 3.2 points compared to September 2020.

Evolution of stock indices

The end of October 2020 is experiencing a deterioration in international stock exchanges, amid concerns about the second wave of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, the most significant decrease being recorded by the exchanges in America and Europe. At present, the volatility of the Bucharest Stock Exchange indices has decreased, and the regime remains for now a medium to low one. The relationship between the evolution of the BET index and the number of new SARS-CoV-2 cases (USA and Italy) is an indirect one, thus the increase in the number of illnesses (USA and Italy) has led to a decrease in the local index and its return has occurred as there has been a decrease in the number of new cases.

The European indices analyzed showed very short-term negative developments (1-week 23 October vs. 30 October). The decreases were between -8.61% (DAX index) and -2.23% (ISEQ index). International indices showed similar developments to European indices. The decreases were between -6.47% (DJIA index) and -1.63% (SSEA index).

Local indices had very short-term negative developments (1 week 23 October vs. 30 October). The most significant decrease was recorded by the ROTX index (-3.29%).

The index of the distribution by investment sectors shows that the financial sector is predominantly dominant on the Romanian capital market, the next representative sectors being the industrial and energy sectors.

VaR is a statistical estimate that measures, for a certain confidence interval (usually between 95% and 99%) the value that a portfolio may lose over a certain period due to the change in the market price. Calculations indicate that there is a 1% probability that the BET-XT index will fall above 1.88% for the next period.

Volatility in asset prices varies over time and is not constant, and probability distribution cannot be correctly predicted in terms of uncertainty. Unlike GARCH models in which variance follows a deterministic process, volatility follows a stochastic process and is represented in terms of probabilities. Currently the stochastic volatility on the Romanian capital market is high, being in the range of 6%-31%, while the realized volatility (represented by the volatility calculated in the Garch model) is 15%. Uncertainty is visually represented by the quantum (1%,10%,50%,90% and 99%).

Evolution of risk-adjusted stock index yields and interest rates

Between 23 and 30 October 2020, the volatility of the indices analysed increased. The VIX volatility index increased 38% from 27.41% to 38.02% at the end of last week.

ROBOR rates at 3M and 6M are on an upward slope and yields on the local interbank money market (ROBOR) continue to be above the monetary policy rate (1.5%).

Evolution of interest rates and yields on sovereign bonds

During the week 23-30 October 2020,both the yields of Romanian government securities denominated in lei and those in euro decreased.

Yields on zero coupon bonds in Romania have decreased for all the maturities studied. The yield curve for these bonds is increasing, indicating an increase in credit risk.

Currency evolution

THE ERR (actual real exchange rate) is an indicator of international competitiveness, defined as the ratio of external and domestic prices and measured in local currency. The deflator used by BIS for the calculation of the ERR is the Consumer Price Index. Compared to last year (September 2019), the actual real rate of the lei depreciated by 2.3% in real terms while the pound remained depreciated by 0.7% and the euro depreciated by 3.9%. Compared to 1 January 2019, on 30 October 2020 the euro appreciated in nominal terms by 4.5% against the leu, while the US dollar appreciated against the leu by 2.5%. Over the same period, the euro appreciated against the dollar by 1.8%. Between 23 and 30 October the volatility of the EUR/RON exchange rate remained stationary and the exchange rate level oscillated slightly around 4,873. We forecast that exchange rate volatility will remain low (approximately 1%) over the next four weeks. Long memory in time series is defined as self-correlation at long intervals. The EUR/RON exchange rate analysis shows that it is integrated fractionally. If the long memory parameter d (0.4) takes values in the range (0-0.5), then the size of the range increases and the shocks decrease hyperbolically.

Risk of contagion in stock markets

The contagion analysis indicates that the Romanian capital market is sensitive to the risk factors influencing the neighboring capital market (Poland, Austria and Hungary). Contagion (IMF) is defined as the impact of changes in the price of assets in one region (stock exchange) on prices in another region (stock exchange). As a result of economic expectations related to the effects of the pandemic caused by the spread of coronavirus, contagion increased rapidly in February and early March and reached its highest level since 2011. In May 2020, contagion between European capital markets remained at a critical level, close to that of the 2008 global crisis. Between June and August, the contagion continued to decline, while the social isolation conditions of all European economies were easing. In the absence of further economic shocks, the contagion decreased and in September it returned to the long-term average. In October, the contagion began to increase slightly.

The CMAX indicator for the Romanian capital market is calculated as the ratio between the current value of the Romanian capital market index (index calculated by Datastream similar to the BET-C index) and the maximum value of the index from the last two years to the current date (Patel and Sarkar, 1998). A value below 0.95 (5% less than the two-year peak) indicates that the index is on a downward trend.

The value of the CMAX indicator remains below the 0.95 threshold, even though it has recovered from the losses recorded, but the downward trend remains, as both the Bucharest Stock Exchange and the European stock exchanges have incurred significant losses against the background of information related to the coronavirus expansion and the measures applied.

In contrast to the contagion index, the historical breakdown of shocks shows how much a stock market has been influenced in the evolution of other exchanges. The historical decomposition of the shocks received by the Romanian stock market index (index calculated by Datastream like the BET-C index) indicates that the local stock market is currently mainly exposed to external shocks. The analysis of historical decomposition confirms the results of the fundamental analysis, which suggests that the Romanian capital market index was influenced by the evolution of foreign markets in particular by the evolution of the main capital markets (USA and Germany). However, the magnitude of the shocks is very small. The sensitivity of the contagion index in yields according to the structure of the VAR model shows that although uncertainty has decreased, there are different dynamics in the suggested markets and suggests increased nervousness and removal from balance for European capital markets.

4. National Perspectives

Evolution of the indicator on confidence in the Romanian economy

The indicator on confidence in Romania's economy fell in October 2020 for the first time in six months, against the background of the intensification of the COFID-19 epidemic, the most affected sectors being services and industry. October 2020 and early November brought an accelerated increase in new cases of COVID-19 disease and new operating restrictions for the services sector.

The Perception indicator on the economy (ESI) fell by 1.9 points in October 2020 to 86.9 points, returning to the level of August 2020. ESI stood at 99.6 points in March when the economic effects of the CoVID-19 pandemic and government-imposed restrictions began to be seen, and then decreased by about a third. In this context, Eugen Sinca, analyst at BCR, notes that " this is the1first monthly decrease since May and indicates a possible economic recovery in W, but with a less severe reduction in economic activity in the 4th quarter compared to what happened in the 2nd quarter". The ESI indicator is calculated by the European Commission and has a high level of correlation with THE evolution of GDP – for example, the record drop in confidence in the second quarter announced very poor data on the evolution of gross domestic product from April to June 2020. The number of new daily cases of COVID-19 has moved from the 1,000 to 1,500 levels in August and September to 3,000-5,000 in October, with a record of more than 6,000 cases announced on Thursday. The authorities have imposed new restrictions leading to a decrease in interaction between people, the most important with economic impact being those related to bars and restaurants, which are once again closed inside. At the same time, schools were closed in large municipalities such as Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca. Confidence in the services sector fell to -16 from -12.4 points, with pessimistic expectations of the evolution of demand and employment over the next three months. 2

The industry is in contraction for the second month in a row - down from -6.1 in September to -7.3 in October, mainly due to much weaker production prospects in the coming months. The retail and construction sectors – which performed best in the pandemic – showed an improvement in the perception of prospects in October, with an increase of 1.6 points from -1.6 and -10.9 from -13.1. Hiring expectations also deteriorated to 96.1 points from 100.1 points in September 2020.

According to the BCR, the recovery of the workforce will be done with syncope, especially after the government's support measures expire. Consumer confidence data were not reported for the sixth consecutive month, with Romania being the only country with this statistical situation. BCR shows that there is a risk that Romania will have economic growth below the forecast of 2.1% in the 4th quarter (quarter by quarter). The bank maintains the estimate of -4.7% for 2020 and 3.9% for 2021 but shows that there are risks for a weaker recovery next year in the event of a weak fourth quarter.

Estimates of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has also downgraded its estimates of Romania's economic developments in 2020 and 2021 as a result of the crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19). According to the EBRD's most recent forecasts, Romania's economy is expected to fall by 5% this year, compared to a 4% decline forecast in May 2020. For 2021, the EBRD expects a 3% expansion in Romania's GDP, compared to a 4% advance forecast in May 2020.[3]

It will also reach GDP per capita in 2019 again in the second quarter of 2022, the EBRD estimates that in the first half of this year Romania's economy contracted by 3.9%.[4]

After a robust growth of 4.1% in 2019, Romania is facing recession in 2020. Key transmission channels are lower consumption and export decline. The state of emergency introduced in mid-March 2020 and containment measures aimed at stopping the spread of the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) lasted until mid-May 2020, severely affecting travel, economic activity and consumer and business confidence.

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[1]**E**conomic **S**entiment **I**ndicantor - composite index, based on survey, which shows the perception of operators in the service sector, industry, construction and trade, but also of the population regarding the current state of the economy, as well as expectations for future developments.

[2] https://www.profit.ro/stiri/economie/increderea-in-economia-romaniei-a-scazut-in-octombrie-pe-fondul-intensificarii-epidemiei-covid-19-19568899

[3] The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) was established in 1991 to invest in the former communist bloc states and help them make the transition to the market economy. In recent years, the EBRD has begun to reorient its attention from the former Soviet bloc to North Africa and the Middle East.

[44] https://financialintelligence.ro/berd-inrautateste-prognozele-privind-evolutia-economica-a-romaniei-in-2020-si-in-2021-2/

Isolation measures have had a significant impact on private consumption: retail sales fell by almost a fifth in April 2020 compared to the same period in 2019, although some recovery was observed in the coming months. Industrial production collapsed in April 2020, down nearly 40% from the same period in 2019, causing exports of goods to decline, the EBRD estimates.

In the first half of this year, Romania's economy contracted by 3.9%, private consumption decreased by 5% and exports by 15%. The unemployment rate climbed to 5.4% in July 2020 (from 3.7% in January), with the likely loss of new jobs in the coming months, as government support schemes will be halted. In June 2020, the annual inflation rate climbed to 2.2%, in line with the BNR target of 2.5% plus/minus one percentage point.

Romania has entered the pandemic crisis with a significant fiscal deficit (4.3% of GDP in 2019). The combination of declining production and government income, a fiscal stimulus program amounting to about 4-5% of GDP, and other pension increases in September 2020 (in addition to those in 2019) would deepen the fiscal deficit in 2020 to an estimated 8.6% of GDP, according to the revised draft budget. BNR cut the monetary policy interest rate three times to 1.5%, lowered the deposit facility interest rate to 1% per an and the lending facility interest rate (Lombard) to 2% per ans.

Romania's economy is expected to decline by 5% in 2020 and growth by 3% in 2021. The recovery will depend on the gradual normalization of economic activity, both in Romania and in its main economic partners, and on the resumption of structural reforms. However, they will be difficult to achieve if social distance remains in place longer than anticipated, the EBRD warns.

In June and July 2020, The EBRD conducted a study of 1,652 SMEs from 15 economies in the regions where the lender is present (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) to assess the preliminary effects of the pandemic on small and medium-sized enterprises. Expectations for government support, in the form of grants, subsidized loans or wage subsidies, have varied significantly in the region. While more than half of SMEs in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Morocco and Mongolia received or were waiting to receive government assistance, less than 20% of firms believed they could not rely on government support in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Lebanon. Higher government support (expected or received) is associated with a more optimistic view of the prospects for recovery, the report says.

The EBRD is the main institutional investor in Romania, with investments of more than 8.6 billion euros. In 2019, the Bank invested and financed 22 projects in different sectors of the Romanian economy totaling over 372 million euros.

Other estimates of interest

According to Eurostat, in the third quarter of 2020, seasonally adjusted GDP increased by 12.7% in the euro area compared to the previous quarter.

The second "lockdown" imposed in many countries has contributed to considerable uncertainty among investors. The level of stress within the European financial system, according to the composite indicator calculated by the European Central Bank, has increased and is around 0.158.

In Romania, the indicator of economic sentiment is lower than the EU average, ranking in October 2020 at a level of 86.9 points, down from 88.8 points in September.

The European indices analyzed showed very short-term negative developments (1 week). The decreases were between -8.61% (DAX index) and -2.23% (ISEQ index).

Measures at national level

The Government by Emergency Ordinance, the loan agreement between the European Union, as a Lender and Romania, as a borrower, amounting to EUR 4,099.244.587, signed in

Bucharest on 8 October 2020 and in Brussels on 19 October 2020. In practice, through this agreement, Romania borrows EUR 4.1 billion from the European Union under the European Temporary Support Instrument to mitigate the risks of unemployment in an emergency situation following the outbreak of COVID-19 (SURE).

Characteristics of the loan granted to Romania:

- the drawdown period for the amounts of the loan shall be 18 months from the date of entry into force of the Council of the European Union Decision (i.e. until the end of March 2022);
- the loan may be made redundant in a maximum of 8 instalments;
- the amount of the instalments and the timing of the redundancy will be determined by the Commission in consultation with the Member State;
- the average maturity of the loan is 15 years;
- the loan will be granted in the same financial terms in which the Commission borrowed from the market for its redundancy, plus any costs/expenses incurred by the Commission for the contracting of that financing. Given the reputation of the European Union, supported, and strengthened under this instrument by the Guarantee Mechanism by the Member States, the loan contracted will be at advantageous cost.

According to the MFP, the loan will support the measures adopted by the Romanian Government, in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, between February and August 2020, aimed at protecting employees and self-employed persons, with the aim of reducing the incidence of unemployment and loss of income.

Of these measures, eligible under the SURE instrument, as assessed by the European Commission:

- technical unemployment
- flexible working hours
- other such schemes for categories of freelancers whose activity has been reduced/interrupted because of the COVID-19 pandemic s
- increases and similar measures granted to medical personnel in order to recognize their merits.

5. Conclusions

The analysis of macroeconomic indicators reveals that the world, European and national economy is heavily affected by the pandemic generated by COVID-19, and as the medical crisis deepens, the economy will recover extremely hard.

For Romania's economy it is necessary to keep the connection to the world economy and to the European economy. At the same time, it is necessary for decision-makers at the level of the Romanian Government to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the financial and economic instruments made available by the EU institutions.

An opportunity for the economies of EU Member States, including Romania, is to digitize the services offered to citizens, while implementing measures that value the potential on the IT level of Romanian specialists.

It is also necessary to continue the process of optimizing public expenditure, by reducing the budget deficit, while at the same time applying prudent fiscal and economic policies, by increasing labor productivity both in the public system, but especially in the private sector.

Another particularly important aspect is the identification of new markets at international level for Romanian products, at the same time as the consumption of domestic products, in order to support Romanian producers.

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MACROECONOMIC FORCES THAT INFLUENCE ALTERNATIVE ASSETS PRICING

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Abstract

Global Institutional Investors are showing great interest to opportunities that derive from Alternative Assets. This trend is further accelerated by hope of improving their portfolios' returns while also diversifying their assets.

At the global macro level, virtually all asset classes and investment strategies are cyclical in their return profiles, meaning they simply work better at some times than at others, depending on a bundle of macro factors including interest rates, GDP growth, central bank interventions and other geopolitical factors.

The purpose of this paper is to identify assets allocations within the Alternative Assets spectrum as a basis for providing clarity to macroeconomic factors that influence digital assets pricing.

Keywords: Alternative Investments, Digital Assets, FinTech

JEL Codes: G20, F41, E31

Introduction

A new challenge in asset allocation, looking at assets as vehicles of more fundamental factors, offers a new language to decipher financial markets. It builds a bridge between rigorous portfolio construction, echoing today popular risk-parity approaches, and a more fundamental method which interprets financial markets in terms of macroeconomic dynamics.

Alternatives investors have always been focused on the possibility of achieving a measure of downside protection, accessing differentiated exposures and identifying truly uncorrelated, complementary sources of returns.

A proper classification of Alternative Assets and Investments needs to be in place to show how they meet various investment objectives and their sensitivity to macroeconomic factors.

Asset Allocation

In the article published by De Laguiche and Tazé-Bernard in 2014, entitled "Allocating Alternative Assets: Why, How and How much?", a definition of asset allocation, which traditionally refers to the way a portfolio is divided between equity, fixed income and money market products, has expanded to the alternative investments like: hedge funds and unlisted assets.

This highly diverse investment landscape is hard to define due to the high degree of heterogeneity for the alternative assets. The most common distinction for these type of assets is classified in two major categories:

1. Listed Assets – Referred mostly to Hedge Funds, this category is important to the fact that Hedge Funds have increased their transparency, updated their valuations and reduced their leverage, thereby adhering towards the traditional funds' standards.
2. Unlisted Assets – Referred mostly to Real Estate, Natural Resources and Private Equity.

An important difference between listed and unlisted assets reflects in terms of liquidity. Hedge Funds may be subject to the risk of liquidity especially during time of crisis. Unlisted Assets are usual illiquid, predominately on a short-term; they automatically become liquid over long investment horizons. Their liquidity therefore depends on the investment horizon.

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Investments in commodities, which investors consider part of the alternative category, are therefore sought out in order to protect a portfolio from a risk of rising inflation.

The relationship between volatility and return is disrupted when it comes to alternative assets. First, for illiquid assets some of the additional return is compensation for greater liquidity risk, which cannot be measured via volatility. Second, volatility is an imperfect measurement of market risk, because especially in the world of hedge funds, the extreme risks that are observed are substantially greater than those of conventional assets with equivalent volatility, making the assumption of symmetrical returns required for the estimate inappropriate. Performance-related fees also contribute to asymmetry in the return distribution of these assets.

Spulbar and Birau (2019) suggested that volatility does not diverge to infinity and seems to react significantly different considering the case of high positive or high negative stock returns. Moreover, portfolio diversification strategy is a representative phenomenon of quantitative finance, most often applied in relation to low or negative correlations between financial assets.

Digital Assets

Within the digital assets realm, it's important to acknowledge Financial Technology (FinTech) Companies which promoted the use of Blockchain and Distributed Ledger Tech, the underlying technology for crypto assets, for various business models and financial services. FinTech has found a broader meaning day by day and now plays its role as a disruptor of order in various parts of the financial and monetary system, including micro payments, money transfer, lending, comparison and online sales of various types of insurance policies, capital increase, and asset management. It has even been recognized in the formation of new paradigms such as the crypto assets. (Mehdiabadi et al., 2020).

Crypto assets are digital financial assets, for which ownership and transfers of ownership are guaranteed by a cryptographic decentralized technology. Cryptocurrencies can be seen as part of a broader class of financial assets, "crypto assets", with similar peer-to-peer digital transfers of value, without involving third party institutions for transaction certification purposes (Giudici, G., Milne, A. & Vinogradov, D., 2020).

Much recent public discussions of cryptocurrencies have been triggered by the substantial changes in their prices, claims that the market for cryptocurrencies is a bubble without any fundamental value, and also concerns about evasion of regulatory and legal oversight.

Within the overall category of crypto assets, we can follow the distinctions drawn in recent regulatory reports, distinguishing two further sub-categories of crypto assets, on top of cryptocurrencies:

1. Cryptocurrencies: defined as an asset on a blockchain that can be exchanged or transferred between network participants and hence used as a means of payment—but offers no other benefits;
2. Crypto securities: defined as an asset on a blockchain that, in addition, offers the prospect of future payments, for example a share of profits;
3. Crypto utility assets: defined as an asset on a blockchain that, in addition, can be redeemed for or give access to some pre-specified products or services.

Within cryptocurrencies category we can further distinguish those whose quantity is fixed and price market determined (floating cryptocurrencies) and those where a supporting arrangement, software or institutional, alters the supply in order to maintain a fixed price against other assets (stable coins, for example Tether, USDC, DAI or the planned Facebook Libra).

Cryptocurrencies can be used both as a means of payment and as a financial asset. Glaser et al. (2014) provided evidence that, at least for Bitcoin (BTC), the main reason to purchase a cryptocurrency is speculative investment. Financial securities, such as ETNs (Exchange Traded Notes) and CFDs (Contract For Differences - Derivative Products) that replicate Bitcoin's price performance are made available by brokers, expanding the speculative investment opportunities to an even larger set of investors. With this in mind, it makes sense to evaluate cryptocurrencies as digital financial assets.

Cross Asset Investment Strategy

Rethinking strategic asset allocation in terms of diversification across macroeconomic scenarios, is a novel approach in Strategic Asset Allocation that consists in looking at asset classes as vehicles of more fundamental factors. According to this method, fundamental factors govern the majority of asset class dynamics, and hence, asset allocation should be rephrased in terms of risk allocation of fundamental factors.

Asset segmentation in terms of macroeconomic changes allows us to exploit portfolio diversification to the level of fundamental factors and to directly relate asset allocation to factors' risk premia.

Traditional approaches look at nominal bonds, commodities and equities as representative of deflation, inflation and growth. This interpretation is not adequate: asset classes do not constitute good axes, as e.g. equity and commodity share similar polarization to economic growth, but are opposite in terms of inflation.

The key principle is that asset price dynamics can be largely explained in terms of change in expectations of macroeconomic variables and market stress: stocks move not because of low or high growth but mainly because growth is above or below expectations.

The most relevant factors to determine asset prices are inflation, growth and market stress. Growth and inflation are crucial because the value of an investment is mainly affected by the volume of economic activity (growth) and its pricing (inflation). Market stress is relevant since it often plays a major role in asset dynamics, as in 2008 when financial stress was mainly due to the liquidity problem.

The recent crisis poses serious doubts on the effectiveness of diversification to reduce drawdowns in balanced portfolios. Nevertheless, recent portfolio construction schemes, like risk parity and maximum diversification, make of diversification the kernel of asset allocation. While most approaches diversify on asset class level, the new challenge in asset allocation suggests diversifying on fundamental factors that are believed to be the main drivers of asset price dynamics.

The factors approach provides a new, challenging, and powerful way to interpret financial markets. This new way forces the rethinking of asset segmentation and strategic asset allocation. Strategic decisions should be mostly rephrased in terms of asset environmental biases towards macroeconomic and stress factors, rather than on standard mean-variance optimization packages that need forecasting returns.

Rigorous portfolio construction which is explicitly related to the macroeconomic dynamics can help us to navigate portfolios in uncertain financial markets.

The cross-section of cryptocurrency returns has been analyzed in a number of papers: Urquhart (2016) shows that Bitcoin returns do not follow random walk, based on which he concludes the Bitcoin market exhibits a significant degree of inefficiency, especially in the early years of existence. Corbet et al. (2018) analysis, in time and frequency domains, the relationship between the return of three different cryptocurrencies and a variety of other financial assets, showing lack of relationship between crypto assets and other assets.

Liu and Tsyvinski (2018) investigate whether cryptocurrency pricing bears similarity to stocks: none of the risk factors explaining movements in stock prices applies to cryptocurrencies in their sample. Moreover, movements in exchange rates, commodity prices, or macroeconomic factors of traditional significance for other assets play little to no role for most cryptocurrencies. The latter invalidates the view on cryptocurrencies as substitute to money, or as a store of value (like gold), and rather stresses they are assets of their own class.

The review of the literature in Corbet et al. (2019) summarizes the most interesting findings on the role of cryptocurrencies as a credible investment asset class and as a valuable and legitimate payment system.

Risk Premia

The concept underlying alternative risk premia is the potential reward to an investor for taking on some form of risk. As the name suggests, this risk is "alternative" to traditional market risk or traditional beta in the sense that it is non-correlating and tends to be structured in the form of a long/short investment.

Alternative risk premia tend to exhibit heterogeneous statistical properties, making them potentially diversifying building blocks to a broader multi-asset portfolio.

The risk of holding cryptocurrencies is discussed by Fantazzini and Zimin (2020). Cryptocurrency prices may drop dramatically because of a revealed scam or suspected hack, or other hidden problems. For example, on June 26th, 2019, the Bitcoin price lost more than 10 % of the value in a few minutes because of the crashes and technical problems of the Coinbase digital exchange. As a consequence, a crypto asset may become illiquid and its value may substantially decline.

Fantazzini and Zimin (2020) propose a set of models to estimate the risk of default of cryptocurrencies, which is back-tested on 42 digital coins. The authors make an important point in extending the traditional risk analysis to cryptocurrencies and making an attempt to distinguish between market risk and credit risk for them. The former, as typical in the finance literature, is associated with movements in prices of other assets. The latter is associated in traditional finance with the failure of the counterparty to repay, but as cryptocurrencies presume no repayments, defining credit risk for them is tricky. The authors' approach is to see the "credit" risk of cryptocurrency in the possibility of them losing credibility among users, and thus becoming value-less, or "dead".

The authors find, notably, that the market risk of cryptocurrencies is driven by Bitcoin, suggesting some degree of homogeneity in the crypto market.

Commonly Used Risk Premia

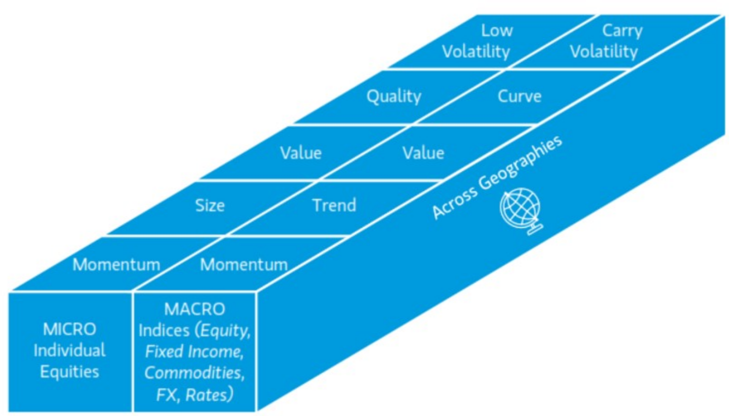

Fig.1 – Commonly Used Risk Premia. Source: Morgan Stanley Investment Management, 2019. Retrieved from www.morganstanley.com

The figure above highlights commonly used alternative risk premia, which often result from market behaviors or structural conditions. For example, herding behavior and instances in which investors “chase winners and sell losers” create momentum. Mean reversion of asset prices to fair-value anchors often leads to opportunities classified as value. Investor mispricing of asset yields may lead to carry opportunities. In commodities markets, for example, carry is defined as the price differential between futures contracts of different maturities. This figure may be positive or negative because of the demand dynamics and other factors. The large derivatives market often provides opportunities to design novel alternative risk premia, both behavioral and structural, related to asset volatility. For example, during market crises, investors seek safer assets, and low volatility stocks to outperform.

While the term “alternative risk premia” is fairly new, investors have had exposure to these sorts of returns through hedge fund strategies like quantitative equity, macro and managed futures. While having an understanding of alternative risk premia is important, what is attractive and compelling to investors is to think about their utility. In our view, these premia can be thought of as an extension of factor-based investing and can serve as building blocks for portfolio construction.

Original factor-based investing started with the Capital Asset Pricing Model (CAPM), which sought to explain investment performance using a risk-free rate and a single market risk factor or premium. Over the years, it become increasingly apparent, through the groundbreaking research of Eugene Fama, Kenneth French and Mark Carhart, among others, that a single market risk premium was not the only driver of asset returns and that investors could exploit additional factors within or across asset classes. More recent research suggests that investors can harvest “alternative” risk premia that persist because of human behavior and the structure of certain investment markets.

Alternative risk premia are of interest to investors because unlike stocks and bonds, they are generally unrelated to broader macro fundamentals. Therefore, they can provide diversification benefits when included in portfolios alongside traditional investments.

Digital Assets behavioral finance and economics

A large strand of the literature explains market phenomena that work against the neo-classical predictions, from the perspective of unquantifiable risk, or ambiguity. Most commonly, ambiguity is associated with the impossibility to assign probability values to events that may or may not occur. In the case of cryptocurrencies, this type of uncertainty may arise for two reasons:

- the technology is rather complicated and complex to unsophisticated traders;
- the fundamental value of cryptocurrencies is unclear.

Shiller (2003) notes that market participants are humans and can make irrational systematic errors contrary to the assumption of rationality. Such errors affect prices and returns of assets, creating market inefficiencies. Studies in behavioral economics highlight inefficiencies, such as under- or over-reactions to information, as causes of market trends and, in extreme cases, of bubbles and crashes. Such reactions have been attributed to limited investor attention, overconfidence, mimicry and noise trading, explanations of many of which find roots in Kahneman and Tversky’s (1979) prospect theory, which postulates that decision makers evaluate outcomes from the perspective of their current endowment (and are predominantly loss-averse) and “revise” probabilities of outcomes when making decisions (predominantly overweighting probabilities of bad outcomes and underweighting those of good ones).

The loss-aversion theory led Shefrin and Statman (1985) to formulate the “disposition effect” in investment decisions: investors in traditional assets tend to keep assets that lose value too long and sell those that gain in value too early.

Three features distinguish cryptocurrency markets: investors are non-institutional, risk (volatility of returns) is high, and the fundamental value is unclear. Under these conditions behavioral biases should be even more pronounced than in traditional asset markets. Haryanto et al. (2020) studied the disposition effect and the herding behavior in the cryptocurrency realm by investigating the trading behavior at a crypto exchange: they find a reverse disposition effect in bullish periods where the Bitcoin price increases while a positive disposition effect is observed in bearish periods. They also find that in different market conditions herding moves along with market trend (in the bullish market a positive market return increases herding, while in the bearish market a negative market return has the same effect).

The reverse disposition effect in the bullish market indicates investors exhibit more optimism and expect returns to further grow, which is consistent with the exponential price growth in a bubble in the absence of a clearly defined fundamental value. This lack of clarity regarding the fundamental value is also supported by the asymmetric herding behavior: when the price grows in a bullish market, investors look at other market participants to see whether others also think the price will continue to grow (similarly but with the opposite sign for the bearish market).

Factors that influence the prices of Digital Assets

The contribution by Moosa (2020) highlights that the Bitcoin was in a bubble up to the end of 2017. The analysis claims that the volume of trading in Bitcoin can be explained predominantly in terms of price dynamics considering past price movements, particularly positive price changes, and that the path of the price is well described by an explosive process.

The price dynamics and speculative trading in cryptocurrency is examined by Blau (2017) with the main finding that speculative behavior cannot be directly connected to the unusual return and volatility of the cryptocurrency market. Cheah and Fry (2015) study the role of speculation in the cryptocurrency market from the viewpoint of Bitcoin's basic value.

Dwyer (2015) investigates empirically the Bitcoin economy with the fundamental finding that Bitcoin is likely to limit authority regulation revenue from inflation. Branvold et al. (2015) examines the role of different cryptocurrency exchanges in the price discovery procedure, representing that the information allocate is dynamic and significantly evolving over time.

The valuation of a digital currency that is, at least in principle, able to be used as a medium of exchange needs to take a wide variety of considerations into account. These include:

- The expected real return of holding the digital currency (that is, the nominal interest rate minus expected price inflation), relative to other options;
- Any risks associated with holding the digital currency relative to other currencies, including risks of theft or fraud, and price volatility;
- The relative benefits of using the digital currency as a medium of exchange when compared to traditional systems, including availability, transaction fees and degrees of anonymity;
- Any time constraints or costs associated with switching wealth between the digital currency and more traditional assets (including sterling);
- Any non-monetary concerns, such as an ideological preference for one particular currency;
- A view on how much other people value the currency (based on the above factors) and how this is expected to change in the future.

A price discovery analysis has been done by Makarov and Schoar (2018) and their findings show that shocks across markets are independent of each other, which means the variance-covariance matrix is diagonal. They constrain these shocks to have the same variance, for ease of interpretation. In theory, if price deviations were short lived, each row should have the same coefficient, since these are loading on the efficient (common) price.

Conclusions

This digital transformation results from what economists who study scientific progress and technical change call a general-purpose technology—that is, one that has the power to continually transform itself, progressively branching out and boosting productivity across all sectors and industries (Mühleisen M., 2020).

The European Central Bank (Chimienti et al., 2019) has been analyzing the digital asset phenomenon with a view to identifying and monitoring potential implications for monetary policy and the risks crypto-assets may pose to the smooth functioning of market infrastructures and payments, as well as for the stability of the financial system. The financial system may be subject to risks from crypto assets to the extent that both are interconnected; spillover effects may also be transmitted to the real economy. In particular, crypto assets may have implications for financial stability and interfere with the functioning of payments and market infrastructures, as well as implications for monetary policy.

The European Central Bank (ECB) analysis shows that, while these risks are currently contained and/or manageable within the existing regulatory and oversight frameworks, links with the regulated financial sector may develop and increase over time and have future implications.

Accordingly, the analysis concludes that the ECB should continue monitoring crypto assets, raise awareness of their risks and develop preparedness for any future adverse scenario.

Crypto asset risks primarily originate from:

- The lack of an underlying claim;
  Since crypto assets have no underlying claim, such as the right to a future cash flow or to discharge any payment obligation, they lack fundamental value. This makes their valuation difficult and subject to speculation. As a result, crypto assets may experience extreme price movements (volatility risk), thereby exposing their holders to potentially large losses. Depending on the circumstances of a possible price crash, the effects may be passed on to the creditors of the holders (if the positions involve leverage) and other entities.
- their (partially) unregulated nature;
  Crypto assets, can hardly fulfil the characteristics of payment and financial instruments and, as such, fall outside the scope of current regulation. Given that they are unregulated, their holders do not benefit from the legal protection associated with regulated instruments. For instance, in the event of bankruptcy or hacking of a crypto asset service provider that controls access to customers' holdings of crypto assets (e.g. custodian wallet providers), the holdings would neither be subject to preventive measures (e.g. safeguarding and segregation) nor benefit from schemes or other arrangements to cover any losses incurred. In view of the current state of law, there is limited scope for public authorities to regulate crypto assets. Any such intervention may be further complicated by the lack of governance and distributed architecture of crypto assets, as well as their cross-border dimension.
- the absence of a formal governance structure.
  As the use of DLT allows crypto assets to dispense with an accountable party, the roles and responsibilities for identifying, mitigating and managing the risks borne in

the crypto asset network cannot be clearly allocated. From this characteristic derive, among others, heightened money laundering and terrorist financing risks, to the extent that there is no central oversight body responsible for monitoring and identifying suspicious transaction patterns, nor can law enforcement agencies target one central location or entity (administrator) for investigative purposes or asset seizure. In view of the lack of formalized governance, it may also be difficult to address operational risks, including cyber security risks, and the risk of fraud. In fact, in the broader crypto asset ecosystem, the provision of certain services (e.g. trading) is often centralized. In such cases, the service providers can be identified and held accountable. However, this is not always possible in decentralized models, which minimize the role of intermediaries.

Potentially large and unhedged exposures of financial institutions to crypto assets could have financial stability implications, all the more so since there is currently no identified prudential treatment for crypto-asset exposures of financial institutions. In its statement on crypto-assets, while conceding that banks currently have very limited direct exposures, the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) sets expectations for banks that acquire crypto-asset exposures or provide related services, including due diligence, governance and risk management, disclosure and supervisory dialogue.

Publicly available aggregated data already provide some tools for measuring crypto asset risks and their linkages with the regulated financial system. These data, subject to passing quality checks and being complemented with other data from commercial sources, provided the basis of a crypto asset dataset as the first step in the ECB approach to monitoring this phenomenon.

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MANAGEMENT OF NEW TEHNOLOGIES: THE AVANTAGES OF USING TEHNOLOGY IN COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

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"Education is what is left after you have forgotten everything what you learned in school."

Albert Einstein

Abstract:
At present, the continuous and rapid evolution of technology and the insertion of its resources in all sectors of society, including education, it is the starting point of this article. The use of technology in teaching-evaluation activities of teachers, but also the extension of teaching activities using new tools in the non-formal environment of the school, makes a difference between individuals who are ready to integrate into this digital society, which wants the existence of as many competent people as possible. The article presents the advantages of using technology in the educational act, which will help the child's cognitive development.

Keywords: *technology, education, advantages, cognitive development, children, instructive-educational process.*

JEL Classification: A

1. Introduction

On March 11, schools locked their gates and students and teachers went home without knowing when they would first meet. For those isolated at home and cornered by coronavirus care, school has become an additional source of uncertainty and instability. For many of the children, the classes were simply suspended and they heard nothing from their teachers. For teachers, a nebulous period has begun, with applications we do not know and zero experience in online education. When the authorities decided to continue classes in the digital environment, more than a month after the classrooms were closed, teachers and students with internet access were overwhelmed by bureaucratic chaos. Therefore, through this article we want to present what are the advantages of technology in children's cognitive development.

2. Literature review

According to the researcher Ștefan Bârsănescu, education represents "the fundamental and original social phenomenon, which appeared together with the human society, fulfilling the social function of informing and training man"[3].

Constantin Cucoș considers that "between current technologies and education there is a close relationship, of inter-determination and mutual empowerment: technological advancement is a consequence (and) of the strength and amplitude of education, but education also subsumes these benefits in a specific way"[4]. The new technological tools of information and communication thus help the teacher in carrying out the instructive-educational process, because a close connection has been created between the two, both having as main objective the communication.

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3. Research methodology

The accelerated development that our society has had in recent years, has led the technology to a very high level of development. That is why we are all obliged to keep up with all this. Information technology has developed rapidly in the last twenty-five years, which has led to the emergence of work equipment with very high working speeds and technical performance, as well as software packages that can meet the most demanding requirements, both on the part of parents and teachers, but also on the part of children, pupils, students.

As information can be obtained very easily during this period, either by typing a word on google or by various search engines, technology is part of our daily lives, with its advantages and disadvantages.

I will further present some of the advantages of using technology at the moment, in the cognitive development of the child.

The first advantage would be that it helps the child to develop his imagination. With unlimited access to information, we can help children learn how to "filter this information and how to choose the right part of it"[1]. Therefore, it is up to us adults to help, guide, and choose. filtering the correct information, thus helping them to develop their creativity, free expression. "Imagination is the one that takes shape the best when the technology is used correctly".[2].

Until a few years ago, children built their games on a sheet of paper, but now they can unleash their imagination, running games, robots, programs, "they can lay the foundations of their own virtual worlds and have access to any information in time. real"[3]. "Space visualization skills are used to their full potential when it comes to games"[4]. It has been shown that "those children who have controlled access to games focused on the process of construction or strategic thinking, develop their vision a lot. in space, the speed of reaction and are much more anchored in reality"[5].

Another advantage of using technology is that it helps the child solve problems. "Interactive games and educational sites help children learn how to solve problems on their own as they try to overcome the challenges they encounter along the way"[6]. Even when they encounter difficulties in running a program, children learn to they manage to solve problems on their own.

Moreover, the use of technology develops "young people's language skills, requiring them to learn the language in which the programs run, and often this is an incentive to understand what the application tells you"[7]. In addition, language skills develop as children search for information online.

We also talk about the advantages of using technology when we say that the introduction of new information technologies in education brings many benefits to the education system, thus taking education to another level. The use of multimedia tools leads to a much better understanding of concepts and ideas than the classic tools used so far. "The

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degree of interaction offered by new technologies is much higher. Educational software allows students to experiment with the taught ideas" [1].

Thus, the introduction of computer / laptop / tablet / phone in the instructional-educational process, "increases the quality of learning and allows the inclusion of notions in a coherent set of information" Educational software used by teachers helps the child to understand new information much easier , because the child not only listens to what the teacher tells him verbally, but also has the opportunity to discover for himself what happens if…. When it is desired to provide additional training to the child, or to practice what he has learned in school, he can be offered access to sites specially created for children. Because this increases the child's confidence in himself and thus decreases his anxiety. "Test-induced anxiety decreases substantially precisely because in the online environment, the child is the one who can set the level at which to work and solve the exercises"[2] This has been demonstrated because, when the child does not know something or does not know how in which the requirement must be solved, he can resume the sequence, as many times as he needs, in order to be able to complete the task, to understand what was asked of him and to solve it.

Unlike television and the diversity of channels it offers, information technologies allow the child to actively and selectively interact with the materials. "Choosing useful information, selecting sources you can trust are some of the lessons that children who use computers in learning" [3] . "Computer educational products can be the ideal meditator because they are enough, the child does not need of other materials, and in addition, it tests the child's initial level, teaches him - explains, fixes his new knowledge, then tests him"[4]. With the help of new information technologies the child does not "blunt", but is helped to understand the notions.

The use of information technologies in the teaching process "is an appropriate and natural form in which students are prepared to integrate into a computerized society, ensuring a major advantage for both teachers and students"[5].

Developing alongside new technologies, "young people from different cultures and countries, whose development revolves around technology, seem to be more similar than their predecessors and promise to be the ones to move markets and transform industry, education and global politics"[6]. When young people are involved in their activities, "they are motivated by instant gratification for any action taken and are dependent on feedback"[7].

In the context of a society in a continuous search for spiritual and moral models and in the conditions in which the individual has a space-temporal determination strongly influenced by the economic factor, its social isolation is an obvious reality. That is why it is necessary to "adopt strategies to counteract the effect of isolation, because these strategies are usually of a

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[6] Ibidem 15

[7] ibidem 15

communicative nature" [1]. The use of new technologies aims to break down space-temporal barriers because they represent a new degree of freedom of the individual in society.

In the current context of the pandemic, as the teaching-learning-assessment activity is carried out online, teachers must be trained and up to date with all the news in this field. Every teacher must know as much as possible about the educational platforms, about the way of teaching in the online system, about the way of writing the tests, using various websites. These must come as part of each lesson with news to keep students captivated in the activity.

Since March, when the online activity started, the courses have been suspended according to some legislation. The suspension of the educational process is approved in public school units in education preschool, primary, middle school, high school, and high school professionally, during 11-22.03.2020, with the possibility of extension, depending on the evolution situation at national level, according to Hot.CNSSU No.6 / 2020. The authorities in the field have also developed a framework methodology in this regard, so that the teaching activity can be carried out properly, according to OM no. 5545/2020 Methodology Framework.

According to some studies on how to carry out educational activities in the online system, the following were highlighted:

-valorization, with good results, of abilities and competencies that teachers and students had in the use of means electronic communication;

- discovering a variety of devices for learning in the virtual environment and a plurality of solutions in accessing them and in the production of learning;

- certain types of interactions, mediated by the virtual environment, can be permanent, in the context in which they proved their effects beneficial (eg a meeting, communication of announcements to parents, colleagues, some projects of children / students, some summer school program activities, summer school activities promotion of projects, dissemination of good practices, etc.) "[2]

According to the CEDP Step by Study Step and MEC, from June 2020 the following were found:

- the interaction of teachers with children was achieved especially through the use of mobile networks (WhatsApp or Messenger application), e-mail and / or social networks (Facebook) or platforms (Zoom);

- a significant percentage of preschool children, 75%, have continued learning at home (with different participation) requiring involvement and presence of an adult in the family;

- the greatest difficulties mentioned by teachers in the interaction with the parents were the ones that capture the lack time or lack of interest / patience / ability to understanding to support the child in the activities proposed by teacher.

Following studies on online learning, researchers propose the following recommendations:

- online small group discussion sessions on needles aspects of the curriculum that can be addressed in activities that requires the presence of the teacher and those aspects that may be left at the level of parent-child interactions, in contexts different from the institutional one (even recommended exploring / deepening in a team some concepts such as Flipped model classrooms or Dalton Plan);

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[1] Adăscăliței, A., (2007), *Computer aided training: computer science didactics* (*Instruire asistată de calculator: didactică informatică*), Polirom, Iași, p. 27

[19] Ionescu, M. (coord.), (2011), *Instruction and education. Modern educational paradigms* (*Instrucție și educație. Paradigme educaționale modern*), Editura Eikon, Cluj-Napoca, p. 31

[2] http://www.ise.ro/

- team design (by age groups) of the activities that are can run with children, using virtual means of communication (electronically, using the WhatsApp or Messenger application or through video meetings, etc.) with the involvement of parents;

- establishing the manner of transmission of activity suggestions to children, physically, in case they do not exist the possibility of interacting with children as illustrated above;

- planning and conducting weekly meetings of counseling with parents who support activities with
children at home;

- posting on the school's website or on websites proposals for activities and experiences, from different fields of knowledge, specific to education preschool, as well as the organization of exchanges of experience, with the presentation of good practices between colleagues from the same unit education or from different educational units;

- involvement of teachers of music, modern languages, education physics or the arts in the design of supporting materials for parents or for teachers, for the development of some musical activities, physical education, artistic-plastic, etc. with preschool children, at home;

-discussing and selecting the most appropriate means of communication, tasks / activities dedicated to parents and children, materials posted by educators, resources used in the curriculum committee;

- the appointment of a person to select and compose a base with adequate digital resources for preschoolers, and parents teachers;

- identification, analysis and adoption of other resources learning other than traditional (examples: site https://www.educred.ro/, sites with scientific experiments, with documentary or educational films, with virtual tours of some exhibitions / museums / parks etc.);

- designing tools for evaluating practices online teaching.

The integration of digital tools in education must take into account:

- the particularities of the instructive-educational process in the online environment;

- structure and organization of online activities. Here we must take into account the way in which the teacher formulates messages for children and parents, learning tasks, adapting activities to the learning structures of students;

- recommended time for children to use the digital device;

- digital tools must be adapted to the age level of the students.

In order to support teachers, several institutions, NGOs, specialized teachers, come to support teachers in support of Webinars, for a fee or free, to help teachers in making tutorials, creating stories, tests , concept maps, graphic design. They help teachers to master new digital technologies and tools more easily.

"Globally, in order to help parents and teachers facilitate the process distance learning of students during the suspension of courses, applications have been created, educational platforms and resources."[1] In this material, the School Inspectorate from Vrancea County presents a material offered by UNESCO some solutions regarding the use of educational platforms.

All the necessary tools in carrying out the instructive educational activities have been centralized and we find them on several web sites, among which:

- https://sites.google.com/upg-ploiesti.ro/edu/tehnologie/resurse
- https://sites.google.com/site/tudoricabogdan/-publicatii-si-resurse/-lista-de-resurse-pentru-educatie
- http://www.inovarepublica.ro/red-isj-5000-resurse/

[1] https://isjvrancea.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Ghid-orientativ-resurse-educationale.pdf

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, in this article I aimed to present the advantages of the correct use of new technologies in education, their transformation into learning tools. The use of new technologies in education is a bridge to change, “while promoting the quality and interactivity of the instructional-educational act, but not without a permanent and sustained concern for teacher training and to provide the necessary services to support and maintain technology”. The use of personal resources or made available in schools allows the formation of skills and work habits that facilitate the development and further integration of the adult in society. Modern technology has become ubiquitous in the lives of young people, influencing their development, social and academic life, and it is clear that the increasing use of modern technology and access to the Internet will have another weight in the years to come. The development of technology has helped us achieve our goals in an efficient way, and access to information is a click away for all the inhabitants of the planet.

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STUDY ON THE FEATURES OF THE MANAGER (FROM THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS) RELATED TO THE CURRENT PANDEMIC TIMES

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Abstract:

People differ from each other in their possibilities of action, depending on how they approach the problem and what solutions they find to solve it. The success of an activity is conditioned by the way in which the activities are solved, as easily, well and efficiently as possible, this is given through skills. In this article we started from the following questions: To what extent do the dominant features of the manager in the units subordinated to the Ministry of Internal Affairs contribute to the achievement of the organization's objectives? Are the identified features appropriate in crisis situations, such as the current pandemic? In order to find out the answers, we carried out a qualitative empirical research, the result of which supports the ability of these traits to face the challenges and responsibilities imposed by the pandemic crisis.

Key words: *aptitudes, manager, leadership style, pandemic*

Clasificarea JEL: *M12*

1. Introduction

Modern management gives a particularly important role to communication, which it considers a vital component of the management system of any organization, either belonging to private management or belonging to public management. The communication process in the organizations of The Ministry of Administration and Interior has the same components as the communication process in any other organization. However, for each type of communication there are specific characteristics of the led field (police, gendarmes, administration, etc.).

Vertical communication takes place between different levels of leadership and between commanders (bosses) and their subordinates. This type of communication is particularly intense. It must focus on the motivation of the recipient of the message (of the subordinate), taking into account from the beginning his values, beliefs and aspirations. In this case, the subordinate has access to experience, which gives him the opportunity to understand what he has to do about priorities, options, the selection between what he wants to do and the requirements of the situation. It is possible that he has a different vision than his boss, but he will gain the understanding that this situation is not the creation of his superior, but of the reality of the business environment.

Horizontal communication takes place between commanders (bosses) and subordinates at the same hierarchical level (services, offices). It ensures the interdependence of action of the members of the institution, as well as the establishment of good collaboration relations and a pleasant climate.

Oblique communication takes place between staff who are on different levels and operate with different activities (the office of preparation for the fight with the logistics office, etc.).

The essence of communication is important but in the same percentage are the manager's features important too. For this reason we have highlighted a set of seven skills which we highlighted in figure no.1. Now we will allocate a few paragraphs to detail these skills, necessary for the manager of M.A.I:

- Predictability - is based on the prospective thinking of the manager, his ability to predict the future. It is based on the collaboration of probabilistic thinking with the

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imagination of the leader. In order to be effective, it is recommended to offer an absolute freedom to the imagination in exploring the distant future and in building approximate models, which subsequently require their passage through the filters of thought.

- Decision-making ability implies discernment and objectivity in the choice, the possibility to deliberate thoughtfully and based on the optimal alternative. The manager will select and prioritize the strategies and methods he deems appropriate to complete the optimal alternative. The application of the decision admits the commitment in terms of affectivity and will, the ability to assess the difficulties and to mobilize to overcome them. The manager will face a reasonable risk in the decision (decisions in conditions of relative uncertainty).

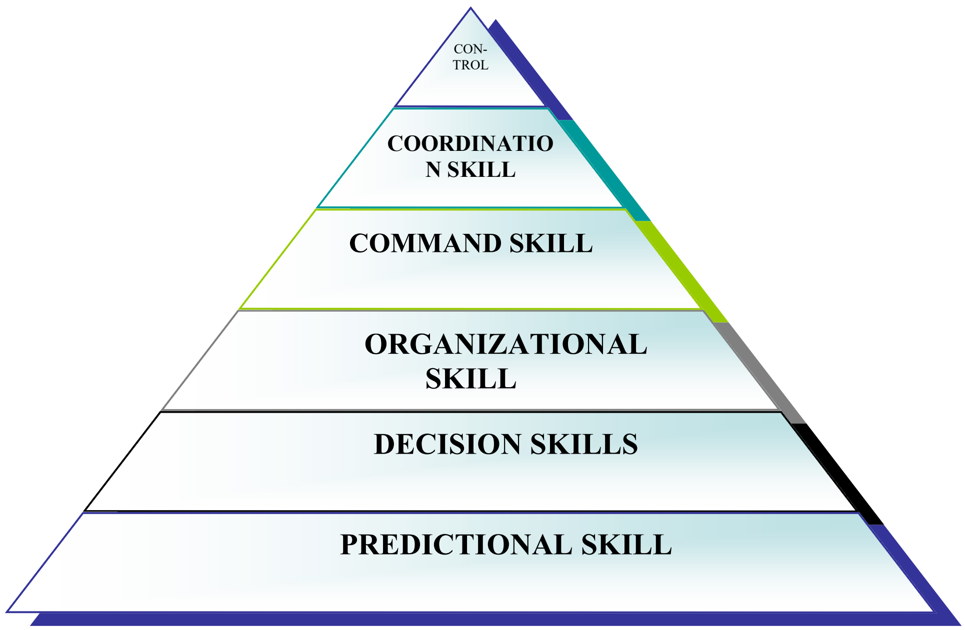

Figure no. 1. The skills of the M.A.I. , Source: Own vision

- The organizational ability consists in putting into functional conditions the logistical components and the human factors. It involves analytical thinking complemented by synthetic, supple and dynamic thinking. It presupposes a memory of detail and ensemble, a perception of the parts and the whole. At the same time, it implies availability in the temperamental energetic area, optimism, spirit of initiative, a good knowledge of people.
- The command ability involves a special clarity in thinking and expression, adapting the language to the level and requirements of the audience. The leader must have the will to democratically impose goals, to trigger emotionally motivational availability and at the same time the flexibility and the smoothness to accept opinions and even a correction from the group. He must be a fine and subtle observer of the group's reaction to the decision.
- Coordination skills consist of the ability to be a good conductor. Coordination implies a sense of balance and harmonization of the parties as a whole. This ability requires a special tact and sense of human relationships, a good knowledge of people, the ability to communicate with them rationally and emotionally. It involves the ability to harmonize the team, to gently remove obstacles and differences, to alleviate tensions and to know how to make concessions within the limits of fairness, when and with whom.
- The ability to control involves a spirit of fairness, severity and firmness, discipline, order, emotional balance, patience and tact, trust in people. The control requires that the

activity be carried out correctly, in the spirit of legal norms. It is very important to shift the focus from corrective to preventive control. These six skills, in managerial activity, can be classified as special skills, each corresponding to a number of basic skills.

After analyzing these skills we can outline the portrait of the efficient manager. Without claiming that we have absolutely selected certain traits, we further reproduce our vision, the peculiarities of the effective manager are: meticulous, optimistic, innovative, responsible, objective, critical, future-oriented, fine knowledge of human behavior, disciplined, patient, confident in people and in their own strengths, with clarity in thinking and expression, has an adaptable language, good observer, is in emotional balance.

To create the robotic portrait of the successful manager, in our vision we must use six skills: the ability to predict; decision aptitude; organizational skills; command ability; coordination skills, control skills.

A robot portrait of the manager from the MAI organizations, in our vision would include: firmness, tolerance, pleasure to have power (translated by respect, aplomb - communicate clear messages firm and easy to understand, appreciation, high IQ, vision, high EQ- Emotional capacity), decision, perseverance, empathy, resistance to stress.

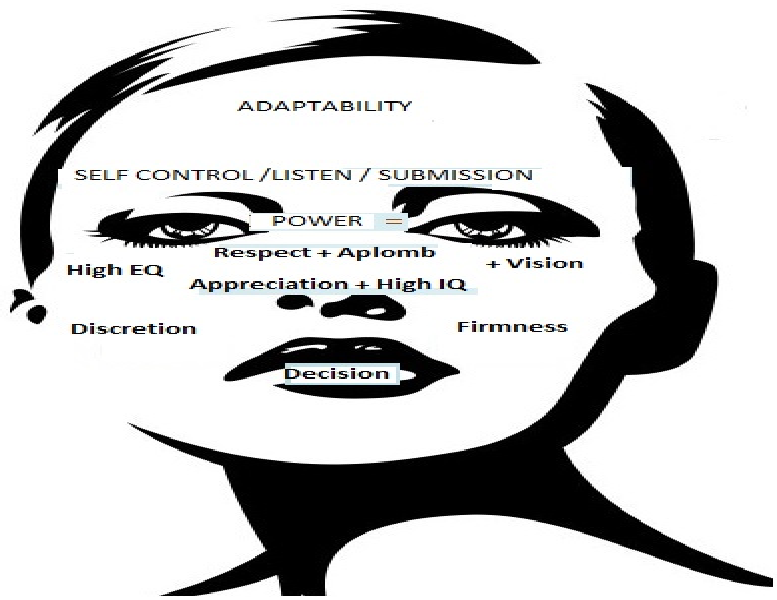

Figure no. 2. Robot portrait of the manager from M.A.I., Source: Own vision

Without claiming that we have absolutely selected these traits, we further reproduce 12 character traits considered important in this activity: justice, loyalty, initiative, self-control, determination, integrity, discretion, obedience or allegiance, forgiveness, compassion, patience, adaptability. It is ideal for all of these traits to exist within a manager, whether he or she is active in the public or private sector. For clarity on this portrait we created the following scheme (figure no.2.).

Chester Barnard believes that the manager's responsibility to influence the moral behavior of subordinates is a hallmark of leadership and executive responsibility.

In order to be successful, it is important for the manager to like what he does and to dedicate himself entirely to this profession.

Each type of manager, including those in M.A.I. organizations, corresponds to a certain managerial style, which transposes the manifestation of the qualities, skills and knowledge of the manager in relation to subordinates and hierarchical bosses.

2. Research questions

In the context presented above, we asked ourselves the following questions:

- To what extent do the dominant features of the manager from the units subordinated to the Ministry of Internal Affairs contribute to the achievement of the organization's objectives?
- Are the identified features opportune in crisis situations, such as the current pandemic?

We start from the premise that the dominant features of the manager (from the organizations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs) favour the achievement of objectives. At the same time, we believe that certain dominant traits are appropriate in crisis situations.

In order to find out the answers, we carried out a qualitative empirical research, the result of which supports the ability of these traits to face the challenges and responsibilities imposed by the pandemic crisis. Thus, the qualitative empirical research was carried out on a sample of 10 respondents from the structures of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, namely 2 from the staff employed at the inspectorate, 1 chief from the municipal police, 4 bosses and deputies from the city police, and 3 from the formations of rural police.

To the question: What is the degree to which the dominant features of the manager (from the organizations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs) favour the achievement of objectives ?, 90% of respondents chose firmness and decision, 80% chose emotional capacity (empathy) and high IQ, 70% chose appreciation and resistance to stress, 60% chose perseverance and 50% chose tolerance. We graphically represented these choices in figure no.3.

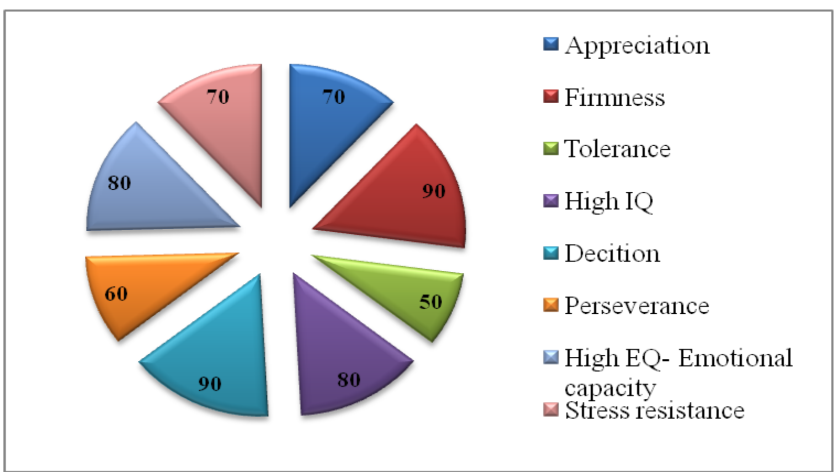

Figure no.3. The degree to which the dominant traits of the manager achieve the objectives

To the question: To what extent are the identified features appropriate in crisis situations (such as that of the current pandemic)?, the interviewees answered variously. Thus a percentage of 100% chose the resistance to stress and decision as being traits that help in this pandemic period. At the same time, appreciation and perseverance are chosen by 90% of the interviewees, and high IQ is another dominant feature considered opportune in the current period. Firmness and high EQ, followed in the end by tolerance are the least appropriate traits of the manager in the current pandemic context. We graphically represented these choices in figure no.4.

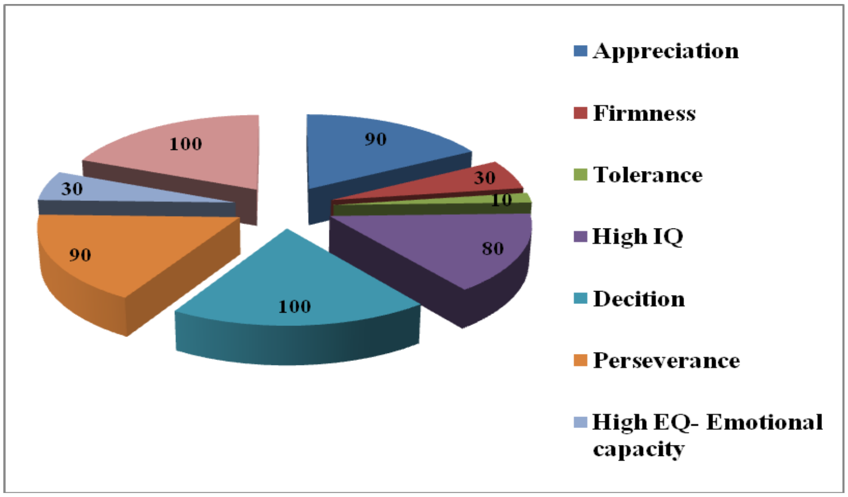

Figure no.4. Traits considered appropriate in the current pandemic context

Beyond that schematic portrait, proposed by us, it is good for the manager to have

✓ above average intelligence, but not at a brilliant level. A leader should be a little smarter than his subordinates. A high or too low IQ can have negative effects. Intelligence is defined as the ability to understand the relationships that exist between the elements of a situation and to adapt in such a way as to achieve your own goals;

✓ initiative, ie the ability to perceive the need for action and to do something about it, it designates the triggering of new actions, the detection and practical solution of a problem situation. The initiative seems to be closely related to energy and endurance and decreases, in many cases, with the age. The initiative is related to the strength of the individual, to the imposition of the new, to the capacity of the police unit to accept this new. The initiative involves at least three stages:

a) awareness of the problem (getting acquainted);

b) mental solving;

c) practical solving (transposition into practice);

✓ self-confidence, that is, believing in what you do. This quality is correlated with the way people perceive their place in society with the level of their own aspirations. Self-confidence should not be translated into aggression and careerism, but it can be expressed in a discreet manner;

✓ "helicopter sight" - the ability of a manager to rise above a certain situation and to see it in the context in which it manifests itself and then to descend to deal with details. All these characteristics are influenced by certain factors that act both at the level of the unit commander and at the level of the micro groups that make up the unit. The most important factors are: experience and value system. In the experience we include the following components: education, training, occupation, family life, position, role played in the community. The value system is important in that it individualizes, it gives personality unicity;

✓ trust in subordinates or colleagues - a participatory managerial style requires that there be people able to fulfil their responsibilities. Trust in others is likely to increase cohesion at the unit level and increase responsibility through involvement;

✓ the need for certainty - individuals feel the need for stable "points", clear benchmarks to guide their actions. A commander must ensure this certainty at work. Many qualities that are required of the subordinate: loyalty, fairness, discipline, etc., start from these certainties;

✓ personal contribution is very important. To the extent that you know what to do, you know what to ask of collaborators or subordinates. On the other hand, subordinates want their boss to be an example, to know their job (technical skills), to know how to get out of difficult problems and to talk on their meaning. There are no good or bad commanders - there are efficient and inefficient commanders. Efficiency or inefficiency proves in a certain conjuncture, depending on the subordinates you have at your disposal and the nature of the activity. One thing is certain. The manager is the main pawn in an organization. The smooth running of the organization depends on his professional and managerial training. Charismatic managers are few. Most of them are the product of the effort made in training, in the development of abilities, skills and habits that make them respected by the people they lead.

As in any organization, in the structures of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the leadership style needs to be adapted to the "age" and characteristics of the working group too. Thus, we can consider two styles, namely: a task-oriented one (the manager has the ability to cognitively define the situation, to establish and formulate credible objectives, to synthesize the problems that arise during the work process); and the other one, relationship-oriented (the manager is a key factor in preventing possible conflicts). An important emphasis is determined by the degree of maturity of the respective group, created following the correlation of the leadership style with the needs of the group. In this sense, members of an immature group will have better results with a task-oriented leader. As the group grows up, the leader can adopt a style characterized by both orientations simultaneously. In groups with a medium maturity, the relationship-oriented style is more effective, while for "aged" groups the most suitable is the laissez-faire style (or the low-scoring style in both orientations.) So, throughout the life of a group, it is advisable for the leader to adopt four successive leadership styles, characterized by the terms communication, persuasion, participation and delegation.

An employed manager stands out by the fact that he prefers to do what he has to do, to find suitable solutions and to optimize the use of resources. His style is distinguished by dynamism and increased flexibility, based on consciousness. Some authors point out that, although style depends to a large extent on how the manager perceives the requirements of a concrete activity, the influence of consciousness on style should not be overestimated. They also drew attention to the fact that not every mental trait is included in the composition of the style, but only to the extent and under the form necessary to perform an activity. The form and the degree of manifestation of the psychic qualities in the managerial style are very strictly regulated, the role of the manager having a special social significance.

Efficiency or inefficiency is proven in a certain conjuncture / context, depending on the subordinates you have at your disposal and the nature of the activity. One thing is for sure, the manager is the main pawn in an organization. The smooth running of the organization depends on his professional and managerial training. Charismatic managers are few. Most of them are the product of the effort made in training, in the formation of abilities, skills and habits that make them respected by the people they lead.

3. Conclusions

Managerial personality and leadership style and are two characteristics that must be met by the specific requirements of each sector of activity. The manager must make others do it. The main function of the manager is to coordinate the efforts of a group, so as to ensure the optimal accomplishment of the task to be performed, and the achievement of the goal.

We believe that being an effective manager, ie proving a good managerial ability does not mean actually fulfilling the tasks or objectives that are subsumed to a certain activity, but on the contrary, it means the ability of that person to coordinate and lead a group of people whom to mobilize in order to obtain the expected results. This combines commitment and efficiency to achieve the goals of the organization in M.A.I.

From the category of dominant traits we tested through qualitative research shows that firmness, decision are the first selected in achieving the objectives. They are followed by emotional capacity, appreciation and resistance to stress. And in the end perseverance and tolerance are the last selected. What we notice is the recognition of the features proposed by us (according to the already existing classifications) as appropriate in achieving the objectives of the M.A.I organization.

In the case of the crisis situation (implicitly the current pandemic), stress resistance, the ability to make decisions, appreciation, perseverance, high IQ are the first five features considered appropriate by the interviewees of our study, and implicitly by us. Firmness and high EQ, followed in the end by tolerance are the least appropriate traits of the manager in the current pandemic context.

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MODERNIZATION OF UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND ALIGNMENT OF THE ROMANIAN UNIVERSITY WITH EUROPEAN STANDARDS

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Monica-Ioana Toader[2]

Abstract

Due to the fact that we live in a world that is constantly changing, where technology redefines our lives, and at present the working environment is characterized by an increasingly alert rhythm, being crowded, subject to pressures, the mission of higher education. is to create leadership skills for future sustainable leaders. The educational standards of a society will dictate its degree of success in addressing the complex problems for promoting sustainable development; the educational level of its leaders directly influences the achievement of sustainable development goals. A lasting and significant change in the behavior of organizations that tend towards sustainability must involve the institutions in the education system, especially the academic environment. Higher education institutions have the role of modeling the attitudes and behaviors of leaders through entrepreneurial education, through management development programs, training and other ubiquitous aspects, but less tangible activities, such as spreading and promoting new values and ideas. By these means, academic institutions have the potential to generate a wave of positive changes, thus contributing to ensuring a world in which both businesses and societies can flourish. The purpose of this paper is to identify the role of higher education in creating sustainable leaders in order to benefit from a sustainable society. Thus, using methods such as literature review and documentation, in this article we have highlighted the relationship between leadership and sustainability for creating sustainable leadership.

Keywords: *Leadership, sustainable leader, sustainability, education, competencies*

JEL Codes: A20, I20, M12

1. Introduction

The 21st century comes with a series of challenges and new demands from the new generations and from the education systems as well (Calder, W., Clugston, R.M., 2003) . The mission of higher education is to prepare the first generation that is facing an unprecedented speed of social, economic and technological change. In this sense (Friedman M. 1995), the formation of socially active persons, of leaders of a sustainable society, who are able to adapt quickly to changes becomes the main mission of any education system. In the education process, the focus is shifting from the strictly learning and assimilating area of rapidly perishable information, to the development of social skills.

2. Literature review

Classic education systems have, over time, focused only on memorizing facts by applying certain working methods. This model based on the delivery of information has changed radically as a result of the emergence of new technologies that allow the access of knowledge and information to a level impossible to imagine in the past. In this context, the role of education is no longer to provide information, but to facilitate learning.

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Table 1. History of initiatives taken in society and education to maintain sustainable development.

Year	The event/the statement	Level of reporting/adress
1972	Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment, United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Sweden	Society
1975	The Belgrade Charter, Belgrade Conference on Environmental Education, Yugoslavia	Education
1987	Tbilisi Declaration, Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education, Georgia	Education
1987	"Our Common Future", The Brundtland Report	Society
1990	Talloires Declaration, Presidents Conference, France	Higher Education
1991	Halifax Declaration, Conference on University Action for Sustainable Development, Canada	Higher Education
1992	Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio Conference);Agenda 21, Chapter 36: Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training and Chapter 35: Science for Sustainable Development	Society
1992	Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future founded, USA	Higher Education
1993	Kyoto Declaration, International Association of Universities Ninth Round Table, Japan	Higher Education
1993	Swansea Declaration, Association of Commonwealth Universities' Fifteenth Quinquennial Conference, Wales	Higher Education
1993	COPERNICUS University Charter, Conference of European Rectors (CRE)	Higher Education
1996	Ball State University Greening of the Campus conferences were in 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2009	Higher Education
1997	Thessaloniki Declaration, International Conference on Environment and Society: Education and Public Awareness for Sustainability, Greece	Education
1999	Environmental Management for Sustainable Universities (EMSU) conference first held in Sweden. Following conferences in 2002 (South Africa), 2004 (Mexico), 2006 (U.S.A.), 2008 (Spain), and in 2010 in The Netherlands.	Higher Education
2000	Millennium Development Goals	Society
2000	The Earth Charter	Society
2000	Global Higher Education for Sustainability Partnership (GHESP)	Higher Education
2001	Lüneburg Declaration on Higher Education for Sustainable Development, Germany	Higher Education
2002	World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa (Type 1 outcome:Decade of Education for Sustainable Development; Civil Society outcome: the Ubuntu Declaration)	Society
2004	Declaration of Barcelona	Higher Education
2005	Start of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD)	Education
2005	Graz Declaration on Committing Universities to Sustainable	Higher

Year	The event/the statement	Level of reporting/adress
	Development, Austria	Education
2009	Abuja Declaration on Sustainable Development in Africa: The role of higher education in SD, Nigeria	Higher Education
2009	Torino (Turin) Declaration on Education and Research for Sustainable and Responsible Development, Italy	Higher Education

Source: Adapted and updated after Calder and Clugston (2003) and Wright (2004).

3. Methodology of research

In economic science, research on education aims to identify the modalities of participation of education in training and the use of the economic resources of an individual or of the whole community, respectively of highlighting the contribution made by education to the enhancement of the economic potential of an individual or of the national economy as a complex system. In the microeconomic approach, education is considered one of the determinants of human potential, it contributing to the formation of professional competences, respectively stimulating the efficiency of the human factor. In the acroeconomic approach, the economic role of education is analyzed through the contribution made to the evolution of macroeconomic indicators (Zaccaro *et al.,* 2004). The synthesis of the macroeconomic approaches of education allowed us to present the macroeconomic impact of education through the contributions made to the formation of human capital, social capital as well as the externalities that are characteristic to it (Figure 1).

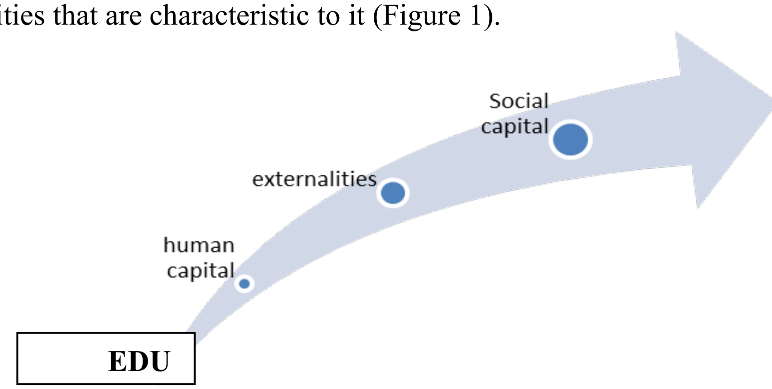

Figure 1. Contributing elements of education on economic growth

Source: Ozturk, I, 2001, *The role of education in economic development: a theoretical perspective*, Journal of Rural Development and Administration, Volume XXXIII, No. 1.

According to the figure above, the quantification of the contribution made by education to economic growth can be achieved through human, social or external capital, each element representing an aggregation of the values, skills, knowledge, competences formed in the educational process. In the last decade, leadership has emerged as a component of management efficiency, presenting a particular specificity and showing a major, often decisive, influence on the performances of organizations.

"Most specialists define leadership as a process of social influence in which the leader willingly requests the subordinates to participate in an effort to achieve organizational goals" (Tamkin and Hirsh, 2003). The leadership is presented by management specialists, such as Nicolescu O. and Verboncu I., as "the ability of a manager to obtain the effective involvement of some people in the implementation of a certain course of action" (Nicolescu and Verboncu, 2000). Another specialist, Kotter J. appreciated the leadership as "a process of orienting a group or groups of people by mainly non-coercive means" (Constantinescu *et al.*, 2000).

Of course, in the literature we meet other points of view. For example, Clement J. considers leadership the process by which a person sets a goal or direction for one or more persons and determines them to act together with competence and discipline in order to achieve them. From here comes an interesting idea, namely that the team spirit lies at the base of leadership, which is the result of the integration of four processes: building trust between the people involved; establishing a clear mission and goals for people to adhere to; the development of participatory decision-making processes; strong individual and group motivation to help achieve common goals (Cornescu *et al*., 2003). Thus, leadership can be defined by using multiple facets, Figure 2.

Figure 2. The semantic facets of leadership
Source: Making by autors

Leadership is tied in with vision and forming, shaping what's to come in the future. (Hargreaves A., 2003). There is an earnest need in today's businesses for another kind of initiative - one that makes the long haul sustainability of our reality a top need. Business leaders have a significant part to play in settling on the privilege key decisions so as to make this economical sustainable future. Wayne Visser presents the traits of sustainable leaders as follows (Visser, 2013):

- *Systemic, interdisciplinary understanding:* meaning that they would have to understand the root cause of the problem and gear up their efforts towards creating systemic change.
- *Emotional intelligence and a caring attitude:* the ability to not only motivate but inspire people with their personal passion and care.
- *Values orientation that shapes culture*: A value-based approach is critical, coupled with the long-term vision.
- *A strong vision for making a difference:* Sustainability leaders are able to effectively communicate a compelling narrative on how their organisations can contribute to creating a better world.
- *An inclusive style that engenders trust:* A great definition of leadership is when the leader and followers work together towards their goals.
- *A willingness to innovate and be radical*: sustainability leaders recognise the complex problems which require creative solutions.
- *A long-term perspective on impacts:* the ability to plan for long-term impacts and to give directions towards this.

Sustainable leadership is based on a belief that everyone in the organization will be successful. Sustainability sees success as both sustainable and accessible to everyone.

Sustainable Leadership is made up of the key factors underlying organization, namely, long-term success and development. Developing sustainable leadership remains a key economic challenge. Leadership is the most important resource in a process of organization improvement (Judge, T.A.,2009).There are also certain models of sustainable leadership (Figure 3).

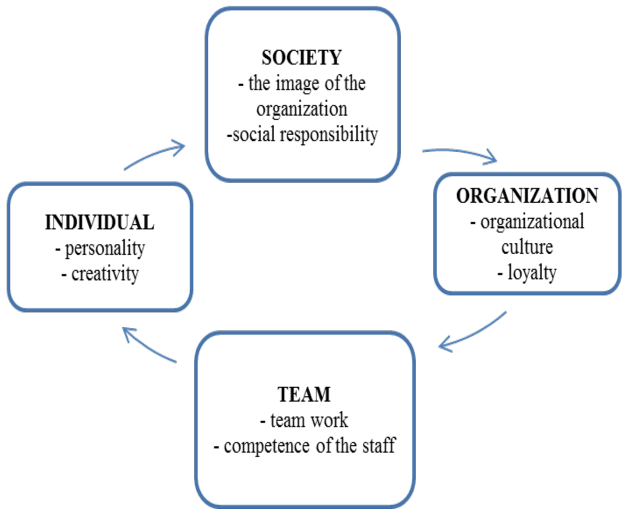

Figure 3. Model of sustainable or sustainable leadership factors

Source: Processed by: *Ellen Daniëls, A. H. (2018). A review on leadership and leadership development in educational settings. Educational Research Review.*

The beginning of psychological research on organizational leadership has been rooted in trait orientation and what is often referred to as the "great man" as a leadership approach (Poling, 2009). The idea that great leaders are "born and cannot be done" was influenced by the early writings of historian Thomas Carlyle, who wrote that the history of the world was recorded in the biographies of great people (Zaccaro and Day, 2007). And according to these character traits of leaders, there are a number of characteristics of leaders who are said to have been born with them. (Vagu, P., 2006). But there are also authors who contradict this and I believe that the concept of leadership is not something we are born with, but it is a human capacity that can be developed and learned. In order to support this we can say that there are people who are not born with a certain talent but because they practice, learn and become more informed they become better and better. For example, as Michael Owen said, "I don't know if footballers are born or created, but the more they practice, the better they become." (Owen, 2005).

This approach builds on the same research objectives set out in the Strategic Framework - Education and Training 2020 through Education and Investment Plan, Education and Training for Growth and Jobs, Skills Development, Recognition of Skills and Qualifications, Social Inclusion and Citizenship , through formal and non-formal learning, Digital competences and technologies in education, Education and training: policies based on concrete data, Entrepreneurship in education, ET 2020 Working Groups, Monitor of education and training.

Between March and November 2016, eight regional consultations were organized under the auspices of the "Educated Romania" project. These regional debates were organized with the support of the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research and its subordinate or coordinated institutions, as well as in partnership with the host institutions..[1]

[1] http://www.presidency.ro/files/userfiles/Dezbateri_regionale_site.pdf

Each debate aimed at obtaining contributions on the vision and country objectives of Romania for education and research, for the period 2018-2030.

The report of each regional debate is available on the website of the Presidential Administration, accessing the date of each event in the Calendar of activities organized under the auspices of the National Debate for Education and Research.

The theme of the project is "Sustainability of management in state higher education institutions", the research will be directed to the sustainability measures discussed, researched, existing and future, for higher education institutions to become sustainable both nationally and internationally.

The research gradually follows aspects related to university management, analysis and diversification of sustainability measures of state universities through activities that ensure a good implementation of the strategic framework for education and training.

3.1. Graduate profile at the transition to higher education

The main theme was the need to ensure a balance between transversal and process skills that allow the graduate to be autonomous, able to make decisions related to participation in university education and to integrate the skills acquired in the construction of personal goals. They also mentioned the important role still played by the concrete knowledge acquired in school, provided that their integration with practice and the needs of the real economy.

3.2. Graduate profile at the transition to the labor market

The profile of the graduate at the transition to the labor market was outlined as that of a responsible young person, who has social skills such as teamwork and benefits from specialized technological, digital and linguistic skills.

3.3. The profile of the university tertiary education graduate

Innovative ability was considered a key skill of the higher education graduate by 2030. This ability was understood in a broad sense, from creativity in tackling professional problems, to the ability to produce new knowledge by combining existing knowledge and / or training in collaboration with experts in other fields, up to knowledge-based entrepreneurship and even approaching individualized personal training as an act of innovation.

The Regional Debate on “Scientific Research” was the second of the eight debates announced within the **Educated Romania project.**

During the sessions, the following priorities were identified:

1) Predictability, stability and professional prestige in the development of teaching and research career;

2) The mission and functions of higher education institutions;

3) Collaboration between academia and research and the private sector;

4) Ethics, impartiality and scientific rigor in research;

5) Transfer of research results at the level of public policies and practice in the field.

The Regional Debate on “Internationalization of Romanian Higher Education” took place on October 25, 2017 and proposed discussing the challenges faced by higher education institutions in their internationalization, as well as agreeing on development prospects by 2030.

In the context of political, social and economic globalization, the internationalization of universities is an essential condition for the development of research, increasing the quality of education, attracting talent and creating new opportunities for Romanian higher education.

Internationalization, in itself, is a process by which national higher education systems intertwine on a global scale to facilitate the understanding, innovation and dissemination of new scientific discoveries. Among the main reasons for internationalization are: economic competitiveness, promoting a better understanding between nations, increasing the quality of education, but also national security.

The development of a national strategy in the field of internationalization of higher education was discussed, how student services can be adapted to have universities open to globalization, the role of European mobility programs and, of course, the promotion of higher education abroad, while streamlining the process of admitting and recognizing studies for candidates from abroad. In a first step, three major country objectives were identified:

- Mobility
- Internationalization at home
- Educational Marketing / Promotion

3.4. Internationalization at home: adapting the administration and the academic and administrative / non-academic staff for an institution open to globalization

The following country objectives have been identified that reflect to some extent different layers of manifestation of internationalization at home:

- Flexibility of structures and adaptation of programs to increase the access of international students;
- Improving language skills to remove any barriers to multicultural experiences;
- Quality experiences of international and national students by changing the attitude of members of the academic community towards internationalization.

To achieve the objectives, a series of solutions have been identified as follows:

- Additional funding for international students (eg subsidized places) and increasing autonomy in the use of resources;
- Training opportunities (eg free language courses), development of several bilingual programs and promotion of administrative services in foreign languages;
- Awareness of the importance of internationalization at home;
- Adapting quality standards to the specific needs of internationalization;
- Facilitating multicultural experiences (multicultural evenings, activities, festivities, etc.).

European mobility programs have an important role to play in the internationalization of education, mentioning two more important ones:

- In each faculty of Romanian universities, at least one Joint Master Degree (JMD) program should be operational, and the diversification of existing educational programs contributes to the creation of partnerships between faculties in Romania and in other countries.
- Romania to be an attractive destination for the mobility of students and staff from universities in all countries (Romania to enter at least in the Top 10 at European level).

Promoting the Romanian higher education system abroad - continuation and development of the concept - **"Study in Romania".**

“Study in Romania” aims to promote Romanian higher education internationally, to attract both Romanian and international students in the study programs offered by Romanian universities.

Currently the platform includes 2990 study programs in 14 languages, completed by 31 universities.

In addition, the platform provides information about the Romanian higher education system, the advantages of foreign students wishing to study in Romania, study programs taught in foreign languages, but also certain technicalities in terms of enrollment, or other procedures such as obtaining study visa and / or residence permit.

In addition, the platform provides information on facilities and living conditions for international students in Romania.

3.5. Streamlining the process of admitting candidates from abroad and recognizing studies

It can be seen that between Romania and the other member countries of the Bologna Process there is a greater collaboration and thus a higher number of educational exchanges. This phenomenon can be explained by the mechanisms and tools provided by the key factors in this process.

Adoption of a three-cycle system (bachelor's, master's and doctorate), a European credit system (ECTS - European Credit Transfer System), and the Diploma Supplement (which provides a standardized description of the nature, level, context, content and stage of studies completed by the holder) are just some of the tools that facilitate the recognition of studies and then the admission of candidates to another level of study.

Although the current situation in the European space is favorable for Romania, the current data show that we are below the European average in terms of attracting foreign students, but we are in a continuous increase in terms of their accommodation.

In order to increase the number of foreign students of any kind, an efficient process of recognition of studies is needed, but also a more flexible process in terms of the process of admitting candidates from abroad.

Five major country targets have been identified:

- Authorization of programs in foreign languages - Authorization of foreign programs in a facilitated manner, even if there is not already a corresponding program in Romanian.
- Electronic admission platform - An electronic admission platform facilitates the admission process without the need to submit physical documents prior to receiving the decision to accept at the university and starting courses.
- Coherent / incremental evolution of the admission regulations - Currently the Romanian state does not offer scholarships or budgeted places for foreign students (non-EU, non-EEA).
- Correlation of procedures for admission and granting of study visas between state authorities - At European level there are regulations in force aimed at facilitating the process of admission and granting of study visas (eg Directive No. 114/2004 on the conditions admission of third-country nationals for studies, student exchange, unpaid training or voluntary services).

Inclusion of recognition specialists in the International Relations Departments - In order to facilitate the recognition of studies, it is necessary either that the staff of these departments be trained on recognition issues.

4. Conclusions

Education is sustainable when it is viable after some time, when coordinated well with social, monetary, political, innovative changes, and can adjust to these changes. The mission of the educational organization is of vital importance, to be responsible in terms of personal and social development. Sustainability considers accomplishment to be both supportable and available to everybody. Sustainable Leadership is comprised of the key factors basic of higher education, to be specific, long haul achievement and improvement. Likewise, higher education is the most significant component of society, in light of the fact that, with its help, the future of mankind develops, so a sustainable educational system must be created.

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THE DIGITALIZATION OF SOCIETY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SARS-COV2 PANDEMIC

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Miruna Angela Mutu[2]

Abstract:

The current pandemic generated by the SARS-COV2 virus demonstrates the importance of society digitalization. Nowadays, the area of digitalization is an essential pillar in the structure of society. If before the introduction of the restrictive measures the governments were considering the transition to electronic communication and had taken some steps towards it, at the current moment the transformation has been accelerated. The members of the European Union have taken measures on digital infrastructure and services in order to deal with the pandemic crisis, Romania included. The significant measures taken in our country were establishing a new institution, called the Authority for the Digitalization of Romania, creating online platforms through which taxpayers have the opportunity to submit documents to public institutions and updating websites in order to provide clear and transparent information. Paradoxically, the pandemic seems a moment of reset that forces the whole society to get out of the comfort zone, to find solutions and to adapt to the digital transformation of almost every aspect of life. This article highlights the place of our country in the "digital age" within the European Union, the measures taken in order to deal with the crisis, as well as future digital field prospects..

Keywords: *pandemic, digitalization, electronic communication, society, digital transformation*

JEL classification: *D73, H12, G38*

1. Introduction

Digitization is the process of converting analog information into a digital format. It is the social and economic transformation, promoted by the massive adoption of digital technologies to generate and process information. In the recent years, technological gains have been the basis for proportional achievements in health and daily life.

The digital society and the digital economy are now a new reality with the accelerated development of technology, which has forced citizens, institutions and companies to adapt to this phenomenon by acquiring the digital skills essential for professional success. Digital technology is a huge potential, still untapped to the maximum, to improve the development of the public and entrepreneurial system.

Digitization has a profound impact on the labor market and the business environment, a phenomenon that produces positive effects for competitiveness, by increasing productivity and reducing costs, but also has a remarkable impact on the creation and disappearance of certain jobs.

In this article, aspects related to the place of digital services in our country at the level of the European Union and future perspectives in this field were observed and analyzed, using information and data provided by both European and national institutions. It was highlighted that our country has a bad ranking regarding the level of digital skills owned by the population, which will make it difficult to switch to digitalization, which will not be 100% accessible to us in the near future.

At the same time, specific measures are taken by each sector of society, such as the public sector or the banking sector, sectors that planned to switch to digital correspondence

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for efficiency and cost reduction, and which the restrictions imposed by the authorities have forced to adopt an accelerated and unexpected pace of transition.

2. Literature review

Anghel Monica and Neagoe Andrei (2015) through the article "The level of digitalization of e-government in Romania" conducted a research on the issue of digitalization of public services from the perspective of the population and representatives of public institutions. The research was conducted by the method of the questionnaire on a sample of 54 people concluding that the digitization process is difficult both from the point of view of the citizen and public institutions.

Roja A. (2018) through the article "Digital transformation - challenge, risk or opportunity" published in the journal Research and education, analyzed the most important trends in digital transformation and the effects that this phenomenon brings in different fields. He stated that "the digital transformation has led to an increase in the quality of life, even to an increase in life expectancy, by treating some diseases. At the same time, it has contributed to the emergence of new social and economic models, as well as to the development of new opportunities in various fields. The phenomenon remains very exciting in the future, but this combination between biological, digital and the surrounding reality, without a visionary leadership, will turn opportunities into risks".

3. Romania's place in the digitization process

Digitization has the potential to provide solutions to many of the challenges the world is facing. Digital technologies are not only changing the way people communicate, but also, more generally, the way they live and work.

The year 2020 has been and is a real challenge for all mankind, affecting all markets globally, together with consumers and businesses.

In the last year, all EU member states have improved their digital performance. Finland, Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands have the highest ratings in DESI 2020 (an indicator that monitors global digital performance in Europe) and are among the world leaders in digitization, joined by countries such as Malta, Ireland and Estonia. However, other countries still have a long way to go, including our country, which in 2020, as in previous years, ranks 26th out of 28 in the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI).

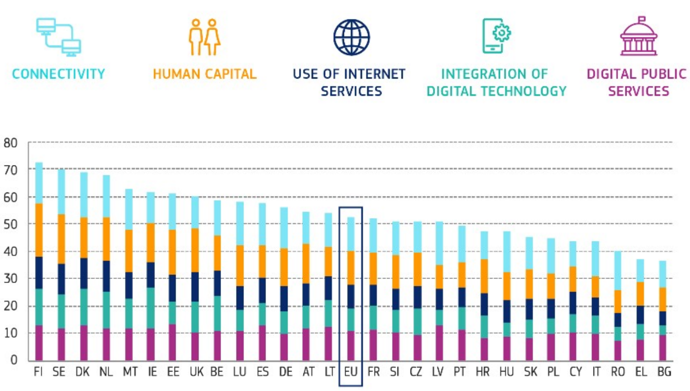

Figure no. 1 - Position of EU countries regarding the DESI indicator
Source: https://ec.europa.eu

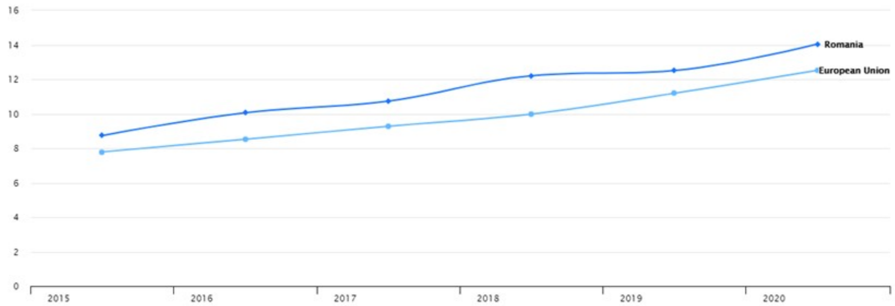

Figure no. 2 - Evolution of the DESI - Romania indicator compared to the European Union average

Source: https://ec.europa.eu

This DESI indicator has the following structure:

• Connectivity = coverage,
• Human capital = skills of internet users,
• Use of internet services = use of these services by citizens,
• Integration of digital technology = business digitization and e-commerce,
• Digital public services = digital services of public institutions.

In terms of connectivity, Romania ranks 11th in the European Union, improving its results in this regard, but not enough to be able to stay in the position held in 2019, respectively 8, unable to keep up with other countries. Thus, our country obtained a score of 56.2, above the European Union average of 50.1, a chapter in which it performed well in previous years.

1 Conectivitate	România		UE
	loc	punctaj	punctaj
DESI 2020	**11**	**56,2**	**50,1**
DESI 2019	8	50,0	44,7
DESI 2018	6	48,8	39,9

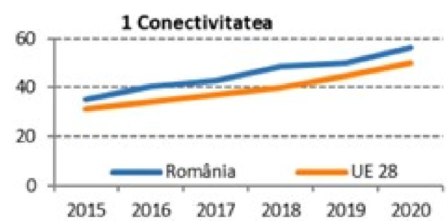

Figure no. 3 - Evolution of connectivity level - Romania compared to the European Union average

Source: https://ec.europa.eu

The backbone of the digital society is digital competence, which is essential in carrying out the activity in most jobs. Regarding the level of digital skills, in the EU ranking Romania is on the penultimate place, stagnating as in the previous year, obtaining a score of 33.2, below the European Union average of 49.3.

Romania holds a place at the end of the ranking at EU level, being penultimate in terms of basic skills (31% of the population / 58% EU average), penultimate in the number of ICT (information and communications technology) specialists (2.2% / 3, 9% EU average), but compensates in terms of ICT graduates, ranking 5th (5.6% / 3.6% EU average), after countries such as Malta, Estonia, Ireland and Finland.

2 Capital uman	România		UE
	loc	punctaj	punctaj
DESI 2020	**27**	**33,2**	**49,3**
DESI 2019	27	31,1	47,9
DESI 2018	28	31,5	47,6

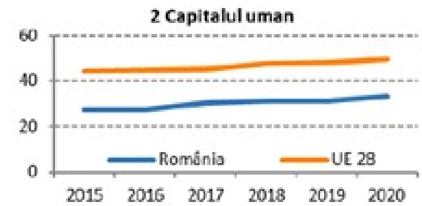

Figure no. 4 - Evolution of human capital level - Romania compared to the European Union average
Source: https://ec.europa.eu

The indicator of the use of internet services measures how many people use the internet and what is the consumption of online content (music portals, socializing, movies, games, etc.). Romania is at the bottom of the EU ranking in terms of the use of internet services, which corresponds to the lowest level of basic digital skills. While 18% of people have never used these services, in terms of using social networks, it ranks 6th, with 82%, compared to the EU average of 65%.

3 Utilizarea serviciilor de internet	România		UE
	loc	punctaj	punctaj
DESI 2020	**28**	**35,9**	**58,0**
DESI 2019	28	35,0	55,0
DESI 2018	28	31,5	51,8

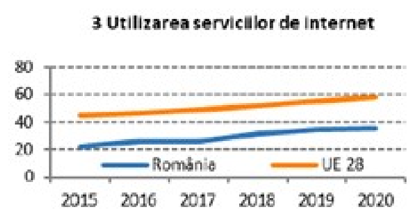

Figure no. 5 - The evolution of the level of use of internet services - Romania compared to the European Union average
Source: https://ec.europa.eu

The digital transformation of business opens up new opportunities and brings competitive advantages, such as expanding into new and distant markets. The Digital Technology Integration Indicator measures business digitalisation and e-commerce.

The level of integration of digital technology by enterprises in our country is well below the European Union average (score of 41.4), positioning us on the 27th place (with a score of 24.9), a place that remained unchanged, as in previous years. Romanian companies exchange 23% of information and only 11% sell products through e-commerce (compared to the EU average of 18%).

4 Integrarea tehnologiei digitale	România		UE
	loc	punctaj	punctaj
DESI 2020	**27**	**24,9**	**41,4**
DESI 2019	27	21,3	39,8
DESI 2018	27	20,8	37,8

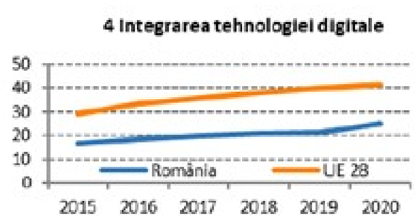

Figure no. 6 - The evolution of the integration of digital technology - Romania compared to the European Union average
Source: https://ec.europa.eu

Also, at the end of the ranking we are at the digital public services, a place that Romania has occupied in recent years. The interaction between the public authority and the population regarding the submission of forms is made through the platform www.e-guvernare.ro chapter in which our country ranked 8th in the EU, with 82% of Internet users, compared to the EU average of 67%. Pre-filled forms and services made entirely online rank us last in the European Union, indicating a systemic problem in terms of quality and ability to use the services offered. Compared to previous years, there was no improvement in digital public services for businesses, with a score of 53, compared to the EU average of 88.

5 Servicii publice digitale	România		UE
	loc	punctaj	punctaj
DESI 2020	**28**	**48,4**	**72,0**
DESI 2019	28	45,0	67,0
DESI 2018	28	41,1	61,8

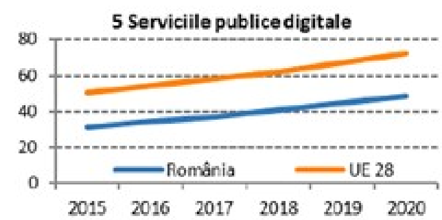

Figure no. 7 - The evolution of digital public services - Romania compared to the European Union average

Source: https://ec.europa.eu

Thus, Romania's performance was identical as in previous years in four of the five dimensions of DESI measured, a situation caused by slow progress in general, but probably also by political developments, as in the last three years there have been four different governments. Romania's digitalization is lagging behind, given that 18% of the country's population have never used the Internet, only 31% have at least basic digital skills and 11% of Internet users use banking services, and in terms of digital public services we have the lower performance among EU Member States.

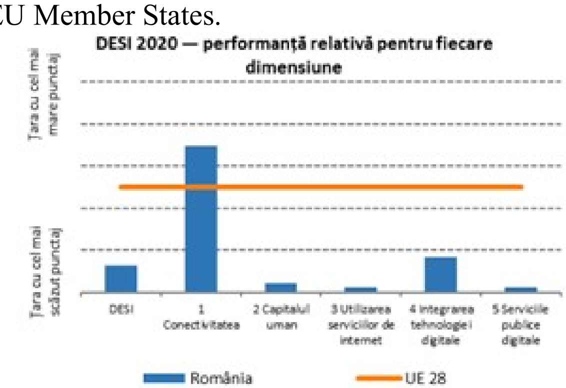

Figure no. 8 - Evolution of the DESI - Romania indicator compared to the European Union average

Source: https://ec.europa.eu

4. The "digital age" during the SARS COV2 pandemic

The SARS-COV 2 pandemic has shown us and shows us how important digitalization is, the crisis has shown that the right digital skills that allow citizens access to information and services are crucial for the whole world, being essential to the smooth running of all activities.

In the fight against the new Coronavirus, digital skills are necessary and essential for both public employees and the population, taxpayers, students, emphasizing the importance of connecting and interacting between citizens, businesses, public institutions.

Thus, due to circumstances, digital technology has been available and widely used in all sectors of the economy, at the level of all countries in the European Union, looking for and finding solutions, such as: the public and private sector have implemented the transmission of documents remotely and work from home, the education system takes place in the online environment, technological investments have been made in public health services, a vital sector in such times, and businesses have moved their marketing activity, providing services in the online environment.

At the level of our country, in the year 2020, during the pandemic, certain measures specific to the digital field were adopted in order to face the restrictions, among which we mention:

- Regulations were adopted in the electronic communications and digitalization sector, which established a new body, the Romanian Digitization Authority (ADR), with the role of realizing and coordinating the implementation of public strategies and policies in the field of digital transformation and information society, according to the Government Decision no. 89/2020. At the same time, the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Communications and Information Society were abolished and a new entity was created, the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Communications, which will have responsibilities for developing policies in the field of electronic communications and implementing policies related to electronic communications infrastructure, according to the provisions of Government Decision no. 90/2020. Based on a government decision, it was decided to supplement the budget of the Ministry of Education for the purchase of laptops for pupils, students in order to ensure access to online learning activities;
- An application has been created in the health system through which medical data on the management of the situation caused by this virus are centralized;
- The online platform https://aici.gov.ro/ was created, which serves as an intermediary for the registration of documents addressed to public institutions that do not have their own online registration system, so all public institutions in Romania are obliged to accept electronically signed documents and to respond to the requests submitted by citizens also in electronic format;
- In terms of providing clear information, increasing transparency, reducing panic, combating misinformation, explaining risks and preventive measures, online platforms have been created through which public authorities help people understand and cope with this period, including: https://stirioficiel.ro/, https://datelazi.ro/, https://fiipregatit.ro, https://cetrebuiesafac.ro/;
- The public authorities came to the aid of Romanian citizens from outside Romania by creating the Diaspora Hub platform (https://diasporahub.ro/), where information is available on either the delivery of purchases, or support in translating documents, useful information in this period etc;
- Online platforms have been created to offer aid for the health field (https://www.ajutorspitale.ro, https://spitale.quickdata.ro);
- Banking institutions were preoccupied with digitization before this pandemic, but in 2020 they also migrated to the online space, in a much faster process than normally expected. It was avoided as much as possible the physical presence of customers in banks, these institutions implementing the option of requesting by the customer information, data, services, products through their own sites, and also their transmission to customers' homes through couriers. For example: if in the past it was necessary to pick up a debit/credit card by the customer from the bank's headquarters, they adopted the measure of sending the cards by courier.

Thus, banking institutions, through the online environment, have further promoted their banking products and services, have adopted work from home, have adapted websites for requesting, signing and submitting documents by customers, all to protect both employees as well as customers.

The pandemic caused by the new coronavirus has triggered a mass migration to the area of online and commercial companies, taking measures such as:

- Employees working from home and maintaining interaction through online platforms and social networks;

- Creating, promoting and selling goods and services through online platforms,
- Interaction with potential customers and suppliers through video conferencing,
- Dematerialization and 100% digital workflow in companies, such as documents created - signed - transmitted - archived in electronic format.

5. Conclusions and future perspectives

The global crisis caused by the SARS-COV2 virus will definitely affect the way the world will function and evolve in the future.

Both the public and private sectors have deeply felt the effects of the restrictions, with technology proving, in the current context, to be the main tool for responding to crisis situations, supporting the development and continuity of individuals' work. Thus, changes will be felt and strategies will be rethought for an optimal functioning and to respond as well as possible to the needs of the population, which is slowly changing due to the impact of COVID-19 on the way of thinking and approaching things.

Romania is at the bottom of the European Union ranking in terms of digitalization, but with the coronavirus pandemic we hope to be the beginning of a new era, namely the acceleration of the maturity of digital technology.

Interest in technology and the implementation of new technologies worldwide can increase significantly now, but also in the post-COVID-19 period, due to the benefits they bring both individually and in business.

The future prospects for both the public and private sectors could be:

- financial support of digital transformation projects of companies from all sectors of the economy by granting grants and loans by the banking and/or public sector.
- offering flexible vouchers, subsidies or tax credits for digital investments, so that companies have the ability to find solutions based on their individual needs;
- the implementation by the banking institutions of the videobanking concept, an interaction between a bank representative and the client through a platform, in order to confirm the identity of the latter and to avoid possible fraud attempts;
- ensuring technological investments regarding public health services. The current health crisis demonstrates an unprecedented need for modernization and digitization through new technologies to prevent the collapse of medical systems globally. At the same time, against the background of the crisis generated by COVID-19, there was a divergence of policies and protocols in the field of health from city to city, which shows the need for an approach based on collaboration and exchange of information at the international level.
- the process of digitalization and automation of the Romanian economy will also depend on the way in which the authorities will implement the reforms in the public sector. Elimination of the physical file and implementation of the digital file both for citizens and for societies at the level of all the entire public apparatus. Implementation of the electronic platform of the online invoicing system through which companies can issue and receive documents but also the possibility to verify the concordances with the partners.
- implementation of digital identity and digital unique code.

Statistics show that each government has its own pace of digitization depending on financial resources, but especially on the education of the population. Public authorities are constrained by the circumstances to adopt an accelerated pace of digitization and to provide citizens with efficient electronic services, without being able to directly benefit from the benefits of changing the mode of operation, as well as the possibility of avoiding the disadvantages of this change. they an obligation.

Romania is not in a leading place in the ranking of European Union countries in terms of digitization, but the efforts made to better control the situation in which we all find ourselves are visible.

As for private companies, they adapt in their own way to the pandemic, by introducing protection measures that are suitable for the specific field of activity. Unlike public authorities, they make the most of the benefits of this transformation and try to minimize the disadvantages, all to increase profitability, but also to maintain a good level of health among employees.

Crisis situations have been and will continue to exist, but the transition of our daily life in the online environment will be further accentuated, representing the normal course of the society in which we live. Electronic services will become essential for the efficient functioning of both public authorities and companies of all sizes, requiring concrete plans for the development of digitalization until its implementation at all levels. There will be changes in the way we carry out our activity, trades will disappear, new ones will appear, but society will continue to live by adapting to the new normal.

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CONTINUOUS TRAINING OF TEACHERS - A FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE QUALITY EDUCATION SECTOR

Abstract:

The world is constantly changing. The desire to progress is increasingly evident in any community. Now, more than ever, there is a need to correlate education and training systems with labor market requirements. The level of education of the population is the key factor that can lead to the social well-being and economic progress of a country.

The dynamics of the labor market require that changes in education and training systems take place at a faster pace. These changes need to be in line with the new requirements of employers, new technologies, the labor market in general.

The European COVID-19 pandemic and the national measures needed to combat the spread of the virus can cause significant disruption to education, training and mobility activities for students, teachers and educators in the European Union (EU).

Keywords: management, change, education, training, progress

1. Introductory notions

Technical and technological progress determines important changes in the world of professions, imposing the rethinking and renewal of the training and improvement activity and at the same time the increase of its role in the set of active employment policies.

Training and professional development is an important lever for increasing the efficiency of the use of labour by ensuring a maximum degree of occupation of jobs with specific tasks, insofar as the knowledge and skills acquired through training are capitalized in practice.

Also, through professional training, action is taken to improve the use of working time of employees and equipment.[1]

Professional development needs engage both the responsibility of the individual and the organization.

The importance of employees' professional training is reflected in the manager's attitude: creating a favourable climate for professional training in accordance with the objectives pursued, ensuring the necessary financial support, monitoring employees' professional results and their appreciation.

Lifelong and continuous learning has become a necessity and a solution to the changes taking place in various areas of the individual's life and the society in which he lives.

Consequently, in order to adapt to the requirements of reality, in order to obtain performance at work or personal achievement, knowledge is needed, which presupposes the existence of knowledge (procedural, declarative), skills (information processing, analytical, problem solving, adaptation to the unfamiliar, technical) and skills to succeed (to think autonomously, to make decisions and to take responsibility for their consequences), which can only be obtained through continuous and permanent learning.

The optimal model of organization that responds appropriately to the impact of economic and technological development becomes that of the learning organization, an organization in which, through learning, employees are involved in a process of permanent understanding and interpretation of the world and their relationship with the world.[2]

Human resources development, as a distinct function of the organization[3], includes, as an essential activity, the training and professional development of employees.

The general objectives of this activity result from the internal needs of the organization and are subordinated to its general objectives; they refer to the elimination of the gaps

[1] A. Androniceanu, *Noutăți în managementul public,* Ed. ASE, 2003, p. 182.

[2] Z. Bogâthy, *Manulul de psihologia muncii şi organizaţională,* Polirom Publishing House, Iaşi, 2004, p. 115.

[3] O. Nicolescu, *Strategii manageriale de firmă,* Economic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1996, p. 354.

between the real level and the necessary level of knowledge and skills of the staff, to the creation of learning opportunities for each employee, so that learning becomes a permanent activity of each person in the company.[1]

Vocational training is a learning / training process, through which employees acquire theoretical and practical knowledge, new abilities or techniques to make their work more efficient. Towards training, professional development is a more complex process of training managers or other specialists to take on increased responsibilities in current and future positions.

Professional development is the coordinated activity of preparing an employee for the development of professional potential in order to increase the responsibilities of the current job or to change the job. This activity comes from the organization's concern to retain and motivate employees with special professional skills.

Vocational training is an invitation / training process, through which employees acquire theoretical and practical knowledge, new skills or techniques that will make their current work more efficient.[2]

The process of training professionals includes two components relatively distinct: training and professional development. Training aims to develop new skills, while training aims to improve existing skills. Given this, the two components often intertwine - training can become a training stage for the core profession.

However, the essential differences consist in the fact that, while the training refers to the acquisition of an initial or a new quality, the improvement presupposes the acquisition of new knowledge / abilities in the held qualification, but also the multi-qualification or requalification.[3]

Vocational education and training, the accumulation of professional experience have a decisive role in career development, in career performance that involves the application of the latest knowledge, skills or qualifications and technologies in its realization as a result of numerous changes and developments of contemporary professions or occupations.

Under these conditions, if individuals do not prove their ability to adapt to those changes and do not introduce these changes in their career practice, there is a risk of premature aging of acquired knowledge which, in turn, leads to the loss of jobs.[4].

Taking into account the European context but also the need to develop the Romanian administrative system, public administration reform aims, among other things, to improve public sector management and streamline public administration activity by developing a professional, stable and politically neutral civil servants.

In order to adapt to the requirements of reality, in order to obtain performances at work or personal achievement, a continuous and permanent learning is needed.

Theoretical and practical professional training of public administration staff must be taken into account in the training of its staff, starting from the multilateral and specialized nature of the activity in public administration, a character that also determines a differentiated professional training.

The optimal model of organization that responds appropriately to the impact of economic and technological development becomes that of the learning organization (leaming organization), an organization in which, through learning, employees are involved in a process of permanent understanding and interpretation of the world and of their relationship with the world.[5]

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[1] *Ibidem, pp. 355.*

[2] AM Bercu*, Pregătirea profesionala și cariera personalului din Administrația publică*, University Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009, p. 162.

[3] R. Mathis, P. Nica, C. Rusu, *Managementul resurselor umane,* Economic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1997, p. 124

[4] P. Barbu, „Formarea profesională - mecanism al flexibilităţii muncii", in *Raporturi de muncă, no. 12, p.77.*

[5] C. Roşea, D. Roşea, M. Negulescu, M. Neamţu, *Resurse umane - pregătirea continuă, gestiunea carierei„* Ed. Universitaria, Craiova, 2005, p. 107.

2. Key concepts in education

A.V. Chişu defines *vocational training* as the set of processes through which employees acquire in an organized framework the knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviours necessary to exercise certain occupations.

While training has a broader spectrum of approach involving increasing employees' conceptualization and human relations skills in order to allow them to use the changes that must take place within the organization over a period of time, as defined by Pierre Bergeron.

We subscribe to the opinion of the Romanian author I.O. Pânișoară, who considers that vocational training involves a systematic process of changing the behaviour, knowledge and motivation of existing employees in order to improve the balance between employee characteristics and job requirements.

Thus, vocational training and knowledge assessment are based on nationally recognized occupational standards.

In another opinion, training and improvement are intertwined, sometimes being difficult to assess whether certain activities are training or improvement. That is why a delimitation between the two concepts is necessary.

Therefore, *the professional training* has as finality: the initial qualification or specialization; retraining or acquiring a new profession while professional development aims at: the acquisition by workers already qualified in a certain field of new knowledge, skills and work skills, recognized as part of the content of the profession; multi-qualification; requalification.

Taking into account the above, we can conclude that the educational process never ends, and the start of the process of preparation for a particular profession is very difficult to locate in time.

Native talent, the power to imitate, general culture, school education, man's ability to orient, adapt and integrate into the socio-economic, concrete professional environment, help to develop global intelligence and, especially, for learning any trade.

The concepts have evolved and the idea has been reached that: "continuing education aims at the continuity of training throughout the professional career" and lifelong learning is a continuous and articulated investment in the development of the individual on all levels.

At the 19th session of the UNESCO General Conference (Nairobi, 1976), the definition was accepted *that adult education is a set of organized processes aimed at prolonging or replacing the initial (formal) form of education in schools*. The idea launched is extremely surprising in the continuation of the definition because it brings to attention adult education as a form of improvement, by virtue of which they develop their skills, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualification or give them a new orientation.

Being a consequence of the changes in all fields, through permanent education the development of the humanistic side was pursued, having as declared aims the possibility and necessity of personal development, creation and maintenance of an active citizenship that will result in social inclusion, employability and mobility of individuals.

The adult, caught in the whirlwind of changes on a personal level (fulfills various roles: parent, husband,) and professionally (employee, unemployed), wakes up at some point that he is in a crisis situation. What is to be appreciated is the fact that most people understand that they need counseling, a reorganization of education (training, retraining, etc.).

The article does not aim to elucidate the terms (pedagogy is the one that seeks new meanings of human becoming) but an understanding of them as a factor of *rebalancing* the adult of today, of *adapting* to the requirements of today's and tomorrow's society. Beyond the diversity of meanings and concepts is the contemporary man (the postmodern individual) responsible for the construction of his own world, made to choose and rediscover himself through the choices made.

Adult education through its specificity brings to today's man a new challenge: *to learn to change*, focused on concrete situations, having a professional and life experience behind him. Lifelong education, understood at the beginning as a later stage of school, as an adaptation to the ever new conditions of life and as "recycling" or even a "professional reconversion" of adults, ends up creating in the individual independence and desire for self-improvement.

Continuing education emphasizes effectiveness (doing the right thing), individual satisfaction and support through one's own willpower. If he is not aware of the need for change and the fact that change comes from him, that lifelong education will give him the strength to *understand*, move on and look at the challenges of the contemporary world as natural, then the adult will have dissatisfaction, will feel useless.

As a result, it is increasingly necessary to develop a new concept in modern pedagogy, namely pedagogy *focused on the postmodern individual*, oriented towards transformative learning that takes into account experience, abstraction, generalization and involvement.

Considering the researches in the specialized literature, I consider and conclude that adults consciously or not accept the continuous professional training in order to respond to the demands and challenges of the contemporary world. Adaptation can be a tense one, when the individual rejects the change, or comfortable, accepting the new through continuous training in an organized setting alongside his own learning.

3. Conclusions

The world is constantly changing. The desire to progress is increasingly evident in any community. Now, more than ever, there is a need to correlate education and training systems with labour market requirements. The level of education of the population is the key factor that can lead to the social well-being and economic progress of a country.

The dynamics of the labour market require that changes in education and training systems take place at a faster pace. But at the same time, these changes need to be in line with the new requirements of employers, new technologies, the labour market in general.

A strategic framework for European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period up to 2020 ("ET 2020") is established at European Union level. The main purpose of this framework is to support the further development of member states' education and training systems. It is hoped that education and training can ensure the personal, social and professional fulfillment of all citizens. At the same time, sustainable economic prosperity, employability, the promotion of democratic values, social cohesion, creativity and innovation, active citizenship and intercultural dialogue are also taken into account.

The Council of the European Union and the European Commission have established measures to mobilize the "ET 2020" process, in support of the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs.

In this economic context, it is necessary to reduce the rise in youth unemployment in Europe. In recent years, there has been ample evidence that the supply of skills does not meet the needs of the labour market. Proof of this is the existence of more than two million vacancies in Europe.

Given that public funding is limited, increasing competitiveness can take place through more efficient investments in education and training systems.

Education and training are considered to have a strategic role to play in supporting economic recovery in Europe.

Given the key role of investing in human capital, education and training systems can be the main driver of economic growth and competitiveness, as well as for preparing for an economic recovery that generates new jobs.

One in five people in the working age in the EU has low literacy and numeracy skills, which significantly limits their ability to find employment.[1]

Vocational education and training contribute to generating smart, comprehensive and sustainable economic growth, improving competitiveness and employability, and strengthening productivity and innovation.

The aim is to continue efforts to improve the acquisition of key competences and to reduce the share of students with poor results. It also aims to promote the acquisition of basic skills, as well as the adoption of measures for the retraining and improvement of skills by strengthening lifelong learning, with a focus on people with low skills.

Given the new forms of learning, the validation of skills acquired through quality web-based learning could be the tools of transparency and recognition in formal education.

At the same time, through flexible training, incentive systems and curriculum adaptation, teachers could be motivated to acquire a high level of digital skills and exploit the potential of new technologies and digital content.

Another important aspect of the field of vocational education and training is the financial aspect. Thus, it is suggested that the Member States of the European Union make maximum use of the new generation of financial instruments, in particular the Erasmus + program and the European Structural and Investment Funds.

Increasing the competitiveness of the workforce can be achieved through investments in human capital. Globally, countries with high economic performance are, at the same time, countries that allocate significant resources in the fields of education and health. In knowledge-based economies, human capital is becoming increasingly important. Investment in education is also a positive factor for social cohesion. People who are highly qualified are better able to work in different fields. Their adaptability is high. Local communities with such people, who have more or higher qualifications, are more prepared to respond to change.

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) makes it possible to compare qualifications systems and national frameworks as well as their levels, making qualifications obtained in different countries and systems in Europe easier to understand. Validation of non-formal and informal learning is a way of recognizing a person's knowledge, skills and competences, regardless of the education system in which they were acquired. Their validation involves identification, evaluation and certification. If validated, these learning experiences can become more visible and can be better used for further studies or work.

Europass - a set of five standardized documents and a competency passport available free of charge in 26 languages, is also designed to allow users to present their skills, qualifications and experience across Europe. The realization of a credit system is also pursued: ECTS for higher education and ECVET for vocational education and training, but also the quality assurance modalities for higher education and for the vocational education and training sector.

Changes in both economic activities and society have led to the emergence of new paradigms. Technological changes require new skills needed for jobs. The skills acquired allow people to better cope with daily demands. We can consider that this “scientific and technical knowledge has brought in the mechanism of obtaining the value resources and tools over the previous periods, with favourable effects. All these changes require a new way of conducting economic processes, as well as a new paradigm of value.[2]

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SECTION V
MARKETING AND TOURISM

EVOLUTION OF TOURISM IN THE YEAR 2020, IN THE CONTEXT OF MEASURES ON THE PREVENTION OF COVID-19

Cosmin Sandu Bădele[1]
Dr. Lucian Ivan[2]

Abstract:
The COVID-19 pandemic is of major affect small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) worldwide, with measures to combat the pandemic by blocking and quarantine leading to severe decreases in production capacity utilisation, with supply chains interrupted, leading to a lack of intermediate materials and goods in the field of and tourism. There is a dramatic and sharp drop in demand and therefore in revenues, which severely affects their ability to function due to a lack of liquidity, with SMEs being more vulnerable to 'social distance' than other types of companies.

Keywords: global economic crisis, covid-19 pandemic, tourism, corporate governance, Open Source Intelligence OSINT.

1. Introduction

The humanitarian crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has also triggered a global economic crisis. Attempts to predict the likely impact of the pandemic on the tourism economy were quickly overcome by the speed at which the situation evolved with the spread of the pandemic. The total impacts will depend not only on the duration of the pandemic, but also on the speed of response, and on the measures taken. However, the serious situation is also a major, evolving challenge.

Today, tourism is one of the most affected sectors in terms of both supply and demand. As an interdependent industry, the current context of the world economy with a real chance of recession, geopolitical, social and trade tensions, as well as the still uncertain situation of the evolution of the pandemic and the safety measures taken by most countries (travel restrictions, closing borders, suspension of cultural events, the activity of shopping centres, accommodation and restaurants, etc.) constitute an additional risk to tourism.

Given the evolving nature of the situation, it is still far too early to assess the concrete impact of the pandemic on international tourism.

In the EU, the tourism industry is expected to suffer losses of around 1 billion. euro per month. The unprecedented decline in tourism is having a negative impact on the Hotels-Restaurant-Cafe (HoReCa) industry, which is facing a severe crisis, with SMEs particularly affected. Most hotels have had to close due to declining demand or measures to combat COVID-19.

2. Internațional Context

The current coronavirus pandemic puts the EU's tourism ecosystem under unprecedented pressure. As a result of travel restrictions and other legal restrictions imposed, tourism gradually ceased operations in the first quarter of 2020 at EU and global level. Including from this point of view, the OECD estimates that the decline **in tourism activities is between 45% and 70%,** depending on the duration of the health crisis and the pace of recovery.

Almost all enterprises in the tourism sector are facing an **acute crisis of financial liquidity,**so according to industry estimates, revenue losses at European level have reached

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85% for hotels and restaurants, **85%** for operators and travel agencies, **85%** for long-distance rail transport and **90%** for cruise services and airlines.

The EU travel and tourism sector reports **a reduction** in bookings of **between 60-90%** compared to the same period of previous years.

The crisis has hit small and medium-sized enterprises the most, which, in the absence of liquidity, financial forecasting capacity and experiencing various uncertainties regarding the existing workforce, have tried to stay afloat in order to gain access to finance and to keep their employees and staff active in the workforce.

Comment: *In the absence of immediate joint action and emergency funding from the EU to cover the period until tourism flows resume at full capacity, many SMEs could go bankrupt in the period immediately following.*

3. National Context - Tourism on the Litoral of the Negre Size

The Romanian tourism industry was also severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures that were taken to stop the spread of the coronavirus. Both hotels and travel agencies have seen massive declines in bookings and cancellations of events. Since the beginning of March, hotel occupancy has decreased by 40% in Bucharest and over 50% in resorts.[1]

The Romanian seaside resorts well known in international tourism are represented by: [2]**Navodari, Mamaia, Eforie Nord, Eforie Sud, Techirghiol, Costinesti, Olympus, Neptune, Jupiter, Cap Aurora, Venus, Saturn, Mangalia**, which have modern bases of accommodation and treatment, as well as various possibilities of agreement.

According to INS data, in 2019 the Romanian coast had **848 tourist reception structures** with tourist accommodation functions (about **10% of the total,** not including units in the Danube Delta) and a tourist accommodation capacity of **85,081 beds** (about **23.9% of the total capacity,** not including the existing situation at the level of the Danube Delta).

According to data from the online environment, the number of tourists arriving on the coast in 2020 was 276,000 tourists, compared to the number of tourists arriving at sea in 2019, which amounted to 331,500 tourists (-55,500, -20%).[3]

Although many tourists have had to give up their planned holidays outside the country this year due to restrictions imposed by national or foreign authorities, and the main option of those who still wanted to spend their holidays was to travel to Romania, however, in general, the number of tourists has been decreasing this year, as a result of the measures put in place by the authorities to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

According to the latest data published by the National Statistical Institute, in July a.c.:

- ✓ at national level, arrivals in tourist reception facilities with accommodation functions decreased by **44.4%** and overnight stays by **44.7%** (compared to the same period in 2019);
- ✓ at border points, arrivals of foreign visitors **decreased by 69%** and departures abroad of Romanian visitors by **63.8%**;
- ✓ **1/3 of the total number of tourists arriving** in accommodation sands in Romania chose the Black Sea coast to spend their holidays.

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[1] Horeca, http://www.horeca.ro.

[2] The Romanian Black Sea coast runs for 245 km, between the Musura gârla (border with Ukraine) and the village of Vama Veche (border with Bulgaria). The coastline has a complex composition that increases its tourist value, namely the Danube Delta area and the Razim-Sinoe lagoon complex to the north, and to the south about 70 km stretches the tourist coastline itself.

[3] According to data taken from the Financial Journal (https://www.zf.ro/eveniment/criza-se-vede-in-cifre-numarul-turistilor-ajunsi-pe-litoral-a-fost-19531257).

Sea hotels that have not gone bankrupt over the season are approximately 80% occupied in the first days of September, with more than 50% of tourists paying with holiday vouchers.[1]

In this context, according to an analysis by the Mamaia-Constanta Employers' Organisation (OPMCTA), without voucher accommodations, hoteliers who had 30% fewer customers than last year during the whole season would have gone into financial collapse, for which they asked the Romanian Government to issue holiday vouchers this year, so that tourists could afford to go on domestic holidays even during 2021.

By July 15th, hotels throughout the Romanian coast had reached an **average occupancy rate of 37%,** failing to cover their operating costs.[2]

Currently, since the beginning of September, **the occupancy of functional seaside hotels is estimated at 80%**[3].

4. National Perspectives

By reference to the immediate measures to save Romanian tourism, it would be an opportunity to develop an analysis of the resilience and sustainable development of this important sector for the national economy, anticipating, during the crisis period, new trends and consumption patterns related to its activity.

National ambitions should be focused either on maintaining a leading position on this level of the economy within Europe and at the forefront of the world's tourist destinations in terms of value, quality, sustainability and innovation. A new, overall vision should guide the use of financial resources and investment at regional and national local level, and the focus of this new ambition is **sustainability,**contributing both to the European Green Pact and to maintaining strong communities within the EU.

The main national objective should be to enable more sustainable transport at affordable prices for tourism and to improve connectivity between local communities, to stimulate intelligent management of tourism flows on the basis of sound measurements and tools, to diversify the Romanian tourism offer and to expand tourism-related opportunities, to develop sustainability skills for tourism professionals and to harness the variety and diversity of landscapes in Romania. At the same time, a system for the protection and reconstruction of the natural terrestrial and marine heritage needs to be allocated, in line with the European strategic approach for a sustainable blue and green economy. These actions should include the promotion of sustainable tourist accommodation structures carried out through voluntary schemes such as the EU Ecolabel and EMAS.

All these national ambitions towards Romanian sustainable tourism should guide investment decisions at national level, but this can only work in combination with strong commitment at local and regional level.

Romanian tourism can also benefit from **the digital transition** by offering new ways of managing travel flows and tourists, including foreigners, financial opportunities, as well as more tourist options. At the same time, all these actions would lead to the more efficient use of national resources quite limited for this economic sector.

The use of new technologies in the analysis of large volumes of data on tourism activity could create and pool precise segments of the tourism profile and contribute to understanding the trends and needs of tourists. This would allow Romanian tourism to

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[1] Holiday vouchers were very useful to the summer season of this year, so more than 50% of tourists coming to the Romanian coast, including in the first days of September A.C., made reservations that they paid with holiday vouchers issued last year and whose validity was extended until May 2021.

[2] By comparison, on 15.07.2019, the average occupancy on the coast amounts to 75%.

[3] According to the statements of the President of OPMCTA and First Vice-President of the Federation of Employers of Romanian Tourism (FPTR).

respond quickly to changing customer demand and provide predictive analysis based on pre-existing models. The application of *blockchain* technology would also allow economic operators in the Romanian tourism sector to have all available information on secure transactions, thus limiting all types of fraud in this segment.

Digital tools could also be included in confidence-building measures to assure citizens that tourism and travel can be safe. This would involve investing in digital skills, including cybersecurity and encouraging digital innovation, as well as connecting tourism businesses and entities with existing local and regional data spaces. From this point of view the measures would be more useful to be applied in rural, remote and outermost regions, where tourism is quite fragmented and highly dependent on the accessibility of information and transport and travel services.

As part of this transition, Romanian SMEs will need special attention, and intensive collaboration with the European Commission, the European Enterprise Network, the European Cluster Alliance, as well as the European Digital Innovation Centres to support sustainability and digitalisation, which will support local tourism businesses to become more resilient and competitive. Achieving this would require cross-sectoral links, interdisciplinary knowledge flow, stronger connections and strengthening of national capacities to ensure accelerated adoption of products, services and process innovations.

All these measures should connect tourism with other existing industries on the national space in order to accelerate the adoption of new solutions, to promote cross-sectoral investment in the tourism ecosystem with IT&C, renewable energies, health, agri-food industry, maritime industry, and cultural and creative industries, including the media sector.

Digitalisation involves the use of digital and data technologies (digitised and/or digital) to create value, by replacing/transforming traditional business processes and creating a digital business environment, and is driving the transformation of **activities**[1]**,** as the way employees perform their jobs changes as a result of the use of new tools, such as mobile technologies, that facilitate collaboration within unified communication platforms.

Digital process transformation means not only the adoption of new technologies, but also the realization of organizational, operational and cultural changes/transformations within the organisation, industry or economic ecosystem, as a result of the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the exploitation of digital skills at all levels and functions of the organisation. In order to ensure the full exploitation of the potential offered by new digital technologies and skills, the organisation must define a digital transformation **strategy.**[2].

An opportunity generated by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of the digitisation of economic activities

Experimenting on a wider scale of remote work (telework/work from home)

Because of the pandemic of COVID-19 many companies have made the working regime of employees flexible, as far as this was possible. Flexibility has meant changing and/or reducing working hours and, in particular, introducing/expanding remote work (telework/work from home).[3]

In 2019, with 0.8% of employees working from home out of the total employees, Romania was only ahead of Bulgaria (0.5%), but far behind the European average of 5.4%, or

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[1] Gartner Report, 2013. The Third Era of Enterprise IT Exploring the "Nexus of Forces", "Quiet Crisis", and Gartner's 2014 CIO Agenda, Gartner.

[2] The physical distancing measures imposed by the authorities following the COVID-19 pandemic have stimulated many organizations to adopt the way of working at home (MD), which has led to a forced and rapid digitization of some of their business processes.

[3] Ahead of the COVID-19 pandemic, Romania was in the penultimate place in the European Union (EU) in terms of the percentage of employees working from home.

of some countries in the top places in relation to this indicator, such as: the Netherlands and Finland, with 14.1%, Luxembourg, with 11%, Denmark, with 7.8% and Ireland, with 7%.[1]

Digital mechanisms in restarting the economy

The usefulness of the digital transformation of Romania and the european countries in general has been invoked for a long time as a measure of the recovery of the development gap with the other EU Member States and the increase in living standards. Romania is heavily integrated in terms of international trade and foreign investment with Western European states. [2]

A study by the consulting company Colliers International shows the desire to work from home for a good part of the time for seven out of ten Romanian employees, even after the end of the state of emergency. The timing is time to implement measures to expand digital transformation at the level of Romanian society. [3]

*Such measures contribute to the faster recovery of the economy and bring long-term benefits in areas such*as:

Labour market

Digital transformation gives workers greater freedoms, such as flexible working hours and adapting work models to suit the individual, digital transformation requires more skills and employee qualifications.

There is a strong demand for well-educated professionals who continuously adapt their skills and qualifications to meet new and emerging technological needs.

Trade

Digital commerce opens up opportunities for entrepreneurship, innovation and job creation, and digital tools can help firms overcome the barriers to their development, facilitating payments, enabling collaboration, avoiding investment in fixed assets by using cloud-based services and using alternative financing mechanisms such as crowdfunding.

Digital transformation has a profound impact on international trade, helping to change the way countries trade, change the way products are manufactured and delivered. Even if digital trade continues to involve the physical crossing of borders for various products and services, and traditional measures on taxes or trade facilitation commitments remain in place, new measures affecting the conduct of digital trade are being taken.

Public sector

For the public sector, digital transformation is associated with the emergence of new types of partnerships, new skills and responsibilities for public sector staff.

However, the process is a large one, due to the expansion of interconnections between the various institutions. However, it is an opportunity to harness the partial or even full redefinition of the main objectives of the public sector, to renew its roles and functions and to find new ways to respond to demand from service users and the public, in a coherent reform encompassing the review of organisational structures, capacities, governance, work processes and culture.

5. Measures proposed by other States and possible solutions for Romania

The tourism industry is currently facing an unprecedented crisis. To mitigate the impact of the implementation of quarantine restrictions, international institutions and governments of affected countries are trying to make new packages of measures available almost daily. They usually concern the economy as a whole, and the tourism industry benefits

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[1] Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/.

[2] The COVID-19 epidemic and social isolation measures that are becoming mandatory to limit the spread of the virus have stressed the need for digitization.

[3] https://cursdeguvernare.ro/sondaj-70-din-angajatii-romani-doresc-sa-mai-lucreze-de-acasa-si-dupa-relaxarea-restrictiilor-de-deplasare.html?fbclid=IwAR1MwCDEoxd4p2mrM7IyMx2jR3JcEQrLabLQZJ5ingukyNcX6Wgfd_briZs

from these general, relevant and accessible economic measures for workers and tourism enterprises of all sizes, especially SMEs requiring special support.

Governments need to act much faster, at sectoral level, with creative solutions to support businesses and tourism workers, restore travellers' confidence and be ready to stimulate demand once containment measures are lifted.

Some EU states have already taken such tourism-specific measures to mitigate immediate negative impacts and facilitate the recovery of the sector.

Austria has set up financial support programmes for affected companies to mitigate the economic disadvantages resulting from measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, to facilitate economic recovery, to mitigate income losses and to stimulate the labour market. For this, a fund of 15 billion was created. euro for businesses facing major losses as a result of travel restrictions and meeting bans such as those in the tourism industry. The Fund uses two instruments: government guarantees for loans and non-refundable grants. The government is also offering $100 million. euro to cover debts if a hotel (family-run) applies for a loan to cover the loss caused by cancellations (only if it has a loss of more than 15% compared to last year).

In addition to national support, at regional level each country has taken its own measures to support tourism companies. In Vienna, guarantees are offered to consolidate liquidity of up to 80%. A volume of funding is provided between 5,000 and 500,000 euros. Burgenland has created three programs that offer a total of 30 million euros. The city of Graz has eliminated restaurant operating fees until the end of 2020, reduced utility rates and rent subsidy applications are paid immediately for the whole year. Lower Austria offers 20 million euros for SMEs in the commercial and tourism sector. The State of Salzburg offers an 80% guarantee for loans, interest is paid by the Province of Salzburg and the duration is 36 months and the credit limit of up to 500,000 euros per enterprise.[1]

Belgium, in Flanders, has made available 5 million euros for social and youth tourism. The cancellation of a travel package will result in a voucher equal to a validity of at least one year.[2]

Croatia has decided to defer payment of tourist taxes and provides financial support, subsidies for tourism SMEs to finance working capital and improve liquidity. The total funding budget is US$3,386 million. Amendments to some laws have also been approved: the law on the provision of tourist services on the use of vouchers (the customer has the right to terminate the travel agreements on the expiry of 180 days from the date of termination of the special circumstances, the tour operators issuing a voucher for the unrealized trip; if the traveller chooses the refund, the organizer must make it within 14 days after the expiry of the 180 days after the end of the special circumstances); the law of hospitality and the law on tourist tax. Other amendments relate to: simplifying the conditions for the operations of travel agencies; extending the deadlines for regular harmonisations of standards for hospitality services in households; postponement of mandatory reclassification of accommodation establishments.[3]

Spain has announced a funding line of 400 million euros, with a guarantee from ICO (Official Credit Institute of Spain), for independent companies and travel companies domiciled in Spain, in need of liquidity, with a limit of 500 thousand euros. The funds function as a 4-year loan with a fixed interest rate (max. 1.5%). Operations may be agreed by 31 December 2020.[4]

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[1] Austrian Business Agency, https://investinaustria.at/en/blog/2020/04/covid-19-regional-support.php.

[2] Belgian Federal Public Service for Economics, SMEs, Independent Workers and Energy, https://economie.fgov.be/fr/themes/entreprises/coronavirus/ information-pour-les/reduction-des-pertes/coronavirus-premier-volet-du.

[3] KPMG International. https://home.kpmg/xx/en/home/insights/2020/04/croatia-government-and-institution-measures-in-response-to-covid.html.

[4] Government of Spain, https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/lang/en/gobierno/councilministers/ Paginas/2020/20200312council-extr.aspx.

Romania, this challenge must be addressed with a thorough judgment and proportionate measures. Tourism must be included among the priorities in future economic recovery efforts. More measures are needed at sectoral level and in a more coordinated way to support businesses and tourism workers in order to be ready to restart work, restore tourist confidence and stimulate demand.

- ✓ Protecting tourists by setting safety rules. Protecting workers by providing support for income insurance, prolonging financial support for technical unemployment or regulating short-term labour schemes – Kurzerbeit, following the German model, and ensuring the protection of self-employed and seasonal workers.
- ✓ Ensuring the survival of industry throughout the chain and, in particular, supporting SMEs by making liquidity available, guaranteeing emergency loans, creating quick and easy access to short- and medium-term loans to overcome liquidity deficiencies, including funds made available by the EU through the Corona Response Investment Initiative, deferring payment of contributions to the State (tax , VAT, etc.) for economic operators seriously affected by the crisis, ensuring continuous dialogue with the private sector, providing timely data and creating a platform to this end to ensure effective and targeted response measures.
- ✓ Stimulating demand for domestic tourism by extending the holiday voucher program and promoting the country as a destination through all possible channels, especially now during the population quarantine period. Also, supporting Romanian destinations by increasing their budgets for promotion, marketing and product development purposes to encourage demand from alternative markets and to accelerate recovery.

6. Application of corporative Government Policies for the growth of the Performance of Companies in Romanian Tourism

In this new era of globalisation, characterised by a continuous increase in competition and the amplification of transfers of financial flows, new performance standards are imposed that go beyond the economic sphere for both national and international companies, and corporate governance has become a ubiquitous concept.

Corporate governance is the result of increasing the company's performance and harmonizing interest groups.

Application of corporate governance principles:

1. protection of shareholder rights;
2. ensuring fair treatment of all shareholders, including minority and/or foreign shareholders;
3. the role of stakeholders- recognising the rights of all persons involved in society, encouraging active cooperation between the company and these persons and groups in creating value, jobs and viable and competitive enterprises;
4. information and transparency - ensuring relevant information is published on time and accurately, including data on the financial situation, performance, ownership structure and management of the company;
5. the board of directors - must ensure the strategic orientation of the company, effective monitoring of the management by the board of directors and the responsibility of the board towards the company and shareholders.

The effective functioning of the corporate governance process assigns auditors – external and internal – key roles in the transparency of financial reporting, i.e. monitoring internal controls, aimed at improving the risks assumed by the organisation in the conduct of the business.[1]

7. Management of data osint in management of actual risks[2]

[1] Dobroteanu C.L et all - Independence of auditors in the context of corporate governance, Financial Audit, no.3, 2010, p. 19.
[2] Open Source Intelligence.

Resources at the level of each organisation are limited, it is necessary to carry out efficient and efficient management of the activities carried out, based on the results and conclusions provided by the types of information analysis (OSINT), in order to achieve the objectives of the organisation. [1]

Thus, by adapting and integrating existing analytical techniques, it will be possible to achieve the correct anticipation of developments in political, economic, social, technological and security terms, which will allow managers to have fair and effective measures, scientifically based, that allow them to maximize the results, while at the same time making the resources used more efficient.[2]

From this proposed definition, the first characteristics specific to the scientific field of information analysis can be observed, namely:

Importance of OSINT

OsINT is estimated to provide between 80% and 95% of all information worldwide.

Ensure:

→ Strategic historical and cultural knowledge;
→ Operationally useful information on infrastructure and current developments;
→ Tactically vital geospatial information that cannot be obtained by other means.
→ Open (public) sources ensure validation of data from closed sources.

OSINT management, stages:

→ Planning and targeting actions;
→ Research, search and collection, processing and exploitation of information;
→ Production, dissemination and evaluation (feedback);

Steps to follow in OSINT analysis

→ Discover that information necessary to carry out the tasks undertaken, according to the principles (know where to look, know who knows);
→ Selection between good and bad sources, valid and expired sources, relevant and irrelevant ones;
→ Filtering them;
→ Providing relevant information in a timely, safe manner in a format that is easily understood by the beneficiary;

Advantages of OSINT products

→ I assume low costs as well as a considerable decrease in the time to obtain;
→ I support multi-source and financial intelligence analysis by directing the collection process;
→ They have a guiding role at the analysis stage by identifying elements necessary to understand the context;
→ Facilitates access to certain types of expertise that is not always accessible to the analysis department in the company.

"At the same time, from an analytical point of view, managers are considered to be obliged to make decisions on the organisation of the activity, with or without analytical support. However, in order to make scientifically correct decisions, the manager needs an information analyst and an analytical product containing accurate information, presented in a coherent, clear and explicit manner and, perhaps most importantly, in due course." (Ivan L., Information Analysis Management, Bibliotecha Publishing House, Targoviste, 2018).

8. Conclusions

It will take a joint effort by all tourism stakeholders to keep the tourism industry afloat. There is a crucial need to adopt an integrated government approach so that measures

[1] This activity is all the more important in the situation of budgetary constraints, and it is necessary to plan and allocate the limited resources available correctly and efficiently.
[2] Ivan L., Information Analysis Management, Bibliotecha Publishing House, Targoviste, 2018.

taken to support the tourism industry are consistent and complementary to the overall economic stimulus packages.

Comprehensive tourism recovery plans must be made to strengthen the resilience of tourism over time, taking into account the long-term implications of the crisis for the tourism sector in the context of the digital transformation, climate change and structural transformation that will be needed to build a stronger, sustainable and resilient tourism economy in the future.

The economic success of a country or region in global competition for markets may depend, to a large extent, on the concentration of development efforts towards key areas where competitive advantages, resources and skills are gained.

In the case of travel agents, the situation is dramatic, on the one hand due to the lack of incoming and the drastic reduction of outgoing and, on the other hand, as a result of the cancellation of reservations by customers and the request for a refund of their consideration which risks leading to the bankruptcy and disappearance of many agencies on the market.

In the current economic crisis, many specialists consider tourism to be one of the sectors with the highest potential to offer economic growth and development at international level.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON TOURISM: COMPARATIVE ANALYZES AND RESPONSE POLICIES

Mariana Bălan[1]

Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disruption to the global economy. By the end of the first quarter of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had abruptly stopped international travel and had a significant impact on the tourism industry. Tourism is an important sector of the international economy, accounting for 10.3% of global GDP, 29% of world exports of services and about 300 million jobs globally in 2019. It is also an important source of income and employment for developed and developing countries. By October 2020, COVID-19 had infected more than 39.6 million people and caused the death of more than 1,108,000 worldwide, and globally the spread shows no signs of reduction. In this context, it is estimated that international tourist arrivals will fall by 60 to 80% in 2020, tourism spending will not return to the levels before the crisis by 2024 and more than 120 million jobs are in danger of being lost. The paper presents a brief comparative analysis of the potential economic and social effects of tourism stopping, in the short and medium term, in the main tourist destinations, as well as in those countries highly dependent on tourism (as a share of GDP).

Keywords: *COVID-19, tourism, economic impact, health crisis, social reactions, unemployment*

JEL Classification: L83, Z32, Z38

1. Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the largest sectors in the world, determining socio-economic development and generating employment. The benefits of tourism have spread far beyond its direct impact in terms of GDP and employment; there are also indirect benefits generated by supply chain links with other sectors, as well as the impact it has induced.

In 2019, 1458 million international tourist arrivals were registered, and tourism revenues amounted to 1.478 trillion dollars, to which another 254 billion dollars from passenger transport is added.

The huge and immediate shock generated by the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry affects the economy in general. Health communication strategies and measures (eg social distancing, travel and mobility bans, community blockades, home campaigns, congestion limitation, etc.) have stopped travel, tourism and leisure worldwide.

Over time, tourism, being an industry extremely vulnerable to many environmental, political, socio-economic risks, has become accustomed and has become resilient in its recovery from various crises and outbreaks (eg terrorism, earthquakes, Ebola, SARS, Zika) (Novelli, Burgess, Jones and Ritchie, 2018). However, the unprecedented nature, circumstances and impacts of COVID-19 demonstrate that this crisis is not only different, but it can also have profound and long-term structural and transformative changes in tourism as a socio-economic activity and industry.

The revised scenarios of the various international organizations indicate that the shock caused by the COVID-19 pandemic could mean a 58-78% decline in the international tourism economy in 2020, depending on the duration of the crisis and the speed with which travel and tourism. This would translate into a drop in visitor spending from $ 1.478 trillion in 2019 to between $ 310 and $ 570 billion in 2020. More than 100 million direct tourism jobs are also at risk of closure, many of them in small and medium-sized enterprises that employ a large share of women and young people.

In the short term, domestic tourism is expected to provide the main chance to stimulate recovery and support the tourism sector, which is significant in many countries. Even though domestic tourism flows have been severely affected by restrictions on the movement of

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people, however, with the lifting of isolation measures it has begun to revive. However, the likelihood that domestic tourism will compensate for the decline in international tourism flows, especially in destinations heavily dependent on international markets, is very low.

Tourism losses actually mean significant macroeconomic effects in countries, regions and cities where this sector supports many jobs and businesses. Estimates suggest that the tourism shock could reduce global GDP by $ 1.17 trillion (or 1.5% of GDP) in the most optimistic scenario (representing a four-month tourism stalemate) and up to $ 2.22 trillion. dollars (2.8% of GDP), in the scenario of an eight-month stalemate. Due to supply chain links, the negative impact of COVID-19 on the economy could be three times worse than the loss of tourism revenues, and unemployment in some countries could increase by more than 20 percentage points.

2. Literature review

International tourism is among the economic sectors most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The impact of the health crisis on tourism will be unequal in space and time. Crises can be a trigger for change, but, as Hall et al. (2020) show, no crisis has so far been a significant transition event for tourism.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates a huge global economic impact: international tourist arrivals are estimated to fall by 58-78%, causing a loss of between 910 million and 1.17 trillion dollars in export earnings in tourism and 100-120 million jobs in tourism. Compared to the impact of September 11, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are estimated to be seven times greater and are considered the largest decline in history (UNWTO, 2020).

In the pessimistic scenario of the OECD, global GDP growth will decline by 1.5% in 2020, and global trade volume will fall by as much as 3.75%, while other predictions indicate even more dramatic effects (McKibbin and Fernando, 2020).

The pandemic crisis has also negatively affected domestic tourism activities, with measures taken by various countries to reduce the spread of the virus leading to a sharp reduction in so-called "social consumption" (restrictions including domestic tourism, visits to cultural events, fairs, visits to restaurants, etc.) (Hoque et al., 2020).

Shortly after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (declared as a pandemic by WHO, 12 March 2020), research has focused on the impact of the health crisis on tourism in certain areas of the Earth. Thus, Dinarto, Wanto and Sebastian (2020) investigated the impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry in Bintan (an island in the Riau archipelago in Indonesia); Centeno and Marquez (2020) estimated the losses in the Philippine tourism industry, Correa-Martínez et al. (2020) studied the effects of the spread of the virus in a ski area in Austria. Nepal's (2020) comments on travel and tourism in Nepal after COVID-19 also raise a number of issues related to the new configuration of this sector: "business as usual or opportunity to reset".

Studies conducted at European Union level (European Parliament, COVID-19 and the tourism sector, 2020) estimate that the EU tourism industry (which has around 13 million employees) will lose around € 1 billion in revenue per month as a result of COVID-19 outbreak. According to estimates by the Italian tourism federation, Assoturismo, Italy will lose about 60% of tourists this year.

Regarding the analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global tourism industry, few studies have been conducted. Thus, Gössling, Scott, and Hall (2020) evaluated the effect of global travel restrictions and stay at home behavior on tourism and projected global change, Niewiadomski (2020) analyzed the relationship globalization - post-COVID-

19 tourism industry, and Galvani, Lew and Perez (2020) assessed the sustainability of the industry.

Uğur and Akbıyık (2020) analyze in their paper the impact of CoVID-19 on the global tourism industry, making a trans-regional comparison.

Given the fact that the tourism sector is one of the world's largest employers (1 in 10 jobs are directly related to tourism, UNWTO, 2020) and for many countries it is the main contributor to GDP, worldwide, within the international organizations in the field, as well as within the academic environment, attempts are being made to use the pandemic as a transformative opportunity for the tourism industry (Mair, 2020). Other authors (McKinsey, 2020) consider that, in addition to the fact that it should recover losses, this sector of activity should also be reconfigured and reset according to the new conjuncture.

Gretzel et al. (2020) plead for transformative e-tourism research that can shape tourism futures by making value systems, institutional logics, scientific paradigms and technology notions visible and transformable.

To revitalize the tourism industry, other researchers have suggested various approaches to the problem: inter-disciplinary (Wen, Wang, Kozak, Liu and Hou, 2020), multi-disciplinary (Gössling et al., 2020, Hall et al., 2020) or even anti-disciplinary (Sigala, 2018).

3. The socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism - comparative analyzes

The current health crisis has generated national quarantines and global travel bans, leading international travel to a standstill. According to data collected internationally by the International Tourism Organization of the United Nations on April 27, 2020, of the 217 destinations worldwide, 156 (72%) have completely stopped international tourism. The COVID-19 crisis has thus led to the cancellation of business trips, holidays and weekend mini-holidays, which has severely affected the tourism industry.

According to the seventh UNWTO report on travel restrictions (1 September 2020), a total of 115 destinations, representing 53% of all destinations worldwide, have reduced COVID-19 travel restrictions for international tourism. Thus, the number of tourist destinations increased by another 28, compared to 19 in July 2020.

According to World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) statistics, tourism generates 10.3% of global GDP, thus being an important factor in the world economy. In 2019, for countries such as Spain and Italy, the contribution of tourism to their GDP was even higher than the global average: 14.3% and 13.0% of their GDP, respectively. OECD statistics on the contribution of tourism to national GDP in 2018 show an upward trend in almost all countries for which data was available (Figure 1).

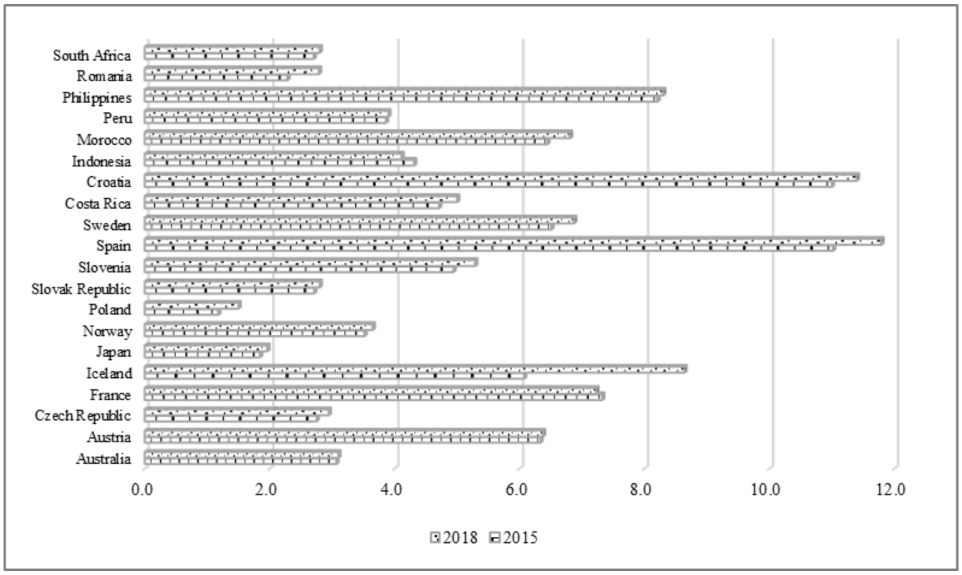

Figure 1. Contribution of tourism sector to national GDP, in 2018, (%)
Source: created by author based on OECD statistics

Tourism is one of the fastest growing economic sectors and it is an important factor in economic growth and development. Thus, in 2019, the share of tourism in the global GDP increased to 3.5%, being much more significant than that of other economic sectors (Figure 2).

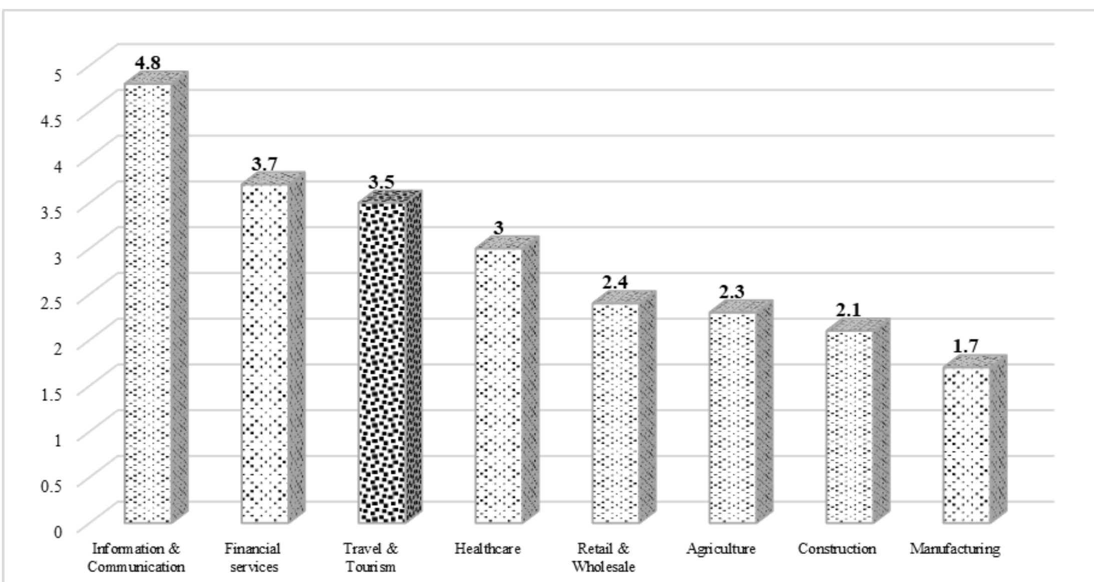

Figura 2 Travel & Tourism GDP Growth Compared with other Sectors in 2019, (%)
Source: created by author based on Travel&Tourism Report data, Global Economic Impact & Trends 2020

At the level of the world's subregions, the contribution of the tourism industry is differentiated, the most significant contributions being registered in Central Asia (Figure 3).

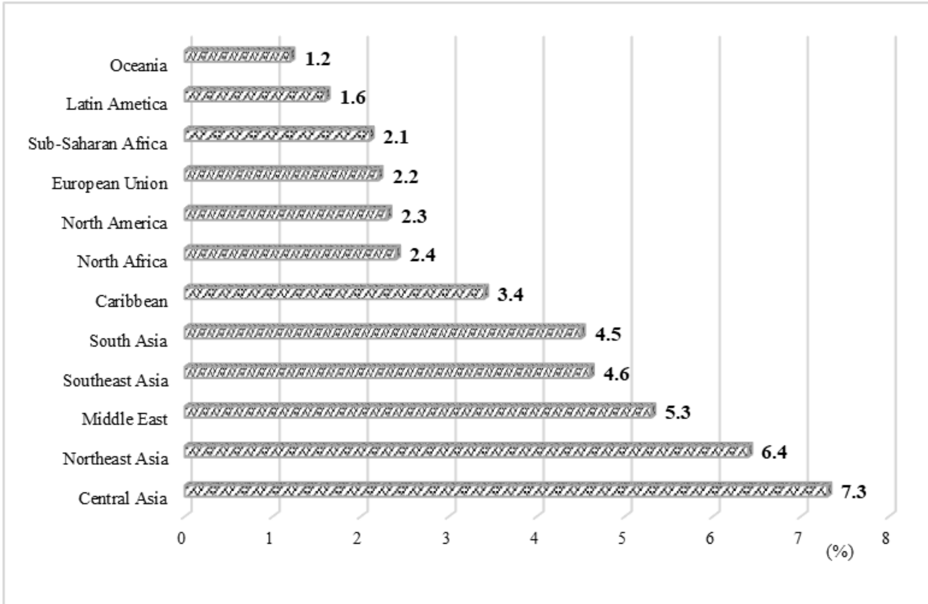

Figura 3. Contribution of the tourism industry to the GDP, by large regions of the world, in 2019

Source: created by author based on Travel&Tourism Report data, Global Economic Impact & Trends 2020

Tourism is also an important source of employment worldwide. According to the WTTC, tourism has supported 330 million jobs worldwide in 2019, which in the current context are at high risk. The tourism labor market has several particular features: a large proportion of jobs are held by women: 54% (significantly higher than in most other sectors) and young people, which makes the tourism industry considered inclusive. The fact that women are more likely to be entrepreneurs in tourism than in other sectors makes most women occupy low-skilled jobs in this sector and thus vulnerable to shocks.

The impact of the health crisis on tourism also has negative consequences on young people employed in this sector. In some OECD countries, young people aged 15-24 account for almost 21% of tourism employment, compared to 9% of the total economy (OECD, Supporting Quality Jobs in Tourism, OECD Tourism Papers, 2015). At the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, there were 178 million young workers worldwide, four out of ten young people employed globally, working in severely affected sectors, including tourism.

According to World Labor Organization estimates, more than 1.6 billion informal workers out of 2 billion are significantly affected by lock-in measures and / or work in the most affected sectors, such as tourism. Self-employed workers and small businesses, which employ a large number of informal workers, also account for 60% of the accommodation and food subsectors.

The development of the tourism industry also involves the creation of a significant number of indirect jobs in construction, infrastructure development, the provision of food, beverages and souvenirs to tourists, as well as in travel agencies, airlines, ships, hotels, restaurants, shopping malls and various tourist attractions. .

To reduce the spread of the virus, travel restrictions and border closures have been imposed on almost all destinations around the world, especially in the second half of March and April (-97%) and May (-96%). In this context, in the first half of 2020, the arrivals of international tourists (overnight visitors) decreased by 65% compared to the same period last year, and in June 2020, a decrease of 92.6%, compared to June 2019 (according to World Tourism Barometer, Vol. 18, Issue 5, Aug / Sept 2020) (Figure 4).

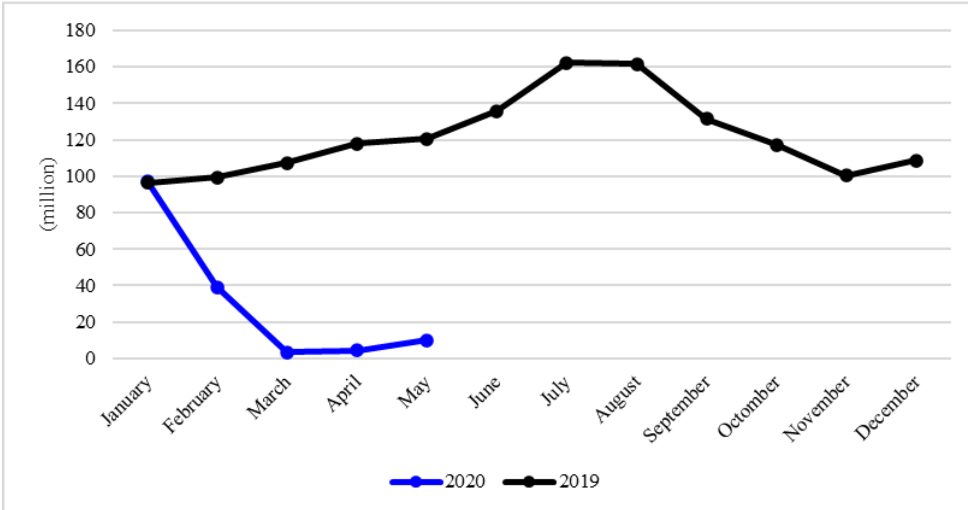

Figure 4 International Tourist Arrivals by month, worldwide
Source: created by author based on World Tourism Barometer data, Vol. 18 , Issue 5, aug/sept 2020

The massive decline in demand for international travel between January and August 2020 translates into a loss of 705 million international tourist arrivals, a loss of about $ 730 billion in export earnings from international tourism, eight times more than the revenue losses recorded in 2009 amid the global economic and financial crisis.

The impact of COVID-19 on tourism, in the first six months of 2020, was strongest in the Asia-Pacific region, which saw a 72,2% decrease in foreign tourist arrivals. Europe (with a decline of 66.5%), Africa (-57.1%), the Middle East (-56.9%) and North America (-55.2%) were also largely affected.

The extended UNWTO scenarios for 2021-2024 indicate a change of trend in 2021, but in the conditions of gradual and linear lifting of travel restrictions and a significant increase in people's confidence to travel by mid-2021. This can only be achieved in the conditions in which there will be a reversal of the evolution of the pandemic and the availability of a vaccine or an effective treatment. UNWTO estimates show that even if the above conditions are met, however, it would take a period of 2½ to 4 years for international tourist arrivals to return to 2019 levels.

In this context, the global demand for air passengers also decreased (by 67% between January and July 2020). The slight improvement in global passenger demand in July (92% compared to 97% in June) might not continue due to increases in COVID-19 cases in several countries which will lead to the re-imposition of travel restrictions. A small recovery in global demand for air travel continues to be driven mainly by domestic markets, especially in Russia and China.

Europe has reported 213 million international arrivals lost by June 2020, compared to the same period in 2019. The highest reductions were in Southern and Mediterranean Europe (by about 72%) and Northern Europe (- 64%). In June 2020, there was a slight improvement in this indicator, which contributed to the slowdown in the reduction of arrivals in Western Europe (-63%) and Central and Eastern Europe (-62%). In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, domestic tourism has resumed in many European countries, which reflects a still cautious attitude of people towards cross-border travel.

In Europe, international passenger demand (measured in revenue passenger kilometers) decreased by 68% in January-July 2020, traffic capacity decreased by 79% and the load factor decreased to 55%. In July 2020, there were significant reductions in revenue per available room (-66%) and the average daily rate (-21%).

To reduce the risk of the COVID-19 virus spreading, protected natural areas have also been closed, which has had a destructive impact on them and the communities that protect them.

According to data provided by the World Tourism Organization, 14 African countries generate about $ 142 million from the protected areas entry fee. The closure of tourism activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic meant no income for staff serving these protected areas and for the communities living around them for several months, many being dependent on tourism for survival and without access to social protection measures. Without alternative opportunities, communities can resort to overexploiting natural resources, either for their own consumption or to generate income. Recently, there has already been an increase in poaching and robbery in some parks and protected areas, partly due to the low presence of tourists and staff.

Also, in response to the pandemic, 90% of countries have closed their World Heritage sites, with huge socio-economic impacts on communities that depend on tourism revenues.

The impact of COVID-19 on tourism exerts additional pressure on heritage conservation in the cultural sector, as well as on the cultural and social fabric of communities, particularly for indigenous peoples and ethnic groups. During the pre-crisis, the cultural and creative industries generated annual global revenues of $ 2.25 trillion and exports of over $ 250 billion.

The outbreak of the pandemic led to the closure of 90% of museums and many intangible cultural heritage practices, such as festivals and traditional gatherings, were also stopped or postponed, with important consequences for the cultural life of communities everywhere.

In May 2020, the UNWTO developed within the World Tourism Barometer three scenarios for the evolution of international tourism in 2020, assuming that the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic could be lifted in July or September or December 2020. As a result of recent developments to the pandemic, the reintroduction of lockdown and the adoption of other measures in response to the growing cases of Covid-19, UNWTO considers that the evolution of the tourism industry falls between Scenario 1 and 2. According to Scenario 2 a recovery of 2019 levels for tourism can be achieved in three years (end of 2023) and Scenario 3, the slowest, after 4 years (end of 2024).

The pandemic is also expected to have a longer-term effect on international tourism, while other economic sectors could return faster. Especially for countries where the national economy relies heavily on the tourism industry, it is crucial to closely monitor the situation and provide measures to protect the industry and mitigate the economic impact of this crisis.

4. Measures to mitigate impact on tourism sector

In order to mitigate the economic impact of this health and economic crisis and to protect the tourism industry, Governments and institutions have taken and continue to take several measures.

The magnitude of the impact of COVID-19 on tourism requires strong measures to ensure the survival of businesses and support jobs. This is especially important for SMEs and the self-employed. For example, temporary waivers or rescheduling of taxes and other payments, special employment support schemes and credit conditions adapted to tourism could be considered, both in the short and medium term, in order to preserve the means of living and to prevent bankruptcies.

In summary, some examples of measures adopted by various countries to support enterprises and jobs in the tourism industry are presented in Table no. 1

Table no. 1 Examples of measures taken to support tourism

Country	Measures
	Postponement of taxes (taxes, rents or insurance payments)
Egypt	- postponement of payment of all taxes related to tourist and hotel units; - exemption from rent until tourism resumes safely (bazaars and cafes located in archeological sites)
Bulgaria	Government funding of insurance payments due by employers for hospitality companies, travel agencies and tour operators, restaurants and fast food establishments, etc.
Italy	suspension of tax payments, social security and social contributions for the tourism sector and extended the measure to cultural enterprises
Mauritius	the training fee has been temporarily reduced from 1% to 0.5% for tourism operators
	Direct support for companies
Serbia, Slovenia and Slovakia	made direct payments to companies (or a percentage of wages) forced to close due to the pandemic
Jamaica	funding from multilateral partners and international institutions for small and medium-sized tourism enterprises
	Special conditions for loans
Egypt	to tourism companies, the Central Bank of Egypt provided low-interest funds (especially for the payment of employees' salaries), credit facilities with a repayment period of up to two years, as well as a grace period of six months from the date of granting, launched a funding initiative to support tourism.
Lebanon	allowed economic institutions to borrow interest-free money for five years to help them pay their salaries
Montenegro	granting subsidies to the salaries of entrepreneurs and SMEs in tourism
	Employee support
Greece	awarding compensation to workers whose employment contracts have been temporarily suspended
Argentina, Kuweit, Maroc, Mongolia, Samoa and Ungaria	- total cancellation of employers' payment obligations; - state financing of 70% of lost wages for three months for part-time workers
Gabon, Botswana and Republic of Korea	employees who are technically unemployed have received an allowance of 50% to 70% of their gross salary.
Cambodgia	offered retraining and improvement programs for laid-off workers and announced plans to pay 20% of the minimum wage for workers employed in hotels, boarding houses, restaurants and travel agencies. Workers must attend a short course offered by the Ministry of Tourism before receiving government support.
Namibia	granting salary subsidies to support companies in tourism,

Country	Measures
	hospitality, travel and aviation to keep jobs.
Romania	- granting technical unemployment representing 75% of the gross salary during the emergency period; - for employees who have benefited from technical unemployment and whose employment relationships are maintained after the resumption of activity by employers until 31 December 2020, with the exception of seasonal workers, a payment of 41.5% of the basic salary corresponding to the job held will be supported for a period of three months, through the employer, - for persons over 50 years old as well as for those aged 16-29 who will be employed for an indefinite period and full time from June 1 to December 31, 2020, employers receive monthly, for a period of 12 months, 50 % of the employee's salary.
The European Commission	- provides legal analysis to Member States and has set up a network of industry associations to facilitate the exchange of experience. - has set aside € 37 billion to provide liquidity to businesses and support those who have lost their jobs.

Source: created by author

Conclusions

In addition to the threat to public health, the economic and social disruption induced by COVID-19 threatens the long-term existence and well-being of millions of people, which is especially true for tourism-dependent means of living.

For every job directly in tourism, almost one additional indirect and induced job is created.

The tourism economy has been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and measures have been introduced to limit its spread. Depending on the duration of the crisis, the revised scenarios indicate that the potential shock could range from a 58-80% decline in the international tourism economy in 2020.

Domestic tourism is expected to recover faster, thus providing the main opportunity to stimulate recovery, especially in countries, regions and cities where the sector supports many jobs and businesses.

The impact of the medical and economic crisis is felt on the entire tourism ecosystem, and the reopening and reconstruction of destinations will require a combined approach. Tourism businesses and employees benefit from stimulus packages across the economy, with many Governments introducing tourism-specific measures. These include considerations for lifting travel restrictions, restoring travelers' confidence and rethinking the tourism sector for the future.

These actions are essential, but in order to successfully reopen the tourism economy and get the business up and running, more needs to be done in a coordinated way, as tourism services are highly interdependent. The crisis is also an opportunity to rethink the tourism sector and its contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals.

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DIGITALISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY: IMPORTANT FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR FUTURE TOURISM MODELS

Maria-Anca, Craiu[1]

Abstract

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has hit economies worldwide, but maybe one of the most affected sectors is tourism, given the immediate and immense shock suffered by it.

Tourism represents a significant part of many economies, some of them highly dependent on the revenues coming from it in order to improve citizen's life and conditions.

Tourism, a sector built on people-to-people interaction, is one of the major vehicles for promoting culture and advancing intercultural dialogue and understanding.

Besides the importance of this sector and the motivation of people in choosing tourism, the paper highlights possible consequences of the pandemic on this sector and insights of how tourism might look like in the future, as modern advanced technologies have come into our attention.

Maybe this crisis is also an opportunity to rethink and transform the relation of tourism with nature, climate and economies.

So sustainability and digitalisation could be in the center of tourism's recovery and in designing new tourism business models.

I also wanted to add a "human" touch to the paper, so I ask for opinions from my co-workers regarding the impact of COVID-19 on their travel plans and how do they see the tourism sector in the future.

Keywords: *tourism, digitalisation, technologies, sustainability, human presence*

JEL classification: *Z32, Q56*

1. Introduction and the importance of tourism sector

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is, first and foremost, a humanitarian crisis affecting people's lives, and has triggered a global economic crisis. Countries around the world are facing this tremendous challenge, economies are declining and people have to obey strictly rules imposed by their governments and state heads. The future seems so unclear and the end point of all this is truly uncertain.

The crisis reveals and amplifies our vulnerabilities and inequalities, questioning our development models in each and every country. It leads us to rethink and factor in environmental and social issues in our production and consumption modes in order to build just and resilient societies.

Tourism is one of the sectors most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, impacting economies, livelihoods, public services and opportunities on all continents.

Tourism provides livelihoods for millions of people and allows billions more to appreciate their own and different cultures, as well as the natural world. For some countries, it can represent over 20% of their GDP and, overall, it is the third largest export sector of the global economy. The global wealth of traditions, culture, history and diversity are among the principal motivations for travel.

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2. Impacts and consequences for tourism sector

But tourism is a sector built on people-to-people interaction and one of the major vehicles for promoting culture and advancing intercultural dialogue and understanding.

The pandemic has reduce human interaction and this had an effect on travelling, visiting, spending and using tourism services.

As borders closed, hotels shut and air travel dropped dramatically, international tourist arrivals decreased by 56% and $320 billion in exports from tourism were lost in the first five months of 2020 [13] – more than three times the loss during the Global Economic Crisis of 2009. Governments are struggling to make up for the lost revenues that are needed to fund public services, including social and environmental protection, and meet debt repayment schedules.

Scenarios for the sector indicate that international tourist numbers could decline by 58% to 78% in 2020, which would translate into a drop in visitor spending from $1.5 trillion in 2019 to between $310 and $570 billion in 2020. This places over 100 million direct tourism jobs at risk [13].

But the consequences are more drastically if we refer to sustainability and environmental levels.

The pandemic risks slowing down progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[1].

The impacts of COVID-19 on tourism threaten to increase poverty (SDG 1) and inequality (SDG 10) and reverse nature and cultural conservation efforts.

As tourism has so many linkages to other area of society, all this translates into more effects regarding the contribution of the sector to other SDGs, such as gender equality (SDG 5) or the reduction of inequalities among and inside countries (SDG 10).

3. Future of the tourism sector in a digitized world

But this crisis is also an unprecedented opportunity to transform the relationship of tourism with nature, climate and the economy. It is time to rethink how the sector impacts our natural resources and ecosystems, building on existing work on sustainable tourism.

It is time to embrace local values, to promote innovation and digitalisation, creating decent jobs for all, especially for youth, women and the most vulnerable groups in our societies. [14].

But for all these to be successful, the sector needs to advance efforts to build a new model that promotes partnerships, places host people at the centre of development.

A broader vision of the environment that affects tourist destinations shows the existence of other factors that also force traditional tourist destinations to radically innovate their tourism model. Among these factors, technological advances and the urgent need to bet on sustainability stand out.

New strategic lines that vacation tourist destinations could choose to radically innovate their tourism model are needed.

And for this, two basic competitive methods have been chosen around which to design new tourism business models: sustainability and digitization.

These competitive methods are currently the priorities of many governments and also of the European Union[2] as essential means to improve the competitiveness of the economy, in general, and of the tourism sector, in particular.

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[1] http://tourism4sdgs.org.

[2] At the same time, the Commission's approach in all areas is subsumed by the major objective of creating the Europe's digital decade.

The need to reduce physical contacts to avoid possible contagion by the Covid-19 forces to accelerate the digitization of tourist destinations.

Digitalisation is changing the way people live, work, and travel, and has opened up new opportunities for tourism businesses to compete in global markets.

It is the process through which technology and data-driven management is transforming our social and economic systems and lives. The push to adopt digital technologies is driven by the convergence of advanced technologies and the increasing social and economic connectivity unfolding under globalisation. Digitalisation has the potential to boost innovation, to generate economic and environmental efficiencies and increase productivity, including in the highly globalised tourism sector [5].

The impact that the digital transformation has, and will continue to have on tourism, cannot be ignored. The digital economy is transforming the process of communicating with tourists and marketing tourism services, and opening up new and highly creative ways of delivering tourism services and enhancing the visitor experience. It is changing the way work is organized and services delivered, and also presents opportunities to take advantage of digital advancements to handle transactions, capture and process information and data on tourism supply and demand, and improve and connect operations along tourism value chains and ecosystems.

But not all sectors in the economy are touched by the digital transformation with the same speed and/or extent.

Unlocking the potential of digital technologies and digitalisation in tourism therefore requires a nuanced approach that responds to the unique challenges experienced in different parts of the tourism sector, and in different types of tourism businesses. Addressing the challenges that tourism businesses face in their digitalisation journey can vary significantly depending on:

- Type, size and characteristics of the tourism business, and the subsector they belong to (e.g. transport, accommodation, personal services) [1]
- Access to technologies, information, expertise, advice, mentoring and other resources and support [4]
- Management and strategy-making capabilities, which shape the extent to which business owners sense opportunity, perceive risk and are motivated to seize opportunities [10]
- Location of the business, the social and economic context, and the access and availability of digital technologies [3]

In these times, governments have an important role to play in creating the right framework conditions for the digital transformation of tourism business models and the wider tourism ecosystem. Integrated and coherent policy approaches are needed to leverage the opportunities of digitalisation while also addressing challenges and minimising any negative consequences that may emerge.

4. Human thoughts and their future perspectives on tourism sector

I also wanted to add a “human” touch to the paper, so I ask for opinions from my co-workers regarding the impact of COVID-19 on their travel plans and how do they see the tourism sector in the future.

The sample itself was not big, but I could gather some interesting ideas that are shared below. The flavor and ideas are not always very optimistic, but it is worthwhile to have the whole picture.

There is a general consensus that people and their travel plans were affected like never before and this feeling was felt deeper on the persons that also have kids.

But what is fascinating is their views on the future of the sector itself, depending on individual perception and their expectations on how tourism contributes to their lives.

It is acknowledge the important of modern technologies and people do seem to be attached more and more to them, as the pandemic "made" us all to be more online or to become more virtual, cutting human contact, face to face meetings, social events and so forth.

People will start travelling again after they will be feeling safe again and all this psychological effect would have been gone. But they will still be reluctant to make long term travel plans.

But the perception of the future goes hand in hand with people's motivation in choosing tourism and travelling. Some people do it only to show off or for fun, other sees it as an adventure of the visual and olfactory senses, feeling the freedom of movement, visiting new places full of history that is known only from books, eager to see and meet locals, to know their habits, to interact and understand them. Put it in such lovely words by one of my colleagues, how can all these be replaced by technologies and still have the same impact and feeling for humans? Seems impossible.

Digitalisation and advanced technologies are good as long as they are understood and properly used.

Virtuality and technologies can do almost everything; can recreate images, feelings, emotions and much more. What you can see through VR glasses can feel so real, but it doesn't mean it actually is.

On the other hand, people felt that certain forms of tourism will no longer exist and we will never return to the same tourism as it was before COVID-19.

And the differences will be even more pronounced as the health crisis lasts longer, and the economic crisis that will follow, deeper. States will not be able to cover the losses of the sector, the offer will decrease through chain bankruptcies (hotels, travel agencies, airlines). Demand itself will exist after the pandemic ends, but the crisis will reduce much of the income available for such activities (compared to the pre-pandemic level).

Digitalisation or advanced technologies will appear in all sectors, but they are not essential in the hospitality sector, so maybe these are not the solution here, because there is a saying: man sanctifies the place.

People would rather choose, in the near future, locally vacations and places easy to be accessed (via car for example). Mass tourism would probably disappear (but this can be translated in less pressure on the ecosystems) and the business tourism part probably will be greatly reduced. Many bankruptcies envisage, the state will probably nationalize a lot of the sector's assets, whoever has money will preserve them and will reopen them after the economic crisis passes, if it will be the case.

I, myself tried to replace travelling abroad this year with domestic tourism. It was nice, but not complete. I miss airports, foreign languages, unknown routes, the joy in discovering different places and traditions. I am a person that enjoys real life and definitely virtual is not for me.

More focus on consumer needs and benefits, as tourism is a service business in the end.

Consumers still have needs even after the pandemic period ends, but those needs have changed and it is time to redesign the products and services accordingly.

So for the next year(s), domestic tourism could be helping in recovering the tourism sector on one hand. Digitalisation in communication, tele-anything (education, working, medicine) done by distance using VR, AR, modern tehnologies, electromobility as sustainability will be more and more in the center of people's concerns that seem to become more aware of protecting the environment and last, but not the least **WE** as persons need to refocus our priorities and our way of living – these could be called priorities in the future.

5. Conclusions and possible recommendations

The development and adoption of new technologies is expected to continue at pace in the future, driven by the cumulative nature and exponential rate of technological change, the convergence of technologies into new combinations, dramatic reductions in costs, the emergence of new digital business models and declining entry costs [12].

Realising the benefits from the digital revolution will depend on a combination of investment in digital infrastructure, as well as the skills development of human capital and innovation in business models and processes [7].

On digitalisation, we will leverage on the power and the acceleration of the digital transformation to foster the SDGs' implementation as well as the climate, biodiversity and social goals. We will work towards a more systematic integration of the opportunities and challenges of the digital transformation and its societal impacts, including by recognizing the widening of the digital divide and inequalities and focusing efforts against it.

Many current policies are the legacy of the pre-digital era, and difficulties in understanding the changes underway and their implications may delay the review and adaptation of these policies. Such an understanding is imperative as digital transformation affects the entire economy and society.

Follow up on my colleagues, there is a great deal of understanding the importance of modern technologies and digitalisation monopolizing our lives. Some of them would prefer to have everything at just one click away, others prefer real feelings and human interaction.

Clients' needs and benefits should be in the center of future business models and everybody needs to be prepared to change from individual level up to the sector level.

But as a whole feeling, REAL or REALITY is more valuable than VIRTUAL or VIRTUALITY and human presence is important for carrying on with the tourism sector. In this sense, I would like to recall an old saying: "MAN sanctifies the place".

The human desire to explore will never die.

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THE TOURISTIC POTENTIAL OF BANAT MOUNTAINS IN THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE REGION

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Abstract

Banat is a territory with inherited structures, yet constantly renewed by the sequence of influences and dominations it was subjected to throughout history. The identity of Banat is rendered by its capacity to assimilate and harmonize values of different origins. The reverence for the other's specificity is a lifelong rule established here, also confirmed by the lack of intercultural tensions in a region traditionally characterized by an exquisite melange of nationalities, customs, mindsets and internal organization. All these represent powerful arguments for the purpose of this article, namely the assessment of tourism development over time in Banat, this Romanian territory being successor of a multicultural material and spiritual patrimony of high value not extensively known and included in the national and international tourist circuits.

Key words: *mountain tourism, tourism potential, Banat patrimony*

JEL Classification: Z32

1. Introduction

The Banat Mountains are part of the old historical region of Banat with an indisputable touristic potential. It benefits from an original natural setting, unique through remarkable tourist objectives. From the tourist potential standpoint, it exceeds many of the geographical sections of the Romanian Carpathians. The Banat Mountains, compared to other units in the Carpathians, have a position potential, being thus accessible for neighboring countries but also for others in Central, Northern, Southern and Western Europe. The Banat Mountains boast attractive natural and anthropic resources of high touristic value, with tourist tradition rendered by multiculturalism and the presence of several ethnic groups, inhabitants' hospitality and generosity (Olaru, 2010, p.34).

According to the Romanian encyclopedic dictionary, tourism equals: "the totality of relationships and phenomena resulting from people's movement and time spending outside their abodes but also from recreational or sports activities consisting of walking or traveling by various means of transport throughout a picturesque region or interesting from a certain point of view. In specialty literature, tourism is described as a solution to all the economic problems a country or region could face, also being responsible for balancing the payments balance as capital investment generator in many fields of activity (Neacsu et al., 2016 , p.14).

From an etymological perspective, tourism comes from the English term "*to tour*", which means to travel, to roam, with reference to trips. Invented in the 17th century in India, this Gallic word comes from the French word "*tour*" (traveling, outdoor movement, walking, hiking), which is also derived from the Greek "turnos", respectively the Latin "turnus", preserving the meaning of circuit. As a social and economic phenomenon, tourism began to be enhanced in Europe as early as 1880 and in 1905 the first definition showed that tourism, in the modern sense of the word, is a contemporary phenomenon based on increasing the need to improve health and change environment for the manifestation and development of the receptivity feeling to the beauties of nature (Ehmeyer Feuler in the work "Handbuch der Scweizeishen Volkswistshaft", quoted by Guran V, 2015). As a synthesis of the two types of relationships established in tourism (the material ones - tourists using paid services, and - the

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immaterial ones (stemming from the contact with the local inhabitants, culture, tradition, public institutions in the area visited) we can say that tourism is the activity with recreational character that consists of walking or traveling by different means of transport with the purpose of visiting picturesque regions, localities, or sightseeing. Tourism is a complex phenomenon that also involves social and economic trends and material values circuit between countries, in the process of spending free time.

2. Overall physical-geographical and economic presentation of the Banat Mountains

The Banat Mountains represent the southern section of the Western Carpathians and are located between the Danube valley in the southern part and Mures valley in the north. The eastern part is indicated by the separation corridors from the Southern Carpathians (Timis - Cerna Corridor and Bistra Corridor), and in the western part it comes close to the Western Hills and Plain. The Banat Mountains were formed by intense processes of folding and converging movements of the tectonic plates along the alpine orogeny. Granitic intrusions were previously formed during the Hercynian orogeny. The Banat Mountains represent the lowest Carpathian mountain unit, with a maximum altitude of 1446 m of the Semenicul Mare peak.

The main attraction factors are represented by the value of certain tourist areas, with the possibility to visit from all directions. Other favorable elements worth listing would be the hydrographic network, the climate with Mediterranean influences and the proximity of larger urban centers. In the southern part, the Danube has formed a valley in the gorge (Iron Gates Gorge) distinguishable through its ampleness, length (154 km-the largest gorge in Europe of this kind) and picturesque character. The western hills enter the mountain area through bay depressions: Oravita Depression. Other depressions have an intramontane aspect: the Almajului (Bozovici) Depression on the Nera River, the Caras-Ezeris Depression on the Barzava River. The Banat area has one of the most interesting *geographical positions*. Located in the southeastern part of the Pannonian Basin, it mostly spans a smooth and low plain, with vast marshy areas (Timis, Bega, Aranca) but also with wind accumulations (sand dunes of Deliblata). The region also includes areas of low and medium height mountains (alpine Banat), which culminates in its eastern border at over 2,000 m altitude (Tarcu Peak, 2,190 m). Units of low hills (200-300 m) border these mountains interrupted by the indentations of real plain "bays", which extend along the main rivers toward the inner mountain mass, facilitating traffic. The geographical position of the Banat mountains is presented in figure 1.

Banat is in fact situated on the edge of *three large ethno-cultural complexes* that make contact with: the Eastern Latin complex (Romanians), the South Slavic complex (Serbs) and the Finno-Ugric complex (Hungarians). The *colonizations* undertaken by the House of Habsburg during the eighteenth century will add a fourth ethno-cultural complex, the Germanic one, which will play a decisive role in the space organization and social and economic development of the region for a long time. Mainly, depending on the spatial distribution of these ethno-cultural complexes, the territorial division of the historical Banat (1918) will be produced between the *three neighboring states*: Romania, Serbia and Hungary.

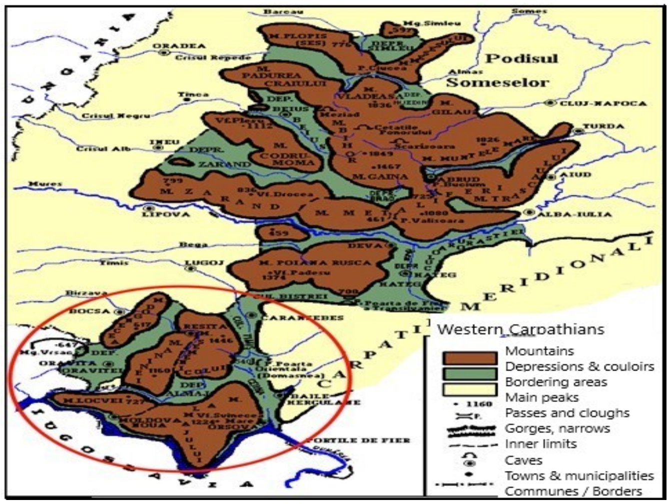

Figure no. 1. Geographic position of Banat Mountains
Source: www.geocities.com/dmarioara/carpocc.htm edited

Banat is located in an intensely politically polarized region in Europe, less than 700 kilometers from 15 European capitals, feeding a diverse and rich local heritage spawned by the interaction with the waves of ideas and values, people and goods which it has permanently benefited from. The transport infrastructures, still precarious, attracted by large transcontinental traffic axes, registered overall on convergent directions, connecting Central Europe and South-Eastern Europe, respectively the Mediterranean and Baltic Sea (Danube valley, European couloir No. 4, the Trieste - St. Petersburg connection, etc.) basins are completed by the efficient airport infrastructures from Timisoara (with 1 million passenger traffic in 2008) and Arad, with the role of communication between the large regions from this part of Europe. The improvement of these infrastructures and the related services will allow Banat to consolidate its reputation as an attractive, open and dynamic identity area, with potential for remarkable intercultural dialogue.

Currently, it has a population of almost 2 million inhabitants, out of which 0.7 million in Serbian Banat and about 1.25 million in the Romanian Banat (including the northern part of Mures, up to the border with the Crisul Alb basin). The population density is, however, reduced in the Romanian side, especially in the mountainous Banat (38 inhabitants/sq km) and slightly higher in the plain areas (78 inhabitants/sq km in Timis County), which gives a certain inconsistency to the efforts to capitalize on the local natural and human heritage.

The Romanian Banat has an advanced degree of urbanization (61%), above the national average, but a life expectancy of only 71 years, below the national average, mainly due to the morbidity rate resulted from the traditional high-fat diet. In addition to its geographical position in Central Europe and in the socio-economic and political context of the Habsburg Empire, Banat was the first industrial region in Romania, renowned since the second half of the eighteenth century and which stood out in the nineteenth century. Based on competitive material and human resources and successful local and foreign investments, Banat has exceled as a traditional pole of attracting surplus labor and innovation resources from different regions of Europe and Romania.

3. The tourist history of the mountainous Banat

From a geographical-historical point of view, Banat has the shape of an irregular quadrangle, with an area of about 28,500 sq. km., centered around the city of Timisoara, as the main polarizing center. Its territory limits are marked by well-defined natural elements: the Danube river in the south, the Tisza river in the west, the Mures river to the north, the ridges of the Poiana Rusca Tarcu, Godeanu and Mehedinti mountains in the east. Only the northern border is controversial in specialty literature, due to the identity interference between Transylvania and Banat, in the area between Crisul Alb and Mures rivers.

Divided after 1779 into provinces and after 1920 into counties, Banat suffered some separations that could very well have been avoided, given its relatively small area, similar to that of Belgium or the Netherlands. Unfortunately, the central interests often pursued both its splitting into distinct and unrelated territorial units, led in a centre-based spirit, and the separation of some marginal areas, which were discreetly attached to other regions. The autumn of 1716 marks the liberation of the city of Timisoara from the ruling of the Ottoman Empire. Subsequent to the conquest, the Habsburg Empire will reintegrate Banat into European Christianity, the imperialists bringing the modernization specific to those times to Timisoara. The release of Timisoara from Ottoman domination was achieved in a particularly turbulent European context, a context in which the great empires were governed either by the ambition to rule new territories, by the fear of strengthening competitors, or by erasing the failures that weakened their power.

The region was part of the Hungarian Kingdom, then, in the sixteenth century, of the Ottoman Empire, after which it was incorporated in the late eighteenth century in the Archdiocese of Austria, which became the Austrian Empire. After 1867, it was part of the Hungarian side of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and after the First World War, Banat was divided per ethnic lines between the three national states whose ethnic groups lived in the area, Yugoslavia, Romania and Hungary. The proclamation of the Banat Republic in 1918 was an attempt to preserve the unity of the multiethnic and multi-denominational Banat, but failed due to the promises made to Romania prior to the war and Serbia's territorial claims.

The analyzed territory forms what is commonly known as the "historical Banat", with a unitary evolution starting from 1718, from its conquest under Ottoman control by the Habsburg Empire until 1918. The regional identity of Banat has been strengthened especially during this period, when the House of Habsburg directly administered the province (until 1867), subjecting it to a complex process of identity reconstruction, through colonization, a real social engineering experiment (luckily successful).

Following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, after the First World War (through the Treaty of Trianon), the geographical-historical Banat is divided, according to the principle of nationalities, between Romania, Yugoslavia and Hungary. Thus, a "Romanian Banat" (18,977 sq. km) and a "Serbian Banat" (9,276 sq. km) are formed and included in the Vojvodina Autonomous Region, to which a small area (248 sq. km) is added, south of the Mures River streaming into Tisza river, which returned to Hungary. Currently, the main regional structures in the Banat area are presented in figure no. 2.

Following this division, the resulting sectors evolved distinctly, each within the policy of the state to which they belonged, but without losing all of the common characteristics, deeply instilled in the material structures, spiritual values, social behaviors of the population.

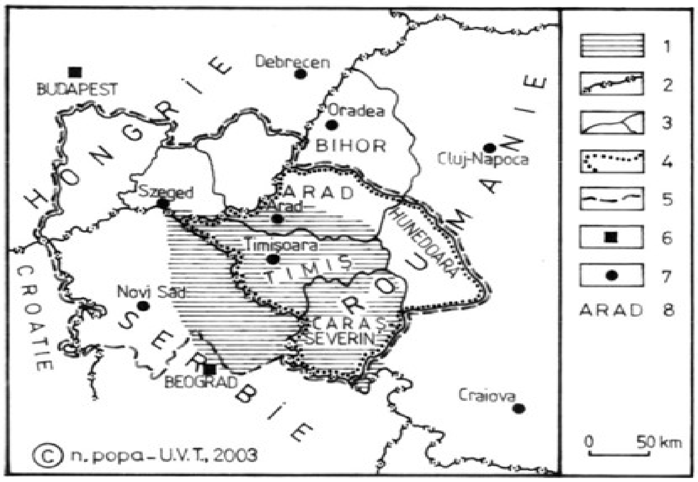

Figure no. 2. Regional structures at the western border of Romania
Source: http://turism.cjcs.ro/ro/turism-montan.php
1 – Geo-historical Banat; 2 – state border; 3 – county border; 4 –Western development region border; 5 – DKMT Euroregion border (DKMT =Danube-Kris-Mures-Tisa Euroregion); 6 –state capital; 7 – town with over 150,000 inhabitants; 8 – western county of Romania.

These will be recurrent when, after 1989, the first premises for the development of freer cross-border relations would occur, which would lead to the formation of new regional cooperation structures, this time with a cross-border character, as is the case of the Danube-Cris-Mures-Tisa Euroregion, presented in figure no. 3.

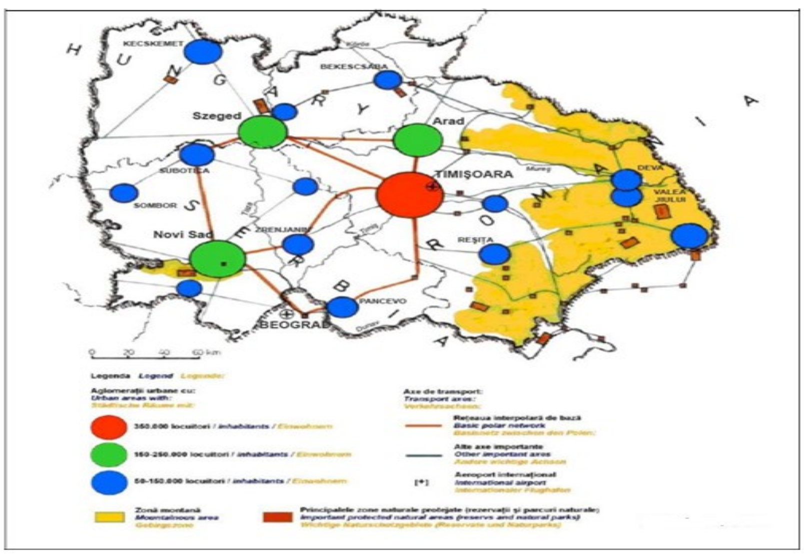

Figure no. 3. Multipolar Transborder Dunare-Cris-Mures-Tisa Euroregion
Source: editing acc. to Popa, N. (coord.), (2017), *Banat: identity, development, regional collaboration*, Mirton Publishing House, Timisoara, p.32

The Banat Mountain area was, prior to this unfavorable present, one of the Romanian tourism cores. The rich nature and picturesque beauty of the area have attracted many tourists. Up until now, many of the tourist attractions in Banat have been swallowed by time, and those that have endured over time are just scars of the past and loss of interest. Whether they were recreational areas or real spas in the past, the balneary resorts in the county were real attractions for tourists everywhere. The first mentioned on the list of wonders now extinct was the Steierdorf resort, also called the Aurora of Banat. This beautiful place was found five kilometers from the town of Anina, in an oasis of peace and fresh clean air. Especially the preservation of multiculturalism and an obvious intercultural dimension, both in the Romanian and in the Serbian part of Banat, was a favorable premise for the competitive unfolding of the socio-economic processes but also for the cooperative attitude. In a magical place, surrounded by tall fragrant fir trees, a real tourist paradise was opening up. The development of the area closed its wings at the end of the First World War, which left deep marks on the buildings there.

In addition to these areas with a unquestionable tourist potential decades ago, but which sadly became slowly extinct, we must not forget those that survived the battle with time. Resorts such as Herculane, Dognecea, Brebul-Nou, Calacea or Valiug still preserve, among ruins, the memories of the times when they used to shine.

4. Forms of tourism practiced in the Banat mountains region

The tourist potential of an area can be defined by the set of elements that can constitute tourist attractions and that could properly be prepared for visiting and receiving tourists. The concept of tourist attraction expresses the affective, cognitive-aesthetic side of the elements of the tourist potential, which influences certain sectors of the tourist demand through the impressions produced. The tourist resources include, besides natural or anthropic tourist attractions, all the specific infrastructure and facilities that can be exploited into tourist activities.Depending on the conditions offered by each locality or rural area, but also on the reasons tourists have when traveling in rural areas, as forms of rural tourism, we distinguish: cultural-historical tourism, cultural-religious tourism, balneary tourism (for maintaining or restoring health), business tourism, adventure tourism, leisure and recreational tourism, transit tourism and, last but not least, tourism for winter sports, hunting and fishing.

Next, depending on the natural and anthropic tourist resources, we will deliver a presentation of the rural tourist potential of the Banat mountains region, classified in the forms that we consider to be more present.

4.1 The cultural-historical tourist potential

Cities full of history, dozens of churches and architectural monuments, typical mountain villages, people who preserve an authentic way of life, in a nutshell, the Banat mountains area has a cultural heritage dating back over 2000 years, supported by a peaceful quiet nature. The region under scrutiny belongs to a geographical area located at the merging of two great civilizations, Eastern and Western, which during the first and second millennia marked the political, religious, economic, social and cultural destiny of the European society. The rural tourist potential with cultural-historical character of Banat historical region is very rich and consists mainly of ancient and medieval fortresses, castles, museums and memorial houses.

4.2 Balneary touristic potential

Mineral waters, this natural gift has been cherished from ancient times. They still offer opportunities to improve health and relax for both young and especially the older generations. The emblematic resort of Caras-Severin County remains Baile Herculane. Crossed by clear watercourses, forests and extensive natural meadows, the town is known for its healing springs since Roman times. The resort town of Baile Herculane is located in southwestern Romania (Caras-Severin County), on the Cerna Valley, between the Mehedinti Mountains in the east and the Cerna Mountains in the west at the altitude of 160 m, 41 km northwest of Drobeta-Turnu Severin Municipality (the residence of Mehedinti County).The thermal-mineral springs located here have been used since the Dacians, being documented during the Romans in 152BC. Due to their curative action, they were used by the locals during the

Middle Ages, yet the erection of the first balneary constructions began only in 1724; destroyed by the Ottomans in 1738 and 1788, the buildings were quickly rebuilt. The middle of the 19th century finds the resort at a European level of development, both in terms of therapeutic character and high standards regarding accommodation and food offered. The heritage buildings, built in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, boast the Baroque, Neoclassical, Neo-Renaissance, Secession styles as a whole or architectural combinations.

Through their antiquity and beauty, the historic buildings confer the Herculane Baths the sensation of its glorious past; Unfortunately, nowadays, due to negligence, carelessness and divergent interests, these jewels are affected by an advanced process of degradation, which requires urgent intervention measures to protect and restore them.

4.3 Cultural and religious touristic potential

Spending leisure time, holidays or vacations in rural areas and visiting places of worship is, according to some opinions, how the so-called religious rural tourism is actually practiced. Our opinion is that depending on the motives of the visits to places of worship, we can distinguish cultural rural tourism, when the reason is architecture or painting of objectives, respectively religious rural tourism when going on pilgrimages on the occasion of certain religious celebratory days or when visiting these objectives for praying to certain miracle-working religious paintings or other symbols that people believe to be beneficial to human health. On the other hand, the ecotourism and leisure tourism potential seems to be a necessity springing from the desire to rediscover nature, to closely get in touch with the flora and fauna, true natural treasures, with significant scientific, tourist and landscape value and which the Banat mountains region is not missing.

The maximization of Banat's cultural heritage through cultural tourism currently encounters multiple difficulties determined not only by the above mentioned aspects, but also by the lack of modern accommodation and food facilities and a viable infrastructure such as access roads, parking lots, hygienic-sanitary facilities. The lack of specialized staff to deal with the future of the monuments, together with the lack of promotion are the main shortcomings in the tourist capitalization of this extremely rich and diverse heritage. These conditions require measures to regulate the unfavorable impact of these factors and, in the not too distant future, to allow the protection, restoration and enhancement of Banat's heritage through cultural tourism, nationally and internationally.

4.4. Ethnographic and folkloric potential

These lands offer a spectrum of ethnofolkloric attractions for potential tourists, from traditional crafts to traditional holidays, from customs to cultural events already integrated within traditions.The mountainous areas in Romania, and especially in Banat, deserve special attention and a political strategy at EU level, for social, economic and ecological reasons. Models of economic development during this period did not take into account that some natural resources are non-renewable and that the environment must be preserved healthy for future generations. They did not lead to ensuring equity between people or similar material, social and cultural conditions for human development. Due to these findings, the development crisis was defined as "a rupture between the accumulation process and the set of spontaneous regulatory mechanisms and procedures for regulating social relations, on the one hand, and the relationship between man and nature, on the other" (Harribey, JM, 1998, p.6).

Acknowledgment of this crisis has led modern societies to take steps to find a new path of development, as there is a possibility of destroying not only the environment but also their own future. The touristic enhancement of the regional cultural heritage must be a constant concern of the authorities and specialists involved in these cultural fields. The results thus obtained can be spectacular and beneficial on multiple levels: cultural, tourist and financial.

5. Conclusions

Banat is a territory with inherited very old structures, but constantly renewed by the succession of influences and dominations it has endured throughout its history. The identity of Banat is paradoxically conveyed by its ability to assimilate and harmonize values of different origins, in a symphony in which, although the initial nuclei lose firm contours, rarely are they completely "melted" into forming a homogeneous mass. Respect for the specifics of others is a lifelong rule set here, confirmed by the lack of intercultural tensions in a region traditionally characterized by an extraordinary fusion of nationalities, religions, customs, mindsets and internal organization.

All these are challenging arguments for the development of cultural tourism in Banat, inheritor of a multicultural material and spiritual heritage of great value, still little recognized and included in the national and international tourist circuits.

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THE IMPACT OF FRONT OFFICE STAFF PROFESSIONALIZATION ON INCREASING PERFORMANCE OF THE ACCOMMODATION UNITS

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Cristina Ciami[2]

Abstract.
The hospitality industry is a relevant component of the global business environment and the third most important socio-economic activity in the European Union. As regards human resource, a significant percentage of European employees work in this field and their number is expected to increase significantly over the next ten years. At the same time, an increase in interest in the professional training of these employees is expected, which is currently less relevant. The present paper highlights the gap between the socio-economic relevance of the hotel industry, on the one hand, and the characteristics of work in tourism, on the other hand. The paper also presents the direct impact that front-office staff can generate on the revenues of the hotel company, in order to emphasize the relevance of professionalization of work in tourism at all hierarchical levels.

Key words: *tourism, front-office staff, work in tourism, hotel tariff*

Introduction

According to the *World Travel and Tourism Council* (WTTC), the tourism and hospitality industry is one of the most important sectors of the global economy, generating a turnover of 6 trillion dollars annually and employing over 230 million people, which means a significant part of the world's workforce (one tenth of the world's employed). At European level the tourism activity is also remarkable. Thus, in 2018, 51% of tourists traveling around the world arrived in Europe and 39% of the revenue of the tourism industry was generated in Europe (which is an increase of 8% compared to 2017, which in turn it was a year in which there were positive developments in tourism). Also, tourism as a branch of the service industry, exerts a strong influence on the labor market, has a strong social effect, creating a large number of different jobs in different sectors.

However, the characteristics of work in tourism place human resources somewhat on the periphery of the labor market. Thus, the most important resource of the industry is quite little appreciated.

In a socio-economic context in which the tourist market has registered significant increases due to opportunities determined by the evolution of society (eg: increasing leisure time, increasing the ease of movement of people, the existence of various sources of information that increase the attractiveness of tourist destinations , fashion, population emancipation etc.) it can be appreciated that the tourism industry has benefited from a favorable situation without the need to develop strategies to increase the attractiveness of the offer. On the other hand, at least in the medium and long term, the competition is becoming fiercer on the tourism market, which determines the need to increase the interest of hotel operators to find new and innovative competitive advantages, because beautiful rooms located in attractive places are no longer enough in this market.

That is why we support the need to increase the importance of human resources employed in the hotel industry, as a strategy for the sustainable development of companies in the field.

1. Characteristics of work in tourism

The characteristics of tourism work are numerous. But, in accordance with the objective of this paper, however, we present those characteristics that justify the appreciation according to which work in tourism is not evaluated at its true value.

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- *Job instability and a high rate of staff mobility* - this feature is especially evident at the operational level. According to ILO (*International Labor Organization*) estimates, 25% of tourism staff in the European Union are employed part - time, and in countries such as the United Kingdom, Denmark and the Netherlands, this rate exceeds 50%. These reasons make the hospitality industry to be called a "transition industry" which means that many employees see the tourism jobs as a temporary occupations that pave the way for other careers. This aspect has a number of negative consequences such as: high level of stress, low morale, inefficiency, low quality of service delivery, high costs for labor replacement, investments in training which is no longer recovered, disloyal and not work involved employees, low profit rate.
- *A high share of jobs do not require qualification or require semi-qualification* - This characteristic explains the low level of welfare for those who work in tourism, the low level of payment, difficult working conditions. This characteristic also explains the lack of formal tourism education of the employees. To consider that working in tourism does not require specific education and skills is a stereotype that should be overcome in the current competitive context that characterizes the tourism industry.
- *Poorly organized internal labor market* - internal market refers to characteristics of the labor market in a particular field, tourism for example. The tourism internal labor market is considered a weak market because: there are no clearly defined employment standards, employees enter this market easily, the skills specificity is low, regular participation in training sessions is not necessary, there are no clear criteria for promotion and transfer, the salary criteria are volatile. The negative consequences of this feature are: low level of pay, high staff mobility, poor social image of the industry.
- *Low social status for tourism employees* - in many countries, tourism jobs are given a low level of social respect, which creates an "image problem" for the industry. The low social status of jobs in tourism is because these jobs are usually seasonal, part-time, poorly paid, are carried out in difficult working conditions, work is intense in periods of time that for the other areas of activity are holiday periods, the activity is associated with "serving others" or "cleaning up after others". Often the perception of jobs in tourism is transferred to employees in this industry who are considered uneducated, unmotivated, inefficient.
- *Low level of unionization* - this characteristic is determined by the high level of heterogeneity of the industry, by the fragmentation of the industry, by the fact that small organizations are predominant, by the specifics of employees, by the fact that many of the tourist entities are subcontracted, by the predominant paternalistic management style, by the characteristics of the internal labor market.
- *Skills Transferability* - many of the employees skills in the tourism industry are considered to be transferable, which means they are compatible with various segments of activity in the tourism industry but also with occupations in other sectors such as banking, retail, insurance, etc. This feature of work in tourism justifies the mobility of human resources as well as low wages, as long as there is a wide base of potential employees from which employers can recruit and select.
- *Human resources from marginalized or disadvantaged environments* - the tourism and hospitality industry employs, especially for the operational level and for the executors on the first levels of the organizational pyramid, young people, representatives of ethnic minorities, immigrants, generally people considered disadvantaged and marginalized in society.
- *Hard working conditions* - these materialize in irregular and intense work schedule in periods of time associated with the holiday, the use of the whole day as working time, low wages, lack of bonuses for overtime or for working on days off, a low level of job security, low opportunities for advancement, high level of stress etc.

In this context, it is very important for managers to understand the positive or negative impact that human resources can have on financial and of the overall performance of the hotel company and, consequently, to act towards the professionalization of work and the restraint of the performing employees. properly paid

2. Front-office staff as a determinant of the hotel performance

The role of front-office staff in determining the performance of the hotel company can be summarized in three categories of techniques:

A. Financial techniques
B. Non-financial techniques
C. Mixed techniques

A. Financial techniques

Financial techniques refer to those that have a direct impact on the level and structure of the hotel rates, as well as actions that can be taken by reception staff to sell hotel products / services at a certain rate.

A.1. Rates presentation to customers

Rates presentation refers to the technique of presenting a tariff for hotel guests, so that the perceived value of the product / service sold to increase. Although currently the communication of tariffs by front-office staff is increasingly replaced by online communication, this category of staff continues to be active in receiving reservation requests, dealing mainly with the management of reservations.

The rule is to first present to customers the highest rates or the most expensive package, then move on to the options with lower rates if customers refuse the first-rate offer. However, in the literature (Lieberman, 2011), it is suggested that the highest tariffs should not always be presented first. There are other techniques for presenting rates, such as offering first the middle room categories and then the lower ones or presenting the whole range of rates: first the booking rate in advance, then the standard rate and then comparison between the two and explaining the differences by cancellation conditions, time of payment and other issues. For price-sensitive guests, the most effective approach is to present the "bottom-up" tariffs, for example the presentation of the standard tariff followed by information on the possibilities to improve the service with additional fees.

Responsibility of communicating the rates, generates a series of professional skills expected from front-office staff, such as: the ability to analyze statistics on room availability, the communication techniques of presenting accommodation options to customers so as to increase the likelihood that they will choose a more expensive option, the ability to identify the needs of each guest.

A.2. Upselling technique

Closely related to the pricing technique, is the upselling technique. This is a sales technique that aims to get the customers to spend more by buying an updated or premium version of what they want to buy. This technique essentially contributes to achieving satisfactory levels for two relevant indicators in the hotel industry, namely *Average daily rate (ADR)* and *Revenue per available room (RevPAR).*

The upselling technique can be applied at different times of the stay:

- check-in - for example, guests can be offered a room with increased or more modern comfort, if available
- check-out - for example, guests may be offered the opportunity to book for future stays

For this technique to succeed, the front-office staff must have the ability to make a suitable offer, which clearly presents benefits to hotel guests at the right time, when guests are ready to buy. In applying the technique, the advantage of the new offer should be emphasized, rather than the additional fees, that guests must pay for it.

To succeed, the front office human resources must have marketing knowledge as well as a clear understanding of the range of services the hotel offers and of the alternative functions and room facilities.

A.3. Discriminatory pricing technique

The discriminatory pricing technique involves charging different rates for different customer segments, but for the same service. The correct application of this technique significantly influences the hotel's income. These discriminatory rates may be applied depending on aspects such as: hotel room location, room size, bed linen, furniture and other additional facilities, time of accommodation or departure, booking flexibility, duration or frequency of stay.

To effectively apply this technique, front-office staff must be able to explain tariff differences so that customers are not offended. This is a very important skill for the reception staff due to the fact that, thanks to technology, customers can easily compare the prices charged on various distribution channels and can ask questions at the hotel reception about why the rates are different.

B. Non-financial techniques

These techniques do not directly influence the hotel's revenue but provide the basis for revenue optimization.

B.1. Offer and the length of stay control

The standard approach to booking rooms in a hotel is that reception staff must accept any new booking, regardless of the length of stay, as long as rooms are available for the requested period. However, this approach could lead to a "dilution of tariffs", which means that the revenue generated by such a booking technique is lower than that which would have been obtained if the booking technique were to wait, selling at the best rate. Also, within this category of techniques is the one that involves controlling the length of stay, for example setting a minimum limit or, very rarely, a maximum limit of stay.

Front office staff need to know these techniques, understand their motivation and implement them. Front-office staff must also understand that limits of the tariffs are not fixed but may change depending on the degree of occupancy. For example, when the occupancy rate is below 75%, no limit on the length of stay applies, when the occupancy rate exceeds 75%, the minimum duration can become 2 nights, and when the occupancy rate exceeds 85% the minimum length of stay can become 3 nights.

B.2. Overbooking

To avoid negative effects on no-show revenue, last minute cancellations or unexpected departures, many hotels practice overbooking, that means they accept more bookings than available capacity. In most cases, the front-office staff is involved in implementing the overbooking policy at a practical level

There are two types of overbooking situations. A first type is that overbooking is done for specific room types, rather than for the entire hotel. In this case, the solutions are much easier to find, guests can be offered other rooms under the pretext of a free upgrade or moving the room during their stay. Another type of overbooking is a more aggressive one and consists in the fact that it is done for the whole hotel. In this situation the front-office staff has a greater involvement. This involves checking the booking database to identify certain bookings that may be prone to cancellation, to seek internal sources to expand usable capacity by taking steps to make rooms with certain defects usable, moving guests to another hotel and providing assistance and so on.

C. Mixed techniques

These techniques can influence both the room rate and the number of rooms available at each rate level.

C.1.. Conversion of the reservation channel

This technique involves converting bookings from higher cost distribution channels to lower cost channels or direct selling. Many hotels, especially large hotels, are less interested in converting bookings made through other channels to front-office employees, as most of the guests of these hotels are usually corporate and VIP guests. But in smaller hotels the involvement of front-office staff in direct bookings is relevant.

The channel conversion can be done when, for various reasons, guests who have made a reservation using other channels contact the hotel staff or, more frequently, the conversion of guests who repeat the purchase can be targeted so that customers are determined to use the direct booking for subsequent visits. Another option for stimulating direct bookings is the loyalty points system, for example only guests who book directly can enter the hotel's loyalty system.

To apply this technique, front-office staff must have specific skills related to direct sales as well as a relevant knowledge of costs and of the distribution strategies of the hotel. Reception staff must be properly informed or trained to identify the appropriate opportunity and method to convert customers and potential customers into direct booking guests.

C.2. Determining an optimal rate per room

Room allocation is an important responsibility of the front-office staff, and this is done before and on the arrival of a guest. During the process of allocating rooms depending on the type of guests, the type of room and the services booked, as well as other special requests, the reception staff may influence the allocation of the room rate. Reception staff must be able to understand and interpret the overall situation of the hotel's daily bookings and, on this basis, to be able to reallocate guests to different types of rooms available, for example by applying upselling techniques and avoiding bidding of free facilities if the lower room categories are no longer available upon arrival of guests.

In summary, the involvement of the reception staff in ensuring the financial performance of the hotel can be presented as follows:

Table 1.
Examples of integrating sales growth activities into the front-office staff activity

Front-Office staff responsabilities	**Front-Office staff practices that can influence financial performance**
Before arriving at the hotel	
Room reservation	Ability to present tariffs eloquently; Maintaining tariff limits depending on the type of tourists; Granting discounts only justifiably; Clear evidence and knowledge of the hotel's room inventory
Processing customer information	Understanding the reasons for rates differentiation for different guest segments and channels Recording and monitoring guest preferences and setting rates according to these preferences

Front-Office staff responsabilities	Front-Office staff practices that can influence financial performance
Cancellation of the reservation	Sending offers to move the reservation to another date, with a lower rate etc.
Guests arrival	Upselling: e.g. sale of the shuttle service from the place of arrival to the hotel.
Accommodation	
Guest registration	Understanding special guest preferences Carefully check and confirm payments made by hotel guests
Room allocation	Application of upselling and cross-selling techniques Optimal room rate allocation Offer to obtain a membership card to encourage direct sales
Stay	
Customer stay management	Application of upselling techniques through measures to improve the facilities of the room / tourist package during the guests' stay Selling various products and services that tourists can buy from the hotel
Overbooking	Monitoring and understanding of cancellation statistics, no-show rate, and timely identification of cancellable bookings to expand accommodation Communication with customers and establishing advantageous conditions for moving them
Guests Departure	
Procedurile de check-out	Room inventory control Correct identification and registration of payment differences Upselling: e.g. sale of the room departure service after the scheduled time
Follow-up	Reservations for subsequent visits

Conclusions

In this paper we have brought to your attention the importance that human resources in tourism have in ensuring quality services and, moreover, the influence they can have on the company's revenues. More specifically, the paper presents and analyzes the role of staff in direct contact with customers (respectively front-office staff). The special importance of this category of employees derives from the fact that they have a direct and continuous interaction with the hotel guests. The role of hotel reception staff was analyzed in terms of how they can contribute to hotel performance by applying sales growth techniques.

Regarding the ways of involving the staff from the hotel reception in the process of increasing the revenues at the hotel level, three main categories of techniques were identified, respectively: Financial techniques, Non-financial techniques, Combined techniques. The following have been described in the category of financial techniques: price presentation, upselling technique, discriminatory price technique. In the category of non-financial techniques were presented: Offer and the length of stay control technique and Overbooking. In the category of combined techniques were presented: Conversion of the reservation channel and Determining an optimal rate per room techniques.

Through the paper, the authors want to draw attention to the need to professionalize work in tourism and to transform human resources into a source of competitive advantage for companies operating in this field. This is an important aspect in the conditions in which the competition on the hotel services market intensifies permanently, and the classic competitive advantages lose their relevance.

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THE ROMANIAN AGRO-TOURISM ACTIVITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Elena, Sima[1]

Abstract:
In Romania, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the tourism industry due to the resulting travel restrictions. The feeling of health insecurity and the reduction of household income are leading to changes in consumers preferences for the summer 2020. These preferences shifted prominently from mass tourism towards less crowded touristic destinations, and in particular rural and nature tourism. Taking this into consideration, the aim of the paper is to analyze the tourism flow in Romanian agro-tourism boarding houses in order to identify the main trends and changes during the nine months of year 2020 comparative with the same period of year 2019, using the official empirical data and the specific indicators: tourist arrivals and overnight stay by months. The statistical data were completed by information from papers and studies published in specialty books and journals on tourism and rural development. The results showed that in the pandemic times many tourists have turned to domestic tourism, and the agro-tourism boarding houses play a more and more important role in Romania's tourism and their services are more attractive in comparison to other sorts of accommodation units.

Keywords: *COVID-19 pandemic, tourism market, agro-tourism, Romania.*

JEL Classification: L83, R11.

1. Introduction

Health, social security and economic stability of society are essential in defining life's quality. As result, a sustainable society is a society which is modelling its economic and social system such that the global natural resources and the support systems of life are maintained for the next generations. Tourism is one of the sectors most vulnerable to crises, natural and human - caused disasters (Pforr and Hosie, 2008).

Romania's effort to develop and promote agro-tourism is an important political aim. In the context in which agriculture is still considered ”a strategic sector of Romania due to the country's natural advantages and due to the economic and social environment” agro-tourism (an activity as many others, organized and developed in the rural environment by the members of a farm/agricultural household, which means the combination of the agricultural and tourism activities) becomes an alternative source of incomes and labour employment supported financially by European funds, and the Romanian agro-touristic potential represents a component of the sustainable rural development (madr.ro).

Having in view the positive role which is played by the promotion and development of agro-tourism activity as activity complementary to the agricultural one, organically integrated in the farms' economy, as well as benefiting by a non-polluted picturesque environment, and by the touristic natural attractions and the traditions and habits present in the village environment, the paper proposes itself an inventory of the tourism flow in Romanian agro-tourism boarding houses in order to identify the main trends and changes in the pandemic times, during the nine months of year 2020 comparative with the same period of year 2019, using the official empirical data and the specific indicators: tourist arrivals and overnight stay by months. The statistical data were completed by information from papers and studies published in specialty books and journals on tourism and rural development.

2. Overview of Romanian agro-tourism development

In Romania, agro-tourism is a form of tourism emerged from the need to find some solutions for increasing the rural farms incomes by putting into value their economic

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potential. This potential refers both to the existent accommodation potential, prepared and arranged mainly for the guests' receiving, and to the goods and services supplied for consumption to persons coming into the rural environment for relaxing, rest, leisure. The years that have passed since Romania joined the European Union was a time of radical change for the rural areas, with more or less positive effects. Romania received financial European support before and after its accession to the European Union related to the rural tourism and agro-tourism actions and recreational activities in the countryside (Sima, 2018).

According to the legal regulations, the rural households/farms' orienting to the completion of their incomes from the agricultural activities with incomes from touristic activities should be rearranged keeping the rural and archaic specific. The specific manifested through the construction materials, architecture, decorations, furniture must be re-discovered and kept as such, being protected from the urban civilization's contaminations. The main condition for a farm/household to receive the name of agro-touristic boarding house is to have sufficient rooms for its own family and supplementary capacities to accommodate and feed proper hygiene and sanitary conditions, means of information and other comfortable adjacent elements in order to constitute an attraction for the tourists. The licence for the accommodation and feeding of tourists, as well as the certificate for the classification of the comfort degree are granted by the central public institution responsible in the tourism field together with the respecting of the following criteria:

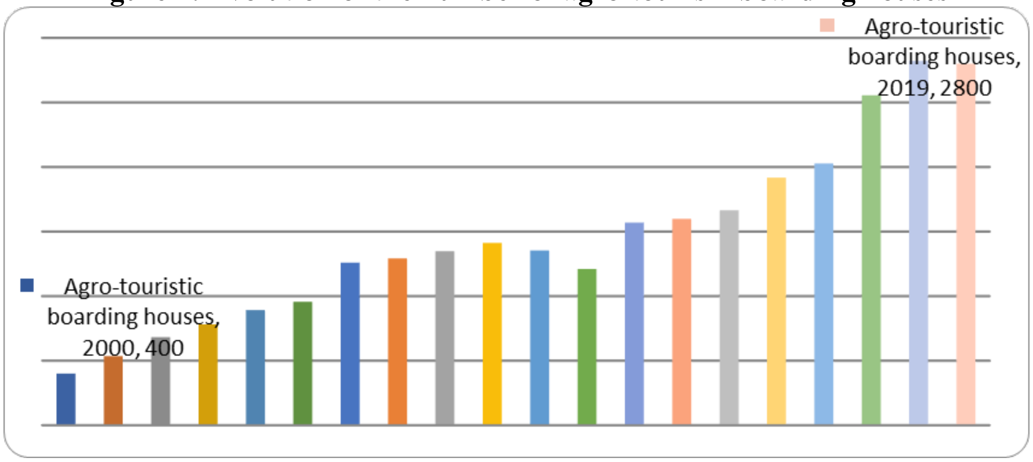
- Spaces and access destined to tourists must be separated from those of the host;
- The accommodation rooms must be detached with direct access from the hall or from the stairs' house, must be spaceful, sunny, shiny, with the heating possibility, furniture strictly corresponding to the norms, preferably with simple, traditional rustic furniture, eliminating the objects lacking utility for the tourists;
- To exist balconies and terraces at the rooms or halls destined to the tourists endowed with lounges, osier armchairs, tables and electric light;
- To have a day room destined to the tourists for serving the meals, leisure, lecture, games and others;
- To have sanitary groups endowed with cold and warm water, this must be well kept and perfectly clean;
- To exist the possibility to prepare the meal by the tourists in a separate space or in the kitchen of the host with the possibility of separating the compartments and equipments for tourists;
- To exist places and objects for children to play.

The last 20 years has seen a growth in active countryside tourism as increasingly urban populations seek relaxation and leisure in rural areas. The agro-tourism offers a possible solution to some of the problems associated with lost economic opportunities and population decline that accompany the waning of agriculture, and many opportunities including accommodation and other service provision, showcasing of local culture and heritage, and active countryside pursuits, the latter of which may be well-placed to capitalize on the move away from mass tourism products and a consumer desire for more niche and tailored offerings.

The regional and local authorities have embraced agro-tourism as an opportunity to bring new money into rural regions, stimulating growth, providing employment opportunities and thus beginning to halt rural decline. Ranging from traditional countryside pursuits, such as walking, horse riding, and bird watching, to the increasingly popular 'adventure sports' or 'extreme sports', such as snowboarding, windsurfing and kayaking, rural regions offer the required natural resources and quiet, controlled risk and excitement as an alternative to the perceived pressures and constraints of urban life.

The number of agro-tourism boarding houses registered at national level, during 2000-2019 period, indicate an upward trend, exception making the 2010-2011 period, when was registered a decrease (Figure 1).

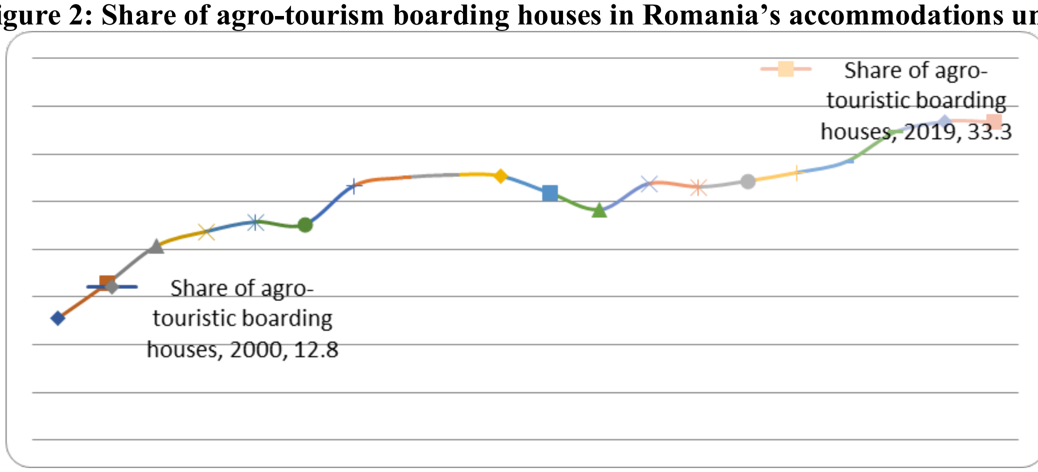
Figure 1: Evolution of the number of agro-tourism boarding houses



Source: Tempo-online database, 2020

The share of agro-tourism boarding houses in the total number of tourism accommodation units have continuously increased from 12.8% in 2000 to 33.3% in 2019 (Figure 2).

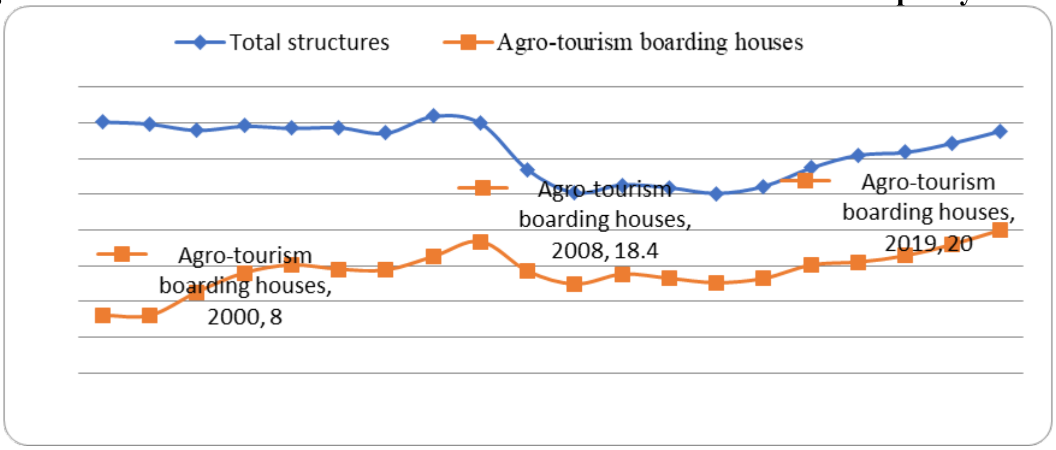
Figure 2: Share of agro-tourism boarding houses in Romania's accommodations units



Source: Tempo-online database, 2020

The flows of tourists have a deep influence on the indices of the net use of the accommodation capacity (calculated by reporting the number of overnight stays to the tourism accommodation capacity in use in a certain period) and tourism receipts. In case of the agro-tourism boarding houses the indices of the net use of the accommodation capacity increased from 8% in 2000 to 20% in 2019 (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Evolution of the utilization indices of tourist accommodation capacity in use



Source: Tempo-online database, 2020

Also, the agro-tourism flow are characterised by seasonality along the year, because the holidays planning mainly in the middle of the year. For example, in August the flow of tourists is 4.5 times higher than in February in agro-tourism boarding houses (Boghean and State, 2014).

But there are differences from a region to another regarding the tourist flows and the indices of the net use of the accommodation capacity in agro-tourism boarding houses. For instance in the Rucar-Bran area and Marginimea Sibiului area, the tourism flows are higher and also the indices of net use of the accommodation capacity are higher (Stanciu at al., 2014).

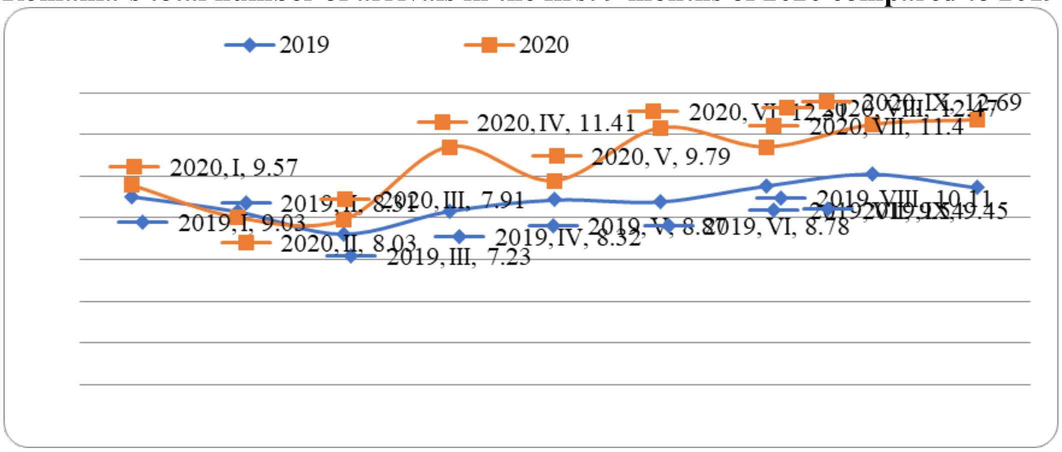
3. Trends and changes in Romanian agro-tourism flow in pandemic times

Between April and May 2020, 100% of all worldwide destinations introduced travel restrictions in response to the COVId-19 pandemic, through the closure of borders for tourists and suspension of international flights (UNWTO, 2020).

In Romania, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the tourism industry due to the resulting travel restrictions. Still reluctant to travel abroad and confused about the conditions of travel abroad, which changed from day to day, Romanians opted for holidays in isolated areas or in destinations offering in terms of outdoor activities. Thus, the Danube Delta and mountain areas occupied the first places in the preferences of Romanians. Also, the interest of Romanians towards the seaside remains unchanged compared to last year. The tendency of tourists to book holidays with caution was also observed. About 60% of them preferred last-minute holidays this year, booked even less than 48 hours before the start of the holiday, contrary to the trends of previous years when reservations were made early to take advantage of early booking offers.

In this context, agro-tourism boarding houses offer a pleasant stay to their visitors at lower prices compared to hotels. Tourism demand/flow is measured by the number of arrivals at tourism accommodations establishments. This variable was selected, instead of the number of nights spent at tourism accommodations establishments, because it is more related with accessibility and it is a better proxy for the number of tourist in a territory than the nights spent, which is linked with the duration of the stay. The share of the number of arrivals in agro-tourism boarding houses in Romania's total number of tourist arrivals in the first 9 months of 2020 compared to 2019 registered a more dynamic trend (Figure 4).

Figure 4: The share of the number of arrivals in agro-tourism boarding houses in Romania's total number of arrivals in the first 9 months of 2020 compared to 2019



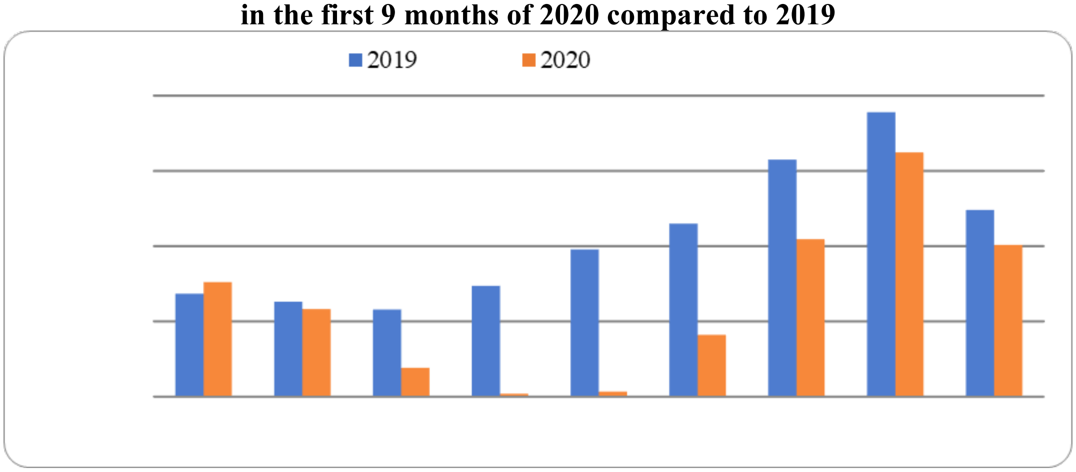
Source: Tempo-online database, 2020

Amid the pandemic, the summer season started late this year, in June. Holiday vouchers and cards were among the main methods of acquiring holidays that contributed to the resumption of domestic tourism.

The period July-August was also intended for holidays, while holidays were booked by Romanians and sometimes paid even a year before to benefit from reduced prices. However, the pandemic has changed, among other things, the behaviour of tourists, who this year prefers to opt for last-minute domestic holidays. After analyzing the evolution of the virus, tourists weighed the advantages and disadvantages of domestic travel in the context of restrictions.

The total number of tourists arrivals in agro-touristic boarding houses decreased in the first 9 months of 2020 compared to 2019 (Figure 5).

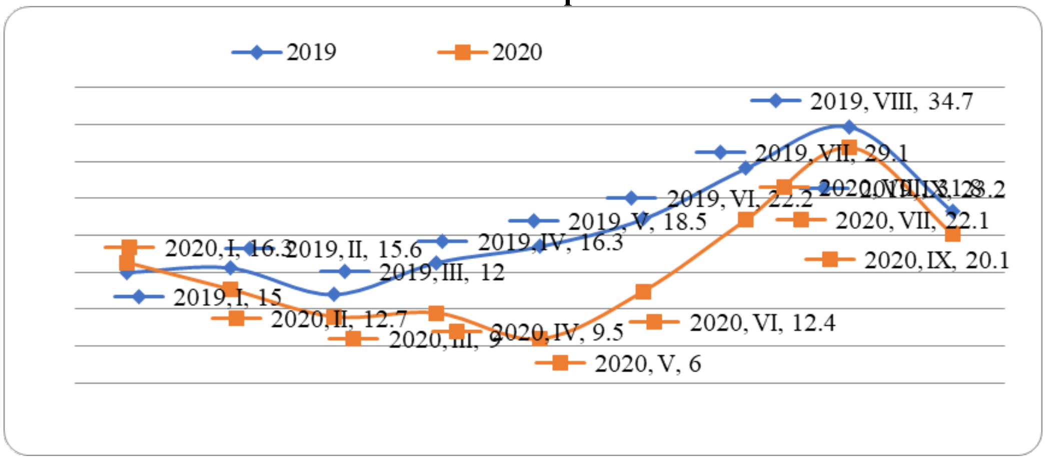
Figure 5: Evolution of arrivals in agro-tourism boarding houses, in the first 9 months of 2020 compared to 2019



Source: Tempo-online database, 2020

A similar decreasing trend was registered at the indices of the net use of the agro-tourism boarding houses, in the first 9 months of 2020 compared to 2019 (Figure 6).

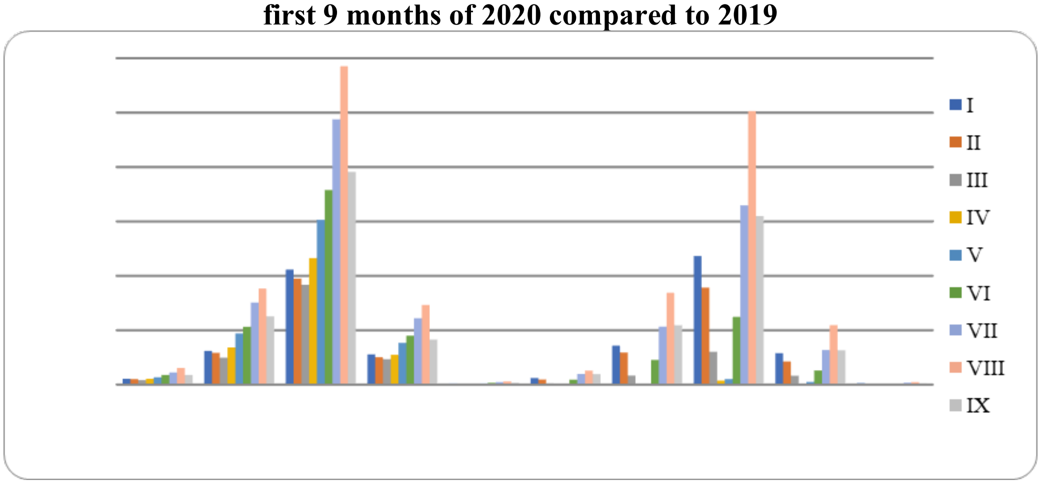
Figure 6: Indices of the net use of the agro-tourism boarding houses, in the first 9 months of 2020 compared to 2019



Source: Tempo-online database, 2020

The agro-touristic boarding houses from category 3 flowers/daisies rest in the preferences in this year and (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Arrivals in the agro-tourism boarding houses by comfort categories, in the first 9 months of 2020 compared to 2019



Source: Tempo-online database, 2020

The main destinations of the rural tourism and agro-tourism in Romania are:

– Maramureş (Săliştea de Sus, Bogdan Vodă, Săpânţa, etc.),

– Transylvania (Arieşeni, Gârda de Sus, Bistriţa Bârgăului, Băişoara, etc.),

– central part of Romania (counties Braşov – Bran, Moeciu, Râşnov; Covasna; Harghita – Tuşnad, Praid, Sub-Cetate; Sibiu – Sadu, Tălmăcel, etc.),

– the Carpathians and the Curvature Sub-Carpathians (counties Prahova – Poiana Ţapului, Cheia; Argeş – Brăduleţ, Rucăr; Buzău; Dâmboviţa; Vrancea),

– Moldova (county Neamţ – Agapia, Văratec; Suceava – Vatra Moldoviţei),

– Oltenia (counties Dolj; Gorj – Tismana; Vâlcea – Vaideeni;

– Mehedinţi – Ponoarele;

– Hunedoara – Haţeg, Bucium, etc.

4. Conclusions

The last year was a time of radical changes. The world is experiencing an unprecedented situation. As a result of the pandemic, many countries and regions have imposed quarantines, entry bans, or other restrictions for citizens of or recent travellers to the most affected areas. Other countries and regions have imposed global restrictions that apply to all foreign countries and territories, or prevent their own citizens from travelling overseas.

Between April and May 2020, national governments and local authorities had acting to discourage and prevent domestic tourism and people visiting second homes. Destinations have closed to visitors and tourists, the lockdowns have significantly reduced even local travel.

The diversity of impacts and responses will make a recovery for travel and tourism significantly more difficult for travel and tourism than for many other sectors. Amid the pandemic, still confused about the conditions of travel abroad, which change from day to day, the tourist is oriented towards less crowded touristic destinations, and in particular towards rural and nature tourism.

According to our analysis, in Romania, the feeling of health insecurity and the reduction of household income are leading to changes in consumers' preferences for the summer 2020. Thus, the Danube Delta and mountain areas occupied the first places in the preferences of Romanians. Also, the interest of Romanians towards the seaside remains unchanged compared to last year.

The period July-August was also intended for holidays. Holiday vouchers and cards were among the main methods of acquiring holidays that contributed to the resumption of domestic tourism. The tendency of tourists to book holidays with caution was also observed. About 60% of them preferred last-minute holidays this year, booked even less than 48 hours before the start of the holiday, contrary to the trends of previous years when reservations were made early to take advantage of early booking offers.

The agro-tourism boarding houses are representative accommodation units in the Romanian preferences. The numbers of arrivals in agro-tourism boarding houses, in the first 9 months of 2020 compared to 2019 was lower but the share of the number of arrivals in agro-tourism boarding houses in Romania's total number of tourist arrivals in the first 9 months of 2020 compared to 2019 registered a dynamic trend.

The reasons why the agro-tourism boarding houses are considered representative accommodation units in the pandemic times are the following: recreational infrastructure offering access to less crowded and natural areas; small capacity accommodation offering the feeling of health security; the healthy food which can be found there; the managers are more and more focused to increase the comfort level according to the quality standards and to increase clients' satisfaction degree; a pleasant stay at lower prices compared to hotels; traditional countryside pursuits, such as walking, horse riding, and bird watching; the increasingly popular 'adventure sports' or 'extreme sports', such as snowboarding, windsurfing and kayaking. Rural regions offer also the required natural resources and quiet, picturesque settings necessary to enable tourists to controlled risk and excitement as an alternative to the perceived pressures and constraints of urban life in pandemic times.

The higher flow of tourists in rural areas of Romania has determined the alignment of the offer of tourist services in terms of accommodation capacity (establishments and places) so that the ratio demand/offer to be balanced and the economic efficiency in the travel and agro-tourism sector to be higher. This means a better management and strategic planning in agro-tourism offer using innovation and creativeness in assuring infrastructure in close relationship with tourism demand.

Therefore, the analysis led to the conclusion that tourism has been continuing in Romania, a fact confirmed by the preferences of Romanian tourists for seaside and mountain areas. But, the Romanian agro-tourism potential is not enough valorised, there are still discrepancies between demand and offer, the promotion of agro-tourism need to be intensified, service quality has to be improved to increase the attractiveness of the country for the foreign tourist flow too.

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SECTION V
SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

THE ROMANIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM VERSUS THE GERMAN EDUCATION SYSTEM COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The development of society in general and that of education in particular have determined the gradual establishment, in each country, of an education system. The education system is the main subsystem of the education system and includes all institutions specialized in organizing and conducting education and training through specific contents and methodologies. The education system is designed and organized on the basis of general educational principles. The system of education has an internal structure, with hierarchical institutions among which there are certain relations. Starting from the idea as a good pedagogue, in addition to mastering the content of the discipline which he teaches and the work techniques specific to the teaching profession also needs a rich general culture, which would offer him opportunities for adequate educational intervention. In various situations, we will continue to debate the importance of training and development teaching skills: In the field of modern education in the last decade, an axis of major importance is that of continuing adult education, which must be directly related to validation in service. Gerard Vaysse, one of the leading specialists in the field, comes to specify that the purpose of lifelong learning is to prepare citizens to learn along life, because Europe sec. XXI will be that of knowledge. The researcher formulates the idea that this process presupposes a Copernican revolution in professional consciousness and tends for the person involved to obtain lasting effects in the practice of the profession.

Keywords: *education system, educational policies, school, children*

JEL Classification: A

1. Introduction

"Education is everything you see and hear," said the great patriot Nicolae Iorga. We see education as a strategic factor for development. Education has been and will remain a major area of interest, always on the public agenda. Education begins at birth and continues throughout life through the accumulation of knowledge. The education system is a subsystem of the social system, it is subordinated and integrated into the general structure of society, not only having an internal structure, but also subject to social impulses. external. The education system, viewed as a whole, refers, fundamentally, to the organization in institutional form of education, in this sense the education system comprising all the institutions that pursue the fulfillment of some educational objectives. It must also be said that the education system has a national and historical character, in other words, it evolves and develops in relation to the material development and the cultural specificity of each country. Therefore, there are common characteristics between the education systems between the different countries, characteristics and differences that are related to the economic, social and cultural conditions in that country. The education system includes: an input flow - it consists of human and material resources, namely: teaching staff, pupils, students, constructions and school spaces, technical-material endowments, school time, funds; the educational process - employs the whole set of resources, in order to achieve the educational objectives, combining in this sense the three essential educational functions: teaching, learning and evaluation; an output flow -

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represents the product of the system: educated, trained people, endowed with competencies and attitudes provided by the social demand of education.

2. Literature review

The school, throughout the times and in all the cultures of the world, through the apprenticeship systems, through the ensemble of knowledge, through the transmitted education represents object of study and research. "Statesmen, great scholars, philosophers, men of culture and art, people of school have carefully leaned on such a subject with implications for the development of present and future society."[1]

Politics is a set of intentions and decisions that operate in an institutional framework delimited by specific professional competencies: education, health, etc.

Educational policy represents "the coherent set of decisions and means by which a power ensures, during a given period, the compatibility between the fundamental educational options and the constraints characteristic of the social field in which they apply".[2]

In a broad sense, educational policy can be assimilated with educational plans or programs (policies), designed and applied globally or sectorally, including at the policy levels of the school, the class of students. In a limited sense, the educational policy should refer through decisions objectified by official documents: laws, government decisions, regulations, orders, etc.

Regarding this aspect, Constantin Popovici, in the 2007 article, "Educational policies for professional evaluation of teachers", stated "Educational policy is, in the first sense, the expression of value judgments that substantiates education, giving it major, priority guidelines at a given time. Under the this aspect merges with the philosophy of education. By the second meaning, that of putting in practice, we understand by educational policy the way of translating options into action
fundamentals: adopting a decisive curriculum and taking social measures, economic, administrative, regarding the realization of this curriculum. Any policy, inclusive the educational policy of a state, is based on the frameworks that carry it out. "[3]

Educational policy is "the sphere in which interests are presented and political aspirations connected with the education system (politics), but at the same time it is and a strategy, an action plan on the education system (policy). In al in the second sense, education policy is a specialized policy". [4]

Another definition for educational policy can be found in Roxana Tudorică. This one states that "educational policy includes options materialized in theses, documents official (politics - conquest and retention of power, policy - decisional sense)"[5]. Within the policies, the role of the considered strategies has a important role. The strategy itself, "as a component of policy, presupposes a concrete program of action. "[6]

3. Research methodology

The investigated problem - the topic of comparative research - The educational system - comparative research (Romania-Germany)

3.1. Romania

The national education system is structured in educational levels, so as to ensure the coherence of instruction and education according to the age and individual particularities of the pupils and students.

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[1] Wikipedia, Istoria educației în România

[2] Bîrzea, C, coord, 1993, Romanian Education Reform, Institute of Educational Sciences, Bucharest

[3]https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280099200_Politici_educationale_de_formare_evaluare_si_atestare_profesionala_a_cadrelor_didactice/link/5a1eefb30f7e9b9d5e008322/download

[4] Polony, I., 2003, Oktatás-gazdaságtan és politika. Budapest – Zsigmond Király Főiskola

[5] Tudorica, R., 2007, Education management in a European context. Bucharest - Meronia Publishing House

[6] Ibidem 7

The structure of the school year is established by ministerial order and is the same throughout Romania. As presented in. Holidays are the same in all counties.

Study structure The national education system includes the following levels:

The national pre-university education system includes the following levels: early education (0-6 years), consisting of pre-school level (0-3 years) and preschool education (3-6 years), which includes the small group, the middle group and the large group. Preschool education is organized in nurseries, kindergartens and day centers. Preschool education is organized in kindergartens with normal, extended and weekly program.

Primary education (ISCED 1) includes: "preparatory class and grades I-IV. Primary school is the form of education that addresses children from grades I - IV. The school program starts in the morning and ends at noon. The children who fall here are between 7 and 10 years old. For most subjects, children benefit from a single teacher and appropriate educational products. Only in certain more specialized subjects, children will be trained by other teachers. At the end of the second and fourth grades, children will have to take exams to assess the knowledge gained in Romanian and mathematics."[1] The educational units, by the decision of the board of directors, can extend their activities with the students after the classes, through "School after school" programs. In partnership with local public authorities and parents' associations, the "School after school" program offers educational, recreational, leisure activities to strengthen acquired skills or accelerate learning, as well as remedial learning activities. Some of these activities are paid for by parents. Where possible, the partnership can be established with non-governmental organizations with expertise in the field. "The program does not exist in all schools, and where the parents' program does not coincide with the school's, there is the possibility of private afterschool, the parents being the ones who bear the costs. The transition from primary to lower secondary education (gymnasium) is conditioned only by the promotion of primary education."[2]

Lower secondary (ISCED 2) or secondary education comprises grades V — VIII. Access to higher education is achieved through a national assessment exam and distribution in upper secondary education units. This form of education works during the day. It lasts 4 years, between the 5th and 8th grade. The children who fall here are between 11 and 14 years old. "The organization of classrooms is readjusted to better meet the needs of children and teachers. Many schools have special classes, such as classes that have intensive English or computer science courses."[3]

The upper secondary education (ISCED 3) can be: high school education, which includes high school classes IX — XII / XIII, with the following fields: theoretical, vocational, technological, or vocational education with a duration of 3 years. Vocational education graduates who pass the vocational qualification certification exam can take high school education courses. Any student who graduates from upper secondary education, with or without a certificate of graduation, can enroll to take the entrance exam in post-secondary institutions (however, post-secondary medical schools require a diploma of baccalaureate). "Vocational and technical education consists of: vocational education, ethnic education, post-secondary education. The high school lasts for a period of 4 years, of which 2 years are compulsory (grades IX and X), the next 2 years not being compulsory (grades XI and XII). At the end of the 12th grade, the end of high school, students are required to take the national Baccalaureate exam, they must obtain a general average of 6, and at least a grade of 5 in each individual test. The diploma obtained after this exam (baccalaureate diploma) allows students to enroll in entrance exams in higher education institutions."[4]

[1] https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/legea-educatiei_actualizata%20august%202018.pdf
[2] Joita, E., 2010, Methodology of education. Paradigm shifts. Iasi – Institute European
[3] http://blog.scoalaaz.ro/sistemul-educational-romanesc/
[4] Bîrzea, C, coord, 1993, Romanian Education Reform, Institute of Educational Sciences, Bucharest

Non-university tertiary education (ISCED 4) includes post-secondary education. “The Postgraduate School is organized for professional qualifications established by the Ministry of Education. Students who have passed or not passed the baccalaureate exam, according to certain criteria established by the ministry, arrive in post-secondary schools. Post-secondary education is achieved through the post-secondary school and the foremen's school. Both represent specialized training routes, with a duration of 1-3 years, depending on the complexity of the qualification. Graduates of post-secondary schools or foremen's schools acquire a level 5 qualification certificate.”[1] Post-secondary education is organized in post-secondary schools, within high schools with legal personality, or in colleges within accredited higher education institutions.

Higher education (ISCED 5-8), is organized in universities, academies of studies, institutes, schools of higher education, called higher education institutions or universities, provisionally authorized or accredited. High school graduates with a baccalaureate degree can enroll in higher education. Admission requirements differ from institution to institution. “The structure of higher education reflects the principles of the Bologna process: undergraduate studies, master studies, doctoral studies. Compulsory general education consists of primary education, lower secondary education and the first 2 years of upper secondary education.”[2]

Scoring System - For the first four years, there is a system called grades. These are Very Good (FB) - Excellent, Good (B) - Good, Satisfactory (S) -satisfactory, in fact, the meaning (barely) passes and Insufficient (I) - failed. “Students who do not get good grades throughout the year must take an exam in the summer with a group of teachers, and if the situation is not better, the student will repeat all year. "Grades" are used throughout the year, in a year-round assessment system, in tests, in school activities, at home or for projects. On average, for a subject (which will go in the catalog) is calculated by the teacher, taking into account the progress made by the student and a value from 1-4 for each grade. For grades 5-12, a grading system from 1 to 10 is used, 10 being the best grade, 1 being the worst grade and 5 being the minimum passing grade. The assessment system is also used with individual grades for each test, oral exam, project, homework or class exercises being included in the catalog. Some subjects take a partial exam at the end of the semester (Thesis). This requirement is regulated by the Ministry as mandatory for certain matters and cannot be changed. The thesis is worth 25% of the final average, and for grades 5 - 8 it is applied to Romanian language and mathematics and only in the eighth grade to Geography or History and in the case of a school with bilingual teaching in a minority language.”[3] Grades are given on the basis of strict ministerial guidelines, which matter the distribution in high school. At the end of each semester, the grade point average is calculated following a four-step procedure: First, the arithmetic grade point average is calculated. If there is also a Thesis, this average, with an accuracy of 0.01, is multiplied by 3, added to the thesis (rounded to the nearest whole number) and divided by 4. This average (with or without the Thesis) is then rounded to the nearest whole (9.5 is thus 10) and this is the average of the student per semester. The next step is to calculate the student's annual average. This is done by adding the averages over the two semesters of the student and dividing by 2. This average is not rounded. The last step is to add all the annual averages of the students and divide this amount by the total number of subjects. This is called the "general average". It is neither weighted nor rounded. If a student has an annual average of less than 5, in a maximum of two subjects, the student must have an exam (correction) in the subject in which he failed, in August, in front of a school board. If he does not pass this exam, he must repeat the whole year (repetition). If the

[1] Pătrăuță, T., 2008, European educational policies, Vasile Goldiș University Press Publishing House, Arad
[2] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/organisation-education-system-and-its-structure-64_ro
[3] https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/legea-educatiei_actualizata%20august%202018.pdf

annual average is less than 5 in three or more subjects, the student is no longer entitled to the proficiency exam and must repeat the year.

3.2. Germany

The structure of the school "year is different from country to country".[1] "The same happens with public holidays and holidays."[2]

Structure of studies In Germany there are several forms of care for children from 0 to 3 years, either through state institutions, private or belonging to different forms of organizations.

Kinderkrippen (Nurseries) "are childcare facilities in Germany for children up to 3 years old. In the nurseries there is also a division according to the age of the children, so the children will be able to be enrolled either in Liegekrippe (group of infants from 0 to 6 months) or in Krabbelkrippe (group of infants from 6 months to 12 months) or if they have turned one year old at Laufkrippe."[3]

Tagesmutter is another form of childcare, specific to this country, and the place where this activity is carried out is usually the very home of the person who takes care of the children. The number of children cared for is a maximum of five. The child who is cared for by a day mother has an intensive, individual care, modeled on the needs of the child. The advantage is that a Tagesmutter is much more flexible in terms of bringing the child and this can be established in advance with the parents, and the child remains in the same family environment. "Many day mothers are willing to take care of children on weekends or overnight. The costs for a Tagesmutter are lower than for a nursery, depending on the number of hours chosen. Also depending on the number of hours chosen, food and drink are included."[4]

Kindergarten / Kindertagesstätte - pre-school education from the age of 3 to 6 is done mainly in kindergartens (Kindergarten) or in day care for children (Kindertagesstätte).

All students in Germany, in the year they reach the age of six enter the Grundschule, which in almost all Länder refers to grades 1 to 4. After the primary school stage, secondary education is characterized by division into different paths. education. The Grundschule (elementary school) comprises grades 1-4, during which time undifferentiated subjects are taught. After that, students will focus on other types of schools, depending on their academic abilities and the aspirations of themselves and their parents.

Hauptschule is suitable for children aged between 10 and 15 (grades 5-9). Here, students study subjects common to students in other types of schools, only at a less competitive level and combined with a series of vocational-oriented courses. Upon completion, students obtain a certificate that allows them to continue their studies in a vocational school, which they will complete at the age of 18. Hauptschule - the general school that includes grades 5-9, ends with a graduation exam (Qualifizierter Hauptschulabschluss). "There is also the possibility to graduate the special 10th grade whose correspondent is equivalent to the graduation of a Realschule, ie to have Mittlere Reife, this consisting of a very good mark in the graduation exam (Qualifizierter Hauptschulabschluss) of a Hauptschule and a situation very good school in the 9th grade within it, at the end making an average between the two. There is also the possibility, after the abolition of the tenth class, to take the entrance exam in a Fachoberschule - "FOS". After students have completed compulsory education, they move on to upper secondary education."[5] The range of courses on offer

[1] https://roger24.de/info/structura-anului-scolar-baden-wurttemberg-gemania-2020
[2] https://roger24.de/stiri/sarbatori-legale-zilele-nelucratoare-2020-germania-pe-landuri
[3] https://pisicapesarma.ro/invatamantul-in-lume-episodul-3-scoala-in-germania/
[4] https://pisicapesarma.ro/invatamantul-in-lume-episodul-3-scoala-in-germania/
[5] http://www.integraledu.ro/ro/articles/sistemul-educational-german---abitur

includes general education and vocational schools, as well as vocational training within the Duales System (dual system).

Realschule provides education to children between the ages of 10 and 16 (grades 5-10), depending on the country. This combines "the academic side with the practical one, and at the end of the period a certificate is obtained that allows the continuation of studies in a vocational school, but students with a high academic level can transfer to a Gymnasium for graduation. Realschule is a school with a specialized profile that involves the graduation of 10 classes (Mittlere Reife)."[1] Successful completion of the 10 classes can pave the way for admission to a gymnasium or the Fachoberschule. However, there are differences, from land to land, in terms of when to start a Realschule, in the sense that you can start with the 5th grade or the 7th grade.

Fachoberschule – "is the correspondent of a post-secondary school and the study period is 2 years, ie the 11th and 12th grades, which ends with a technical or economic baccalaureate exam (Fachabitur)."[2] With the help of this type of baccalaureate you will be able to be admitted in the university education, but only in a faculty with the same profile, which is called Fachhochschule.

Gymnasium, depending on the land, is offered until the 12th or 13th grade (from 10 to 19 years old). After taking the final exams (Abitur) that allow students to continue their studies at a university or other higher education institution. Curriculum differs from one school to another, but generally includes: German, mathematics, physics, geography, biology, chemistry, computer science, arts, music, history, philosophy, civic education, but also a number of foreign languages. "The education offered in the Gymnasium is a classic one. Students can choose between 6 study directions: humanities and social sciences, mathematics and sciences, foreign languages and music. Each high school offers one or two of these programs, children can choose at least 2 subjects studied at advanced level and 7-10 standard subjects."[3]

Gesamtschule - is a form of school education, which does not exist in all Länder and which begins with the 5th grade and ends with the 9th or 10th grade.

The tertiary sector includes higher education institutions and other institutions that offer courses of study eligible for entry into a profession for students who have completed upper secondary education and obtained a higher qualification in education.

The pre-university education system in Germany "is focused on three forms of education. Gymnasium, Fachoberschule and Berufsoberschule. Fachoberschule (FOS): the condition for attending such a school is to pass the Mittlere Reife exam. Berufsoberschule (BOS): attending the courses of such a school is conditioned by the possession of Mittlere Reife or Fachoberschulreife and the possession of a trade; by graduating from such a school, ie the Fachhochschulreife (it is equivalent to the specialized baccalaureate exam within a Fachoberschule - Fachabitur), the way is opened to university education. Also, by taking an exam in a second foreign language, this school can be graduated with Allgemeine Hochschulreife (the equivalent of the baccalaureate exam in a gymnasium - Allgemeines Abitur). Those who want to study in Germany, have the opportunity to choose between several forms of university education such as on the one hand Universities and Technical Universities, and on the other hand faculties, which are based on the assimilation of subjects from a practical point of view. less theoretically, the so-called Fachhochschulen."[4]

If the first two types of faculties are found everywhere in Europe, "as far as the Fachhochschulen is concerned, they are more of a peculiarity of the German university

[1] Ibidem 20
[2] Ibidem 21
[3] https://www.dw.com/ro/jungla-din-învățământul-german/a-16041094
[4] https://adevarul.ro/educatie/studii-in-strainatate/modele-educatie-invata-elevii-germania-grecia-spania-bulgaria-1_534830aa0d133766a8b39cf5/index.html

education system. The main characteristics of such a type of faculty are: the emphasis is on practice and less on theory; the courses take place with a small number of students; subjects that are very related to what a graduate is facing at work; and last but not least, study time is much shorter than at a normal college / university; Fachhoschule graduates who have graduated with very good grades can only enroll in a doctorate at a university, because the Fachhochschulen does not offer the possibility of graduating with a doctorate."[1]

The German grading system includes grades from 1 for very good to 5 for poor. For a better differentiation of merits, grades with decimals can also be given. Almost half of the German Länder carry out an assessment of the work and social behavior of primary school students.

Germany launched the assessment of students on the basis of national standards in education in 2005. "The standards adopted in Germany in 2004 were implemented through national testing in secondary education in all Länder in 2005-2006, to help award certificates and grade students and in addition to testing for centralized comparison between the Länder, comparative tests based on educational standards have been given in each Länder since 2009. The test for the certificate of completion of studies in Germany which is issued in the year 9 or 10 is correlated with the curriculum of each Land but also with the national educational standards agreed at the federal level. Germany tests both German and mathematics as well as a foreign language. For students with SEN from normal schools who offer a qualification, participation in the national test is mandatory. For those in CES schools that do not offer a qualification, participation is not mandatory."[2] In Germany, the tests are set at the state level. There is only one national test during compulsory education. Their content reflects both the Land's curriculum in terms of the subjects and school years involved and the educational standards that were defined by the German Institute for Educational Development and adopted in 2004 by the Permanent Conference of Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs in the Landes. The tests are initially graded by the teacher responsible for teaching the subject of the test. They are then graded a second time by a teacher from the same school or a neighboring school, a qualified teacher in the same field and appointed by the principal.

4. Conclusions

In Germany, schools, as well as universities and institutes of higher education are usually state institutions. Private educational institutions play a secondary role according to the number of pupils and students. Except for them, all schools - general and vocational vocational - as well as higher education institutes and universities are free. Compulsory education begins at the age of 6 or 7 and lasts 9 or 10 years. "All children must first attend Grundschule (primary school) for 4 or 6 years. Generally, from the age of 6, children in compulsory education go to a local Grundschule. Then I choose separate channels. At this point, the parents decide - based on the teacher's advice - on the type of school the child should attend: Hauptschule (lower secondary school), Realschule (intermediate secondary school) or Gymnasium (upper secondary school). In some German regions there are also Gesamtschulen (comprehensive secondary schools) which combine all three types of schools into one form."[3]

In Germany, only a small proportion of young people complete their vocational training in school. About three-quarters of young people in any general school (not including high schools in the Gymnasium) are trained in companies. In addition, the company's students attend vocational school courses. That is why we are talking about a dual system in vocational training.

The Romanian education system is also free. It differs from Germany in both the system of scholarships awarded, the system of grading and final examination, and the

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[1] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/organisation-education-system-and-its-structure-64_ro
[2] Ibidem 25
[3] https://pisicapesarma.ro/invatamantul-in-lume-episodul-3-scoala-in-germania/

organization of classes. A small advantage is for Romania and the Baccalaureate Exam, because compared to Germany, it has an increasing degree of difficulty of the subjects, so that it can be taken not only by those with high school performance. Romania's grading system is more permissive, note 5, both in the subjects during the year and in the exams, except for the Baccalaureate Exam whose average must be over 6. Unlike Romania, where in the whole country there is only one school structure, the structure of the school year in Germany varies from Bundesland to Bundesland. Thus, the German authorities want to reduce as much as possible congestion on roads and highways before and after the holidays.

A disadvantage for the Romanian education system is the teaching methods applied in schools, as most of the time they are based on a lot of theoretical information presented only by the teacher, compared to Germany, which is very much based on the formation of the working spirit in team, of competences in terms of public presentations, in front of colleagues, of forming a more practical and less theoretical thinking as in the case of Romania.

The lack of an effective education system has the worst consequences, which can be seen by analyzing its points: insufficient practical training of young people to the real requirements of the labor market, especially for young graduates; the decrease of the interest of the young people from the rural environment to continue their studies within the high school education; leaving the educational system for economic, financial, social reasons, a situation valid both among teachers and students; negative assessment, both by students and their parents, regarding the quality of education; the decrease of the educational offer in vocational education; poorly developed rural infrastructure; small number of teachers compared to the number of students; decrease in qualified staff in education; lack of an attractive system of differentiated pay based on performance and work results; lack of free training programs for teachers.

From the beginning of this critical situation, the infection with the SAR-COV-19 virus, in Germany strict hygiene rules are imposed in schools, valid throughout the country, will continue to be applied to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

On the DW website, it is presented from the beginning of August how the school will start in September, in Germany. After each class, the class must be ventilated. Railings must not be touched when climbing and descending stairs and students and teachers must wash their hands as often as possible. Disinfectants will be used on a case-by-case basis, but do not spray on surfaces but add to washing water on the floor. Wearing a mask will not be mandatory, and teachers can be tested for free by coronavirus.

A novelty will also be the organization of students. "Usually, two years of education, for example the 5th and 6th grades, will form a kind of cohort, which can include several hundred students. As much as possible, the various cohorts should avoid contact with each other. Instead, those in the same cohort no longer have to keep the rules of distance. Each cohort will have its own perimeter in the school yard, in the wardrobe or in the canteen. The measure was adopted on the recommendation of the Robert Koch Institute, the supreme health authority in Germany, so that only one cohort could be sent to quarantine in case of infection, and the rest of the students would continue their courses." [1]

Online home education "will first take place in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern only by way of exception. For the 1st and 2nd grades, only three hours of distance education are provided out of a total of 40 hours per week, and for grades VII - IX, 26 out of a total of 101. According to the Regional Ministry of Education, distance education will be practice especially where teachers will not be able to come to class because they are part of risk groups. However, distance learning is included in the planning for the eventuality of the multiplication of infection cases."[2]

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[1] https://www.dw.com/ro/germania-%C5%9Fcoal%C4%83-%C3%AEn-pofida-pandemiei/a-54418953
[2] file:///C:/Users/Aviana%20Elena/Downloads/Politica_educationala_in_Uniunea_Europea.pdf

Kay-Alexander Scholz affirm "schools are offered a commercial cloud-based education management system in Norway. According to the website, the product has been on the market for 20 years. In Germany, it is not the schools that decide what to do, but the local health inspectorates. They will decide whether to place a class in quarantine or close a school or another. The political class, however, agrees that large-scale school closure measures, as happened during the lockdown, should be avoided as much as possible."[1]

There are also many doctors who declare themselves in favor of education in the most normal conditions. This is also because schools are not on the list of high-risk institutions. In the federal state of Saxony, 2,600 students and teachers were tested in May, and no acute infection was found, according to Wieland Kiess, head of the Leipzig University Clinic, which conducted the tests. Less than 20 of them had antibodies in their blood, an indication of a cured infection.

Germany is the European country that is said to have managed the epidemic the best, while Romania has been talked about since March about the way the activities are carried out. Unfortunately, even at this moment everything is not clear, there are still children and teachers who can not carry out their activities both from an economic point of view and from a social point of view.

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[1] Ibidem 28

THE COMPULSORY PRESENCE OF ntic IN TEACHING AND CHOOSING THE PROPER SOFTWARE

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Abstract

The New ICT tools have also reached the field of education in order to facilitate the educational endeavour. Nowadays, due to the current state of events concerning the Coronavirus worlwide situation, it has become a "compulsory necessity". With certain hesitation, teachers have started employing the New ICT tools both in drafting school documents but also in actual school classes. The work tools available for this domain have diversified starting from the Microsoft Office array of programs towards smart gadgets and software, specially created for the field of education.

This article presents a classification of the educational software and the manner in which we can analyse and establish the degree of usability of educational software.

Key words*: ICT; students; contemporary education; teaching platforms.*

JEL Classification*: I21, O30*

1. Introduction

It is a known fact that the NICT is the source for economical and social changes affecting all countries in the world nowadays. The Internet – one of the most important of these innovations has the greatest impact being global, full of resources, adaptable, dynamic, accessible to everyone and not very expensive to employ.

In Romania it had a slow start especially by reason of financial resources available. From the data provided by the National Institute for Research in Informatics (ICI Bucharest, www.ici.ro) we can trace the path of expansion of the World Wide Web. Starting with the year 1971 the first studies concerning computer networking are launched and in four years' time the early modems are assembled and communication channels are being evaluated for data carrying. There are many stages initiated until the year 1993 when the approval to register national domains (*...ro*) is received and the first Commercial Internet operator is named *SC EuNet SRL.* By the year 1998 – 20,000 *...ro* domain sites are listed and closer to the present moment in the year 2000 we had 3,817 indexed servers.

At the ending of the 90s the cyberspace enters the field of education transforming it forever. Thus, the expansion of the World Wide Web and the instant access on the Internet support intercommunication between every person worldwide. The input is continuously updated with incredible velocity favoring inquiry and research on any subject matter either real life or virtual. Electronic learning (e-learning) is a novelty of the period which provides the opportunity to educate online.

The present-day reality in the extent of education is reflected in the NICT, that is a modern approach, attractive and interactive (when it is possible to apply) manners of accomplishing the combined operation between educator and scholar in the aim of achievement of the educational goals.

Due to the corona virus school units have been forced to introduce various educational software and to employ gadgets (tablets/ smart phones) but in order for them to be efficient these need to comply to certain conditions and, of course with the school planning.

2. Short opening on the impression of NICT in the performance of teaching and studying.

Formal education is an action by which knowledge is both imparted and acquired by means of teaching and learning occurring eminently at school or at a providing education

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institution. It has been divided between traditional and modern teaching. Modern education techniques are diverse all over the world at the time being and the first choice is an association between the former and the new approaches. There are places where children are being taught in the manner of typical lessons and at the other end we have the ones that cannot perceive studying without their electronic tablet.

In general, when educators employ the usage of NICT during traditional classes, usually they only utilize worksheets created in Microsoft Word or sometimes Power Point Presentations and they do not access educational software.

But the new information communication technology consists of a whole array of scientific innovations that can be either programs (software) but also devices (hardware, as in the case of smart boards that can function as video projectors or similar to a classic board without the necessity of cleaning the written texts, they even allow saving information or school work on the computer) all having the aim of boosting formal training.

One of their main features is the conformance to the educator requirements (moving from having source function towards coordinator function) when presenting the work material (through visual / listening aids) and help comprehension, acquisition, they also encourage a growth of perceptiveness due to the elementary evidence that the new information and communication innovations are intriguing, engaging and even entertaining.

Certainly in the case of assessment (but not only this), the young student would rather be asked to play a computer educational game (by all means comprising the topics of the lesson) than having to complete a typical test paper.

The pillars of development are expressed by arousing perceptiveness and response from the student's part this leading towards data acquisition of data cultivation of proficiency. As consequence the learner will be more involved in the classes inquiring more about the presented subjects.

Working in a more efficient manner and at the same time having the possibility of engaging a greater number of students is another attribute of NICT. For instance during a class, having computers with specialized software installed and each learner being provided with headphones and a microphone would stimulate the learners to listen, to speak and solve exercises as if there were a teacher for each and every student. Thus, visual and listening learning are triggered and, in aftermath assure information acquisition in long term memory. The act of writing down everything to be memorized takes a step backward and in the spot light we have engagement and maintaining it during the development of the lesson.

To all these is added the arousing of creativity from both teacher and student. By associating acquired knowledge with the new teaching pattern filled with images and sounds the learner's mind will be trained to apply the know -how to latter instances, to innovate and therefore to bring about new improved concepts.

The evidence that today is built on technological newness must not be overlooked not the fact that the intensive employment on NICT during courses leads to teacher and student improvement, a boost of advanced computer skills in building projects to cooperating with peers. Still, the information and communication technology does not have the purpose of replacing the teacher but they are meant to assist teaching.

Educator's activity is student centered on helping them find their own personal manner of assimilating data, teaching them how to learn and to shape their personal knowledge. In these current conditions the educator is promoted from the role of main source of knowledge to helper, coordinator, and manager of training.

By creating an educational blog (or possibly a work group or even an app for the smart mobile phone or tablet) the educator can interact with his students, receiving comments and questions related to the previous lesson. In his turn, the educator can give feedback in the form of comments. This manner of communicating substitutes the physical presence during classes and the teaching material can be posted on the respective blog anytime even apart from course hours. Through this approach we accomplish asynchronous teaching as it is not firmly connected to immediate reply from the teacher as is the case of traditional school courses.

Deriving from the above is another important feature of NICT that is work material and teacher's notes can be accessed at anytime; the student can use them both during classes in teacher's presence but also afterwards in order to revise. Ultimately we achieve continuous studying and the educator has the opportunity of enclosing various tasks to be dealt with at a later time.

3. Analysis of computer assisted training software.

The NICT environment has its own particularities which demand to be unfolded as a first step in performing a proper analysis of the training computer assisted software. Thus, the information communication science is characterized by having an interactive feature, correct data, it bears the freedom of providing operations in dynamic and various forms and also each user can interact distinctly with the operating system/ educator. Some of the first applications to come into usage were of the type *Drill-and-Practice* that employs the resources developed through repetition and algorythm. At a later time they were transformed into more complx software as CAI (computer assisted instruction).

Computer Assissted Instruction is using a program installed on a computer/ computer systems to introduce and practice the teaching material in schools. This type of instruction has two approaches. Either they present directly the information or they can assume a tutorial part assessing student comprehension. In the second case the computer presents inquiries and the student types in the reply and the computer reacts accordingly. In case the reply is correct, the system presents him with more challenging problems but if it is wrong the system will send messages and will not increase difficulty until the student is prepared to do so.

Certainly CAI is not the only approach to practicing with the new information and communication technology.

Due to the purposes these software should achieve in pedagogy we classify them as follows:

- *Interactive programs* which are specialized in acquiring knowledge/ new information. They establish a connection between the learner and the operating software that is under the control of the computer (*tutorial dialogue)* or of the student *(investigation dialogue).* The part of the teacher is played by *the tutor,* leading the learner every step of the way following a course pre-established by the designer of the software.

Another approach of the software specialized in investigation is that the student, respecting certain imposed rules collects deduces the work material (both theory and practice) necessary for him to complete the assignment. The path undertaken depends to a great extent on the learner, on his level of knowledge on his learning style.

- *Programs used for practicing.* They represent a manner of working with the new notions with the purpose of better understanding and for the formation of skills characteristic of the topic approached in the classical lesson. These help the teacher to carry out the practice activities, allowing each student to work at their own pace and to always have an appreciation of the correctness of the given answer.

The pedagogical value is reflected by the measure of integration in the realization of the learning activity. The pedagogical evolution of the exercises marks the formative leap, achievable from the exercise of automatisms (which has a limited sphere of action) to the exercise of operations, which employs a wider application field, perfectible at different levels of didactic and non didactic reference.

• *Programs employed for simulation*. They allow the controlled representation of a real process or system, through a model with analogous behavior. This offers the possibility to change some parameters and observe how the system behavior changes.

The experiment is a didactic method in which the action of direct research of reality in specific laboratory conditions predominates and can be carried out successfully with the help of simulation software.

4. Determining the appropriate software

The programs that integrate the basic notions of a field of study transmitted to the students through didactic means and materialized in an interactive approach student - software / program require from the student a mental processing of the information, fulfillment of some work tasks, and implicitly the achievement of the described curricular objectives specified in school curricula.

In order to analyze the usefulness of such a program, we go through several steps:

Step 1. In the first step, we must establish whether the respective software also carries a "Teacher's Manual", which must provide the following sections:

1) Word index in which the terminology is presented,
2) Generic introduction of the software (the teaching pursued objectives,
3) A list of contents, providing guidelines of structuring and teaching the material),
4) References.

The program software has to comply with the objectives and competency demanded by the school syllabus, for this reason an assessment of the software programs from this perspective is required. This is necessary because we can thus verify the effectiveness of the educational act and by achieving the goal, the student feels motivated and confident in his own strength.

Step 2. The tools employed by the program must also be evaluated. It has to be confirmed whether the aims of the lesson have been correctly formulated and if they determine what we need - the degree to which it weighs the achievement of the reference objectives / specific proficiency. If it is the case, the complete statement of operational objectives can be reexamined in order to discard any possible misinterpretation or ambiguity.

Step 3. The program must be characterized by the presence of a teaching strategy that through the student-software-educational interaction provides the student with information and work assignments adequate for producing learning.

Having the purpose of highlighting the existence and the standard of the procedure, the educator will launch the software /program and will compile a table with several columns: in the first column he will enter all the work assignments; in the second column each task is being analyzed, marking the type of action was requested; in the third column he will note his own observations.

The presence of a correction loop, the number of assignments on a certain component of disciplinary content, the progression of tasks, lead to the advancement of a model / theory / methods, targeting the approach on a certain theory / training model, the contribution to the development of creative potential, etc.

Step 4. Beneficiary oriented- it means the software must have a designated target group of students for which it was created taking into account the cognitive and intellectual capacity, social and psychological factors resulting in didactic differences.

That is why "the user teacher is obliged to check the congruence of the software with the characteristics of the student population in his school."(M. Featherstone, R. Burrows).

Step 5. Compliance to ergonomic factors "The degree of irradiation of current monitors is quite high, which requires preventive measures, especially in terms of the student's position on the screen. For example: legibility of characters - a lowercase text forces the student to approach the screen.

Concerning the color scale, we can state that appropriately used colors can enhance the perception and processing of visual information. In average, it is established to reduce the number of colors, maximum three when editing texts. On the other had it is not advisable to access on the screen simultaneously numerous windows, also to change the access place of a frequently used routine not also to have considerable length between the access location and the mouse.

If these factors are not taken into consideration, a number of health issues may appear. Some of them we can exemplify here:

- Strain injuries in wrists and hands (low blood supply to the nerves, tendons and muscles),
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (it occurs when the median nerve is squeezed at the wrist),
- Eye strain (looking at something for long periods),
- Back and neck ache (when one bends its back or neck to suit devices like the computer or cell phone).

Conclusions

The incorporation of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the teaching-learning-assessment process has become in the last two decades a priority of educational policies on all meridians of the world as new horizons open for the practice of education: facilitating the presentation of information, its processing by the student, the construction of knowledge.

NTIC is a combination of multimedia (MM) technologies that offer the user different possibilities such as image, sound, voice, animation, video, with hypermedia (HM). They combine multimedia with hypertext, making it easy to navigate smoothly between different types of data: text, sound, still images, animated images. In time, through the use of ICT, the role of the teacher in traditional education of source of information changes into that of facilitator of the educational act.

Using computers in educational training presents many advantages. One of these is on-to-one interaction with the student and receiving instantly an assessment to the answers elicited. A characteristic of major importance is allowing students to proceed with formal school training at their own pace.

A great applicability we can notice in subject matters that requires drill while providing time to the educator for class work so that, in the end, the teacher has more time to devote to each and every student. The software can also be used diagnostically helping to determine the student’s problem and adjusting to improve the respective issue.

A computer software offers the advantage of privacy and individual attention encouraging the students and making them feel relieved of the possible embarrassment in case of providing an incorrect answer publicly or needing to take a slower pace when learning than the other colleagues.

Of course, there are also drawbacks to this implementation of computer software in the process of teaching. One of the biggest factors is the costs required for purchasing, maintaining and constantly updating the software. When buying computer programs for educational purposes one must take into consideration that it may or not suit the specific needs of the individual class or syllabus.

A template for a course (“courseware”) can provide a general format for drill instruction and building tests presenting the possibility for individual particularities to be introduced later by the teacher or school computer science representative. In time, this type of teaching tends to become repetitive and boring as tests and inquiries respect the same patterns for every school subject.

The idea of *in-house* program that is to create/ adjust the courseware to each and every student but this is not accessible because of the high costs involved, time consuming and advanced technical skills required that may not be at hand to every teacher.

Studies also show numerous physical and mental issues that ICT provokes in human beings. We have named a few above, in the previous chapter. Internet addiction/ computer addiction/ online addiction (IAD) is an impulse control disorder. Some users may develop an emotional connection to online friends and to activities they perform on their computers.

Social Media Addiction (social networking addiction) causes someone to have a compulsion to social media to excess (for instance, frequently looking for Facebook updates and verifying people's profiles for hours).

Video game addiction is when gaming becomes compulsive and the virtual world becomes more important than family, friends, and school.

The ergonomic problem has been discussed above; it mostly refers to the position one uses when working on the computer.

The wireless feature of most of our gadgets can bring about some health risks like- hypersensitivity, DNA disruption, cancer or birth defects.

There are side effect to using for long periods of time mobile phones as – blurry vision, headaches, tiredness, nausea, neck pain, memory loss, changes in metabolism and many more.

All in all, the new information and communication technology represents the future direction of our evolution transforming schools and classrooms, rapidly changing both the roles of students and teachers. The teacher cannot adapt to the need of the development of education in this information era if he can't assume the changing of his own role soon. Thus, educators should seize this opportunity, discard the old concepts of education, uphold the rules of education development and embrace the characteristics of this modern era, setting up ethical approaches to education and expertise, develop and cultivate the information and communication technology literacy and the advantages of using modern education technology to encourage research in the field of educational science.

By doing this, we can match the demands of modern educational technology and if implemented consciously taking into consideration every factor regardless its positive or negative nature, it will support and stimulate the creation of a bright future for students.

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MOTIVATION – A FACTOR TO REDUCE THE INTRAPERSONAL CONFLICT GENERATED BY THE COVID PANDEMIC

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Abstract:

Conflict is an inevitable part of our lives. In relation to the crisis, the conflict is subordinated to it and supports the tensions, mental discomfort, poor cooperation between the actors involved. The Covid pandemic generated a general crisis, in which, along with other types of conflict, the intrapersonal conflict is manifested, with predilection.

According to the interactionist meaning, the conflict can also be constructive, generating change and innovation. Motivation is the mobilizing element in the management of intrapersonal conflicts in general, through a series of motivational factors: intrinsic (individual) and extrinsic (organizational) and in the pandemic context, in particular. Due to the importance of these factors, we can say that part of the success of a business lies in managing and resolving conflicts through the effective motivation of all staff who are part of an organization, especially in times of crisis.

Keywords: *conflict, motivation, crisis, pandemic.*

JEL Classification: *I00, I21, P46.*

1. Introduction

Over the last decades, the organizational landscape has undergone many changes. The technological revolution of our product form of organization of life and work, the phenomenon of globalization gradually dissolved the social, political, economic borders, capitalism allowed the transition from local to global business, thus appearing multinational. Currently, the current pandemic crisis is forcing managers to manage their resources even more carefully, especially human resources, to reconsider their priorities and business model.

The SAR-COV-2 pandemic dramatically changed employment across sectors in 2020, having a significant impact on public and private employees (Thomason B., Williams H., 2020).

In the current economic context, many small and medium-sized companies face difficult internal situations, especially in terms of employee retention and motivation. We started this research considering relevant the knowledge of the motivating factors for employees, in crisis conditions, characterized as a challenge for the current labor market.

This study can give employers an overview of the employees' view of work and the expectations they have in these times of crisis. Thus, organizations can focus more on employee retention through motivation, the benefit being on both sides.

The aim is to provide a general perspective on the needs of employees and, at the same time, to highlight the defining elements by which they take into account the performance at work.

The theme of this paper focuses on how employees conceptualize the values located at work and the expectations they project, regarding the benefits that an employer can offer in times of crisis: work environment, program flexibility, opportunities for promotion, personal development, and professional, labor relations. These are the indispensable influencing factors in deciding on a possible job.

The main objectives of our research are to identify the motivating factors that diminish the situations of intrapersonal conflict that the employees of an organization may face in these moments of change and uncertainty.

Therefore, the research questions through which we want to achieve the objectives are the following:

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1. What are the intrapersonal conflicts that employees face during the crisis period?

2. What are the most popular ways in which organizations can increase an employee's motivation to reduce intra-person conflicts generated by the crisis?

This research is based on the sociological survey conducted through the interview, which offers broader horizons on the perspective of the subjects. We chose to use this method because we want to know in-depth the reasons and beliefs that underlie the formation of opinions about the current labor market.

In conducting this research we chose subjects based on theoretical sampling, whose essential feature is the subjectivity of the choice of the target group depending on the relevance it has for the research topic.

This type of sampling does not seek to validate hypotheses, but to build ideas or theories about a phenomenon. Thus, our sample was represented by subjects who went through changes in the workplace generated by the current crisis, being in line with the research topic, obtaining relevant data through interviews. The chosen subjects are represented by twenty employees from the private environment of Târgoviște Municipality who currently carry out their activity from home, through telework.

Following the analysis and interpretation of the data collected after the interviews with representatives of the educational environment, we aim to formulate empirical ideas to answer the questions from which this study started.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Conflict in crisis conditions

There is a close connection between the crisis and the conflict. Also called the “younger brother of the crisis” (Bodea D., 2020), the word “conflict” is associated with “opposition” or “antagonism”. Social conflict occurs when individuals or groups of individuals depend on each other for valuable results and, through their independent or coordinated actions, deprive each other of such valuable results (De Dreu, 2011).

Over time, the conflict has experienced different perspectives and angles of approach. According to S. P. Robbins (1978), they can be reduced to three distinct types of approach:

- *the traditional approach*, in which the conflict is considered as dysfunctional by definition. Consequently, at the attitude level, a negative position is adopted towards any type of conflict. This way of approaching the conflict implies a unilateral vision in relation to the complexity of social life. That is why traditional approaches propose as a solution the avoidance or elimination of conflicts, by eliminating their causes and sources.
- *the approach to human relations*, which recognizes that a conflict is a natural and inevitable result for any social group or organization. Conflict is perceived not only as a negative process but also as a positive, functional one, within certain limits. As a result, this concept supports the acceptance of conflict, proposing as solutions both the recognition of conflicts and their resolution or elimination.
- *the interactionist approach* considers the conflict not only inevitable but also necessary, being able to favor innovation and change. This approach encourages the maintenance of a certain level of conflict. The solution is not to eliminate conflicts, but to manage them properly, in order to allow the positive stimulation of groups or individuals in a state of conflict. The interactionist vision of the conflict, much more balanced and realistic, has gradually begun to take its place among specialists and theorists of conflict. Thus, the conflict is no longer seen only as a negative, destructive process, which should be flattened and eliminated as soon as possible, but under certain conditions and at a certain level it can also become a factor in stimulating the positive energies of the conflicting parties (Altimae and Turk, 2009; Rahim, 2002 and Spaho, 2013).

Conflict is a natural part of human interaction, functioning whenever individuals experience differences of opinion, beliefs, or expectations (Wall and Callister, 1995). Conflict is inevitable in any organization because not all people think alike and have the same values or priorities (Jennings J., 2016) and, according to these differences, people react differently in similar situations. Conflicts also stem from dissatisfaction with how the organization's staff interacts, as well as management decisions (Liberman, Levy, & Segal, 2009).

The negative aspects of the organizational conflict are associated with demotivation, stress, and low job dissatisfaction. Taken to the extreme, these forms can lead to violence (Freeley K., 2015).

In the context of human behavior and interpersonal relationships, four main levels of conflict can be distinguished (Lewicki R., Saunders D., Barry B., Minton J., 2003):

1. Intergroup conflicts (between large groups of individuals, international relations, conflicts between nations);
2. Intragroup or intra-organizational conflicts (which occur in smaller groups, within an organization);
3. Interpersonal conflict (at the individual level, the conflict between individuals or the conflict between a person and a group);
4. Intrapersonal conflict (on a personal level) (Figure no. 1).

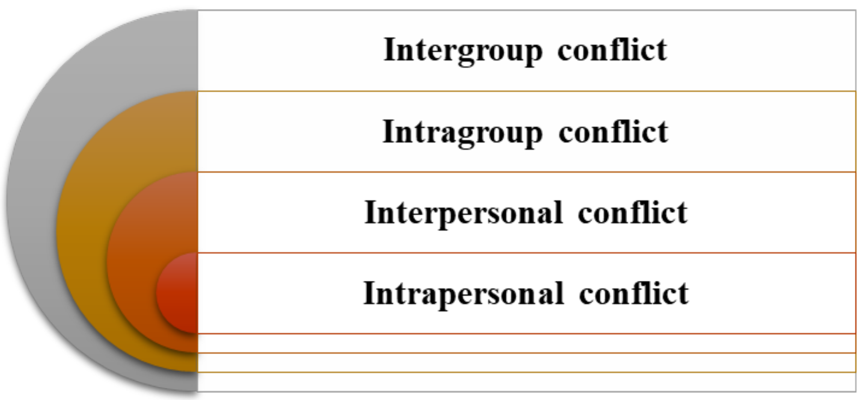

Figure no. 1: Classification of conflicts according to interpersonal relationships
Source: Adapted after De Dreu, C. K. W. (2011). *Conflict at work: Basic principles and applied issues.* In S. Zedeck (Ed.), APA handbook and organizational psychology. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Among these types of conflict, intrapersonal conflict refers to individual psychological dynamics. An example of such a conflict is when they are angry with the manager, but it is not a team that expresses that anger because we know it could fire us.

Intrapersonal conflict means the antagonism of intrapersonal intelligence, a concept regarding the theory of multiple intelligences, developed by Howard Gardner, since 1983. Intrapersonal conflict is an individual crisis, which occurs against the background of personal frustrations that lead to decreased self-esteem, demotivation, insecurity, depression, social problems (Cox K., 2003).

The contradiction between aspirations, ideas, thoughts, emotions, values, individual predispositions and reality generates intrapersonal conflict.

The specific manifestations in case of an intrapersonal conflict are:

• low self-image;
• introspective inability to behave and act;
• the impossibility of being aware of personal limits;
• the difficulty of anchoring at present;

• difficulty in self-understanding and relationships with others.

With such a great psycho-social impact, the pandemic crisis brings to the fore the intrapersonal conflicts, with fears, anxiety, to the depression of individuals.

According to *the Explanatory Dictionary of Romanian Languages* (2007), the current crisis is "the culminating critical moment in the evolution of a disease, which precedes the cure or aggravation of diseases (med.)" Or "period of tension, disorders, (decisive) trials that manifests in society (econ.)". Using a brief definition, the crisis refers to a decisive moment, a danger and a maximum test of our existence. In this way, the crisis can be seen as a disease that can have at least two evolutionary scenarios: disease cure or disease worsening. An essential role in establishing the intervention (treatment) is to estimate the time needed to overcome the crisis.

We can use these coordinates in the analysis of the current crisis, clarifying the state of uncertainty and planning the next steps in resolving conflict situations. The resolution of the crisis is difficult to estimate: it can take months or years, depending on the management measures taken.

Although the effects are negative and high impact, the crisis can reveal untapped aspects until the moment of its emergence, triggers higher motivational mechanisms that support overcoming obstacles of any kind, train unsuspected forces in the human psyche, stimulate the ability to solve problems, lead to change and evolution.

The current crisis is a real shock for many business models and for the organizational life with which we felt comfortable. The imposed social, economic and individual change is difficult to accept and is a barrier to the rapid resolution of conflicts generated by the crisis.

The biggest challenge imposed by the current pandemic crisis has been social/physical isolation. Social interaction is an indicator of lifestyle, of working, producing results and earning a living. In the absence of direct interaction with clients and/or colleagues, many occupations seem to lose their identity and meaning. For many organizations, the core business becomes uncertain and inadequate, and their business model seems completely outdated in this new social reality (of physical distancing).

Due to the importance of this human factor, we can say that part of the success of the business consists in the correct management through an efficient motivation of all the staff that is part of an organization, especially in crisis conditions.

2.2 About motivation and motivation at work

Motivation is related to the will of man to act in a certain way. Motivation represents the internal condition of the employee, who is oriented and behaves with it to meet certain needs.

The employee's motivation is related to the manager's art of influencing his behavior. Once you are aware of this, there is a chance to get good results both at the organizational level and at the individual level.

A manager cannot ask his employees to be motivated either, instead, he can create a climate in the company that motivates the entire team. Although the organizational climate is difficult to measure, by observing its symptoms (staff turnover, attendance at work, labor relations) one can identify the occurrence of problems that are also signs of low staff motivation.

At the workplace, every employee is motivated by various things, and it is the goal of a manager to influence the employee behavior version view with the correlation of their motivation the company's needs.

Needs at work are different: stability, appreciation, belonging to a group, personal/professional achievement, etc. Depending on the needs of the employee, the manager can build his own motivation system through the individual approach, giving employees what they need most, and, respectively, are motivated by it.

Pareto's principle "80/20" describes the fact that in almost any problem, 20% of causes generates 80% of the effect, by extrapolating this principle in the issue of motivation we can say that about 20% of employees of an institution can be self-motivated, they are people who do not need continuous control and supervision, therefore being considered systems that can self-plan, self-organize, self-control. The attention of managers thus falls on the 80% of employees who need their activity to be planned, coordinated, managed, monitored, and evaluated through various professional techniques and methods.

An individual's motivation for work is determined by a number of motivational factors: intrinsic (individual) and extrinsic (organization). In the general model of motivation (Rotaru, Prodan, 1998) presented in Figure no. 2, we observe how the combination of these factors will determine an individual motivated behavior (or not) in order to obtain the expected performances.

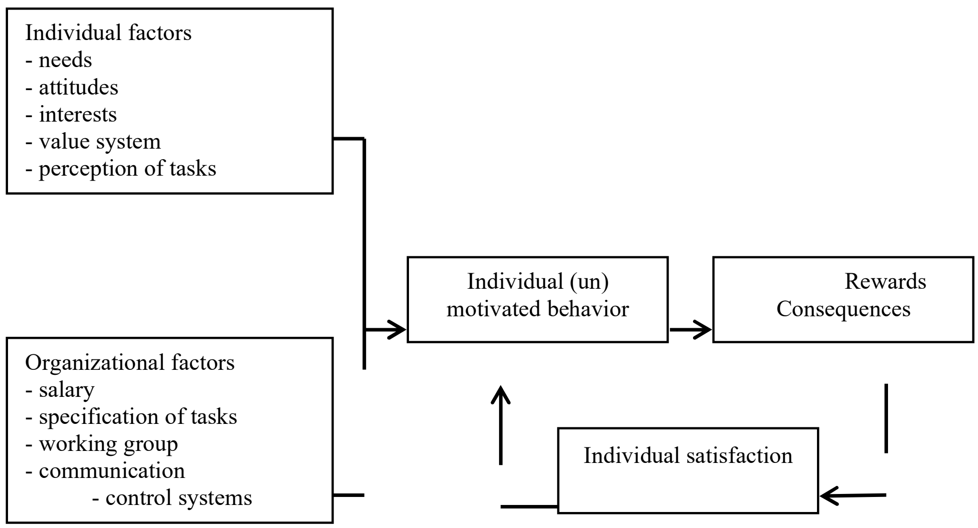

***Figure no. 2*: The general model of motivation**

Source: http://psihologie.tripod.com/motivatia.htm

Based on Figure no. 2 we can identify another important aspect of motivation, namely the managerial connotation of this process.

The needs at work are different: stability, appreciation, belonging to a group, personal/professional achievement, etc. Depending on the needs of the employee, the manager can build his own motivation system through an individual approach, giving employees what they need most, and are motivated by it, respectively.

A. Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" theories can be used to identify employees' own needs. Maslow's pyramid plays an important role in resolving conflicts.

Thus, if the needs and motivations of a party in conflict are identified below in the pyramid of needs, we realize that the generation of options in resolving the conflict is limited.

On the other hand, if the needs and motivations of the other party are identified at the higher levels of the needs pyramid, we realize that the generation of options, in this case, is much higher.

“Depending on the level where the need has been identified, the solutions oscillate:

1) the higher they are at the level of the pyramid, the more solutions there are to extinguish the conflict;

2) the lower down the pyramid, the less conflict resolution there is. ”

Motivation is one of the most important responsibilities of managers, who must find the best ways to make their subordinates perform at work. An important thing in the organizational environment - often insufficiently emphasized - is that the employee alone is able to motivate himself because the motivational processes are triggered and coordinated from within the human being. The role of the manager is to identify and specify how the achievement of the organization's objectives also ensures the satisfaction of the employees' own needs.

According to Foster, the following practices can be used that can increase employee motivation:

- ensuring the job is appropriate to the values and needs of employees;
- increasing the attractiveness of the workplace, taking into account the values and needs of employees;
- establishing clear, attractive, and achievable work objectives;
- ensuring the necessary resources;
- creating a supportive social climate;
- strengthening performance;
- harmonization of all these elements in a socio-technical system.

It is thus desirable for each manager to ensure that all employees are motivated, thus pursuing high performance in the workplace. In other words, the idea is accepted from the beginning that employees have different motivations/needs that must be met in order to obtain the best work results.

3. Analysis and interpretation of research results

The aim of our research is to identify the types of intrapersonal conflicts that employees may face, and what are the most popular ways for organizations to increase an employee's motivation to reduce intrapersonal conflicts generated by the crisis. This paper is an empirical analysis through which we want to answer the research questions.

3.1 Intrapersonal conflicts in crisis conditions

We started this research by identifying the conflicting problems that can arise at the level of each individual, seen as an employee, in the context of the current crisis. From the analysis of the respondents' answers we can say that, in crisis situations, employees need understanding, flexibility, and, often, counseling, in cases of professional burn-out, which is quite common among those who work remotely.

The main specific manifestations in case of an intrapersonal conflict, declared by the respondents, are the difficulty of self-understanding and relationship with others, low self-image, difficulty anchoring in the present, the impossibility of awareness of personal limits, and other characteristics of each individual, according to Figure no. 3.

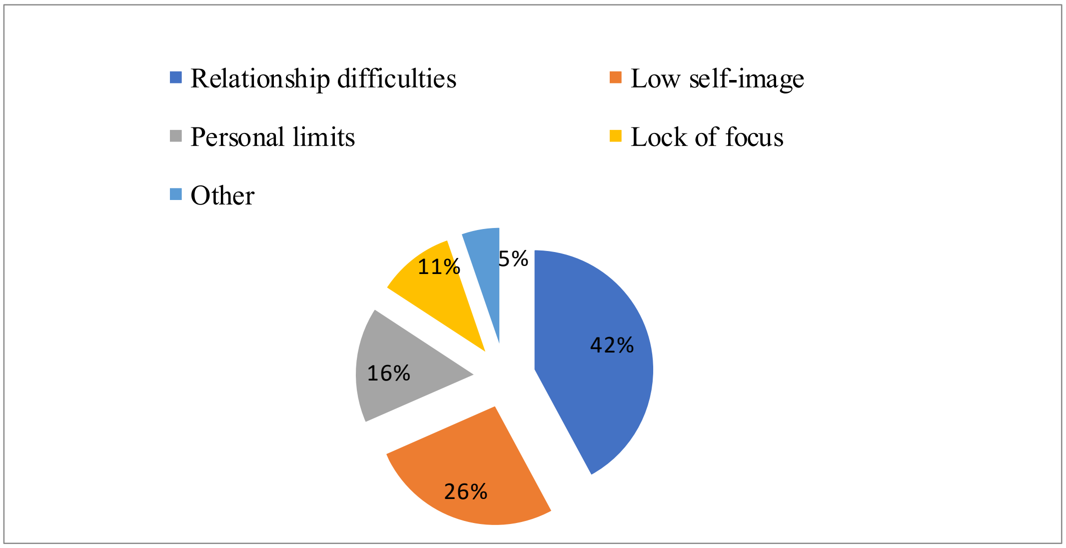

Figure no. 3: **Types of intrapersonal conflicts that respondents face**
Source: Created by the authors

Regarding the crisis, as an intrapersonal conflict, respondents say they needed a gradual exposure to the new situation that triggers fear until they became relatively comfortable with such thoughts and were able to outline action plans.

There have been various conflicts arising from the use of remote information technology needed for communication and related issues (teaching, reporting, maintenance, telemedicine, etc.). Thus, there are difficulties in managing online interpersonal conflicts, compared to face-to-face conflict management.

The appearance of the many negative spontaneous thoughts that accompany the current reality is inevitable. The psychological component could be better managed at an individual level, as the crisis is interpretable at the personal level. It requires a self-management to attenuate the effects of the crisis, to shorten the time needed to overcome it, using a more effective management of irrational and rigid thoughts, full of negative emotions.

3.2 The means by which organizations can increase the level of motivation of an employee in order to reduce intra-person conflicts generated by the crisis

Next, we will discuss the motivational factors identified by the respondents as having efficiency in terms of increasing motivation, implicitly productivity.

From the analysis of the answers, we found that we move from the emphasis on extrinsic factors of motivation to intrinsic ones, namely: job security, appreciation for work, empathic help for personal problems, or involvement in projects that ensure the survival of the company, according to Figure no. 4.

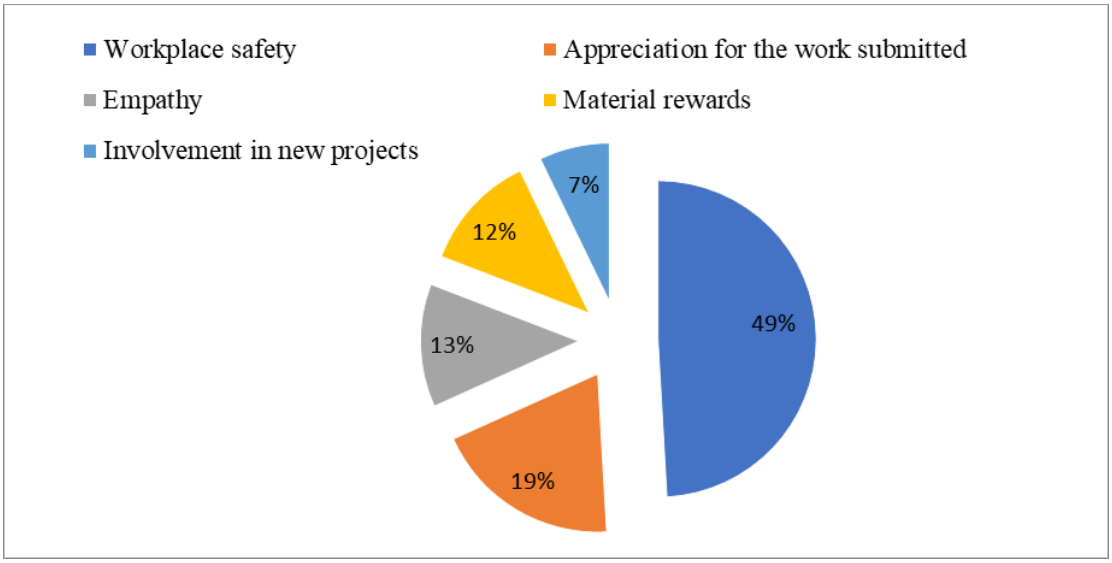

Figure no. 4: Types of intrapersonal conflicts that respondents face
Source: Created by the authors

Obviously, salary or rewards remain motivating factors, but their share in the total motivating factors is diminished due to the limited availability of companies to currently offer such motivations.

All the more so in the current context, in which isolation and social distancing are making an increasingly strong imprint on the psyche of employees, it is important for the manager to take into account measures related to employee motivation.

In times of crisis, no new motivational factors appear, totally different from those of periods of economic development. If we look at Maslow's concept of motivation, people begin to be concerned with the basic levels of the motivational pyramid.

Motivational factors remain the same, but the importance of covering basic and security needs increases. According to the analysis of the data collected, job security and covering the basic needs of employees are the most important things during this period.

4. Conclusions

Following this research, we believe that this crisis has also created panic, fear of the unknown, and uncertainty, but also brought many opportunities. If in some companies we are dealing with decisions to the detriment of employees, many organizations still chose to be close to people and offer them solutions, and the human resources department was and is a real business partner during this period, and it will have to remain so, bringing proactively proposals by which both employees and business can be protected and can manage to overcome this period well.

The level of motivation of employees influences both their results and their productivity. Demotivated employees are apathetic and lacking in energy, while those with a high level of motivation display enthusiastic behavior and are focused on acting. The role of motivation is not limited to making employees work but leads to making them work efficiently, which involves the full use of the physical and intellectual resources they have.

However, the psychological management of the crisis is up to each of us and it means that we have to demonstrate a predictable, future-oriented behavior, which assumes not only survival but also risks of growth, development, evolution.

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MUSLIM VILLAGES IN DOBRUJA, ROMANIA: KANLIÇUKUR (GRĂNICERU) AND DOKUZ SOFU (GRĂDINA)

Nilghiun, Ismail[1]

Abstract:

The 19th-century Ottoman-Russian wars had many consequences for the territories administered by the Ottoman state in the Balkans. At the end of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878, a new state was created, Romania, to which was annexed Dobruja, a region between the Danube and the Black Sea and so Dobruja's land entered the borders of the Romanian state. The area of Dobruja played an important role in the administrative-territorial organization of the Ottoman state.

This study aims to provide a short presentation on Muslim population and villages' situation, in Dobruja, Romania with a special emphasis on villages situated in Constanța county.

The study argues that in time many Muslim villages, under the effect of changes in political environment, education and day-to-day life were depopulated, and in time, some of them were totally destroyed.

Also, the study discusses the influence of political and social changes during communist regime on the ethnic minority of Crimean Tatars of Dobruja, Romania.

This study is based on documentation acquired on individual activity and unpublished documents. Some documents are part of the heritage of the Direcția Județeană Constanța a Arhivelor Naționale (National Archives County Departments of Constanta), newspapers of time owned by Constanța County Library „Ioan Roman" and today's newspapers by online sources.

Key words: *Muslim villages, Muslim population, territorial organization, depopulated villages, Crimean Tatars of Dobruja.*

Cod JEL: *A12*

1. Introduction

It is a great pleasure for me to write this study dedicated to Muslim villages of Dobruja, as I am a native Crimean Tatar borne in Dobruja, Romania.

This study is elaborated from the perspective of a native Crimean Tatar. After the Crimean Wars (1853-1856), my great-grandfather, *Hacı Izzet Ismail* together with his family left their native home, Kerci, Crimea and settled down in Dobruja. I always feel honored to study, write and talk on issues concerning the Crimean Tatars of Dobruja, focusing above all on their history and day-to-day life, as I am the fourth generation of a Crimean Tatar family born in Dobruja, Romania.

Limiting conditions of research led me to a study based on personal documentation, *Photo Gallery*, which I acquired from field research based on individual activity. For changes in administrative-territorial organization, political system and community's social life I relied on newspapers of time owned by the Constanța County Library „Ioan Roman" and documents with *Direcția Județeană Constanța a Arhivelor Naționale, DJCAN* (National Archives County Departments of Constanța), but also on today's newspapers, such as *Ziarul de Constanța*.

1.1 Short History of the Crimean Tatars of Dobruja

To limit this part about war refugees, we refer here to those who left Crimea, settled in today's Romania, but some of them left Romania, as there were many political and social changes.

The enormous influx of the Ottoman subjects, mostly Muslims, who had been living in Crimea, now subject to the Russian occupation, had to flee towards the Ottoman lands under unbearable conditions. This study is dedicated only to those Muslim refugees who came in during the end of the Crimean War, 1853-1856 and shortly thereafter, around 1870, and to Muslim population displaced by the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878, as they found

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themselves again on the battlefield, and had to leave Dobruja, as they found themselves in a newly created state, Romania. (Ismail, 2017: 65).

The Crimean Tatar refugees, who settled in the Ottoman territory of Dobruja, found most of the social and economic landscape already structured and defined. At the end of the 19th century, the existing Muslim and Christian communities as well as the institutions of the Ottoman government imposed their versions of reality on the communities in Dobruja.

There are communities of Crimean Tatars not only in Romania, but also in Bulgaria, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and United States, and they are united in their emotional understanding of their homeland - the Crimean Peninsula.

1.2. Domain literature

There are some studies dedicated to Crimean Tatars of Dobrodja: Müstecip Ülküsal's work, *Dobruca ve Türkler* (Dobruja and Turks), published in 1966, Mehmet Ali Ekrem's work, *Din istoria turcilor dobrogeni* (From the history of the Dobrogean Turks), published in 1997 and Nilghiun Ismail's work *Balkan Turkes The Crimean Tatars of Dobruja*. These works provide information about Crimean Tatars of Dobruja, but less information about Muslim villages, destroyed Crimean Tatars schools, Mosques and voiceless people. This research focuses on destroyed Muslim villages and grass root people rather than on general image of the community.

2. Administrative Changes in the Newly Created Romania

In the last years of the Ottoman administration, in-between 1873-1874, the southern area of Dobruja included Mangalia (Romanian spelling), which was the administrative center of the *kaza* (*kaza* is an historically administrative division used in the Ottoman State translated as "district", or "juridical district") with the same name. Mangalia, together with 36 settlements, villages and hamlets with a majority of Muslim population - Ottoman Turks, Crimean Tartars was included in the *sancak* (an administrative unit of the Ottoman State) of Varna. The district had a very low density of housing.

In 1875, a change in the territorial-administrative organization of the Ottoman State happened, and Mangalia, along with most of its kazas were integrated into *Köstence* (Constanţa - Romanian spelling) *kaza*, which belonged to Tulcea (Romanian spelling) *sancak*.

Romanian documents show that on March the 9th 1880, with the transition to the newly created Romania, was adopted *Constituția Dobrogei. Legea organică din 9 Martie 1880* (The Constitution of Dobrogea. Organic Law of March 9, 1880)[1]. Until 1926, *Mangalia* consisted of 11 rural communities, including *Karaomer, Kanlıçukur, Davulköy* (Turkish spelling).

2.1. Dobruja and its special administrative regime after 1878

The purpose of this part of my study is to underline historical and political events that influenced social changes happened in modern Romania's society and economic and social indicator which impacted changes in the minority's structure, beginning with villages' names up to their clothing, education and ending with family's structure.

At the end of the 19th century, the southern area of Dobruja was an agricultural area with villages and hamlets under the territorial-administrative organization of *Köstence* (Turkish spelling) town. The area was unpopulated due to natural conditions but also due to many military events. Majority of villages were established and re-established by colonization with different Turkic peoples - Circassian, Crimean *muhacir* (Turkish word for war refugees), Gagauz, Bulgarians,

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1 Biblioteca Municipala Constanta, "Ioan Roman" (County Library of Constanța „Ioan Roman") *Constituția Dobrogei. Legea organică din 9 Martie 1880. Legea funciară din 3 Aprilie 1882. Populațiunea Dobrogei. Listele elctorale. Proprietatea rurală. Comisiunea parlamentară. Nu trebue constituantă. Colegiul unic*, Tipografia „Dor P. Cucu", București.

especially after 1811. Many of those village hearths were settled on older, ruined or depopulated villages as a result of the frequent Ottoman-Russian wars (Ismail, 2017:13).

History states that on November 10, 1878, in the Council of Ministers, chaired by King Carol I, new rules and orders for Dobruja's annexation were set. On November 12, 1878, as a result of the Romanian diplomatic efforts, the Russian government announced the Romanian government that it accepted the surrender of Dobruja's administration in accordance with the provisions of the Berlin Treaty.

In March 1880, the Law for the organization of Dobruja, which established the administrative integration of Dobruja to Romania under a special regime, was adopted and it replaced the Regulation of September 1878. The rules for the division and administrative organization of Dobruja broadly corresponded to *sancak* (Ottoman administrative organization) of *Tulcea* (Romanian spelling) during the last years of Ottoman rule. Initially, three counties were chosen, but in the end, there were only two counties *Tulcea* and *Constanța* (Romanian spelling). Constanţa, as county included the territory of the third non-valid county. The military events of 1916-1918 caused the disappearance of some villages as *Casimcea*, *Haidarchioi*, *Alibechioi*, *Bașpunar*, *Polucci*, *Caciamac*, *Mangeapunar* (Romaian spelling).

For Romanian side, the entire area was a kind of promise land. The whole area absorbed a large, Romanian population. Thus, a paradox came up: the old Muslim settlements were transformed into Romanian settlements, but they still had a Turkish toponymy. They kept their old name, the one they had when they came under the Romanian administration.

Villages' names were totally of Turkic origin. In order to eliminate this inconvenience, until 1925, proposals were made to change settlements' toponymy, so that the new names to be in line with the new ethnic reality in the territory.

A year later, in 1926, a new territorial-administrative division replaced the last administrative organization of Dobruja. Many villages, within the new territorial-administrative division, adopted Romanian names and they were set in the official use. In 1930, a new administrative-territorial division was issued for *Constanța* County, with only four small towns on its territory[1].

Most villages adopted Romanian names, and gradually, the old Turkish name of villages became an oral tradition and in time only memories.

2.2. Muslim villages of Dobruja in the interwar period

For this part of the study, the influence of indicators such as education, traditions, historical events of the first decades of the 20th century need to be addressed. Our research suggests that in order to understand Crimean Tatars socio-cultural changes we need to take a glance to some social aspects of villages and towns of Dobruja, at the beginning of the 20th century.

Alexandru P. Arbore, in his study *O încercare de reconstituire a trecutului românilor din Dobrogea* (An attempt to reconstruct the past of the Romanians from Dobrogea) published in *Analele Dobrogei*, 1922, vol. II, states: "The detailed study of the toponymy of Dobruja imposes the following conclusions: Among the 738 maps of old Dobruja we find, 3776 toponimies: 367 are names of villages, other 3,409 are names of valleys, hills, mounds, ravines, lakes, rivers, ponds, crosses and isolated fountains, ruins, quarries, etc. According to their origin, there are: 2338 Turk-Tatar names, 1260 Romanian names, 145 Russians, 28 Bulgarians and 6 various"[2].

1 Pădureanu Sandu Elena, *Plasa Mangaliei*, https://arhivaromaneasca.wordpress.com/arhive/elena-sanda-padureanu-„plasa-mangaliei"/accessed on 25 August 2020

2 Biblioteca Județeană *Constanța „Ioan Roman"*, *Analele Dobrogei,* 1922, p.261, Arbore, P., Alexandru, in „*O încercare de reconstituire a trecutului românilor din Dobrogea*" (An attempt to reconstruct the past of the Romanians from Dobrogea), published in *Analele Dobrogei,* The Annals of Dobrogea, „*Studierea amănunțită a*

Economic life is one of the most complicated aspects of rural life. In the early and mid-twentieth century, the economic status that governed Dobruja's villages brought to the surface a special economic situation that was different from the economic situation in Romania. In the middle of the 20th century all the villages were connected between them by dirty and muddy roads. Villages' economic situation was quite precarious, but during the interwar period agriculture became one of the main occupations of the inhabitants.

3. Social and Economic Aspects in Dobruja's Villages after the Second World War

After the Second World War, life in many Muslim villages inhabited predominantly by Crimean Tartars has changed radically. Everything happened not only according to political rules and laws, but also in agreement with hard-to-understand rules and laws of the Crimean people. In the beginning of the Communist regime in the Muslim villages Dobruja, where the majority population were the Crimean Tatars, brought a special state of mind that was differed from the social spirit of the majority of the population.

Here, in these Muslim villages inhabited by the Crimean Tatars, there still was that state of mind that linked them to their relatives and brothers living in Crimea under the terror of the Stalinist deportation regime.

3.1. Communist Romania and Land Confiscation

The confiscation of land from the Muslim inhabitants and their forced settlement in the collective farms also led to a massive loss of human lives. An overwhelming majority of people after 1950 left their villages, and the largest share of domestic migration, was the rural-urban migration.

The collectivization of lands was a tragic social experiment, which destroyed the Muslim communities. The cultivation of the collectivized land was a desperate means of resolving the acute economic crisis that gripped the entire communist Romanian state during the first decades of the communist regime. The most devastating effect of collectivization was not the demographic loss but an abrupt and violent uprooting of the Muslim community from their culture, as they were anchored in their villages. Collectivization is the final blow by taking away the best from the Crimean Tatars, as today they aren't who they used to be. In the communist worldview, the ownership of land was a "rich" Muslim peasant, and the primary goal of collectivization was in the confiscation of the land owned by the "rich" peasants.

3.2. Social and Economic Changes in Muslim Villages in Communist Romania

Recently, researchers have shown an increased interest in social, cultural and economic changes in family's life. Changes in family's life are part of the society's transition from rural to urban, industrial one. However, these changes have a serious effect on family's structure. External indicators such as economy, social structure, political relations, their dynamics and interactions have a great influence on family's life. As a consequence, families internal conflicts mirror the optical social macrostructure conflicts such as marital conflicts, which are the result of the allocation of resources, division of labor and power of male-female inequality. This theory provides the raw model to explain the major social consequences of family transitions. Political, social, cultural and economic changes that happened in Romanian's society in the last decades influenced changes in family's structure. In the meantime, there were many changes in social structure as the society became more tolerant to

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toponimiei Dobrogei impune următoarele concluzii:Găsim în cele 738 hărți ale vechei Dobrogi, 3776 topice: 367 sunt nume de sate, alte 3.409 sunt nume de văi, coline, ridicături, râpi, lacuri, rîuri, bălți, cruci și fântâni izolate, ruine, cariere, etc. După originea lor se găsesc: 2338 nume turco-tătare, 1260 românești, 145 rusești, 28 bulgărești și 6 diverse" diversity of cultural models and to the ethnic communities. Among indicators that influence family changes are[1]:

a. Education Although compulsory education has a long tradition in Romania (second half of the 19th century) simple statistical analysis on illiteracy and education show there is a gap between men and women.

b. Industrialization - This is important by its distribution of employment and it matters by its nature, the use of female working force, the suitable geographical environment for the family and its branches. In Romania, massive industrialization after 1950 used two kind of labor force: the rural population and women.

c. Urbanization - This indicator measures the very different social realities, the level of industrialization, level of education, trade and means of communications.

d. Social migration - The large shares of domestic migration, after 1950 was the rural-urban migration. The massive rural-urban domestic migration has implications over family structures and rural demographic, behavioral and cultural patterns of the entire population. Industrialization generated massive social migration.

Urbanization forged traditions and personal behaviour in the cities, people experienced far greater impetus to integrate and adapt to the urban, Romanian culture. Urbanization was traumatic but it also brought unprecedented opportunities for education and social advancement. All major towns in Dobruja were Romanian-dominated and Romanianzed. Crimean Tatars do not speak Romanian language, so it was impossible for many Crimean Tatars from villages to find any jobs in the spheres of trade, industrial enterprises and government offices.

4. Some orientations on Muslim villages: *Kanlıçukur* (Grăniceru) and *Dokuz Sofu* (Grădina)

4.1. A few facts on the village of *Kanlıçukur* (Grăniceru)

The Muslim village of *Kanlıçukur* (Grăniceru) was situated in southern Dobruja to five kms distance south to *Kara Omer* (Romanian translation is Negru-Vodă).

The Muslim village *Kanlıçukur* was a part of the administrative changes in Dobruja, integrating into the changes that took place in the economic and social sphere in southern Dobrogea. *Kanlıçukur* village was established in 1830[2] by war refugees coming from Crimea. The refugees settled in the village of *Kanlıçukur* were hard-working people dedicated to land and agriculture. Some of them had to leave the village's hearth after the Ottoman-russian War of 1877 as a result of the atrocities committed by the Russian army, but also of the injustices to which they were subjected by the Romanian authorities (Ismail, 2017: 136).

According to the 1926 documents adopted for the administrative organization of Dobruja, the territory between the Danube and the Black Sea, *Constanța* County included the small town of Mangalia, which consisted of 39 settlements in general medium and small villages and hamlets. Until 1926, Mangalia had 11 rural settlements, including *Caraomer* with *Canlicicur* and *Dauluchioi* (Romanian spelling).

As part of the integration with the Romanian administration, in accordance with the financial possibilities of the villages and the taxpayer's contributions, there were built a village hall. *Caraomer* (Romanian spelling) was organized as a single rural settlement. *Canlicicur* (Romanian spelling) and *Dauluchioi* (Romanian spelling), renamed *Darabani* and *Grăniceru* were detached from *Caraomer* to form a rural settlement residing at *Darabani* (Miu, Dae, 2007:39).

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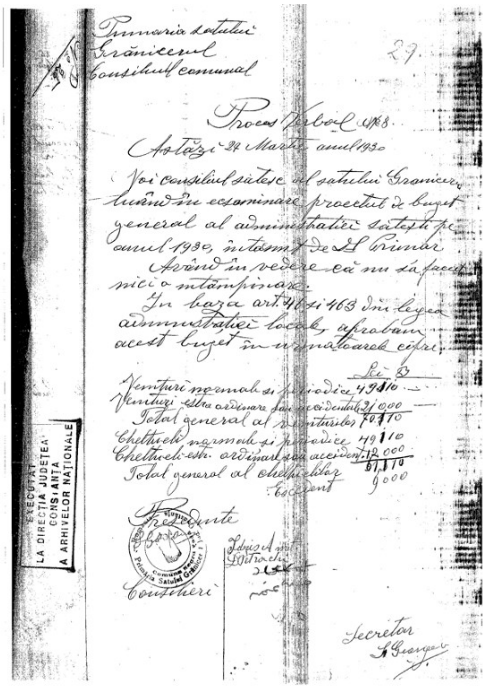
1 Stoica-Constantin, Ana, *Fundamente teoretice ale conflictului*, pag. 4, http://www.psih.uaic.ro/~aconstantin/romana/docs/Fundamente_teoretice_ale_conflictului_Curs_ID_ASC.pdf, accessed on 26 December 2017

2 Călugăreanu, I., *Îndreptar cu privire la satele desființate în perioada 1968-2000 ca urmare a dezafectării prin depopulare* (Guide to villages destroyed between 1968 and 2000 as a result of decommissioning by depopulation), în *Monitorul Oficial al Județului Constanța*, **nr.3**/2000, publicat de Consiliul Județean Constnața, pag. 30

In the interwar period, the position of the Romanian state in rural areas reflects the increasing trend of state intervention in rural areas of Dobruja. In response to the Romanianization of the Muslim population and the demographic growth of the Romanian population, more and more attention was paid to agriculture and the rural population.

Thus in 1930, Constanța county together with its villages was reorganized. Medium and small size villages were also reorganized, and they were entitled to a village assembly of 8-12 people, as it happened with Kanlıçukur village[1].

Enclosure nr.1 – *Primăria satului Grăniceru. Consiliul comunal* (Grăniceru village town hall. Communal council.


Primaria satului
Grăniceru
Consiliul comunal

29.

Proces Verbal No 8.
Astăzi 24 Martie anul 1930
Noi consiliul sătesc al satului Grăniceru, luând în esaminare proectul de buget general al administrației sătești pe anul 1930, întocmit de D-l Primar.
Având în vedere că nu s'a făcut nici o întâmpinare.
In baza art. 46 și 463 din legea administrației locale, aprobam acest buget în următoarele cifre:

	Lei
Venituri normale și periodice	49110
Venituri estra ordinare sau accidentale	21000
Total general al veniturilor	70110
Cheltuieli normale și periodice	49110
Cheltuieli estr. ordinare sau accident.	12000
Total general al cheltuielilor	61110
Escedent	9000

Presedinte

Consilieri

Secretar

EXECUTAT LA DIRECȚIA JUDEȚEAN CONSTANȚA A ARHIVELOR NAȚIONALE

Primăria Satului Grăniceru

Unfortunately, beginning with the communist regime, the increased activity of communist officials and the so-called experts sought to transform agriculture and satisfy new political groups.

From the 1960s onwards, a high number of people moved to the cities in search of better conditions and options.

The massive rural-urban domestic migration had implications over family structures and rural demography, behaviour and cultural patterns of the entire population. Rapid decline of population in the rural areas while increasing the percentage of women in the labor force in the urban area, led to the decay of traditional peasant households and changings in family

Deplorable conditions in the village, the increasingly difficult living conditions in the village, including the aging population and the decrease in the number of young families, the transformation of the secondary school, into a primary school, which determined low educational standards, the scarcity water (in the village, of the three wells with drinking water, only one well had drinking water) created compelling incentives to get people to move to cities.

[1] Direcția județeană Constanța a Arhivelor Naționale, Fond Primăria Negru Vodă, dosar Bugetul general al administrației comunale pe anul financiar 1930, comuna Negru Vodă, satul Grăniceru (*National Archives County Departments of Constanta, Fund Negru Voda Townhall, File The general budget of the communal administration for the financial year 1930, village Grăniceru*)

Photo no. 1
Kanlıçukur village in 1960-1965, (personal archive)

Photo no. 2
Kanlıçukur village in 2015, (personal archive)

In between 1985-1989, our village *Kanlıçukur*, was destroyed, and 2 (two) out of 3 (three) cemeteries were converted into agricultural land including the cemetery where my great grandfather, *Hacı Izzet Ismail* was buried. Today, our great-grand father, *Hacı Izzet Ismail* has no grave, as the cemetery was transformed in agricultural land (Ismail 2015: 492).

Even though many of the Muslim villages were destroyed and turned into agricultural land, as was the case with our village, *Kanlıçukur*, they remained on the map, as can be seen in the image below. I mention that the map in the image is displayed on the wall of *Negru-Vodă* City Hall. I got the map's shot with the consent of the department's staff. Today, in the 21st century, many Muslim villages do no longer exist.

Photo 3 - 2019, July, *Grăniceru* village mentioned on Constanța county's map, personal archive

Photo 4 – 2019, July, *Grăniceru* village, personal archive

4.2.Some aspects on the village of *Dokuz Sofu* (Grădina)

Here we have another example, the village of *Dokuz Sofu* (Grădina), which was once also a Muslim village.

The village *Dokuz Sofu*, as the name of the village says, it seems to have been founded by very religious people - *sofu*, in Turkish language means religious person. Probably, the village was founded by 9 religious families coming from Crimea. In 1929, with the new administrative law[1], with the change of settlements' toponymy in Dobruja, *Dokuz Sofu* was renamed *Grădina*.

1 Legea nr. 167/1929 pentru organizarea administrațiunii locale (Law no. 167/1929 for the organization of the local administration) published in Monitorul Oficial nr.170 / 3 august 1929, https://lege5.ro/Gratuit/gezdiobuge/legea-nr-167-1929-pentru-organizarea-administratiunii-locale?pid=37665662#p-37665662, accessed on 09.09.2020

From the newspaper *Ziua de Constanța*[1] we got some information about the village *Dokuz Sofu* (*Grădina*). The newspaper states that the village "Founded by the Turks, who gave it the name *Tocsof* (*Grădina* in Romanian translation) is mentioned with several local toponyms in Turkish documents, in maps of the Russian-Turkish wars, but also in the notes of foreign travelers to Dobruja, from the 17th century (where toponyms such as "*Tarak-Sofu*", "*Sufi*" or "*Sofu*" appear). Thus, in the *defterdar* of 1584 we find the toponym "*Sofular*" - *nahia* Hârșova (Romanian spelling), on a Russian map from 1828 - 1829 it appears as "*Topsopalocioiu*", in Ion Ionescu de la Brad, in 1850, it appears as "Toksofi", and in the *tapis* (*tapu* Turkish) issued between 1864 and 1877, it appears as "*Toksofi*" - *Kaza Babadag* (Romanian spelling)[2].

As noticed on the newspaper *Ziua de Constanța* the village *Dokuz Sofu* is an old Turkish village, founded before the arrival of Crimean Tatars refugees mentioned even by Ion Ionescu de la Brad in his works.

The same newspaper states "The current hearth of the village Grădina existed since the 16th century, but its development began with the colonization of the village with the Crimean Tatars between 1858 and 1860. At the beginning of the 20th century, the village belonged to Tulcea county and was inhabited by Bulgarians, Turks, Tartars, but also by Romanians, as we found out from the Great Geographical Dictionary of Romania: "Tocsof, village, in Tulcea county, pl. Istrului, the hamlet of residence of *Tocsof* commune, located in the Southern area of the plateau and of the commune, on both banks of the *Tocsof* brook, at the meeting place of the *Taşlî-Culac* and *Cuiu-Culac* valleys. It has an area of 1200 hectares, with a population composed of Bulgarians, Turks, Tatars and Romanians[3]".

From the newspaper lines it is obviously the village was founded by Turks in the 16th century and in the second half of the 19th century populated with refugees from Crimea. At this point, the newspaper proves a great ambiguity in the presentation and leaves room for comments and questions. Although it mentions that the village was founded by the Turks since the 16th century, it states that the village was colonized in the 19th century. From its lines we understand that the village, although mentioned in the documents with the Ottoman archive (*tapu*, which means property titles – in our case, probably agricultural lands), experienced a development in the 19th century, with the arrival of the Crimean Tatars refugees. But there is a gap from the 16th century to the 19th century, what happened with the village during this long three centuries? Was the village populated by Romanians or Turks? or was it depopulated? There is no information in the newspaper about village's population between 1584 and 1858.

Here is a picture[4] with old Muslim gravestones in *Dokuz Sofu*, (*Grădina*) village. Many

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[1] https://www.ziuaconstanta.ro/stiri/invitati/preoti-si-biserici-la-sat-parohia-gradina-judetul-constanta-galerie-foto-704705.html, accessed on 26 octomber 2020

[2] https://www.ziuaconstanta.ro/stiri/invitati/preoti-si-biserici-la-sat-parohia-gradina-judetul-constanta-galerie-foto-704705.html, "*Înființat de turci, care i-au dat numele Tocsof (trad. grădină), satul este menționat cu mai multe toponime locale în documentele turcești, în hărți ale războaielor ruso-turce, dar și în notele unor călători străini în Dobrogea, din secolul al XVII-lea (unde apar toponime precum „Tarak-Sofu", „Sufi" sau „Sofu"). Astfel, în defterul din 1584 găsim toponimul „Sofular" – nahia (plasa) Hârşova, pe harta rusă din 1828 – 1829 apare „Topsopalocioiu", la Ion Ionescu de la Brad, în 1850, apare „Toksofi", iar în tapiurile emise între 1864 şi 1877, apare „Toksofi" – Kaza Babadag*."

[3] *Ibidem*, "*Pe actuala vatră a satului Grădina a existat locuire încă din secolul al XVI-lea, dar dezvoltarea lui a început odată cu colonizarea satului cu tătari din Crimeea, între anii 1858 şi 1860.*

La începutul secolului XX, satul aparţinea de judeţul Tulcea şi era locuit de bulgari, turci, tătari, dar şi de români, după cum aflăm din Marele Dicţionar Geografic al României: „Tocsof, sat, în jud. Tulcea, pl. Istrului, cătunul de reşedinţă al comunei Tocsof, aşezat în partea de S a plăşei şi a comunei, pe ambele maluri ale pîrîului Tocsof, la locul de întâlnire al văilor Taşlî-Culac şi Cuiu-Culac. Are o întindere de 1200 de hectare, cu o populaţe compusă din Bulgari, Turci, Tătari şi Români".

[4] I kindly thank you to Professor Ph.d. Sedat Akkurt to let me access his personal archive with Grădina village.

of the gravestones are older than 200 years. The small tombstones are proof that the Muslim population has been present in the current hearth of the village for more than 200 years.

Photo 5 *Grădina* village's Muslim cemetery with old graves.
Each one of that small stones means a grave (Sedat Akkurt's personal archive).

The newspaper continues giving us detailes about the second half of the 19th century on the village *Dokuz Sofu* when it was renamed *Grădina*.

"According to the museographer Ioana Tömpe, from the Museum of Popular Art Constanța, in the second half of the 19th century Tocsof commune had in its administration six hamlets: *Chirislic*, Romanian spelling (Turkish - *Kirișlik*) (today *Cheia*), *Culeli*, Romanian spelling (Turkish – *Kuleli*) (former *Colelia* village), *Râmnicu de Sus*, *Râmnicu de Jos*, *Moara Cocoanei* and *Podul lui Hogea Ahmet* and was incorporated together with other hamlets of the *Babadag* plasa, to *Tulcea* county. In the year when Romania entred into the First World War, 1916, the village of *Tocsof* had an area of 186 hectares and a population composed of Tartars - 606, Bulgarians - 250, Romanians - 185 and Armenians - 12. Until the beginning of the Second World War Worldwide, the Tartars left the village entirely, and the Bulgarians also left, following the surrender of the Cadrilater and the exchange of population in 1940[1]".

According to the newspaper, after 1916 the village was depopulated, and the entire Muslim population left the village. The reasons why the Bulgarians left the village are given, the exchange of population in 1940, but nothing is said about the reasons why the Muslim population left the village, as there was no exchange of Turks and Romanians.

And finaly, we reach the year 1931, with the new law of administration, about which the newspaper claims: "In 1931 the Turkish name of the village was changed to *Grădina*. Also, this year, the village receives the status of commune, which also included the village of *Cheia*. From 1919 until 1931, the village was subordinated to the communes of *Pantelimonul de Sus* and *Pantelimonul de Jos*. In 2002, *Grădina* had a population of 843 inhabitants and 294 households[2]". Again, nothing about Muslim people. From my personal field research, it came out that there are only a few Crimean Tatars families in *Grădina*[3].

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[1] *Ibidem*, "*Potrivit muzeografului Ioana Tömpe, de la Muzeul de Artă Populară Constanța, în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea comuna Tocsof avea în administrare șase cătune: Chirislic (azi Cheia), Culeli (fostul sat Colelia), Râmnicu de Sus, Râmnicu de Jos, Moara Cocoanei și Podul lui Hogea Ahmet și era incorporată împreună cu alte cătune plasei Babadag din județul Tulcea. În anul intrării României în Primul Război Mondial, 1916, satul Tocsof avea o suprafață de 186 de hectare și o populație compusă din tătari – 606, bulgari – 250, români – 185 și armeni – 12. Până la începutul celui de-al Doilea Război Mondial, tătarii au părăsit în întregime satul, iar bulgarii au plecat, și ei, în urma cedării Cadrilaterului și a schimbului de populație din anul 1940.*"

[2] Ibidem, "*În anul 1931 numele turcesc al satului este schimbat în Grădina. Tot în acest an, satul primește statutul de comună, din care mai făcea parte satul Cheia. Din anul 1919 și până în anul 1931, satul a fost subordonat comunelor Pantelimonul de Sus și Pantelimonul de Jos. În anul 2002 localitatea Grădina avea o populație de 843 de locuitori și 294 de gospodării*".

3 Interview with Sedat Akkurt, Turkish citizen, of Crimean Tatar origin. His great grand father, from the village of Dokuz Sofu (*Grădina*) left the village in 1910.

The former Muslim village, *Dokuz Sofu*, today has a restored church[1], but nothing is said about the worship place for Muslims.

Photo 6. *Grădina* village's mosque with its new minaret.
The right side building is the mosque (Sedat Akkurt's personal archive).

5. Concluding Remarks

With this study I provided an overview of a less studied subject, the Muslim villages of Dobruja, Romania. My intention was to inform and express my own opinions on this subject. Throughout my work I have focused especially on the changes made by the Romanian government in terms of legislative and institutional reforms, as well as the structural changes within the Muslim population that took place after 1878. The social and economic changes that took place in Romania after 1878 were influenced by profound changes in the structure of the Crimean Tatar community that led to dramatic changes in Muslim villages.

In conclusion, by this study - I show the connection between the ethical minority of Crimean Tatars with their long and rich history in Dobruja. Over the years, changes in their daily lives led to their identity transformation, but also to the depopulation of villages and even to the total destroy of the villages.

In present days, I consider that it is important to reconsider our understanding about refugee and migration process, to understand the forms of historical mobility and the incorporation of the communities that arose following the change of borders. Today, we live in a very different world and face challenges in a shifted Southeastern Europe.

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Interview: Sedat Akkurt, Professor Ph.d. YTE, Izmir, born in Turkey

SOCIAL RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SARS-COV2 PANDEMIC

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Abstract:
The worldwide situation created by the SARS-COV2 pandemic has forced authorities to find adaptable and responsible solutions in order to ensure the health and safety of the population and minimize the harmful effects on citizens. At a time when restrictions imposed by the authorities have forced some business areas to restrict their activity, interpersonal communication has moved to the online environment, unemployment is rising, social activities have been restricted to near extinction, teaching has been moved to the online environment for all age groups, education is undergoing a major transformation, a clear understanding of the impact of the new normality on the parts involved is required. The media and online environment are constantly updated with news on the current situation of the disease and the numerous houses of infection, as well as the reported number of deaths, which induces a state of fear among the population. Thus, the effects on social life and on the human psyche are still not fully discovered, but their consequences are palpable and can be indicated as having correspondence in the increasing number of cases of domestic violence..

Keywords: *pandemic, SARS-COV2 virus, social life, social impact*

JEL Classification: *I10, I12, J12*

1. Introduction

Man is a social being, is a product of society and cannot exist outside it. Marx stated that the "human essence" is the "assembly of social relations", being represented by the social relations in which man lives and which he configures by his existence and action as a social being.

In the nature of today's man, the biological and social are closely linked and manifested by the importance and necessity of communication, friendship, the expression of emotions, the formation of social rules of cohabitation.

The formation of the first formations of individuals and then of state formations and systems of law, led to the development of the social form of matter. Man's instinct, "strengthened by reason, leads him to society...". According to Voltaire, isolation from society degrades man: "He who would live completely alone would lose the faculty to think and express himself ... would at most succeed in turning into an animal."

Moreover, we can say that compared to other people Romanians are recognized by the international environment for the hospitality they show whenever they are requested. This innate quality of our nation is appreciated by foreigners who transit our country, Romanians instinctively building these social relations.

Thus, the quarantine and restrictions imposed by the authorities in the context of the pandemic generated by the spread of the SARS-COV2 virus, by limiting the movements and the number of people who can be in various spaces at the same time, by forcing the wearing of protective masks and preserving social distance, have radically changed the way people live at the social level. Meetings with friends, family and colleagues, leisure at the restaurant, holidays, access to the gym and beauty centers, participation in classes, all activities that were a habit and/or were a way of relaxing have undergone drastic changes or have been eliminated. All this has an impact on the human temperament and psyche and is reflected in behavioural changes, often with serious consequences, such as physical abuse, as well as

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abuse manifested online. Mental health suffers from social isolation, change of routine and fear of the possible effects of illness.

2. Review

Jeong et al. (2016) in the article "The mental health status of people isolated from Middle East respiratory syndrome" examined the prevalence of symptoms of anxiety and anger in people isolated during the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) epidemic both during isolation and four to six months after release from isolation. They also "determined the risk factors associated with these symptoms at four to six months. Of 14,992 people isolated for 2 weeks due to contact with MERS patients in 2015, when MERS was introduced in Korea, 1,692 people were included in that study. Symptoms of anxiety were assessed with the 7-element scale of generalized anxiety disorder and anger was assessed with the inventory of expression of state trait anger four to six months after release from isolation for MERS. The results showed that mental health problems four to six months after release from solitary confinement can be prevented by providing mental health assistance to vulnerable mental health professionals and providing accurate information, as well as adequate supplies, including food, clothing and accommodation".

Lu et al. (2020) in the article "Pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 in Taiwan: an online survey on concern and anxiety and related factors" explored "associations of individual factors (demographic characteristics, self-confidence and response to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and self-assessed physical and mental health) and environmental factors (perceived confidence in COVID-19 management by the regional government and the adequacy of resources and support available to address the COVID-19 pandemic) with concern about COVID-19 and general anxiety among people in Taiwan. In total, 1970 respondents were recruited and completed an online survey on concernabout COVID-19, general anxiety during the pandemic, and individual and environmental factors. In total, 51.7% and 43.4% of respondents reported high levels of concern about COFID-19 and general anxiety, respectively. Less self-assessed mental health, lower self-confidence in COVID-19 management and insufficient mental health resources were significantly associated with high levels of concern about COVID-19 and general anxiety. The results showed that high levels of concern about COVID-19 and general anxiety were prevalent during the outbreak. This suggests that healthcare providers need additional surveillance of concern and anxiety during the pandemic. Several individual and environmental factors related to concern about COVID-19 and general anxiety were identified".

3. Content

Epidemiological terms such as "social distance, quarantine, isolation, self-isolation" *have a beneficial impact in the community in the event of a threat to the health and safety of citizens. These involve the conscious efforts of specialists to reduce contact between people in order to prevent the spread of a virus, which causes a pandemic. However,* **all these terms are contrary to human** social instinct **and nature**. *People's natural response to a calamity is the closeness between them and the spirit of help. Sociological research has shown by studying the phenomena of disasters (tornadoes or earthquakes, wars,) that in the face of disaster, natural behavior is of human closeness.*

In the current context, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, companies were forced to adopt rules of physical social distance in order to limit the spread of the virus.

These rules cover the following aspects:

- moving activities to the online environment (conferences, tele-work, conducting school courses),

- markings and physical barriers which have to encourage social physical distancing, (a physical social distance of between 1,5-2 metres),
- quarantine or isolation for a period of 14 days for those suspected of virus infection,
- limitation of human contact (payment by bank card, lack of hugs),
- protective equipment in relations with others: masks, gloves, hygienic solutions, protective clothing,
- closing restaurants or limiting people to events, parks, theatres, performances, meetings,
- traffic rights/needs are also reduced, travel restrictions which have in certain cases prevented meetings with friends and family,
- schools are closed, work at home is encouraged.

Thanks to these restrictions we have begun to become aware of the immediate social effects of the crisis: changes in lifestyle, in relations between people, but also a decrease in quality of life. Globally, we identify an impoverished and more polarized society, as well as a visible increase in national self-awareness.

All these restrictions imposed by decision-makers at the personal and institutional level, without their being required a minimum consultation, establishing, on a personal level, a state of frustration, aggression, a conflict relationship with the state authorities. Every day we learn through online means that at least one known person is experiencing the pathology of COVID, families who have lost at least one family member and have not been able to perform or attend funerals under normal conditions. Also, people's fear of interning is very high amid a loss of trust in the authorities. The state of forced isolation constitutes an important source of inner tension, of frustration, which over time can lead to behavioral disorders and serious psychiatric pathologies. In the literature it is known that the degree of loneliness and time spent forced in isolation can lead to pathological forms of loneliness: fleeting states of dissatisfaction, chronic feeling of mental isolation, lack of communication, distrust in people, or even suicides.

At the sametime, in order to protect ourselves and stop suffering, we begin to live in a more selfish world, we focus on our own self-interest: each for itself, we forget the interest in the other, which can become a possible competitor.

The economic-social impact leads to the restriction of employment, businesses are closed and a significant percentage of people are sent to various forms of employment: unpaid leave, technical unemployment or even actual unemployment, until the loss of jobs.

The Western economy has reduced opportunities for immigrants by also entering the restriction, which has led to the return to the country of a significant part of co-nationals working abroad who want to find job opportunities.

A worrying fact is that, according to an Ires study (2020), half of Romanians do not have savings to cope with possible crises, 41% of Romanians have some economies that can ensure their decent survival, but only 2 months at most.

Some specialists also appreciate that we are facing the return of the potential delinquent population of around 70 000 families, which will form mainly Roma communities, characterised not only by poverty and chronic non-occupation, but also by criminal structures, which will lead to an increase in crime against the background of poverty.

The closure of schools, the transfer of education to the online environment, the decrease in educational standards, lead to poor education and a much lower quality level. If we take into account the fact that the school has a dual role in the education and formation of the behaviour of the future adult in the sense that it forms its sense of responsibility, the spirit of competition, teaches it to follow a strict schedule, it forms a subordinate behavior towards the authorities, we believe that in the future we will witness some disadaptive behaviors,which we will encounter in the future adult.

Preparing for the parliamentary elections and the fact that we are at the beginning of the cold season make the future uncertain in these conditions, leaving room for the establishment of a substantive concern, the forecast of a possible state of emergency after the parliamentary elections and the anticipation of spending the winter holidays in conditions similar to this year's Easter ones. The reduction of constitutional rights, the unpredictability of the evolution of the disease, will accentuate a state of frustration and aggression. Underdeveloped well-founded social services (health, education, social assistance) as well as the lack of coherent policies and strategies for areas of interest make the risks of the future a heightened area of interest.

A particularly important aspect concerns the human resource, which in our view is the most important in all areas. At the moment it is exhausted, devalued, fearful, in various situations of conflict, without hope. When we say human resource we mean the medical resource, education, security, or any person who has a professional activity in any field and who at the moment needs that by certain policies of the state can be understood, supported and helped.

The DSM in Axis 4 specifies "psychosocial and environmental problems". These problems, such as poverty, dysfunctional families, as well as other factors in the person's environment, may have some impact on the person's (psychological, social and professional) ability to function.

On 26.04.2020, it was drafted by Colonel Doctor Dr. Octavian Vasiliu, primary psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, specialist psychotherapist, Clinical Psychiatry Section, Central Military Emergency University Hospital "Dr.Carol Davila", Bucharest, a research that was carried out independently, not sponsored by any governmental organization, NGO or economic entity. The completion of the questionnaire was anonymous and no personal data was collected as part of this research.

The findings of the research reported the occurrence of psychopathological phenomena during self-isolation, identified in particular the following symptoms (insomnia, nervousness/irritability, anxiety/panic, unmotivated fatigue, depressive mood, changes in appetite, concentration problems, and many people had symptomatic clusters, not just isolated manifestations). These symptoms are recently developed and can be attributed mostly to (self)isolation-induced stress, given that only 3% of respondents admitted pre-existing psychiatric disorders. There is a reduced addressability to psychological or psychiatric assistance services and the use of coping methods in order to cope with symptoms (self-medication for sleep, coffee for drowsiness, alcohol for anxiety). Less than 4% of respondents enlisted the help of a mental health specialist (psychologist/psychiatrist) during self-isolation/quarantine.

These phenomena show that there is a risk of the installation of psychiatric disorders (anxiety and depressive type), which is expected during this period of (self)isolation/quarantine, but that there is also a risk that these psychiatric disorders will rapidly worsen in the absence of specialized consultations.

In this context, by increasing frustration and aggression, the UN has already alerted the world's governments to the significant increase in domestic violence during this period. In France, the number of cases increased by a third in the first week after closure. In Spain, online consultations offered by the website associated with the telephone line for victims of gender-related violence increased by 270% in the first two weeks of isolation compared to the same period in 2019.

According to data provided by the police Romanian, in the first 9 months of this year, the largest share in crimes in the sphere of domestic violence is the acts of "kicking or other violence" – 62%, followed by "abandonment of the family" – 14% and "threat" – 9%. Between January and September 2020, 6,472 provisional protection orders were issued in

Romania, 10% more than in the first 9 months of last year. Of these, 6,383 were issued at the request of the victims, 54 at the request of other persons, 5 at the request of NGOs and 30 at the request of other institutions empowered to do so.

Global domestic violence has increased, with the United Nations Organization for Gender Equality and The Granting of Power to Women (UN Women), after the onset of restrictions, showing evidence of the impact of the recent Global CoVID-19 pandemic on violence against women and girls. Thus, the data showed that in France, for example, domestic violence cases have increased by 30% since the block on 17 March 2020. Support lines in Cyprus and Singapore increased calls by 30% and 33% respectively. In Argentina, emergency calls for domestic violence cases have increased by 25% since the blocking began. In Canada, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States, government authorities, women's rights activists and civil society partners have reported growing reports of domestic violence during the crisis and/or increased demand for emergency shelter. Where women have access to technology, online violence against women has also increased. Before COVID-19, one in 10 women in the European Union reported being the victim of cyberbullying from the age of 15 (including receiving unwanted, offensive and sexually explicit emails or SMS messages or offensive messages inappropriate on social networking sites). During the COVID-19 restrictions the use of online platforms increased. This has been used by some as an opportunity to lure young people into exploitation situations. According to Europol, the online activity of those seeking child abuse material is on the rise. Millions of women and girls use videoconferencing frequently, sometimes daily, to work and study. According to various media outlets, social media posts and women's rights experts, various forms of online violence are on the rise, including stalking, assault, sexual harassment and sexual fishing. Examples include unsolicited pornographic videos while calling a social event through a virtual chat room.

Significant stressors that can occur during a quarantine include: duration of the caratine, fear of contracting infection, frustration and boredom, improper supply, poor and false infomation. The stressors that may manifest after the cessation of quarantine are: precarious financial level caused by income decrease and stigma.

4. Conclusions

Diseases have always existed, exist and will exist. Some have been eradicated, others will appear. But is it important how we adapt to the problem, what solutions we find, what measures we adopt, what are the pluses and minuses of the strategy, what experience we have gained and how can we use it in future situations?

Today, the whole of Europe and not only is under the sign of change at personal, social, institutional, economic level. A change of Romanian political vision is required in which the interest of Romanian society, the interest of the citizen, prevails. Professionally trained people of impeccable moral quality are needed, because only under these conditions will citizens once again trust the state authorities. It is also particularly important that the promotion of staff is done on the basis of professionalism and moral probity.

The authorities of the Romanian state must take responsibility for the economic and social development of the country. It must be involved in the creation of a national development project, as well as long-term strategic directions, for each area of activity. At the same time, restrictive measures must be presented in favour of the citizen, to make it clear that they are necessary for the protection of people and the maintenance of their health, effective communication being imperative. It also helps to maintain a good level of optimism and induces safety.

Communication and consultation of specialists in different fields of activity can lead to the identification and adoption of viable solutions in all fields of activity, including the finding of a medical remedy for the COVID-19 virus. It takes teamwork and the involvement of all citizens, with no time for "various proportions of hubris". It is the period when we have to show that we are Romanians, that we care about our country and that every citizen can help change the image.

A rearrangement of the activity from top to bottom, on the hierarchical scale, bringing to the fore respect for the ordinary citizen and his needs and the adoption of effective strategies, will lead, over time, to a decrease in the level of psychosocial stress. We also believe that it is important to give the same respect for all categories and social areas: public system and private system, social, economic, health, educational, technical.

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PERFORMANCE AND LEADERSHIP IN THE ROMANIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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Abstract:

Knowing the subjective factors that define the personality of the leader in the educational field is very important for the orientation and direction of the leadership act, for obtaining meritorious results. Successful leaders are capable, communicative, balanced, have an engaging leadership style. An authentic leader inspires confidence and enthusiasm, encourages communication and initiative, creates a motivating and balanced organizational climate. It directly influences people's desire and ability to work hard, creating the premises for a cohesive and efficient organization. The main role of leadership in the education system is to manage the huge potential of human resources in the school organization in the direction of forming an ethos of communication and reciprocity, the strongest basis of the process of improving performance. Under the leadership of a charismatic leader, subordinates will perform their tasks on time and efficiently, which will increase the level of satisfaction and performance of the school organization, an organization whose operation focuses on creativity, empathy and relationships.

Keywords: leadership, organization, performance, education

JEL Classification: J 53

1. Leadership and management

Modern management is defined as an interactive process, whose junction with leadership responds to the current need to take into account the human factor as a key factor in achieving success. The growing importance given to leadership reflects the general tendency of depersonalization of management by assuming responsibility at the level of the entire organization. In other words, performance is not a simple mathematical algorithm, but the result of processes and, especially, of the attitude of the leader of an organization towards people's problems, towards their values and expectations.

A leader can be considered any person who officially performs or who informally assumes, within a certain group, certain coordination and leadership functions that involve the expression of individuality, flexibility and receptivity to the problems of the group. While the role of manager belongs to the rules of efficient organization, the role of leader involves adapting the theory to concrete situations, both roles complementing each other in order to achieve performance.

Unlike the manager (who makes decisions by exercising management processes), the leader chooses as a way to achieve the objectives the emotional relationships that can be established between him and the members of the organization. In a successful school organization, the manager must also be a good leader, a person with a clear vision, a person endowed with managerial skills, qualities and knowledge and genuine leadership.

Any manager must be aware that the need to lead effectively forces him to assume, in addition to the role of resource manager, the role of "coach" of those he leads and coordinates in a certain direction. In other words, the development of the organization imposes on it the task of facilitating and stimulating the development of human resources in subordinate, to exercise leadership based on consensus, not on hierarchically imposed authority. The successful manager should have vision, but also qualities of a good psychologist, proven by a fine ability to understand the human being. Only in this way will subordinates work with pleasure, effectively, in a relaxed and encouraging climate.

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The two types of leadership must be found in the same measure, in the same person, in order to balance and compensate for certain characteristics that can generate chaos or failure. For example, the impetuousness of the leader (generated by the desire to put his ideas into practice as soon as possible) can be tempered by a series of qualities of the manager (such as balance and the need for technique, rigor and professionalism). On the other hand, the tendency towards conformity and bureaucratization of the manager can be offset by the enthusiasm and creativity of the leader.

How can this harmonious integration of the two types of leadership be achieved? The answer is a big challenge (which only certain newer approaches, with an emphasis on the initial training of managers can solve). Quality leadership is necessary, but not enough. Both management and leadership are two absolutely necessary tools for the smooth running of an organization. They complement each other in the process of capitalizing on resources: management is based on the control of all resources that ensure the achievement of results, while leadership is based on activating human resources, establishing a direction or vision that subordinates pursue with enthusiasm (following that the manager will explain to them clearly how they will achieve it).

Both managers and leaders have the same goals, but the ways in which they act are the opposite. The ability to influence gives consistency to both positions, but has a different semantic content. Leaders have real power in the organization, although managers have formal, hierarchical authority. This is because the influence exerted by managers does not act emotionally, in the depth of behaviors, but in an explicit way, through surface organizational mechanisms, which work only procedurally.

The leader's motto is "Vision, dedication, inspiration!", And the tools he uses are inspirational force, intuition and instilling momentum, which leads to the creation of an extremely deep and complex motivation, an essential condition for achieving performance. The manager's watchwords are "efficiency" and "productivity", but his tools of influence (linear thinking and logical-mathematical reasoning) do not act on the values, people and culture existing in the organization: "In the area of preference of action only a superficial, incremental organizational change can take place, able to optimize what already exists. In the area of preference of the leader's action, real, profound organizational changes of substantial magnitude can take place. "(Dumitrașcu, V., 2016, p .12)

Current research is constantly talking about the need to reconcile leadership with management. Performance management requires leadership skills, and vice versa. Performance means maintaining principles that must be connected to the idea of adaptation. Change must be moderated by stability, connections without which there can be no efficiency and progress: "The challenge of modern organizations involves the objective perspective of the manager, along with visionary vision and dedication. (Bolman, RG, Deal, TE, in Bush, T., 2015, p.22). The two types of leadership are complementary and harmoniously integrated in the profile of the leader-manager (manager-leader), which differs from the "classic" manager by features such as: general approach to change, final priorities, sources of productivity, how to take responsibility and risks, establishing rewards (Verboncu, I., 2018, p.108).

The leadership style "reflects the way a leader thinks and acts" (Panaite, N., coord., 2019, p.286). The leadership models proposed by various authors describe the leader as a responsible person and able to balance, to ensure the increase of performances at the level of the organization. The increasing involvement of subordinates in solving complex, topical problems, characteristic of the modern world (problems that can generate great adverse reactions from subordinates) actually indicates the effectiveness of the leadership style. It is measured both in the degree of cohesion of the organization and in the image it acquires at the community level, in terms of performance.

As an activity that reflects and manages the human side of the organization, as a form of performance improvement, leadership cannot be separated from management, the two being permanently complemented. Although the tools used by the two forms of leadership are very similar, the idea of their overlap no longer corresponds to the current reality of organizations. As a form of emotional and operational involvement in achieving a vision, leadership is differentiated from management by its intense participatory aspect, involved in making substantial decisions at the level of organizations in this field.

Organizational practice in education has often shown that a good leader can become a successful manager, while the reverse is rarer. There are certain temperamental types more suitable for the role of leader, these being adaptable, extroverted and communicative people, who assume the role of leader in an informal group, without the need for the formal authority of a position. On the other hand, it has been shown that a manager (a person appointed to lead a formal group), through the very position of superiority he occupies, can discover his potential for leadership, those latent qualities that he can polish through will and improvement. keep going.

2. Leadership models at the level of the school organization

The organizational role of the leader derives from the combination task - team - individual. and is conditioned by the existence of qualities and abilities that allow people to motivate themselves to achieve the organization's goals with confidence and enthusiasm. These abilities can be classified as follows (Koonty, H., O'Donnell, D., 1980, p.514):

o the ability to understand that people have different motivations, at different times and situations;

o the ability to train subordinates, by concentrating efforts on accomplishing a task;

o the ability to motivate and react to motivations by creating a specific leadership style and climate.

Among the qualities and capabilities of high-performing leaders, the literature listed (Tudorică R., 2007, p.21): the ability to predict and communicate information effectively, involvement, energy, high expectations from subordinates, recognition of results, encouraging differences and similarities. The leader has the power to influence and create team spirit, understood as the desire of people to act in unity and solidarity to achieve goals. His actions converge in the direction of building trust. In fact, the personality traits of the effective leader derive from the main dimensions of leadership:

o leadership is a process;

o leadership involves influence;

o leadership is formed in a group;

o Leadership involves achieving a goal.

The temperamental traits of the leader influence the interpersonal relationships in the organization and its psychosocial climate. The correlation between temperamental types and the basic functions of leadership in the school organization can shape the ideal portrait of the performing leader. In this sense, of all the temperamental types, the bloodthirsty has the highest chances of becoming a good leader.

From a psychological point of view, extraversion and introversion also leave their mark on the style and personality of the leader. The extrovert is sociable, communicative, adaptable, dynamic, but superficial, influential and changeable. The introvert is lonely, shy, reflective, analytical, easily demoralized and loses self-control and control in tense situations, which clearly reduces his chances of becoming a true leader.

The qualities of the leader (born or formed over time) are the basic elements that ensure the optimal level of motivation and confidence in the school organization: enthusiasm, integrity (quality that makes people trust you), exigency and fairness, warmth of soul and humanity, energy, endurance, modesty (lack of arrogance), patience, intelligence, foresight, persuasive power.

The leader's skills must be strengthened by acquiring high-performance management skills. Modern school organizations need both ways of functioning, adapting and developing: "It is of little importance how effectively a leader motivates his subordinates; his skills in management, payroll systems or other incentives that lead subordinates to strive, providing them with the tools and means necessary to perform their tasks, for example, are equally indispensable to achieve the objectives of the organization. "(Tagiuri, R., 1996, p.10).

Current research promotes a management based on credibility and trust, which brings to the fore the model of the transformative leader, as opposed to the transactional leader. While the transactional leader motivates his people through the conventional system of rewarding and sanctioning, the transformative (charismatic) leader relies on the profound influence of subordinates through positive attitude modeling: "This style of leadership creates feelings of responsibility and duty. organizing, stimulating new ways of approaching and solving problems. " (Panaite, N., coord., 2019, p.493).

The leader's vocation is to create and maintain organizations capable of effective action. The leader orients human actions from both a praxiological and axiological perspective, in a network of collective mental programming, in the direction of motivation and performance.

The notion of leadership is related to the concept of change, of transformation of an organization, which has relevant consequences on the school organization, as it is currently defined. The phenomenon of change and realignment of values imposed by achieving performance is related to the ability of leaders to develop a strong vision, attractive to all members of the organization. His vision will reflect a well-articulated and customized set of values that will be adopted and applied in the life of the organization. It will express hope, direction and possibilities for survival and development.

In the literature, there is talk about certain leadership models that can ensure high efficiency in terms of performance in a school organization:

a. The charismatic leadership model - is found in people considered charismatic, who have the native talent to influence in a profound way those around them. Charismatic leaders have important achievements of small children, and their evolution confirms the genetic qualities. An important element is the attraction felt by the supporters towards it. Charisma is thus defined as a social relationship built through attribution, possibly unrelated to the leader's behaviors and behaviors. A charismatic leader has the ability to create a compelling vision and model competitive behaviors, the ability to energize through a high personal involvement, the ability to develop and use the potential of his subordinates in realizing the organizational vision.

b. Transactional leadership model - is based, in large part, on the leader's ability to negotiate. In order to get the staff involved and attract them to his side, he promises a series of rewards in exchange for making certain decisions and behaviors. In order to direct the energy of his supporters, he must constantly develop his negotiating skills and be empathetic, so that he can fully understand the factors that motivate his subordinates.

c. The model of transformational leadership - this concept was launched by J.Mc. Gregor Burns (Burns, J.M., 1978). The leader needs a set of skills and qualities needed to meet the challenges. In a changing environment, it is vital for the organization to have people with a great capacity for anticipation, people who can withstand the stress generated by transforming change into a state of normalcy. They can take responsibility for organizational change, and their efforts will often be successful.

Transformational leaders stand out by rewarding performance, by focusing on people. They practice methods based on creativity, introduce and promote the new, self-learning, individualized consideration, have charisma and the ability to gain strong loyalty and devotion from subordinates, so as to exert a strong influence on them (Bass, B., 1985).

d. The “laissez-faire” leadership model - is specific to leaders who prefer to create a general frame of reference, after which to leave supporters full freedom on how to achieve goals. The leader is only involved in the design part, which means that he does not intervene in the operational area. Supporters of the leader establish their own strategy, define and share their roles, make decisions and act without their leader intervening in these elections.

e. The model of cultural leadership - the role of the leader is to create a vision based on a set of values that take into account the cultural-organizational elements. This activity takes place informally. It is necessary for the leader to subsequently create a formal framework, in which to institutionalize the declared values.

f. Leadership model based on emotional intelligence - Daniel Goleman, the creator of this concept, redefined the field of leadership by introducing in the act of leadership the four components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-control, empathy and social skills. Emotional intelligence is as important for motivation and achievement as logical-mathematical performance. It means being a good listener, able to enter the other person's skin, to recognize and understand the emotional states of those around them, thus influencing them emotionally.

Studies have shown that this type of intelligence is much more important than technical skills, the higher you are in an organization. A high EQ score helps leaders make the right decisions, be more realistic, use their emotions effectively, and accept humanity with all its pros and cons. Emotional intelligence helps them build stronger interpersonal relationships, self-motivate and motivate others, perform better as leaders, function better under pressure, cope with change, and reconcile with themselves (De Vries, MK, 2007, p.34).

The economic, social and technological transformations of the last century lead to a new type of leader, who will inspire people, thus drawing them in the direction of his vision. This vision must integrate an architectural network of relationships based on the professional and human authority of the leader. As a unitary and integrated process of some motivational functions, leadership is the synthesis of mentalities, attitudes, beliefs and ethical norms through which the school organization can acquire a special identity and a firm orientation towards performance and efficiency.

Leadership can be learned through thorough and appropriate training. Currently, leadership is considered an autonomous leadership style, without which performance cannot be achieved. Leadership skills can come to the fore spontaneously when a person is invested with a leadership position and can be strengthened through exercise and lifelong learning.

3. Leadership and performance

Leadership has been defined as a process of social influence, having an intentional dimension, exercised by a single individual (or a group) over other individuals (or groups), in order to structure the activities and relationships in a group or from an organization, in a certain specific context (Yukl, GA apud Bush, T. 2015, p.18).

At the level of the school organization, leadership has considerable effects in terms of performance. The leadership behavior that the manager must manifest (as the official leader of the organization) combines traits associated with efficiency, such as intelligence, energy, self-confidence, dominance, motivation to lead, emotional stability, honesty and integrity, the need to achieve. As designated leaders, school managers must receive consideration from subordinates and provide models of positive relationships based on reward and attachment creation.

Within the school organization, one of the essential qualities of the leader is sensitivity to the human factor. It can be measured in indicators that reflect the involvement of subordinates in solving tasks that can lead to performance. (Pugh, D.S. & Hickson, D.J., 1989, p.152).

School organization managers are fully responsible for the actions of subordinates, as well as for their own: "The success or failure of subordinates is a direct measure of their own success or failure." (Dalotă.M.-D., Bărăgan L.-G., 2019, p.18)

A school manager who acts as a leader motivates and influences through empowering relationships, based on the voluntary involvement of the team in achieving common goals. This creates an organizational climate conducive to development and performance and can meet the need for belonging, esteem and recognition of merit and effort.

Quality leadership appears as a natural necessity, but not sufficient, absolute, for the achievement of an efficient management. The essential qualities of the leader (intelligence, charisma, honesty, trust, availability, ability to communicate effectively, enthusiasm, determination, flexibility, etc.) are closely related to his core activities. They are oriented in the direction of mobilizing, encouraging and training individuals in achieving the objectives designed through the entire managerial approach. These generally valid personality traits can be a selection grid for people aspiring to a school manager position (although they are not a guarantee of training successful leaders).

In the direction of the above, it was found that the leader is formed, not born, that the problem of leadership can not be summarized in theories, but explained by real, concrete, situational examples. It is about those behaviors that leaders show when they have to perform the difficult task of motivating, of giving meaning to the joint efforts of the group.

As a behavioral approach to real problems in the life of the school organization, leadership is a stimulating and inspirational course of action. The way the leader plans, controls, adapts to concrete situations, informs, selects methods of motivation or evaluates the results (beyond his hierarchical position, from the perspective of a person capable of creating relationships based on trust) demonstrates that effective managers are those people who know how to work with people. They must add to the traditional dimension the imperative of mobilizing the whole team and that of ethical conduct, the only conditions capable of leading to the achievement of performance.

Leadership style "reflects the way a leader thinks and acts." The models presented describe the leader as a responsible person and able to ensure increased performance in the organization. The increasing involvement of subordinates in solving complex, topical problems, characteristic of the modern world (problems that can generate great adverse reactions from subordinates) determines the efficiency of the leadership style and the performance of the organization. This is measured both in the degree of cohesion and in the image that the school acquires at the community level.

The manager as a leader proved to be the most effective personality profile at the level of the management of the school organization. In school, there are a multitude of complex and complicated roles, which the manager must manage simultaneously, and this means a leader able to reduce tensions, resolve conflicts and stimulate the motivation to work of subordinates. As a formal leader, the school manager must take on the characteristics of the informal leader and behave like a true member of the group, whom he must represent in any situation, no matter how difficult it may be. The complete set of behaviors that must be manifested demonstrates how important is the activity of the manager, who must manifest simultaneously as a planner, organizer, leader, subordinate or as a simple teacher.

The efficiency of the leader at the level of the school organization depends on his value as a man who knows how to gather around the interests of others. Its motivational potential must be grafted on the specifics of the organizational culture, which it can shape and which shapes it, in turn. In a school organization, a true leader is a model who internalizes the qualities and principles he promotes and demands of others, managing to integrate into the emotional world of his subordinates, so different in human and professional profile. In other words, the effective leader of a school organization must make the connection between the formal role with which he has been invested and the informal role, which he assumes by managing the feelings and emotions of subordinates.

The evolution of management models from the organization's management as a closed system to its management as an open system has led to the emergence of leadership as a form of performance optimization. The information, post-industrial and postmodern society is characterized by a complex dynamism, which can be counterbalanced by a greater attention paid to man and his personality, as essential factors in the process of obtaining performance.

Leadership has filled certain gaps in the functioning of the management system and brought a new vision, adapted to the requirements of today's society. Leadership is intended to be a solution to social and economic challenges, which involve the idea of change in the organization. It adds value to management, as it was practiced until now. Influence-based leadership places greater importance on the members of the organization, with their different needs and interests, considering that only by satisfying them can the organization function efficiently and efficiently.

In this sense, leadership pays attention to the organizational potential, contributing to the development of the key competencies necessary to achieve the vision. This shows what identity, image or reputation the organization aspires to. Leadership offers the opportunity a substantial improvement of the functioning, of the performances and of the position of the organization in relation to the present moment (Dumitraşcu, V., 2016, p.14).

To be perceived as a true agent of change, the successful manager must act as a leader capable of providing the right direction, enthusiasm, motivation, support and advisory assistance that subordinates need. The role of the manager must not only be about managing resources and following work procedures. The manager must also be active in the psychological aspect of stimulating and encouraging collaboration, in order to create the climate necessary for human and professional development. These aspects lead to the improvement of the quality of the educational process and to the increase of the performances, on the background of the increase of the satisfaction towards one's own job or towards the learning results.

As a manager of teaching activities, the teacher must share with the principal the same set of values and attitudes. The shift of emphasis from the direction of information to the formation of skills and attitudes shifts the managerial activity of the teacher in the same area of exploitation and valorization of human resources, seen as a means and purpose of educational activities. The mission of forming characters and helping to develop personalities completes the informative role that the teacher had in the era before the Google revolution. From the perspective of this new "modernity", it is essential that the teacher is perceived especially as a leader, as a person who shows enthusiasm and attitude, elements that must be transmitted to students (especially since, currently, online learning diminishes attention and student involvement).

Consequently, the school as an organization must be rethought in terms of functionality, so that it can manage more and more effectively the structural variables that influence its performance, especially the way of exercising management and leadership. The difficulties involved in the management of the school organization can be overcome only by a correct understanding of the situational contexts, by an adequate interpretation of them and by an efficient application of the managerial and epistemological competencies, obligatory for the efficient management of the informational horizon. social dynamics continue.

In conclusion, as a process of ameliorating the restrictive force of management (from the perspective of which the organization is seen as a mechanism that works rationally and efficiently through coercion and uniformity), leadership brings an extra humanism. Through leadership, the organization is seen as a community of people, of beings endowed with will and feelings. In this sense, the main role of leadership is to manage the immense human resources made available in the direction of forming an ethos of communication and reciprocity, the most solid basis of the performance improvement process. Under the leadership of a charismatic leader, subordinates will perform their tasks on time and efficiently, which will increase the level of satisfaction and performance in the school.

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MODERN APPROACHES REGARDING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHERS FROM UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION SYSTEM, IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19 GLOBAL PANDEMIC

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Abstract:

In the current social and economic context of Romanian society, deeply negatively impacted by the Covid-19 global pandemic, the Romanian education system necessitated an urgent paradigm change through whole its structure. The whole teaching-learning-evaluation process has transferred from classroom to on-line environment. To better respond and adapt to the new challenges, the teacher / professor must adapt his educational approaches and techniques, switching the traditional teaching methods with the more modern ones.

In the present article, it is presented the modality or approach used by the teachers from Bucharest Municipality to successfully adapt to the new challenges ahead, by actively participating to continuous improvement programs and classes regarding the use of modern on-line teaching platforms, as well as new teaching methods applicable to on-line classes environment.

Keywords: *education, Covid-19, method, education platform, on-line environment*

JEL Classification*: I 21*

INTRODUCTION

In Romania, the continuous training of teaching staff is a right that is carried out mainly through professional training and retraining.

The career development of teaching staff in school education is achieved by promoting the examination of the completion of education and the taking of teaching grades II and I.

In conjunction with the specific regulations for adult education and permanent education, teacher training is carried out through compulsory training. Continuous training periods ensure the professional development of teaching staff and enter the system of assessment/equivalence through transferable vocational credits, with the obligation of the teacher to accumulate 90 credits over a period of 5 years.

Lifelong teacher training programs are organized modularly in the following main areas: specialty, pedagogy, psychology of education, specialized teaching, ICT, educational management.

Continuing training ensures that the competences of teaching staff are updated and developed, including the acquisition of new skills, in line with developments in education needs and educational curricula, as well as with the requirements for adapting teaching staff skills to changes in education structures/processes. According to its main destinations, continuing training is aimed at:

a) Updating and developing, through regular training/refresher programs, skills in the field(s) of specialization corresponding to the teaching activities acquired through initial training;
b) Developing skills for learning career progression through the education and training system;

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c) Acquisition or development of managerial skills, guidance, control, evaluation in education structures and organizations;
d) Acquiring new skills through retraining/retraining programs for new specializations and/or new teaching functions other than those obtained through initial training;
e) The acquisition of complementary or additional skills that broaden the range of activities and functions that can be provided by teaching staff (e-learning, language teaching, educational counselling and career guidance, adult education and so on);
f) Development and expansion of transversal skills related to social roles and personal and professional development, interaction and communication with the social and educational environment, taking responsibility for the organization, management and improvement of the strategic performance of professional groups, self-control and reflective analysis of their own activity and so on.

The continuous training of teaching staff is based on the paradigm of a skills approach and the concept of cumulative development of the level of competence of teaching staff. The level of competence covered by the continuing training/refresher programs and activities shall be assessed on the basis of:

a) The ability of the teaching staff to mobilize, combine and use autonomously the knowledge, skills and general and professional skills, in accordance with the different requirements of a particular context, situation or problem;
b) The ability of the teaching staff to cope with change, complex and unforeseen situations.

Since the beginning of 2020, under the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, the education system in Romania has been undergoing a process of major change. The effects and impact on society of the spread of the COVID-19 virus have led the education system to adapt to current requirements, in the pandemic context we are in.

Since the virus spread over the population is to be reduced between April and May 2020, the courses in the Romanian school and university education system were suspended, the start of the new school year being achieved with the highest weight in the yellow scenario, with hybrid classes, and in the present they are carried out under the red scenario, with exclusive online teaching.

Viewed from the perspective of online teaching-learning-evaluation, the Romanian school, being by excellence a traditional one, was initially not prepared to meet this challenge, But through the educational policies and measures taken by the Ministry of Education and Research, the Romanian school and the pre-university education were aimed at adapting as soon as possible to the current context.

Of the measures undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Research, the most important are the following:

- Updating legislative documents to adapt them to the current context.
- Creation of the legal framework for the acquisition, through county school inspectorates and Bucharest municipality, as well as local authorities, of technological and information equipment in order to equip educational establishments to carry out the educational process under oppression.
- Purchase of tablets for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, but also for those who do not have devices to participate in online courses.
- Development of support tools for all actors involved in the educational process: Pupils, teachers, parents, inspectors, directors.
- Facilitating access by educational establishments to connect them to learning platforms, monuments and resources needed to conduct online activities.
- Facilitating the access of teachers to participate in training courses to develop skills on teaching-learning-online evaluation and the use of educational platforms.

METHODOLOGY

The Ministry of Education is the institution which sets the objectives and coordinates the continuous training of teaching staff at the level of the school education system, in accordance with national strategies and policies.

Continuous teacher training includes professional development and career development according to Article 242, paragraph 1 of the national Education Law No. 1/1011, as amended and supplemented.

The evolution in the teaching career is carried out through the teaching degree II and the teaching degree I, the certification exams of the different levels of teaching skills.

In-service training is both A RIGHT and AN OBLIGATION under the legislation in force.

The main ways of carrying out continuing training:

1. Programs and activities to improve scientific and educational training;
2. Training programs in the fields of management, guidance and evaluation of education;
3. Training courses and examination of grades II and I;
4. Vocational conversion programs;
5. Studies appropriate to a specialization in the field of license.

This research is intended to contribute positively to the identification of teachers who have participated in continuous training programs, in the context of the pandemic with COVID-19, on access and use of educational platforms and on-line learning methods.

The study was carried out within the Bucharest School Inspectorate and aimed at gathering information on the number and categories of teaching staff who participated in free training courses organized through the House of the teaching Body of the Bucharest workers, the Education and Research Ministry approved by the Education and Research Ministry as well as the teaching staff who participated in the free webinars.

The analysis under consideration covers the period August to November 2020. The legislative framework governing the organization of training courses is ORDER No. 4862/08.07.2020, setting up support measures for teaching staff in pre-university education supported by continuing training activities, organized and carried out through the teaching staff houses - CCD - for the purpose of ensuring the quality of teaching - learning-evaluation, including blended learning and online, in the context of the COVID pandemic – 19.

RESULTS

The budget allocated to the training of the teaching staff by the school inspectorate in 2020 is 111.800 lei and is divided into classes according to Table 1. The training programs address all teachers who are interested in taking and improving teaching-assessment skills in the online environment, thus successfully responding to the challenges of this period.

The training courses of the Education Corps House in Bucharest are also supported under a payment scheme, based on the number of registrations / course.

Table 1. Breakdown of the budget allocated to the ongoing training of teaching staff in 2020

Curr. No.	Name of the continuous training program	Target group	Formable number	Estimated Budget
1.	Online class and home schooling	Teaching staff in school education	100	16.000 lei
2.	SOIL methods, practical applications in the online platform	Teaching staff in school education	100	16.000 lei
3.	Educational platforms and online evaluation tools	Teaching staff in school education	100	16.000 lei
4.	Online applications useful in civic skills development	Teaching staff in school education	50	8.000 lei
5.	English for the implementation of international projects I	Teaching staff in school education	20	2.400 lei
6.	English for the implementation of international projects II	Teaching staff in school education	20	2.400 lei
7.	Strategies to develop the learning autonomy of pupils in the environment online	Teaching staff in school education	50	6.000 lei
8.	Harnessing the multiple intelligence in digital education	Teaching staff in school education	25	3.000 lei
9.	Digital tools for online pre-school work	Teaching staff in pre-primary school education	50	6.000 lei
10.	The efficient classroom teacher to the virtual classroom	Teaching staff in school education	50	6.000 lei
11.	Use of visual tools in the online environment	Teaching staff in school education	25	3.000 lei
12.	Computer use in auxiliary teaching staff	Auxiliary teaching staff	50	6.000 lei
13.	Digital educational resources in CDI/school library	Auxiliary teaching staff	25	3.000 lei
14.	Tools useful for school inspection design	Methodist teachers	75	6.000 lei
15.	Training program for applicants for national competitions and examinations of pre-university teachers (completed/title/gr. II)	Teaching staff in school education	150	12.000 lei
TOTAL			**890**	**111.800 lei**

The purpose of the training programs is to develop the digital skills of teachers and auxiliary teaching staff in Bucharest pre-university education with regard to the quality of designing and carrying out teaching activities online, as well as training teachers for national competitions and preparing the group of metositi teachers in the course of school inspection in the context of online education.

The skills to be acquired are important for the qualitative growth of education from the perspective of online teaching-learning-evaluation, among which the following are most relevant:

- Assimilation of the concept of innovative and effective practices associated with learning individualization strategies.
- Providing language support for the uilization of digital platforms, as well as for effective communication in virtual connection with teachers from other European countries.
- Selecting appropriate digital learning methods and means to achieve inclusion, respect for diversity and promote participation and cooperation for all students.
- Acquiring digital skills in working with spreadsheets, the Edusal application, other software programs set up at school inspectorate level.
- Legislative aspects on the use of digital resources.
- Creation of evaluation and feedback tools in the teaching activity.
- Use of digital platforms, such as: ZOOM, Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, WebEx, Class-tools, Kahoot, open Board, Mentimeter, BookCreator, Quizizz.
- Effective communication with pupils and their parents using digital means Creation of online lessons and assessment tools adapted.
- Creation of online lessons and assessment tools adapted to the level of appropriate teaching (pre-school, primary, secondary and upper secondary education);
- The implementation of projects, teaching plans and assessment tools adapted to online teaching-learning-evaluation, using means, the monuments and the teaching methods are old;
- Advice to parents in the leisure activities they carry out with children during the time spent together at home;
- The acquisition of skills and competences which aim to stimulate pupils' behavior in promoting values relating to social responsibility, personal development, health education, inter-culturalism, tolerance and empathy toward those in the family, and the development of skills for continuous adaptation to the external environment, in the current pandemic context;
- Increasing self-esteem by satisfaction with the need for self-awareness and the ability to adapt teaching to different critical situations, which often cannot be anticipated.

The following results were recorded from the centralized data on the categories of teachers/auxiliary teaching staff participating in the training courses budgeted through the fund allocated by the Bucharest School Inspectorate for training: (Table no. 2 and table no. 3).

Table 2. Distribution of teachers formed of the budget of the Bucharest School Inspectorate by teaching level.

Curr. No.	**Level of study**	**Numeric Value / Percentage**
1.	Pre-primary school level	206 (23%)
2	Primary and secondary school level	310 (35%)
3.	High-school level	359 (40%)
4.	CMBRAE	15 (2%)

Table 3. Distribution of teachers/auxiliary teaching staff made up of the budget of the Bucharest School Inspectorate for the purpose of the assignment.

Curr. No.	Classification discipline	Numeric value
1.	Pre-primary education	206
2	Primary education	310
3.	Mathematics	48
4.	Romanian language and literature	57
5.	Foreign languages (English, French, German, Spanish, Italian)	45
6.	History, socio-humanitarian	15
7.	Biology, chemistry, physics	20
8.	Physical education and sport	26
9.	Musical education / Plastic education	23
10	Economics / technical based disciplines	75
11.	School Advisors	15
12.	Librarians	25
13.	Asset managers/secretaries	25

From the centralized data, a uniform distribution of the teaching staff and auxiliary teacher's personnel groups on accessing courses for the use of digital platforms in the teaching process is observed.

Training activities are not limited solely to the budget and funding of the School Inspectorate of the Bucharest workers. The training of teachers to develop the skills of using online platforms has been done through a number of counselling activities supported by the teachers of the teaching staff.

Specialized school inspectors and educational experts were invited to participate in the 50 free webinars, so that in the 2019-2020 school year and with the highest share during the period May to November 2020, when it was observed that there was increased interest in accessing the courses of use of educational platforms for e-learning, a number of 11.368 auxiliary/non-teaching staff from the pre-university education in Bucharest attended the training. (See table no. 4).

Table 4. Statistics on the participation of teaching/non-teaching/auxiliary staff in training activities through the Bucharest CCD.

Category of staff	Number of staff involved in training actions in the school year 2019-2020
Teaching staff	10560
Kindergarten teacher	2299
Teachers / Institutors	3251
Professors	4706
Instructor Masters	0
Teaching staff in management, guidance and control functions	304
Auxiliary teaching staff	634
Non-teaching staff	174
Total	**11368**

CONCLUSIONS

The effect of the crisis and the reduction of its risks on pupils and all educational actors is evident to be sustained.

However, the following problem can be raised: Is the Romanian society ready to cope with these efforts to support the educational act in the future? Are parents and the family environment in which students are part of these challenges prepared? This is certainly a subject of reflection for future research.

The process of digitization and e-learning, with appropriate modern teaching-learning methods, also needs to be introduced in the future into the curriculum of initial teacher education, teaching disciplines and specialized practice programs to develop the skills to integrate technology into teaching-learning.

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REASONS BEHIND PLAGIARISM

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Abstract

Plagiarism is a major problem for research or day-to-day schooling. Indeed, there are certain consequences of plagiarism. This paper aims to clarify the potential reasons of plagiarism, the types of plagiarism and we will present a case study which clarifies the potential plagiarism in the world. Observing the most common reasons for plagiarism in the world, there are few methods to diminish the plagiarism. We used a theoretical methodology where we collected data and information from different articles, we considered suitable to our research. Furthermore, for us, is very important to be aware of the consequences of plagiarism these days.

Keywords: ***Plagiarism, Europe, Research, Students, Reasons of plagiarism, Consequences of plagiarism***

JEL Classification: ***I20, I21, I23, I29***

1. Introduction

These days, plagiarism is a serios problem in the academic life. For understanding the term “plagiarism” better, we will go back in time and we will be acquainting with its terminology. The term "plagiarism" derives from the expression "plagiarius" in Latin, meaning kidnapper, thief, and plunderer. Given the fact that the term "plagiarism" itself has one historical context, it is interesting that there are many meanings and perceptions of plagiarism as a notion in a modern world as a concept. In the next chapter we will present different definitions from few scholars. This paper aims to present the meaning of plagiarism, some theoretical parts of the term, the reasons behind plagiarism, and a small study of plagiarism in the world.

2. Literature review

According to Oxford Dictionary the word “plagiarism” is referring to the work or ideas of someone else as your own, with or without their permission, by integrating it without full acknowledgment into your work. Both published and unpublished material is protected by this term, whether in manuscript, written or electronic form.

Furthermore, we will present definitions of the term “plagiarism” from different scholars. Park (2003) defines plagiarism as a “literacy theft”, “which refers to the absence of acknowledgement to original authors after taking their ideas or words and is regarded as “stealing”. In the academic world, plagiarism is a well-known and growing issue. A large part of the overall amount of extreme deviations from good research practice is estimated to be made up. (Titus et al, 2008; Vitse and Poland 2012). Helgesson (2014) affirmed that "when someone using someone else's intellectual product (such as texts, ideas, or results” is called plagiarism. The Federal Government of the United States defines “research misconduct as fabrication, falsification or plagiarism in proposing, implementing or reviewing of research projects or in reporting the results of research”.

2.1 Types of plagiarism

There are 4 types of plagiarism. One of the main problems in the educational system is the issue of student plagiarism and it is becoming increasingly common among students across the globe. Researchers consider nationality and ethnicity to be various conceptions of proper regulations of academic conduct affect them. The measurable relation between the

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perceptions of students and their national origins are the basis of various studies. What's more, many researchers accept that the concept of intellectual and textual (Pennycook 1996, Introna et al . 2003, Yusof 2009) ownership is a Western term.

1. The act of copying the work of another person word for word is direct plagiarism. It is direct plagiarism to insert a paragraph from a book or article into your essay without, for example, having attribution or quotation marks. It is also direct plagiarism to pay others to compose an essay for you and to submit it as your own work. If you commit overt plagiarism, thanks to apps and instruments like Turnitin, you're likely to be captured.
2. Paraphrased plagiarism means making a few (often cosmetic) alterations to the work of someone else and passing it off as your own. If a particular term is common knowledge, even though you do not provide any direct quotations, you should not include it in your paper without including a citation.
3. A mixture of direct and paraphrased plagiarism is "Mosaic" plagiarism. This form includes throwing into your essay different terms, phrases, and phrases (some word for word, some paraphrased) without including quotation marks or attributions.
4. Accidental plagiarism happens when citations are incomplete, references are wrongly cited, or an author shares a concept without a citation that information is not as popular as they thought. The product of a disorganized study method and a last-minute time crunch is always unintentional plagiarism. Ultimately, you have committed plagiarism if you neglect to correctly cite your sources, even if you had every intention of providing credit.

2.2 Why do people plagiarize?

Students who understand their acts involve plagiarism are guilty of academic fraud-for example, copying published information into a paper without source attribution for the intent of claiming the data as their own, or converting it into material written by another student. While the violation of ethical conduct that such behavior reflects cannot be diminished by any reason, recognizing why students plagiarize will help teachers consider how to minimize the possibilities for plagiarism in their classrooms.

According to University of Kent, student plagiarize because of the following reasons:

- ” Students may fear failure or fear taking risks in their own work.
- Students may have poor time-management skills or they may plan poorly for the time and effort required for research-based writing, and believe they have no choice but to plagiarize.
- Students may view the course, the assignment, the conventions of academic documentation, or the consequences of cheating as unimportant.
- Teachers may present students with assignments so generic or unparticularized that students may believe they are justified in looking for canned responses.
- Instructors and institutions may fail to report cheating when it does occur, or may not enforce appropriate penalties.”

We studied an article named “Student Plagiarism and national differences across Europe”, from Coventry University. The aim of the author's research is to investigate whether students from various European countries and backgrounds have different views on plagiarism, thus evaluating the effect of nationality on the perception of academic dishonesty by students. The aim is, therefore, to discuss and re-evaluate the current definition of a common "European" approach. The author must complete multiple research goals to accomplish these goals. In order to examine the attitudes and behaviors that lie behind the issue of student plagiarism, the process starts with gathering data from questionnaires and interviews. Findings from various European institutions of higher education will be obtained and analyzed in the form of a comparative report.

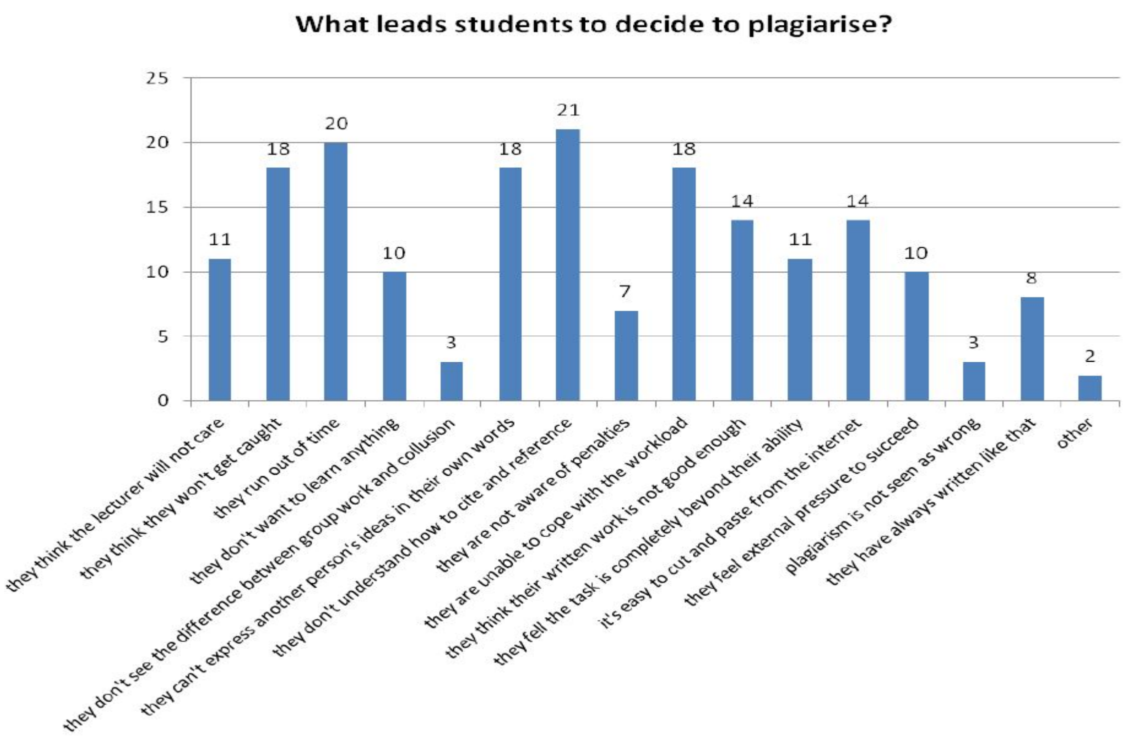

Fig. 1 – What lead students to plagiarism

Source - "Student Plagiarism and national differences across Europe" (2012)

The total number of responses were 188. There was made a percentage analysis and the conclusion was that 11.2% of them don't understand how to cite and reference. Another problem would be their time management, 10.6% of them said that they ran out of time. Some other responses are: "They think the lecturer will not care", "They think they will not get caught", or "They don't want to learn anything, just pass the assignment".

3. A STUDY ON EUROPE

Nowadays, plagiarism raised a lot of questions. There have been made surveys, researches on different nationalities, there have been collected data from specific anti-plagiarism software's and so on. In the following few pages we will present some of these.

We continue with the study presented before, but we want to go deeper in the subject. The article's survey is made upon on students from Nigeria, India, Great Britain, Poland, China, Libya, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and UAE nations. The test survey contained 33 questions and was conducted on a group of 37 postgraduate Coventry University from Engineering and Computing Faculty. There are five of the study. They are categorized as: plagiarism understanding and awareness, plagiarism occurrence, citing and referring, plagiarism deterrence and detection and institutional policies and procedures.

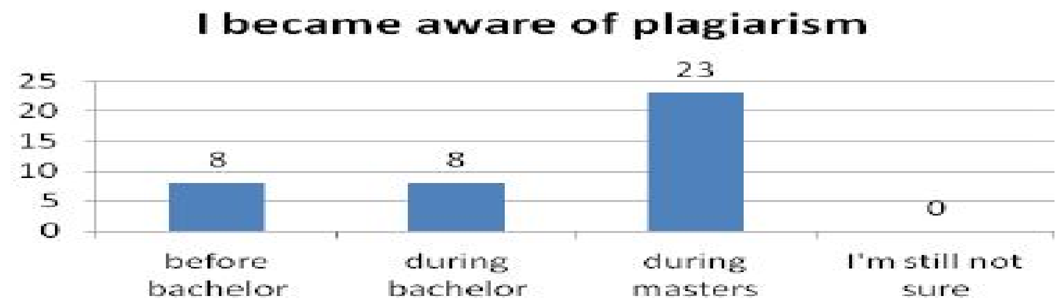

Fig. 2 Awareness of plagiarism
Source - "Student Plagiarism and national differences across Europe" (2012)

Most of the students declared that they became aware of plagiarism during their master's degree – 59% out of 39 responses. 20.5% out of 39 students said that they became aware of plagiarism before bachelor.

	Nigeria	India	Great Britain	Poland	China	Libya	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	UAE nations	N/N
Number of participants	13	12	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	2
"Before bachelor"		2	1	2	1					2
"During bachelor"	2	1	2			1			1	1
"During masters"	11	10						1		1

Fig. 3 National distribution analysis
Source - "Student Plagiarism and national differences across Europe" (2012)

The next figure is referring to the confidence of students about referencing and citation. It turned out that 77.1% out of 35 people affirmed that they are confident in these two concepts. 5% said that they are not sure and 8.6% are not confident.

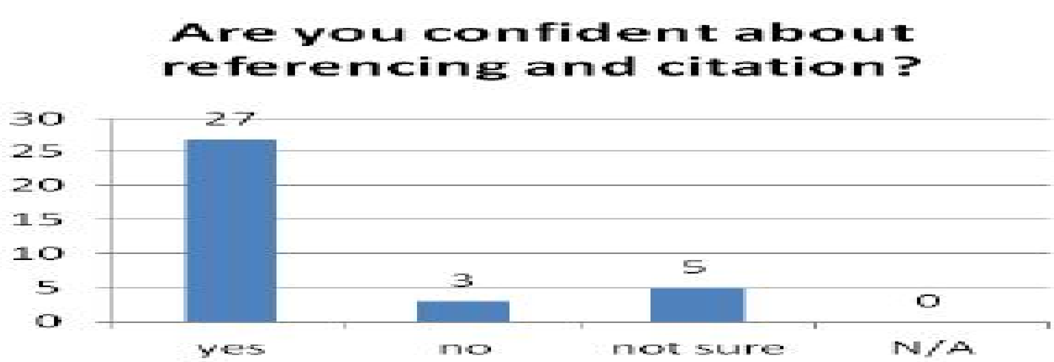

Fig. 4 Confidence regarding referencing and citation
Source - "Student Plagiarism and national differences across Europe" (2012)

Another study we would like to present is the analysis of the hundreds of thousands of technical manuscripts submitted to arXiv. They are offering some intriguing insights into the consequences and geography of scientific plagiarism. ArXiv has been the largest forum in the world for sharing results in physics, math, and other mathematical fields since its establishment in 1991. It publishes hundreds of papers on a regular basis and its millionth submission is quickly approaching. Anyone can send in a paper, and full peer review submission are not received. The papers do, however, go through a quality-control process. The final check is a computer program that compares the text of the paper to the text of every other paper that is already published on arXiv. The aim is to mark papers that have a high risk of published work being plagiarized.

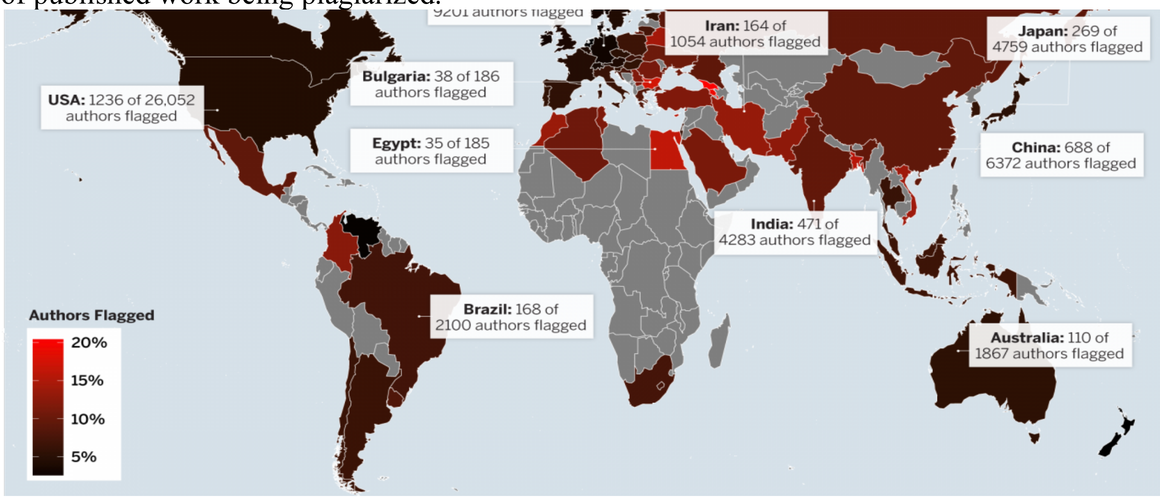

Fig. 5 Geography of plagiarism
Source – ScienceInsider

A conservative approach is taken in the map above, prepared by ScienceInsider. It illustrates only the occurrence of flagged authors to mitigate bias from limited sample sizes for the 57 nations with at least 100 submitted articles. (In Ethiopia, for example, only three writers have been submitted, and two of them have been flagged.)

4. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, we want to resume our research. Plagiarism, from many points of view is mainly regarding "theft". Is referring to the work or ideas of someone else as your own, with or without their permission, by integrating it without full acknowledgment into your work. Park (2003) defines plagiarism as a "literacy theft", "which refers to the absence of acknowledgement to original authors after taking their ideas or words and is regarded as "stealing". There are a few reasons why people decide to plagiarize, two of them are referring to their time management and lack of referencing and citing knowledge, according to Coventry University.

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