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VNÍMÁNÍ SPOLEČENSKY ODPOVĚDNÝCH AKTIVIT ZÁKAZNÍKY U MALOOBCHODNÍHO ŘETEZCE

Consumer perception of Socially Responsible Activities at a Retail Chain

Viktorie KAŠOVÁ – Kateřina KOVÁŘOVÁ

Ústí nad Labem, Czech Republic

ABSTRAKT: V posledních letech se koncept společenské odpovědnosti firem dostává stále více do povědomí společnosti i jednotlivých organizací, proto je do budoucna stále důležité zvyšovat informovanost a vnímání o tomto konceptu a prosazovat jeho zavádění do praxe. Na základě dotazníkového šetření byla provedena analýza dat s cílem zjistit, jak zákazníci vnímají jednotlivé aktivity společenské odpovědnosti firem u konkrétního maloobchodního řetězce. Výzkumný soubor tvořilo 129 respondentů. Data byla statisticky zpracována, testována intervalem spolehlivosti a chí – kvadrátem. Bylo zjištěno, že pojmu společenské odpovědnost firem rozumí 52 % z dotazovaných respondentů. Nejznámější aktivitou konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem u konkrétního maloobchodního řetězce, kterou respondenti znají je boj proti plýtvání s potravinami, recyklací a zpětným sběrem odpadu, podporou zdravého životního stylu. 65,4 % respondentů si myslí, že aktivity společenské odpovědnosti firem mají přínos hlavně pro konkrétního maloobchodního řetězce, a dále 14 % respondentů si je téměř jisto, že maloobchodní řetězec je zapojen do konceptu především z důvodu zisku. Nebyla však testováním dat prokázána závislost ve vnímání aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem na věku, vzdělání, pohlaví a platu respondentů. Zároveň bylo zjištěno, že 56,6 % respondentů není o společenské odpovědnosti firem dostatečně informováno. V neposlední řadě je tento koncept respondenty vnímán pozitivně, vidí v něm smysl a jsou ochotni si připlatit za produkt, při jehož koupi jde část jeho výdělku potřebným. Výsledky tak nastínily směry a oblasti pro případné zlepšování a neustálé monitorování vnímání tohoto konceptu.

Klíčová slova: maloobchodní řetězec, společenská odpovědnost firem, aktivity, vnímání, zákazník.

ABSTRACT: In recent years, the concept of corporate social responsibility has become increasingly well-known to society and individual organizations. Therefore, it is becoming more and more important to raise awareness and perception of this concept, as well as to promote its implementation in practice. Based on a questionnaire survey, data analysis was conducted to find out how consumers perceive various CSR activities of a specific retail chain. The research sample consisted of 129 respondents. The data was statistically processed and tested using confidence interval and chi-square. It was found that 52 % of the respondents understood the concept of CSR. The most familiar activity to the respondents within the CSR concept in a particular chain include the fight against food waste, recycling, and waste recovery, and promotion of a healthy lifestyle. About 65.4 % of the respondents believe that CSR activities mainly benefit the retail chain and another 14 % of the respondents are almost sure that the retail chain is engaged in this concept mainly for profit. However, the performed tests did not reveal any relationship between the perception of CSR activities and the age, education, gender, and salary of the respondents. It was also found that 56.6 % of the respondents did not have sufficient information about CSR. Finally, it can be concluded that this concept is perceived positively by the respondents, they consider it meaningful and are willing to pay more for a product where part of the profit goes to the needy. The research results thus outline directions and areas for possible improvement and continuous monitoring of the perception of this concept.

Key words: retail chain, corporate social responsibility, activities, perception, customer.

ÚVOD

Na českém trhu došlo během posledních několika let k výraznému posunu ve vnímání společenské odpovědnosti firem veřejností. Významnou roli v posunu hraje stále rostoucí zapojení společností do konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem a rostoucí množství propagovaných aktivit. Podle studie z roku 2019 zkoumající vliv společenské odpovědnosti firem na vnímání široké veřejnosti je pro 52 % Čechů při výběru prodejny důležité, zda se chová odpovědně. Do této skupiny se řadili především lidé s vysokoškolským vzděláním [11].

Správné vnímání společenské odpovědnosti firem vede ke zlepšení image značek, k tendenci zákazníků nakupovat u dané společnosti, a nakonec i k rostoucím finančním výsledkům společnosti [8].

Vnímání společenské odpovědnosti firem ovlivňuje všechny zúčastněné strany. Zákazníci s větším povědomím o společenské zodpovědnosti firem mají větší tendence konzumovat výrobky dané společnosti. Vnímání společenské odpovědnosti firem přináší společnosti zároveň i pozitivnější pohled na to, jaký byl důvod zapojení společnosti do konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem, jaké jsou její postoje a budoucí úmysly. Snahou společností je přimět zákazníka a další zúčastněné strany vnímat pozitivně jejich strategii, a to nejen v oblasti spotřeby, ale i v oblasti zaměstnanosti a investic [5].

Autoři [16] jsou toho názoru, že koncept společenské odpovědnosti firem dokáže vnímat jen pár znalých respondentů.

Snahou společnosti by mělo být také naučit své zákazníky, jak správně vnímat společenskou odpovědnost firmy. Správné vnímání konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem si vyžaduje přímé reakce společnosti na požadavky zúčastněných stran. Pro správné vnímání zákazníků by společnosti neměly zaměňovat iniciativy společenské odpovědnosti firem s hlavním předmětem podnikání [4]; bylo nicméně prokázáno, že koncept společenské odpovědnosti firem má vliv na hlavní předmět podnikání a společnost je zodpovědná za to, aby byl relevantní pro všechny zúčastněné strany [16].

Koncept společenské odpovědnosti firem bude správně vnímán veřejností pouze tehdy, jsou-li její společenské a environmentální hodnoty firmy transparentní. Transparentnost se snaží předejít problémům jako je například ignorování záměrů, nedostatečná kontrola aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem, upřednostňování jedné ze zúčastněných stran před druhou nebo problémům v komunikaci [10]. V roce 2001 trápila až 58 % francouzských maloobchodníků nedůvěra ze strany zákazníků. Jedním z dvou hlavních důvodů byla slabá politika společnosti v oblasti společenské odpovědnosti firem. Druhým důvodem byla pro zákazníky je nevyhovující cenová image společnosti. Autoři [14] zkoumali dopad společenské odpovědnosti firem na cenovou image společnosti vnímanou zákazníky. Společenská odpovědnost firem pozitivně a významně ovlivňuje pohled zákazníka na obchodníka. Při budování vztahů se zákazníky nestačí jen správná politika společenské odpovědnosti firem. Společnosti by měly dbát také na svou dobrou image, a to jak z hlediska vnímání podniku, tak z hlediska ceny produktu. Zákazníci nejčastěji reagují na tyto 3 osobnostní rysy obchodníka – příjemnost, svědomitost a důmyslnost, které v nich vyvolávají spokojenost, důvěru a loajalitu [14]. Oproti tomu autoři [17] klasifikovali zákazníky do tří skupin na základě jejich postojů k společenské odpovědnosti firem. První skupinu tvořili zákazníci, kteří znají propagaci aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem společností. Jsou si vědomi většiny firemních aktivit propagovaných společností a následně jsou pozitivně ovlivňováni v rámci jejich nákupního chování. V této skupině se nejčastěji vyskytovali lidé středního věku s vyšším příjmem. Do druhé skupiny patřili zákazníci, kteří na společenskou odpovědnost firem pohlíží negativně nebo se o aktivity společenské odpovědnosti firem vůbec nezajímají. Většinou se jednalo o mladé lidi ve věku 18-24 let s nízkou úrovní vzdělání a s nízkými příjmy. Poslední skupina se vyznačuje ochotou zákazníků přemýšlet o společenské odpovědnosti firem při nakupování, ale nevěří, že společnosti s vynikajícími záznamy o společenské odpovědnosti firem jsou skutečně úspěšné, důvěryhodné a jejich produkty nemohou hodnotit na základě informací z firemních záznamů. Zákazníci tohoto typu jsou nejčastěji ve věku 25-39 let a mají mnohem vyšší vzdělání než ostatní zákazníci. Výsledky studie vedou k závěru, že vztahy mezi spotřebitelskou demografií a jejich postoji k společenské odpovědnosti firem nejsou lineární, tzn. mění se podle sociální kultury a hodnot zákazníků [17].

Výzkum z roku 2019 také uvádí, že aktivity společenské odpovědnosti firem nejsou vnímány pouze pozitivně. Pětina z 1050 dotazovaných respondentů vnímá aktivity společenské odpovědnosti firem negativně. Respondenti s negativními postoji připisují zapojení společností do společenské odpovědnosti firem především snaze o dosažení či zvýšení zisku [11].

METODIKA A CÍL

Cílem tohoto příspěvky bylo zjistit, jak zákazníci vnímají jednotlivé aktivity společenské odpovědnosti firem u konkrétního maloobchodního řetězce.

Zvolený maloobchodní řetězec působí na našem trhu od roku 1996. Spadá pod mezinárodní společnost založenou ve Velké Británii, jejíž historie sahá až do roku 1919. Na území České republiky provozuje síť obchodních domů, hypermarketů, supermarketů a menších obchodů. Celkem vlastní až 190 obchodů v České republice.

Cílí svou společenskou odpovědností na lidi, se kterými spolupracuje, místa, v nichž působí a produkty, které prodává. Od roku 2020 přibyl další cíl, jímž je planeta [2]. Každá z těchto oblastí zahrnuje společensky odpovědné aktivity či programy.

Naplňování uplatňované strategie zveřejňuje prostřednictví raportů pod názvem „Little Helps Plan“. V oblasti společenské odpovědnosti firem si společnost stanovila dva dlouhodobější cíle, konkrétně poskytování výjimečné hodnoty a zajišťování lepší dostupnosti zboží a služeb zákazníkům. Své priority však zaměřuje na ta nejdůležitější místa v této oblasti. Po ekologické stránce vede boj proti plýtvání potravinami a po sociální stránce podporuje kvalitu života lidí v okolních komunitách. Dále se snaží vylepšit vnímání zákazníků, a to prostřednictvím inovování současných obchodů a stálého rozšiřování nabídky zboží čerstvých potravin, značek vlastních i značek společností podporovaných.

Každá prodejna společnosti měří své krátkodobé cíle pomocí ukazatelů výkonnosti. Díky těmto ukazatelům se může každý dozvědět něco víc o plnění cílů a poslání společnosti.

V posledních letech se společnost aktivně zabývá snižováním potravinového odpadu, za což získala v uplynulých letech již mnoho ocenění. Strategie snižování potravinového odpadu spočívá v transparentnosti měření a publikování dat společnosti. Strategie zahrnuje i neustálou optimalizaci objednávek a zásobování. Pro ještě větší snížení potravinového odpadu využívá procesu inteligentního zlevňování produktů, u kterých záhy končí datum spotřeby. Tím minimalizuje množství potravinových přebytků. Avšak ani ty nejlepší strategie neomezí potravinové přebytky na nulu. Přebytky poté vstupují do fáze redistribuce, kdy je společnost rozděluje dle kvality pro darování k lidské spotřebě nebo jako krmivo pro zvířata [2].

Do roku 2030 se společnost zavázala dosáhnout Cíle udržitelného rozvoje. Program schválila Organizace spojených národů již v roce 2015, tudíž se jedná o dlouhodobé plnění 17 nastavených cílů. Jeden z cílů dosáhla již čtyři roky po přijetí závazku, kdy se podařilo snížit množství potravinového odpadu o 55 %. Pro rok 2020 si společnost nastavila cíle z předešlých let, ve kterých chce pokračovat. Nadále tak bude rozšiřovat a zkvalitňovat své služby a zavádět inovace na českém trhu [3].

Společnost pravidelně a dobrovolně zveřejňuje zprávy o společenské odpovědnosti firem a udržitelném rozvoji. Tyto zdroje byly využity pro sběr sekundárních dat. Pro přesnější informace pomohly i interní zdroje poskytnuté manažery společnosti. Na základě těchto informací byly vybrány dle aktuálních strategických cílů společensky odpovědné aktivity, na které společnost cílí z hlediska vnímání svých zákazníků.

Za pomoci zjištěných dat byl sestaven dotazník ke sběru primárních dat. Pro zajištění správné formulace otázek a jejich pochopení respondenty proběhla před dotazováním pilotáž. Po úpravě nejasností mohl být spuštěn sběr dat, který proběhl v září – říjnu roku 2020. Sběr dat byl proveden osobně na dvou pobočkách společnosti, v Ústí nad Labem a v Děčíně. Byl realizován kvantitativní výzkum na základě osobního dotazování s prostým náhodným výběrem respondentů.

Celkem bylo osloveno 135 respondentů, kteří odpovídali na otázky z dotazníkového šetření. Z důvodu nesprávného vyplnění 6 dotazníků jich bylo ke zpracování využito 129. Dotazníkové šetření obsahovalo celkem 15 otázek.

Získaná data byla zpracována nejprve popisnou statistikou a poté testována pomocí chí – kvadrát testu nezávislosti a intervalu spolehlivosti pro pravděpodobnost. Pro celkovou analýzu dat se využilo programové prostředí SPPS Statistic, MS Word a MS Excel.

VÝSLEDKY A DISKUSE

Popis souboru

Z dotazníkového šetření vyplynulo, že skupinu dotazovaných respondentů tvořilo 20 % mužů a 80 % žen. Ženy byly ochotnější a projevovaly větší zájem o dotazování, čímž byla zapříčiněna nerovnoměrnost zastoupení mužů a žen. Mezi dotazovanými se vyskytovalo 45,7 % respondentů ve věku 15-24 let. Ve věku 25-34 let bylo dotazováno 18,6 % respondentů. Kategorie 35-44 a 45-54 let byly stejnoměrně zastoupeny 11,6 %. Kategorie 55-64 let nasbírala pouze 1,6 % respondentů a do kategorie 65+ připadlo 10,9 % respondentů. Co se týče nejvyššího dosaženého vzdělání, 56,6 % respondentů dosáhlo středoškolského vzdělání. 29,4 % byly respondenti s vysokoškolskými tituly. Vyššího odborného vzdělání dosáhlo 4,7 % respondentů a středoškolského vzdělání s vyučením 6,2 %. Zbylých 3,1 % respondentů dosáhlo základního vzdělání. 36 % respondentů z tohoto dotazníkového šetření dosahuje svých průměrných čistých měsíčních výdělků do 13 350 Kč. Další jsou rozděleni do čtyř po sobě jdoucích skupin s průměrnými příjmy. Malé procento přesahuje svými příjmy 40 000 Kč [13].

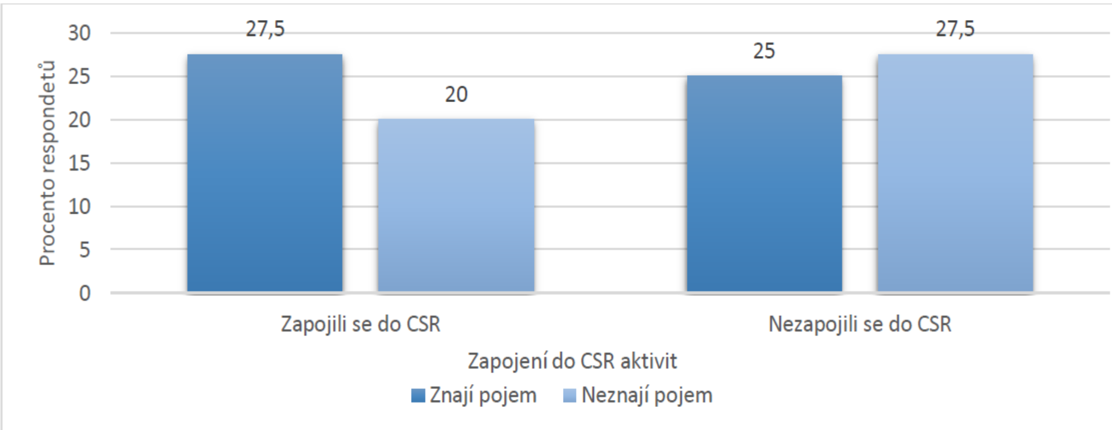
Vnímání společenské odpovědnosti firmy

Znát pojem společenská odpovědnosti firem je důležité k jeho vnímání. Čím více znalostí o pojmu zákazníci mají, tím více je ovlivněno jejich vnímání [5].

Z dotazníkového šetření vyplynulo, že pojmu společenská odpovědnost rozumí 52 % dotazovaných respondentů. To však neznamená, že by zbylých 48 % neznalo společenskou odpovědnost vůbec. Po otázce zjištující znalost pojmu společenská odpovědnost firem byl respondentům vysvětlen význam konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem a propagované aktivity. Poté následovala otázka, která zjišťovala, zda se respondenti již někdy v životě zapojili alespoň do jedné z vyjmenovaných aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem [13].

Získané výsledky korespondují se závěry o vnímání aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem zákazníkem u vybraných maloobchodních řetězců, kde autor konstatuje, že ze 163 respondentů zná pojem společenské odpovědnosti firem jen 33,1 %. Z toho plyne, že pojem společenské odpovědnosti firem a s ním spojených aktivit nelze považovat za všeobecně známý fakt, který zná každý zákazník. Pokud už zákazníci tento koncept znají, spojují si jej především s otázkou ochrany životního prostředí [6].

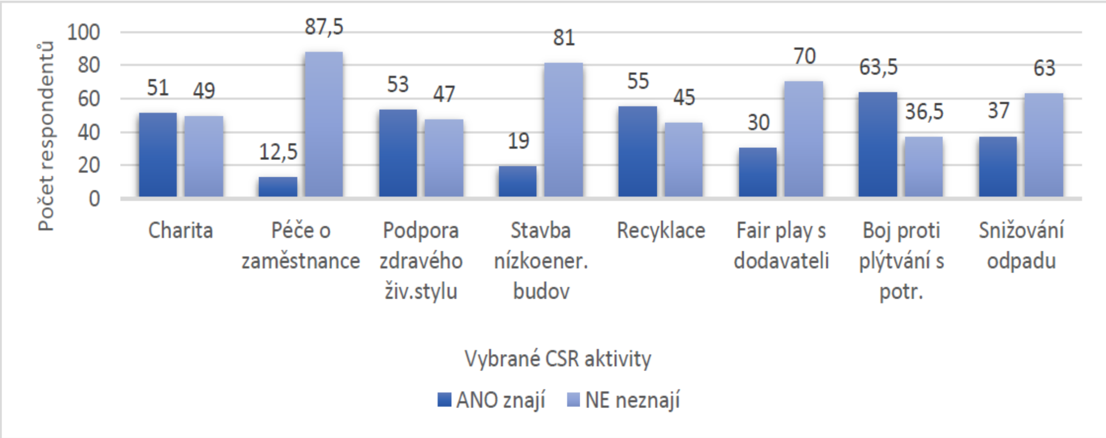
Graf č. 1: Zapojení respondentů do aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem (CSR).



Zdroj: Vlastní zpracování.

Po vysvětlení pojmu se 20 % z respondentů přiznalo, že ačkoli neznají význam konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem, byli již v minulosti zapojeni do některé aktivity společenské odpovědnosti firem. Celkem 47,5 % z respondentů se již zapojilo nebo se pravidelně zapojuje do aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem. 52,5 % z dotazovaných se do aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem nezapojuje i přesto, že 25 % z nich koncept společenské odpovědnosti firem zná [13].

Graf č. 2: Úroveň znalosti vybraných aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem.



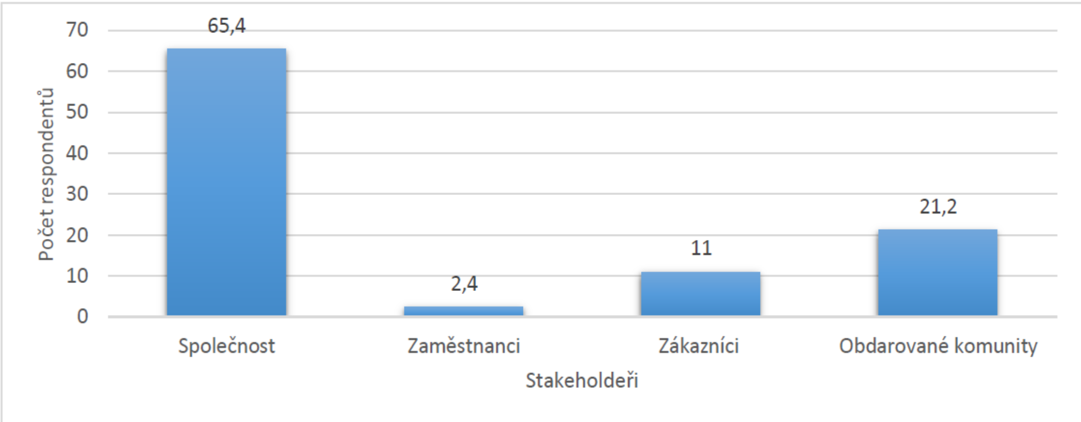
Zdroj: Vlastní zpracování.

Graf č. 2 zaznamenává, jak respondenti znají jednotlivé aktivity společenské odpovědnosti firem propagované společností. U aktivit charita a sponzorování, podpora zdravého životního stylu, recyklace a zpětný sběr odpadu a boj proti plýtvání potravinami bylo zjištěno, že převažuje procento znalých respondentů. Aktivity podpora a péče o zaměstnance, stavba nízkoenergetických prodejen, fair play s dodavateli a snižování produkce odpadu byly vyhodnoceny jako méně známé.

Odpovědi respondentů o znalosti jednotlivých aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem byly dále testovány intervalem spolehlivosti, který s 95 % pravděpodobností odhalil procentuální znalost jednotlivých aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem. Boj proti plýtvání potravinami vyšel v testu jako nejznámější aktivita, kterou zná s 95 % pravděpodobností 54,84 % - 72,29 % respondentů. Hned za ni se řadí recyklace a zpětný sběr odpadu, kterou zná počet zákazníků v rozmezí 46 % - 64 %. Aktivity podpora zdravého životního stylu, charita a sponzorování zná zhruba 40 % - 60 % zákazníků. Další aktivitou je snižování produkce odpadu, kterou zná už pouze 28,45 % - 45,97 % zákazníků. Znalost dalších aktivit, jimiž jsou fair play s dodavateli, stavba nízkoenergetických prodejen a podpora zaměstnanců, značně klesá. Poslední aktivitu zná s 95 % pravděpodobností pouze 6,36 % - 18,64 % zákazníků. Respondenti hodnotili důležitost jednotlivých aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem na stupnici od 1 do 8, kdy 1 znamenalo nejvíce a 8 nejméně důležité. Jejich odpovědi byly pro přehlednost rozděleny do dvou skupin, dle hodnocení 1 - 4 jako kladně hodnocené a 5 - 8 jako záporně hodnocené.

Výrazně lépe hodnotili respondenti první aktivitu Charita a sponzorování, kterou kladně ohodnotilo 62,28 % respondentů. Další důležitou aktivitou je podpora a péče o zaměstnance, kterou hodnotilo kladně už jen 55 % respondentů. Stejně tomu je i u třetí aktivity, podpora zdravého životního stylu, která se zdá důležitá z pohledu 54 % dotazovaných respondentů. Poslední aktivitou, na kterou respondenti kladou důraz v její důležitosti, je snižování produkce odpadu. Aktivity recyklace a zpětný sběr odpadu, stavba nízkoenergetických prodejen, boj proti plýtvání s potravinami a fair play s dodavateli, vnímají dotazovaní respondenti jako méně důležité než první čtyři aktivity [13].

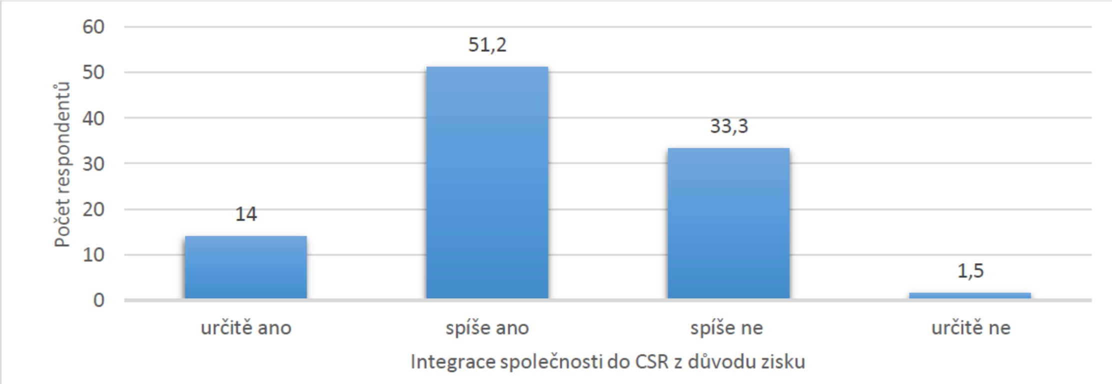
Graf č. 3: Komu přináší aktivity společenské odpovědnosti firem užitek?



Zdroj: Vlastní zpracování.

Z grafu č. 3 je zřejmé, že si převládající část z dotazovaných respondentů, konkrétně 65,4 % myslí, že aktivity společenské odpovědnosti firem mají přínos hlavně pro společnost. Pouze 2,4 % respondentů volilo přínos pro zaměstnance a 11 % pro zákazníky. 21,2 % z dotazovaných volilo možnost obdarované komunity. Ve studii o společenské odpovědnosti firem autoři [11] uvádí, že většina respondentů vnímá důvod zapojení společností do tohoto konceptu velmi negativně. Myslí si, že se do konceptu firmy zapojují především z hlediska zvyšování tržeb.

Graf č. 4: Pohled respondentů na integraci společnosti v konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem.



Zdroj: Vlastní zpracování.

Graf č. 4 má s předcházejícím grafem č. 3 jistou spojitost. Zachycuje, jakým způsobem respondenti z dotazníkového šetření pohlíží na integraci společnosti do konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem. 14 % dotazovaných si je jisto, že je společnost zapojená do konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem především z důvodu zisku. Až 51 % si myslí totéž, ale jsou si svou odpovědí méně jisti. Značné procento respondentů, konkrétně 33,3 % nepředpokládá, že by společnost podporovala koncept společenské odpovědnosti firem z důvodu zisku. Pouze 1,5 % respondentů nepředpokládá vůbec, že by byla společnost zainteresovaná do společenské odpovědnosti firem z důvodu zisku. Více jak polovina z dotazovaných vnímá právě společnost jako aktéra získávající největší užitek z propagování společenské odpovědnosti firem. Autoři [10] přisuzují tento problém nedostatečné transparentnosti ze strany společnosti.

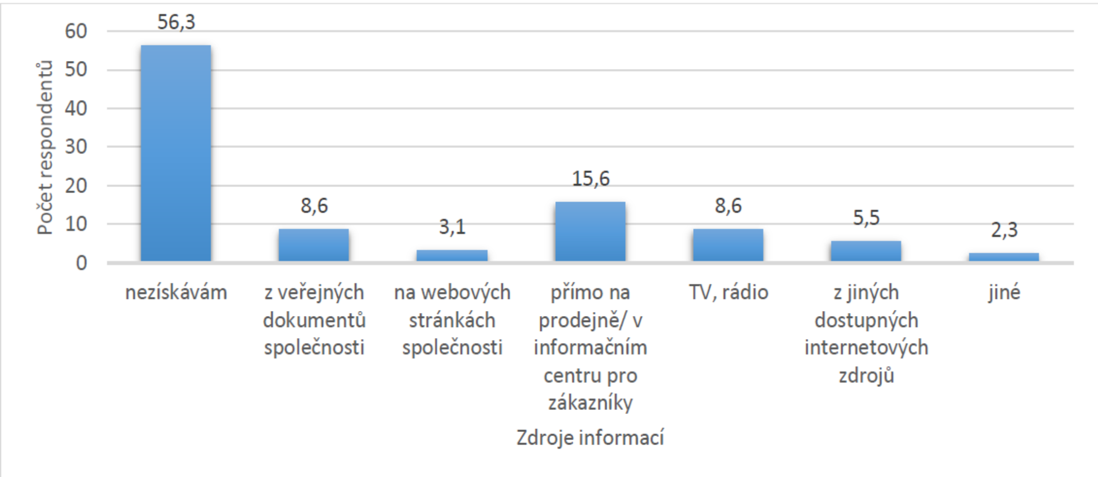
S tím nesouhlasí autoři [17], kteří roztřídili zákazníky do tří skupin podle toho, zda vnímají společenskou odpovědnost firem pozitivně, neutrálně nebo negativně. Následně zjišťovali spojitosti mezi respondenty v každé skupině, čímž došli k závěru, že lidé ve středním věku, s vyššími příjmy a s vyšším stupněm dosaženého vzdělání vnímají společenskou odpovědnost firem pozitivněji než mladší respondenti pod 24 let s nižšími příjmy. Zároveň jiná studie dokazuje, že s přibývajícím věkem ztrácí zákazníci zájem o společenskou odpovědnost firem [11].

Vybrané aspekty věk, pohlaví, vzdělání a plat byly otestovány v závislosti se zjištěnou znalostí respondentů o společenskou odpovědnost firem. Z hlediska věku se neprokázala souvislost se znalostí konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem. Respondenti všech věkových skupin odpovídali víceméně podobně. P-hodnota vyšla 0,81, což dokládá, že úroveň znalostí respondentů o konceptu společenské odpovědnosti firem z hlediska věku je srovnatelná. S rostoucím věkem nebyl prokázán ztrácející se zájem o společenskou odpovědnost firem. S 5 % hladinou významností se otestovala znalost společenské odpovědnosti firem v závislosti na pohlaví respondenta. P-hodnota (0,83) je vyšší než hladina významnosti. Znalost společenské odpovědnosti firem u mužů a žen je tedy srovnatelná, tím pádem pohlaví respondentů nemá vliv na znalost společenskou odpovědnost firem.

Pro splnění podmínek použití chí – testu nezávislosti byly sloučeny kategorie dosaženého vzdělání. Respondenti se základním a středoškolským vzděláním byli sloučeni do jedné kategorie. Do druhé patřili respondenti s vyšším a vysokoškolským vzděláním. Poté proběhlo testování chí-testem nezávislosti, z nějž vyšla p-hodnota 0,42, čili menší než 5 % hladina významnosti. Neprokázalo se, že by vzdělání zákazníků mělo vliv na znalost společenské odpovědnosti firem ani to, že by vzdělanější respondenti měli o společenské odpovědnosti firem více znalostí než respondenti s nižším vzděláním [13].

Ani u respondentů s odlišnými příjmy nelze konstatovat, že výše průměrných příjmů má vliv na jejich vnímání, vzhledem k tomu, že vypočítaná p-hodnota je 0,97 a jeví se jako silně nezávislá. Úroveň znalosti společenské odpovědnosti firem u respondentů s vyššími příjmy je srovnatelná s respondenty s nižšími příjmy. Neprokázalo se tímto tvrzení autorů [12], kteří uvádějí, že majetnější zákazníci mají větší zájem o společenskou odpovědnost firem.
Studie autorů [15] tvrdí, že nákupní rozhodování zákazníků je do značné míry ovlivněno kroky, které společnost podniká v oblasti společenské odpovědnosti firem. První podmínkou pro vytvoření pozitivního vztahu se zákazníkem je dostatečná informovanost o společenské odpovědnosti firem [15]. Informovanost o společenské odpovědnosti firem byla zjištěna od respondentů z dotazníkového šetření.

Graf č. 5: Zdroje získávání informací.



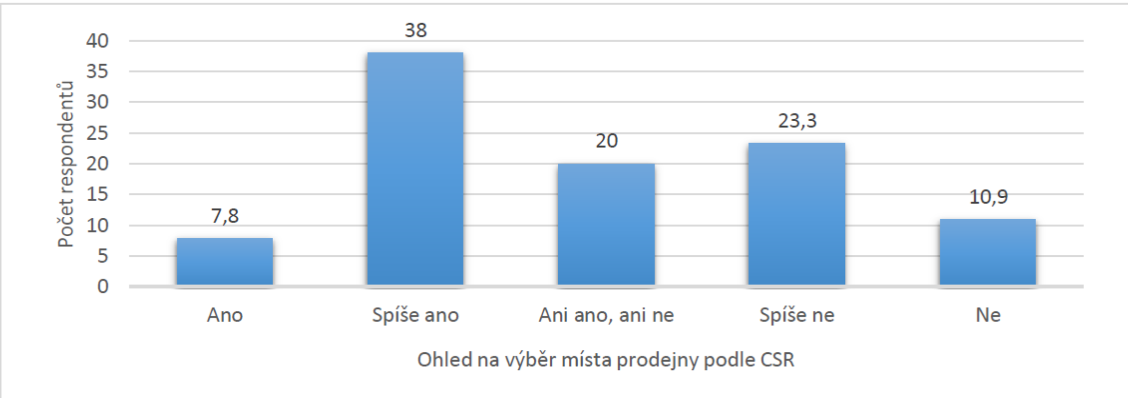
Zdroj: Vlastní zpracování.

Na otázku, kde respondenti získávají informace o CSR aktivitách společnosti, odpovědělo až 56,3 % respondentů, že nezískává informace vůbec. Vyplynulo tak, že více než polovina z dotazovaných respondentů není dostatečně informována o konceptu CSR společnosti, jelikož nezískává žádné informace o tomto konceptu nebo je nevyhledává. Slabá informovanost může být ovlivněna nedostatečným vnímáním vyslaných informací ze strany zákazníka [7].

Dále bylo zjištěno, že 15,6 % respondentů získává informace přímo na prodejně nebo v informačním centru prodejny. 8,6 % respondentů uvedlo, že se informují sami z veřejných dokumentů společnosti. Stejný počet respondentů se informuje skrze média a dalších 5,5 % z jiných internetových zdrojů. Z úplně odlišných zdrojů se informuje 2,3 % respondentů, kteří odpovídali na otevřenou otázku. Většinou uváděli jako zdroj svých informací interní zdroje společnosti nebo samotnou spolupráci se společností [13].

Autoři studií o společenské odpovědnosti firem [9] a [7] se domnívají, že postoje zákazníků a aspekty společenské odpovědnosti firem nejsou hlavním rozhodovacím kritériem zákazníků při koupi produktů. Studie z roku 2019 uvádí, že nákupní rozhodování je ovlivněno i samotným vnímáním společnosti [11].

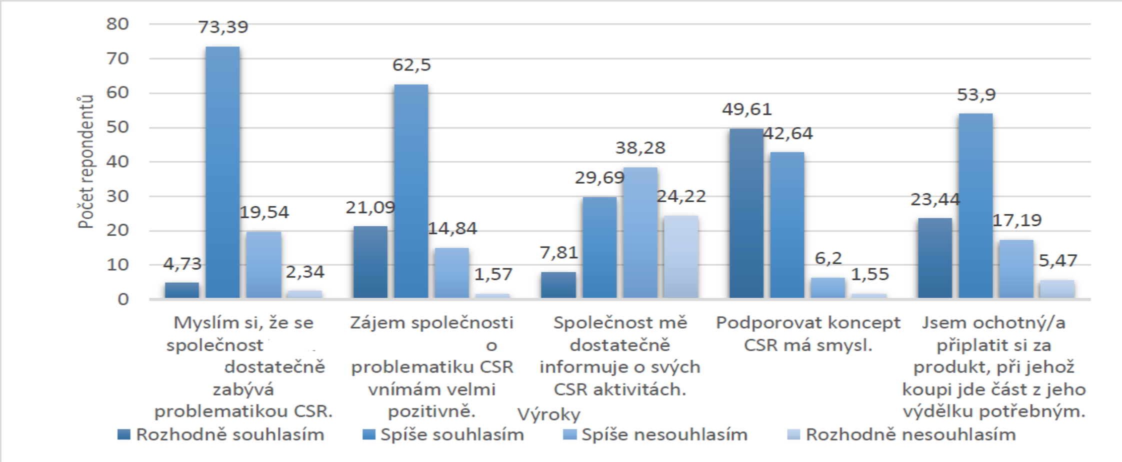
Graf č. 6: Vnímání Společenské odpovědnosti firem (CSR) při výběru prodejny.



Zdroj: Vlastní zpracování.

Graf č. 6 uvádí, zda zákazníci zohledňují výběr prodejny podle odpovědného chování společnosti, kdy 7,8 % respondentů odpovědělo ano a až 38 % uvedlo spíše ano. 20 % z nich si drží neutrální postoj a zbývajících 23,3 a 10,9 % respondentů se výběrem prodejny po stránce společenské odpovědnosti firem příliš nezabývá [13].

Graf č. 7: Postoj respondentů k společenské odpovědnosti firem (CSR).



Zdroj: Vlastní zpracování.

Graf č. 7 ověřuje postoj respondentů konkrétního maloobchodního řetězce k společenské odpovědnosti firem. Až 73,39 % respondentů věří, že se společnost dostatečně zabývá problematikou korporátní společenské odpovědnosti. Co se týče druhého výroku, 62,5 % z dotazovaných spíše souhlasí s tím, že vnímají velmi pozitivně zájem společnosti o problematiku společenské odpovědnosti, 21 % s tím rozhodně souhlasí a 14,84 % spíše nesouhlasí. Třetí výrok o dostatečné informovanosti zákazníků společností vyšel negativně. Více jak polovina z dotazovaných respondentů není dostatečně informována o aktivitách společnosti v rámci společenské odpovědnosti firem. Čtvrtý výrok byl ohodnocen naopak velice kladně. Skoro 92 % dotazovaných respondentů věří, že podporovat koncept společenské odpovědnosti firem má smysl. S pátým výrokem týkajícím se ochoty připlatit si za produkt, z jehož ceny jde část potřebným, rozhodně souhlasí 23,44 % a spíše souhlasí 53,9 % respondentů [13].

Výsledky z dotazníkového šetření částečně korespondují se závěry autorů [1] o tom, že nákupní rozhodování je do značné míry ovlivněno sociálními aspekty, avšak našlo se 22,96 % respondentů, kteří by za produkt podporující lidi v nouzi nepřiplatili.

ZÁVĚR

Z provedené analýzy dat lze konstatovat, že pojem společenská odpovědnost firem a s ním spojené aktivity nelze považovat za všeobecně známé fakty, které zná každý zákazník. Pokud zákazníci pojem znají, spojují si ho u konkrétního maloobchodního řetězce především s bojem proti plýtvání potravin, recyklací a zpětným sběrem odpadu a podporou zdravého životního stylu. Bohužel se většina dotazovaných domnívá, že hlavní důvod zapojení konkrétního maloobchodního řetězce do společenské odpovědnosti firem je především z důvodu zisku. V tomto směru je třeba se zaměřit na vyšší informovanost směrem k zákazníkům, aby vnímali přínos společenské odpovědnosti firem pro celou společnosti a také pro zákazníka samotného.

Na rozdíl od podobných výzkumů v této oblasti výsledky neprokázaly závislost vnímání aktivit společenské odpovědnosti firem na věku, vzdělání, pohlaví a platu respondentů. Dotazovaní respondenti ovšem nebyli dostatečně informováni o společenské odpovědnosti firem, a tudíž se měla společnost zaměřit na přímou komunikaci nebo zaváděním soutěží zaměřených na vzdělávání o konceptu společenské odpovědnosti. Je třeba zdůraznit, že společenská odpovědnost firem je respondenty vnímána pozitivně, vidí v ní smysl a jsou ochotni si připlatit za produkt, při jehož koupi jde část jeho výdělku potřebným. Je tedy nanejvýš důležité monitorovat a zvyšovat chápání toho, jak aspekty společenské odpovědnosti firem ovlivňují každodenní rutinu zákazníků při jejich nakupování.

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doc. Ing. Kateřina KOVÁŘOVÁ, Ph.D.
Katedra ekonomie a managementu
Fakulta sociálně ekonomická
Univerzita Jana Evangelisty Purkyně
Moskevská 54, 400 96 Ústí nad Labem
Czech Republic
kovarovak@g.ujep.cz

Bc. Viktorie KAŠOVÁ
Katedra ekonomie a managementu
Fakulta sociálně ekonomická
Univerzita Jana Evangelisty Purkyně
Moskevská 54, 400 96 Ústí nad Labem
Czech Republic
st17114@ujep.cz

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PERCEPTION OF BARRIERS TO CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION BETWEEN SLOVAKIA AND POLAND IN THE CONTEXT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

Vnímání překážek přeshraniční spolupráce mezi Slovenskem a Polskem v kontextu malých a středních podniků

Jarmila MIŽIČKOVÁ - Michal LEVICKÝ - Viera PAPCUNOVÁ

Prešov, Nitra, Slovak Republic; Brno, Czech Republic

ABSTRACT: Small and medium-sized enterprises are the backbone of the national economy, employment, and competitiveness, and contribute largely to the gross domestic product. The accession of the Slovak Republic to the European Union has created space for even more intensive cross-border cooperation with neighbouring countries. The most common areas of cross-border cooperation include strengthening of the economic, political, and cultural contacts. The aim of the paper was to identify the largest barriers to cross-border cooperation between companies of different size category and operating in different industry in the Prešov Region in the context of Slovakia - Poland cross-border cooperation. Information was obtained through a questionnaire survey and formulated hypotheses concerning barriers to Slovak-Polish cooperation were tested using selected mathematical-statistical methods. The results of the analysis show that businesses consider different currency to be the main barrier to cross-border cooperation, while the legislation related to doing business is perceived as the least problematic. The testing of the hypotheses shows that there is no statistically significant relationship between the size of the company and the perception of barriers in business development.

Key words: cross-border cooperation, Poland, Slovakia, barriers.

ABSTRAKT: Malé a střední podniky jsou páteří národního hospodářství, zaměstnanosti, konkurenceschopnosti a velkou měrou přispívají k hrubému domácímu produktu. Vstupem Slovenské republiky do Evropské unie se vytvořil prostor pro ještě intenzivnější přeshraniční spolupráci. Mezi nejčastější oblasti přeshraniční spolupráce patří posilování hospodářských, politických a kulturních kontaktů. Cílem příspěvku bylo identifikovat největší překážky spolupráce z pohledu podniků různého zaměření a velikosti působících v Prešovském kraji v kontextu slovensko-polské přeshraniční spolupráce. Informace byly získány prostřednictvím dotazníkového šetření a zároveň jsme pomocí vybraných matematicko-statistických metod ověřovali hypotézy týkající se bariér slovensko-polské spolupráce. Výsledky analýzy ukázaly, že za největší bariéru přeshraniční spolupráce považují podniky nejednotnou měnu. A jako nejméně problematickou vnímají legislativu související s podnikáním. Testování hypotéz ukázalo, že neexistuje statisticky významný vztah mezi velikostí podniku a vnímáním překážek rozvoje podnikání.

Klíčová slova: přeshraniční spolupráce, Polsko, Slovensko, překážky.

INTRODUCTION

SMEs are seen as a driving force of change for inclusive economic growth, regional development, job creation, and poverty reduction. The reorganization of production at the international level has had a significant impact on SMEs, especially through the expansion of their business opportunities. SMEs also represent a major boost to the development of a country's economy (Sanjeewa, 2021; Korenkova & Urbanikova, 2014). However, SMEs are also important from the perspective the national economy, as they generate the largest share of the GDP in each region (between 55-95 %), are the creators of new jobs and create the most innovations that can be used in the economy; at the same time, they represent one of the most important contributors to local and national budgets (Chasovschi et al., 2021; Hudakova & Maros, 2019). Small and medium-sized enterprises create room for personalization, have a simple internal structure and a high degree of information transparency. They are more flexible and can adapt better to market changes. They are able to find a niche in the market, develop solutions for the individual customer needs and thus extend the scope of their activities. However, on the other hand, small and medium-sized enterprises have problems with financing and are prone to lack of capital (Liu, 2020; Moravcikova & Dvorak, 2018).

The international market environment and the globalization of world economies point to the importance of boosting export activities of small and medium-sized enterprises, which, however, are not yet fully utilized (Ibarra-Morales, et al. 2020). One option is the creation of joint ventures with the aim of enhancing their participation in global markets. From a strategic point of view, internationalization is a key factor in the business success of small and medium-sized enterprises (Felzensztein et al., 2015). The idea of cross-border cooperation emerged in the 1950s in Western Europe and applied mainly to regions in the Norwegian-Finnish-Swedish border; Dutch-German border; German-French border, and later, the countries of Spain, Portugal, and Greece. After 1989, cross-border cooperation spread to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The basic goal of cross-border cooperation was the removal of barriers from existing borders, promotion of the economic development in industry, agriculture, transport, environment, tourism, trade and services, education, culture, etc. (Cuper et al., 2014). Cross-border cooperation appeals to the inhabitants of cross-border regions mainly as consumers of the results of such cooperation, not as active agents who participate in these activities. One of the main challenges of operationalizing effective ethical management of cross-border cooperation is the change in the composition of cross-border cooperation actors (Nadalutti, 2020). Cross-border cooperation expresses European unity and identity and is the most visible form of cooperation between cities, towns, and villages, with emphasis on establishing contacts with foreign partners (Lechwar, 2008). These forms of cooperation are among the most important criteria for the functioning and implementation of projects in the EU. Cross-border cooperation can be implemented in each member state (depending on needs, legislation, and national practice), primarily at the regional and local levels. Cross-border partnership covers all areas of socio-economic life (Zabielska, 2020). However, the EU is not only an economic but also an ethical project, as its goal is to promote specific ethical values and achieve the well-being of its citizens. One of the ways to achieve this goal is to support territorial, socio-political, and economic integration also through cross-border cooperation. According to Sohn (2014), cross-border cooperation is a regional phenomenon that occurs along national borders in economic, political and cultural areas (Sohn, 2014). Cross-border cooperation applies equally to the activities of local authorities at different levels, as well as to joint initiatives, e.g., non-governmental organizations or businesses, with a focus on the creation of cooperation networks at the local and regional levels, which may result in supporting cooperation in economic matters, while cultural and social barriers in local communities disappear (Pierkowski, 2010; Dusek, 2012). Cross-border cooperation can improve the competitiveness of the business environment, involving the transfer of best practices, experience, knowledge, and new findings, which can contribute significantly to the removal of administrative barriers, thereby creating a more competitive business environment. Cross-border cooperation can thus be used primarily to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the public administration responsible for the regulatory activities, and therefore contributes to simpler and shorter administrative procedures for entrepreneurs (Cankar & Petkovsek, 2011). In addition to increasing the economic competitiveness of border areas, cross-border cooperation contributes to increasing awareness of these areas. Large and medium-sized enterprises often cooperate also within cross-border networks, as they offer many advantages, such as exchange of experience, more efficient use of support tools, and faster transfer of know-how (Bufon & Markejl, 2010). Kurowska-Pysz (2016) considers the process of cluster development process one of the new challenges in cross-border cooperation. Clusters are used in the cooperation of entities in a certain geographical area, which provides an opportunity to establish and develop direct contact between participants. Another prerequisite is the possibility of achieving synergies through joint action for the benefit of a given community and territory. Clusters as a form of networks are often characterized by free and voluntary relationships that involve the transfer of resources between individuals, including the transfer of information and knowledge (Adamisin et al., 2015).

Due to micro and macro barriers small and medium enterprises face, many SMEs do not engage in any form of cross-border cooperation. On the other hand, engagement in cross-border activities enables small and medium-sized enterprises not only to develop new business opportunities, but also become more innovative, more productive, and thus grow faster. Despite the advantages of internationalization, the engagement of small and medium-sized enterprises in international activities is still relatively low. According to the Eurobarometer Survey (2015), 46 % of small and medium-sized enterprises see the main problem in the administrative burden and the difficulties related to the quality control of their orders (Harc, 2019). Buffon & Markejl (2010) mention other disadvantages of cross-border cooperation, such as the fact that often there are not appropriate institutional conditions of cross-border incentives and forms of cooperation. Partners in cross-border cooperation face a number of administrative asymmetries, language barriers and a lack of human resources; often, partners engage in cross-border cooperation only with the unilateral goal of meeting specific criteria for obtaining EU funds and do not pay enough attention to the development of a broader interest in cooperation. The qualifications of persons involved and the organization of cross-border cooperation are often insufficient, and the funds needed to finance joint projects are also lacking. Cross-border cooperation sometimes depends entirely on external funding and often ends when funds run out. These disadvantages can lead to disappointment between the parties of cross-border cooperation and can even outweigh the advantages of such cooperation.

METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the contribution was to identify the major barriers to cooperation from the point of view of companies of different size categories and operating in different industries in the Prešov region in the context of Slovakia - Poland cross-border cooperation.

At the end of 2021, a total of 13,939 active SMEs were registered in the Register of Organizations of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic in the Prešov region. Random sampling was used to to compile the research sample of small and medium-sized enterprises. Of the 1,500 small and medium-sized enterprises in the Prešov region, 628 questionnaires were returned, which accounts for 41.87 %. Of this number, 602 questionnaires (40.13 %) were properly completed. The survey was conducted between November 2019 and January 2020.

To identify the barriers, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H_1: There is a statistically significant relationship between the size of the company and the perception of the largest obstacles in its development.

H_2: There is a statistically significant relationship between functional cooperation with the Republic of Poland and the perception of barriers to cross-border cooperation.

The formulated hypotheses were tested using Cramer 's V test. Statistical analysis was performed in the SPSS 22 program. Cramer's V is an alternative to Phi Coefficient in tables bigger than 2 × 2 tabulation. Cramer's V varies between 0 and 1 without any negative values. Similar to Pearson's r, a value close to 0 means no relationship (Akoglu, 2018). If the sample survey results are arranged in an rxs contingency table, then Cramer's V is defined as in (Rimarčík, 2007):

$$V = \frac{\chi^2}{\min\{(r-1),(s-1)\}.n} \qquad (1)$$

where $\chi 2$ is Pearson's test statistic and $n = \sum_{i=1}^{r} \sum_{j=1}^{s} n_{ij}$.

Of the total number of the respondents, the highest % was represented by companies with up to 9 employees (45.8%). The second most represented group included companies with up to 49 employees (41.5%) and 12.6% were companies with up to 250 employees (Tab. no. 1).

Table No. 1 - Size category of enterprises.

	Count	**%**
0-9 employees	276	45.8
10-49 employees	250	41.5
50-250 employees	76	12.6
Total	**602**	**100.0**

Source: questionnaire survey, own processing.

From the perspective of the industry they operate in, of the total number of enterprises, regardless of their size, most enterprises provide services (44.3 %) or engage in production activities (31.8 %), while 23.7 % of enterprises are engaged in commercial activities (Table no. 2).

Table No. 2 – Industry the enterprises operate in.

	Count	%
Services	267	44.3
Production	192	31.8
Commercial activities	143	23.7
Total	**602**	**100.0**

Source: questionnaire survey, own processing.

For the category of small and medium-sized enterprises, the typical legal form of business is Limited Liability Company or Self-employment. This is also confirmed by research, according to which 48.2 % of the total number of enterprises are self-employed persons, while limited liability companies account for 33.5 % (Tab. no. 3). Other legal forms are Joint stock company (16.5 %), Public Trading Company (1.2 %), or limited partnership (0.5 %).

Table No. 3 - Legal forms of enterprises.

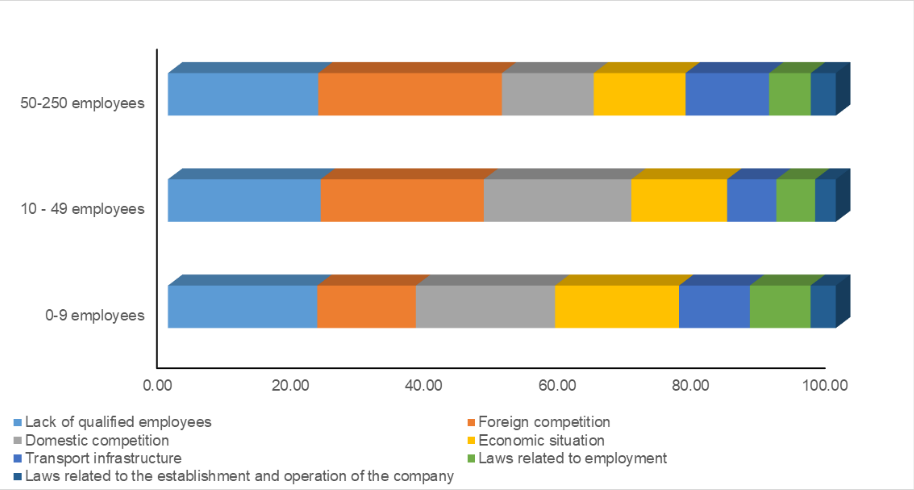
	Count	%
Limited Liability Company	202	33.5
Self-employment	290	48.2
Joint Stock Company	99	16.5
Public Trading Company	7	1,2
Limited Partnership	3	0.5
Cooperative	1	0.2
Total	**602**	**100.0**

Source: questionnaire survey, own processing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As for enterprises with up to 9 employees, the lack of qualified employees was identified as the most significant obstacle to business development by 22.35 % of the respondents. The second most common obstacle was domestic competition (20.83 %). Only 3.79 % of these enterprises perceive the legislation related to the establishment and operation of the enterprise as an obstacle to business development (3.79 %). In the size category of companies with 10-49 employees, 24.42 % of companies perceived foreign competition as the biggest obstacle; the percentage was nearly the same for the lack of qualified employees (22.87 %) and domestic competition (22.09 %). Companies in the size category of 50-250 employees perceived foreign competition (27.50 %) and lack of qualified employees (22.50 %) as the main obstacles to business development. All three groups of companies perceived the legislation related to employment or the establishment and operation of the company as the smallest obstacle to business development (Graph No.1).

Graph No. 1: Identification of obstacles to business development by size category of enterprises (%).



Source: questionnaire survey, own processing.

These research results are in line with the results of the Eurobarometer Survey (2015), according to which 30 % of small and medium enterprises stated that they do not have qualified employees. Ignorance of legislation concerning doing business abroad was a problem for 37 % of small and medium-sized enterprises addressed (Harc, 2019). This is in line with Cankar et al. (2014), who conducted research on cross-border cooperation in the Alpine-Adriatic region between Carinthia, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and Slovenia where the biggest barriers perceived by entrepreneurs were in business support and administrative/legislative barriers. However, these are barriers that each country can largely influence through its own policies.

As for hypothesis H_1, the authors assumed the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the size of the company and the perception of the biggest obstacles to its development. Based on the nature of the variables, it is appropriate to use a non-parametric test for testing the hypothesis, specifically Cramer 's V coefficient, as the range of the contingency table is larger than 2x2. The null hypothesis assumes independence of individual investigated nominal variables. Considering the result of the p-value, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected and the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the size of the company and the perception of obstacles in its development thus cannot be confirmed. This is also indicated by the calculated value of Cramer 's V coefficient, which was 0.121 (see Tab. no.4).

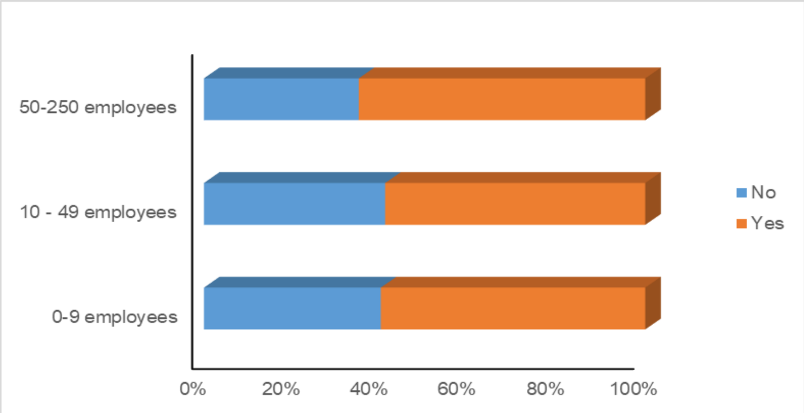
Table No. 4 - Obstacles to business development vs. business size.

Cramer 's V (Nominal vs nominal) Obstacles to business development * Size of the business		
	Value	Approx. Sig.
Cramer's V	0.121	0.147
N of Valid Cases	584	

Source: own processing.

In terms of the barriers to cross-border cooperation of companies, first, the number of companies engaged in such cooperation was determined. Of the total number of the analysed companies, about 60.13 % cooperate with Polish companies. Most cooperating enterprises are in the size category of 50-250 employees (69.94%). In other categories, the percentage of cooperating enterprises is almost the same (0-10 employees – 59.92 %; 10-49 employees – 58.94 %) (Graph No.2).

Graph No. 2: Company size and cooperation with the Republic of Poland.

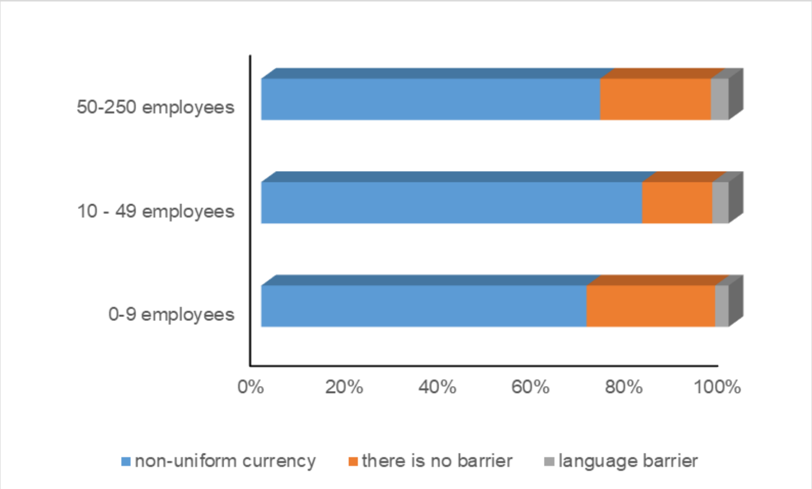


Source: questionnaire survey, own processing.

In the subsequent analysis as well as hypothesis testing, we eliminated companies that answered negatively in relation to cross-border cooperation of companies.

Enterprises consider different currency to be the biggest barrier to cross-border cooperation, specifically, 81.5 % of enterprises with 10-49 employees, 72.5 % of enterprises with 50-250 employees and 69.6 % of enterprises with 0-9 employees evaluated this barrier as the most significant. Less than 4 % of businesses identified the language barrier as a problem According to the Eurobarometer Survey (2015), 29 % of small and medium-sized enterprises see language barrier as a problem in international cooperation (Harc, 2019). On average, 20 % of companies in each size category stated that they do not see any barriers to Slovak - Polish cross-border cooperation (Graph No. 3).

Graph No. 3: Barriers in cross-border cooperation with Poland.



Source: questionnaire survey, own processing.

Next, the second hypothesis, which assumes that there is a statistically significant relationship between functional cooperation with the Republic of Poland and the perception of barriers to cross-border cooperation, was tested. Given the nature of the variables as well as the size of the contingency table, a non-parametric Cramer's V coefficient was selected, as in the case of the first tested hypothesis. The null hypothesis assumed that there is no dependence between the analysed nominal variables. Based on the calculated p-value, the null hypothesis can be rejected, which means that the alternative hypothesis on the existence of the statistically significant dependence between the examined variables was confirmed. The calculated value of Cramer's V coefficient statistic was 0.215, which indicates a weak correlation between the functionality of cooperation with the Republic of Poland and the perception of barriers to cross-border cooperation.

Table No. 5 - Cooperation with Poland vs barriers to cross-border cooperation.

Cramer 's V (Nominal vs nominal) Cooperation with Poland * Barriers to cross-border cooperation		
	Value	Approx. Sig.
Cramer's V	0.215	0.000
N of Valid Cases	423	

Source: own processing.

CONCLUSION

Cooperation in the border areas on the Slovak-Polish border officially began upon the signature of the intergovernmental agreement in 1994 in Warsaw between the government of the Slovak Republic and the government of the Republic of Poland with effect from 19 January

1995. Mutual cooperation was also significantly influenced by the adopted Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland - Slovak Republic 2007 - 2013. Even though this form of cooperation has been in operation for quite a long time and has brought benefits for both territories, there are still barriers to its further development. The analysis of selected small and medium-sized enterprises shows that the main barrier to cross-border cooperation between Slovakia and Poland perceived by enterprises are the different currencies of the two countries. Other barriers to business development included a lack of qualified employees and domestic and foreign competition. Therefore, in the coming years, it will be necessary to remove these barriers and create more favourable conditions to support the development of the business environment. The new programming period should bring about the creation of regional business support systems to support small and medium-sized enterprises also in the context of cross-border cooperation.

Acknowledgments

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ADDRESS & ©

Mgr. Jarmila MIŽIČKOVÁ
Department of Management
Faculty of Management and Business
University of Prešov
080 01 Prešov
Slovakia
j.mizickova@gmail.com
ORCID iD 0000-0002-8392-3016

Ing. Michal LEVICKÝ, PhD.
Institute of Economics and Management
Faculty of Natural Sciences and Informatics
Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra
949 74 Nitra
Slovakia
mlevicky@ukf.sk
ORCID iD 0000-0002-5297-1664

doc. Ing. Viera PAPCUNOVÁ, PhD.
Institute of Economics and Management
Faculty of Natural Sciences and Informatics
Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra
949 74 Nitra
Slovakia
Department of Regional Economics and Administration
Faculty of Economics and Administration
Masaryk University, 602 00 Brno
Czech Republic
vpapcunova@ukf.sk
ORCID iD 0000-0003-1236-0639

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DIGITALIZATION OF THE SOCIAL SPHERE OF UKRAINE: USE OF SPECIALIZED SOFTWARE BASED ON SYSTEMS THINKING

Digitalizace sociální sféry na Ukrajině: využití specializovaného softwaru založeného na systémovém myšlení

Olga MASLAK – Yaroslava YAKOVENKO – Dmytro PIROGOV – Natalya GRISHKO – Kostiantyn POCHTOVIUK

Kremenchuk, Ukraine

ABSTRACT: Information directly acts as a resource that has a special economic value in the conditions of the market economy and the globalization of economic relations. Moreover, the digitalization of the social sphere is impossible without applying the principles of systems thinking. The goal of the article is to determine how the use of special software and the transition from a district orientation to an extraterritorial principle enables digitalization of the social sphere and transfer the majority of services to the online environment, thereby increasing the speed of providing services related to personal appeals of citizens by social security workers.

Key words: digitalization, applied software, systems thinking, digital reform.

ABSTRAKT: Informace přímo působí jako zdroj, který má v podmínkách tržního hospodářství a globalizace ekonomických vztahů zvláštní ekonomickou hodnotu. Digitalizace sociální sféry se navíc neobejde bez uplatnění principů systémového myšlení. Cílem článku je prozkoumat, jak je možné díky využití speciálního softwaru a přechodu od okresní orientace k extra-teritoriálnímu principu digitalizovat sociální sféru a přenést většinu služeb on-line, a tím zvýšit rychlost poskytování služeb pro osobní odvolání občanů pracovníky sociálního zabezpečení.

Klíčová slova: digitalizace, aplikovaný software, systémové myšlení, digitální reforma.

INTRODUCTION

Modern society is linked with information technologies. Therefore, the economy must be seen as co-evolving and co-shaping with information technologies.

The speed of the digital breakthrough, innovation, and the spread of information technologies in the public sector of Ukraine are unprecedented and have a significant impact on the development of the economy, which will even increase over time. Given that the development of information technologies leads to digital transformations, the provision of services and services that are based on it are actively developing. Information market refers to a system of relations related to the development of information technologies and software, their supply, and implementation.

In order to simplify the receipt of social services and benefits, which is relevant in the conditions of the war economy and the realization of Ukraine's aspirations for European integration, digitalization is underway on a nationwide scale. An example of a successful combination of using special software and the launch of new processes and information exchanges is the digital reform of the Unified Social Register as part of the Unified Information System of the Social Sphere of Ukraine.

METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVE

The goal of the article is to determine how the use of special software and the transition from a district orientation to an extraterritorial principle enables digitalization of the social sphere and transfer the majority of services online, thereby increasing the speed of providing services related to personal appeals of citizens by social security workers. Ukraine´s experience in this area is indicative given that under conditions of war conflict and temporary occupation of parts of the country, it has become crucial to ensure the collection, storage, and automated processing of datasets necessary for the payment of social benefits, as well as to optimize already existing information systems and registers.

Information directly acts as a resource that has a special economic value in the conditions of the market economy and the globalization of economic relations. The authors believe that the digitalization of the social sphere is impossible without applying the principles of systems thinking. The ideas of transformations and subsequent change management with an emphasis on information flow (in the modern sense - communications) were first proposed and published by Professor Norbert Wiener, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in his work

"Cybernetics" and have been subsequently widely used in computer engineering and robotics [1].

The understanding of systems thinking as a synthesis of a problem statement and a simultaneous supply of solutions and tools was an impetus for further development of a number of economic and cybernetic disciplines including [4]: 1) systems engineering (developed for designing and optimizing the operation of complex systems; currently, it is the basis for systems analysis used in the development of computer systems and software); 2) chaos theory (concerned with the study of complex adaptive systems and their self-organization); 3) Peter Checkland´s algorithmization of "soft" systems; 4) control cybernetics (dealing with the structure of determining stable system characteristics).

In the example of Ukraine´s experience, this study shows a number of problems that have been solved thanks to the digitalization of the social sphere using special software and adherence to systemic thinking, in particular: queues and a large number of paper certificates; outdated information registers that increased the probability of errors; lack of automated procedures for interaction with banks regarding prompt payment of social benefits.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digitalization of the social sphere is important even in times of war. Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, more than 10 million Ukrainian citizens have changed their place of residence, while the unemployment rate and the number of those in need of state support are growing.

In 2022, the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine introduced the Unified Information System of the Social Sphere, which is currently available in social welfare offices across Ukraine [6].

In order to rationally use budgetary resources, improve the targeting of social assistance in the form of state payments, and promote the digitalization of the social security system, changes have been made to simplify the procedure of applying for state aid [7].

In particular, personal data processing has been automated without the need for human intervention. Verification has been accelerated due to the fact that it is possible to obtain real-time confirmation of the conformity of the data provided by the applicant and to grant them social assistance. Within the system, the administrator checks the fees (in order to detect duplications) using special software and creates registers, which are then transmitted to the competent ministry.

The introduction of the Unified Information System of the Social Sphere expands the capabilities of social protection authorities, improves the quality of services provided, and optimizes time spent on providing the service [8].

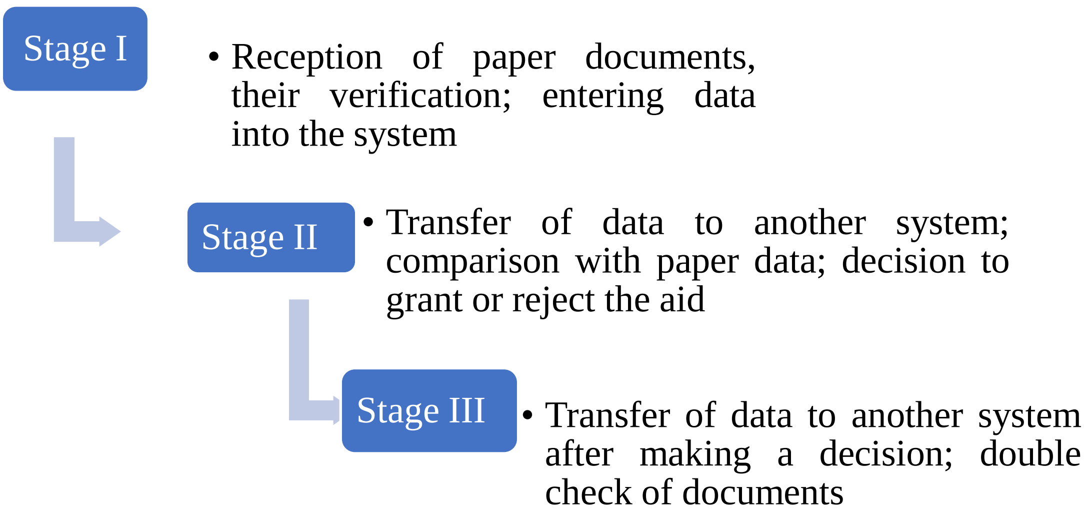
Accordingly, in such conditions, systems thinking is an important approach for the prompt and effective solving of urgent problems. One of the most urgent problems in providing digital-based social protection is assisting internally displaced persons (IDPs) online or at their actual place of residence.

Nowadays, the provision of social welfare grants from the state as a result of the introduction of the Unified Information System of the Social Sphere of Ukraine in individual regions is dramatically different from previous approaches. The diagram below (Fig. 1) clearly shows that collecting references, spending time in queues, and waiting for a decision concerning the confirmation or rejection of applications are no longer needed.

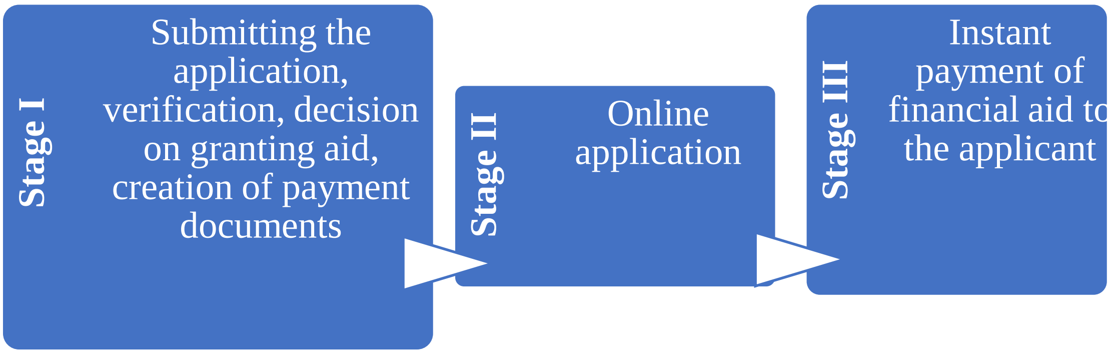
The obvious advantages of reformatting the centralized arranging, calculation and payment of social benefits to the subject "client" are as follows [3,5]: speeding up the provision of the service; the possibility to quickly edit information as needed; the convenience of choosing and changing the social security office; quick consultation; the possibility of sharing documentation; immediate push notifications.

Graph No. 1: Bureaucratic (a) and digital (b) algorithm for granting social assistance.

a)



b)



Source: Own based on [6, 8].

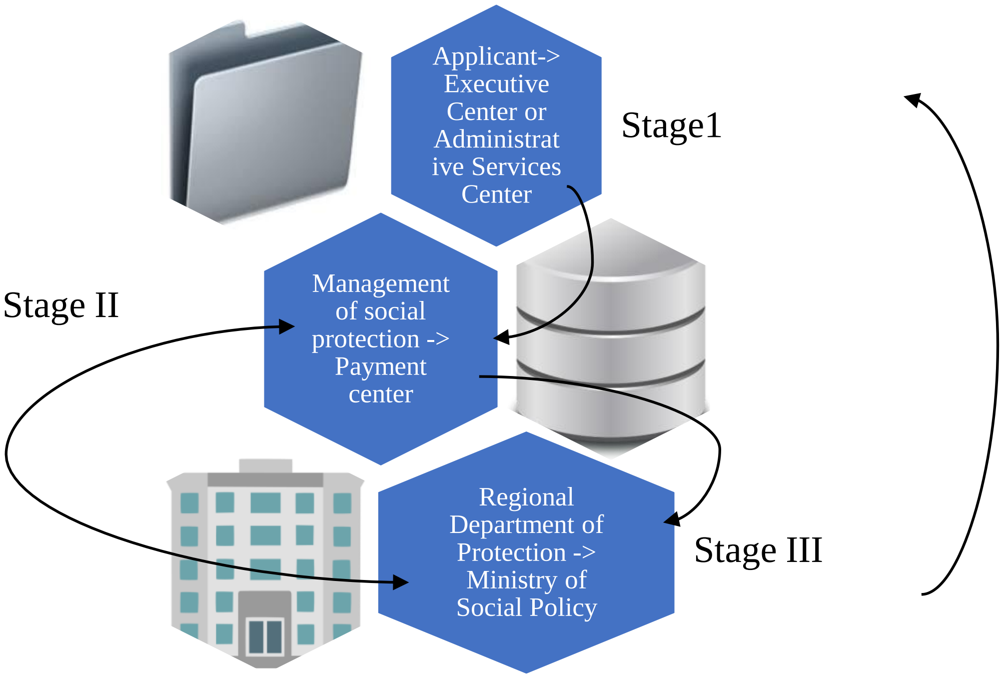
For the subject "state" (the social protection department), the clear advantages include [2, 3]: secure interaction with banking institutions; rational use of budgetary resources; implementation of the principle of "service on demand, and compliance with the principle of a "paperless" service (replacement of paper documents with electronic ones; elimination of a preliminary stage of scanning and verification of documents before entering the data into the database); security of information exchange processes; registration of all changes made in the personal information sections; automated and reliable verification.

It can be seen that approaches have changed radically (see Fig. 2), as thanks to the digitization of processes, data verification, determination (confirmation) of entitlement to receive social assistance, and the subsequent formation of payment documents have been automated.

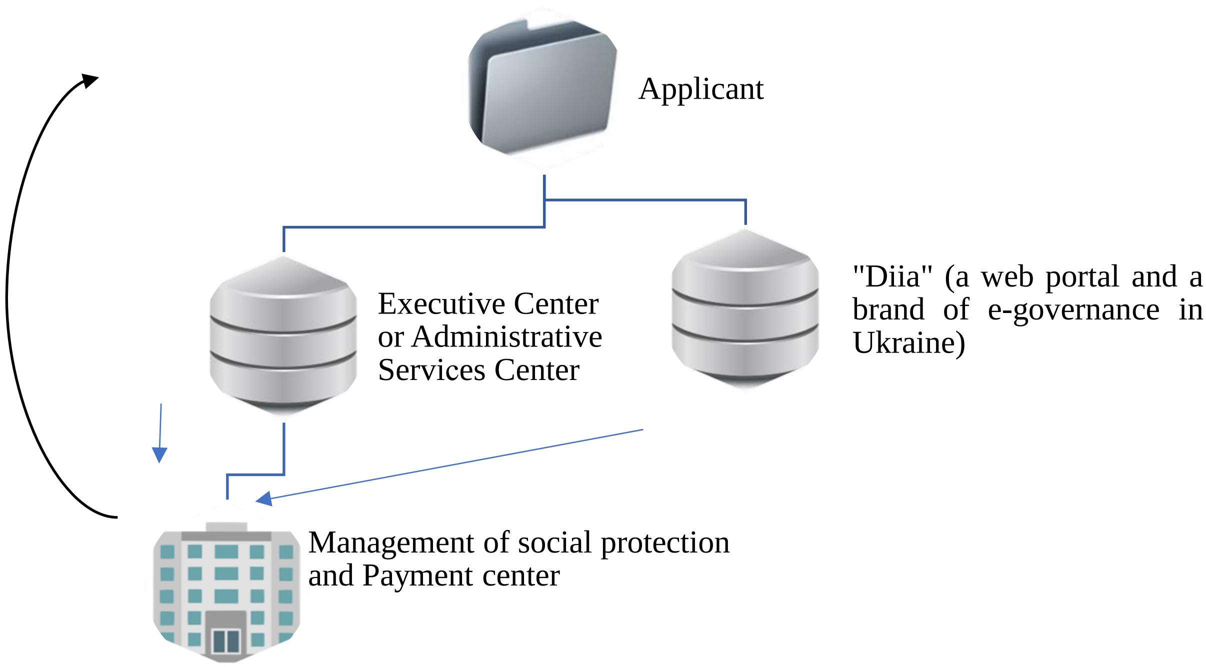
If previously there was a need to upload data into several electronic systems at the same time, which was preceded by their comparison with submitted documents in paper form and processing of the case by several specialists, within the framework of the Unified Information System of the Social Sphere of Ukraine, errors caused by the "human factor" and the resulting technical problems are minimized.

Graph No. 2: Institutional and informational mechanism for obtaining social services before (a) and after (b) digital reform.

a)



b)



Source: Own based on [6, 8].

In addition, the digital format of providing the service prevents officer overload, as thanks to centralization and the absence of automated exchanges between systems they no longer have to transfer data to the system several times.

Nevertheless, there is still the possibility to contact social workers in person. Thanks to digitization, social workers can focus on direct communication, stop working in outdated complex interfaces, and are less exposed to the risk of "burnout" caused by the complexity of working with documents.

The positive effect of reducing the red tape and administrative burden can be seen in the automatic opening of applicants´ personal accounts, the simplification of the electronic transfer of individual cases from office to office, and the automatic verification of documents through the exchange of information. Moreover, thanks to direct electronic communication, the intermediate links between the applicant and the state disappear. Here, it should also be noted that the automation of social services for citizens makes corrupt behaviour impossible, which, in turn, is an important component of an effective digital state.

CONCLUSION

Providing and receiving modern social services should be both simple and secure. In addition to the rationalization of such a digitized mechanism for providing services, it can be stated that based on the use of systems thinking and an integrated approach, the developers of specialized software for the Unified Information System of the Social Sphere of Ukraine ensured the implementation of cyber security elements into the system, which is important in view of the high risks of loss of personal data of IDPs or their unauthorized use in the event of a war conflict or occupation in territories where local social security agencies are located. In particular, it is provided that only authorized representatives have access to the data.

The process of implementing the Unified Information System of the Social Sphere of Ukraine is expected to accelerate due to further cooperation of the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine with the World Bank within the framework of the project "Modernization of the Social Support System of the Population of Ukraine".

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ADDRESS & ©

Olga MASLAK, Doctor of Economics, Professor
Department of Economics,
Faculty of Economics and Management
Kremenchuk Mykhailo Ostrohradskyi National University
39600, Pershotravneva 20, 39600, Kremenchuk
Ukraine
oimaslak2017@gmail.com
ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6793-4367

Yaroslava YAKOVENKO, PhD (in Economics)
Department of Economics,
Faculty of Economics and Management
Kremenchuk Mykhailo Ostrohradskyi National University
39600, Pershotravneva 20, 39600, Kremenchuk
Ukraine
yaroslavayakovenko@gmail.com
ORCID ID: 0000-0001-5042-2701

Dmytro PIROGOV, PhD, Associate Professor
Department of Economics,
Faculty of Economics and Management
Kremenchuk Mykhailo Ostrohradskyi National University
39600, Pershotravneva 20, 39600, Kremenchuk
Ukraine
d.pirogov.64@gmail.com
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-4569-9308

Natalya GRISHKO PhD, Associate Professor
Department of Economics,
Faculty of Economics and Management
Kremenchuk Mykhailo Ostrohradskyi National University
39600, Pershotravneva 20, 39600, Kremenchuk
Ukraine
2nata.grishko@gmail.com
ORCID ID: 0000-0003-1644-3861

Kostiantyn POCHTOVIUK, PhD Student
Department of Economics,
Faculty of Economics and Management
Kremenchuk Mykhailo Ostrohradskyi National University
39600, Pershotravneva 20, 39600, Kremenchuk
Ukraine
misano19@ukr.net
ORCID ID: 0000-0003-1670-3328

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RESEARCH ON DIGITIZATION PROCESSES IN UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

Výzkum procesů digitalizace na Ukrajině v kontextu poválečné obnovy

Iryna TRUNINA – Maryna BILYK –Yaroslava YAKOVENKO – Andrii LOMONOS

Kremenchuk, Ukraine

ABSTRACT: The research output is the identification of trends in digital transformations of Ukraine in the conditions of war as an important mechanism for the economic growth. It is expected that the implementation of DESI in Ukraine will enable determining the progress of digital development, comparing it with the EU digital economies, and thus contribute to the integration into the Single Digital Market of the EU. Particular attention is paid to post-war government, war risk insurance for investments in Ukraine, decentralization of crypto-assets, and legalization of the virtual assets market.

Key words: digitization, post-war reconstruction, European integration.

ABSTRAKT: Výsledkem výzkumu je identifikace trendů digitální transformace Ukrajiny v podmínkách války jako důležitého mechanismu ekonomického růstu. Uvádí se, že zavedení DESI na Ukrajině umožní určit pokrok v digitálním rozvoji, porovnat jej s digitálními ekonomikami EU, a tím přispět k integraci do jednotného digitálního trhu EU. Mezi nimi je zdůrazněna poválečná vláda, pojištění válečných rizik pro investice na Ukrajině, decentralizace kryptoaktiv a legalizace trhu s virtuálními aktivy.

Klíčová slova: digitalizace, poválečná obnova, evropská integrace.

INTRODUCTION

The development and recovery of Ukraine's economy is now inextricably linked to digital transformation, whose production and consumption models are based on the digital implementation of technologies in all economic, social and environmental spheres. Military risks in the format of a digital state are more significant. The weaknesses of digitization are reflected mainly in terms of infrastructure destruction and blackout. Despite this, the digitalization of the economy brings about a significant number of advantages for business: the emergence of new business models and forms that allow increasing the profitability and competitiveness of business activities [1, p.55]; cost optimization, which involves primarily the reduction of costs of information search, identification, and measurement of transaction costs [2]; costs of the promotion of goods and services; costs of concluding and conducting negotiations, etc.; getting rid of intermediaries, reduction of the reaction time to market changes, reduction of the time necessary for the development of products and services and bringing them to the market; mastering new technologies at the application level, and moving towards the awareness of the potential of innovations and the creation of innovative products. The full-scale invasion of Russia into Ukraine has proven the significant role of digital transformation of the economy in ensuring the stability and flexibility of Ukraine in conditions of war. Therefore, the authors believe that digitalization is a basic condition for the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine.

METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVE

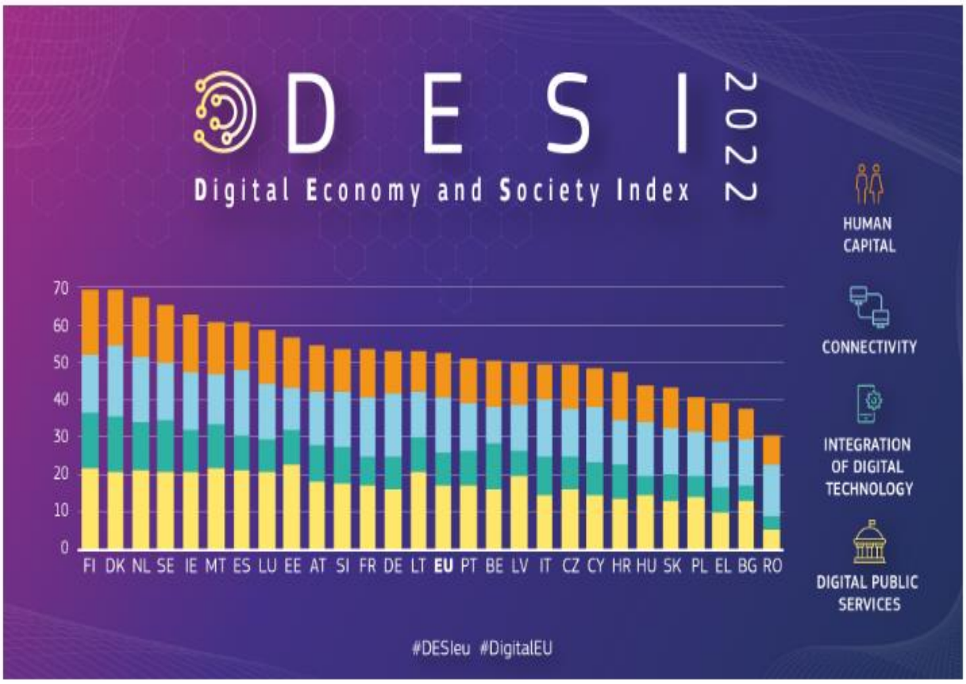
The goal of the article is to explore the challenges and trends in the field of digitalization, which will play a decisive role in the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. To achieve the research goal, a set of general scientific methods is used, namely analysis and synthesis to determine the main directions of research into the issue of digitization of Ukraine during the large-scale invasion of the Russian Federation; comparative analysis for the purpose of analytical interpretation and study of specific facts and phenomena occurring in Ukraine; comparison of the DESI index with European countries. The structure of the DESI index includes 4 areas and the corresponding calculation indicators: Human capital (Internet user skills; Advanced skills and development); Connectivity (Fixed broadband take-up, Fixed broadband coverage, Mobile broadband, Broadband prices); Integration of digital technology (Digital intensity, Digital technologies for businesses, e-Commerce); Digital public services (e-Government). The calculation is determined in the Methodology DESI 2022 [6]. The goal of the research is the analysis of the features of modern digital transformations trends in Ukraine in the conditions of war, as an important mechanism of economic growth.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The priorities of the domestic digital transformation policy are the creation of a single digital market with the EU and adoption of the structure of Ukraine´s digital sector to the requirements of the new reality in the conditions of the war and the post-war period.

For Ukraine, DESI is a prerequisite for joining the EU. It shall be noted that DESI is a composite index that compares relevant digital productivity indicators and tracks the evolution of the digital competitiveness of the EU as a whole and its member states (Figure No. 1) [6].

Figure No. 1: Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI), 2022 (Screenshot).



Source: European Commission. The Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI), 2022.

The figure shows the ranking of the EU member states by DESI for 2022. Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Sweden are the most developed digital economies in the EU, followed by Ireland, Malta, and Spain; Romania, Greece, and Bulgaria show the lowest DESI indicators. According to the study, Sweden and Finland have the highest number of digitalized SMEs (86 % and 82 % of SMEs respectively show a basic level of digital intensity), while Romania and Bulgaria have the lowest number of digitalized SMEs. DESI monitors online public services by assessing the level of digitization of key online services in the EU member states [6].

In accordance with the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, signed in 2014, the government of Ukraine has undertaken to bring its legislation in line with EU standards. The establishment of the DESI ecosystem in Ukraine will make it possible to determine the dynamics and progress of digital development, benchmark it against EU digital economies, and thus contribute to the integration of the EU Single Digital Market as an equal partner.

Since the DESI ecosystem in Ukraine is now in the process of its establishment, the paper will further analyse the key elements of the DESI index in the Ukrainian context.

1. Digital public services

Before the beginning of the large-scale invasion, the Ukrainian government focused on building a digital state, which was one of the most important items on the agenda of the Ukrainian President V. Zelenskyi. The goal is to make Ukraine the most convenient country possible in terms of receiving public services. The main achievement in this area is probably the Diia application. According to the Ministry of Digital Transformation, it is now used by more than 17.4 million Ukrainians [3]. The use of this application allows citizens to pay taxes in a few clicks, as all documents are in digital format so that they can be easily shared via QR code; currently, it is even possible to transfer funds for the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine [3].

At the same time, the government launched a special legal and tax regime for IT companies – Diia City, which provides the best tax conditions for IT companies in Europe [3].

War risk insurance for investments in Ukraine. A digital trade agreement between the governments of Great Britain and Ukraine is currently being prepared. It shall be noted that the agreement will allow for the implementation of non-tariff measures (non-application of customs duties but freedom of taxation) in digital trade and maintenance of a common legal framework for electronic transactions, electronic contracting, electronic identification, paperless trade, protection of personal data, etc. Under the agreement, there will be established the cooperation with the UK concerning digital inclusion, new digital technologies, cyber security, data innovation, digital identity, digital aspects of logistics, invoicing and conformity assessment standards and procedures, digital competition, and all other aspects of the digital economy [9].

Decentralization of crypto assets. The crypto-case of Ukraine shows how the latest technologies can be used in conditions of war. The success of cryptocurrencies is explained by the speed and efficiency of transaction processing, the absence of restrictions inherent in traditional financing. When the National Bank of Ukraine imposed restrictions on electronic money transfers and foreign currency withdrawals in the context of the war situation, the capabilities of the crypto market made it possible to quickly ensure the delivery of military and humanitarian aid. In situations where the speed of transactions is measured in lives of people, the ability to make payments in cryptocurrencies without any delay served as an important and real working tool to satisfy the needs of the army as quickly as possible, to save lives, and act as a guarantee of the victory over the enemy [8].

According to the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, the post-war government should be flexible and mobile, much like an IT company where all functions and services are automated, the number of analogue officials is reduced, and public institutions are efficiently outsourced. Only such a government is capable of implementing quick and bold reforms for the purposes of the post-war restoration of the country and its rapid development [3].

2. Human capital

Particular attention is paid to digital education and improvement of citizens' digital competences. On the initiative of the government, in 2021, more than 1 million Ukrainians were trained in basic digital skills in the form of educational miniseries.

Preparation of a basic crypto education course. A complete course on virtual assets would cover 100 hours of theoretical and practical education. The training will start in February 2023. The theoretical part will help citizens understand how blockchain technologies and crypto asset work, while the practical part enables the acquisition of basic skills for working with the new asset class. The course will be free of charge and will be launched on the state-run educational platform Diia. Digital Education.

Currently, the Diia application is testing the affordable loan program "Eoselia" with discounted 3 % rates for four categories (7 % for all other categories), which will facilitate the acquisition of new housing for citizens who lost it due to the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, for defenders of Ukraine, and also for doctors, teachers, and scientists working in the state and communal spheres [14].

The front in citizens' laptops has become almost as important as in the East of the country. The Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine has launched an evorog – a chatbot based on the Diia application, which collects information about the movement of Russian soldiers. Authorization in Diia helps to weed out saboteurs who can report false information, fake news, hoaxes, and propaganda from the aggressor country [3].

During the war, an initiative was implemented to support the Ukrainian economy through purchasing military bonds in the Diia application with guaranteed profit of up to 16 %. On 25 October, 2022, Ukrainians purchased 70,000 military bonds worth almost 70 million UAH, trying to contribute to the victory of Ukraine [4].

3. Connectivity

According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the level of penetration of fixed broadband access to the Internet in Ukraine was only 12.8 subscribers per 100 people in 2018. Even with a tendency to increase the GDP (by 15.2 % in 2021), Ukraine remains an outsider among the countries of the European Union (see Table 1). Since the beginning of the full-scale war, Starlinks have become part of the critical infrastructure. Its terminals make it possible for hospitals, schools, energy and social sectors to continue working. In addition, a significant part of Starlinks terminals is used by the military. This is a competitive advantage that the enemy does not have. According to the Ministry of Digital Transformation, there are 30,000 Starlink terminals in Ukraine [4].

Funding of projects for the restoration of Ukrainian digital infrastructure. According to the CEF European funding program "Backbone Connectivity for Digital Global Gateways" dated October 12, 2022, domestic mobile operators and Internet providers have the opportunity to participate in the competition and the deployment of strategic networks contributing to the improvement of the quality of communication with EU countries, in particular through submarine cable systems, satellite infrastructure, and connection to Internet exchange points [5].

The possibility for Ukrainian business entities to participate in competitions within The Digital Europe Programme 2027 for the development of digital infrastructure, with a total programme fund of 7.6 billion EUR. About 6 billion EUR is earmarked for funding projects in the areas available to Ukraine [5].

4. Integration of digital technology

The share of enterprises that have internet access fluctuates slightly in the monitored period and even in 2021 it did not reach 90 %. The share of enterprises with a website was only 35.3 % in 2021.

E-commerce through computer networks was generally carried out by enterprises operating in the manufacturing sector, wholesale and retail trade, in the field of information and telecommunications, transport, warehousing, and postal and courier activities [12]. In 2021, the number of enterprises receiving orders for the sale of goods or services through computer networks was 2,503, and 7,147 enterprises were making purchases through computer networks. Ukrainian enterprises have a low share of chatbot implementation (only 11.3 % of enterprises). In 2021, of the total number of enterprises, the share of business entities purchasing cloud computing services was 10.2 %, which is 0.4 % more than in 2018. Moreover, the share of the number of enterprises that conducted Big data analysis is the highest among enterprises with 250 or more employees. A significant share of data was received from smart devices or sensors [13].

The implementation in Ukraine of The E-Governance for Accountability and Participation Program (EGAP, Switzerland) by the East Europe Foundation and the “Innovabridge” in Ukraine envisages the expansion of the EGAP budget by an additional 15 million CHF intended for the development of new digital services and services. The program´s focus on the automation of business registration in Ukraine is an important step that contributes to the integration of Ukraine into the European digital community [5].

Table 1 shows the summary indicators of digital development, approximated to the DESI methodology [10].

Table 1. Indicators of digital development of Ukraine for the period 2018-2021.

Indicator	2018	2019	2020	2021
1.1 Fixed Broadband penetration rate per 100 people	12.8	13.5	13.6	15.1
1.2. Share of the number of enterprises use a fixed internet connection by internet speed of the total number of enterprises, %				
1.2.1 at least 30 but less than 100 Mbit/s	20.0	20.8	20.9	21.8
1.2.2 at least 100 Mbit/s but less than 500 Mbit/s				21.9
1.2.3 at least 500 Mbit/s but less than 1 Gbit/s				5.4
1.2.4 at least 1 Gbit/s				3.7
1.3 Share of the number of enterprises that hired/tried to hire specialists in the field of ICT, in the total number of enterprises, %	6.3	6.1	6.1	6.4
1.4 Level of use of technologies by the population, %	31	35	35.1	44
1.5 The number of enterprises that process orders and have access to the Internet, %	88	86.4	86.4	86.6
1.6 Availability of a website, % of enterprises	35.6	35.2	35.2	35.3
1.7 Use of cloud technologies, big data, %	9.8	10.3	10.3	10.2

Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine. Information society, 2021.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analytical research, we can single out the primary tasks of the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine:

- Development of hard infrastructure (infrastructure of broadband access to the Internet, mobile Internet, public access to Wi-Fi, cloud, or virtualized infrastructure).
- Development of soft infrastructure: Infrastructure of identification (citizen ID, mobile ID, bank ID), infrastructure of open data, public services (e-government), interoperability, e-commerce and e-business, transaction-processing infrastructure, infrastructure life support, geo-information infrastructure, blockchain infrastructure.
- Increasing the competence indicator - the number of citizens with a basic level of digital skills.

The implementation of the planned measures will contribute to the digital transformation of the economy aimed at ensuring the stability and flexibility of the state and the integration of Ukraine into the international digital space on a strategic basis. The activation of relevant processes has the potential to attract funds within the framework of The Digital Europe Programme and the program for financing the connection of the domestic highway to digital global gateways and increasing the digital potential of Ukrainian companies, their structural modernization and, as a result, strengthening their viability in the post-war period. By establishing a coherent legal, political, institutional, coordination, and methodological framework for DESI, the Ukrainian government will be able to not only measure and track, but also shape digital transformation policy based on data. The implementation of DESI in Ukraine will make it possible to determine the dynamics and progress of digital development, compare it with the digital economies of the EU, and thus contribute to the integration of Ukraine into the Single Digital Market of the EU.

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ADDRESS & ©

Iryna TRUNINA, Dr. Sc. (Econ.), Prof.
Department of Business administration, marketing and tourism
Faculty of Economics and Management
Kremenchuk Mykhailo Ostrohradskyi National University
39600, Pershotravneva Street 20, Kremenchuk
Ukraine
truninairina0@gmail.com
ORCID iD - 0000-0002-7416-1830

Maryna BILYK, Cand. Sc. (Econ.)
Department of Business administration, marketing and tourism
Faculty of Economics and Management
Kremenchuk Mykhailo Ostrohradskyi National University
39600, Pershotravneva Street 20, Kremenchuk
Ukraine
marina.bilick@gmail.com
ORCID iD - 0000-0002-9660-3708

Yaroslava YAKOVENKO, PhD (in Economics)
Department of Economics,
Faculty of Economics and Management
Kremenchuk Mykhailo Ostrohradskyi National University
39600, Pershotravneva Street 20, Kremenchuk
Ukraine
yaroslavayakovenko@gmail.com
ORCID ID: 0000-0001-5042-2701

Andrii LOMONOS, Cand. Sc. (Tech.),
Assoc. Prof. of Automation and Information Systems Department
Institute of Education and Science in Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies
Kremenchuk Mykhailo Ostrohradskyi National University
39600, Pershotravneva Street 20, Kremenchuk
Ukraine
lomonosai@gmail.com
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5001-1280

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APPLICATION OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE SOUTH BOHEMIA REGION

Aplikace strategického řízení v organizacích poskytujících sociální služby na území Jihočeského kraje

Klára ROZSÁROVÁ, Radka PROKEŠOVÁ, Jitka VACKOVÁ, Šárka MICHALCOVÁ

České Budějovice, Czech Republic

ABSTRACT: Strategic management is a crucial insight that provides vision and direction for an organization. Through its implementation, an organization is able to identify its strengths and weaknesses, the potential of the whole organization, and the scope of its activities. The research was conducted to determine how strategic management is implemented, how strategic plans are created and developed in organizations providing social services in the South Bohemia Region, to identify the criteria determining strategic plans and the methods used for the implementation of strategic plans. The qualitative research was conducted in social service organizations in the South Bohemia Region through semi-structured interviews with their managers. The results were processed using the ATLAS.ti program with open, selective, and axial coding. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that strategic planning is not an integral part of management in all organizations. The managers of the organizations interviewed did not attach much importance to strategic plans; they even stated that a strategy did not make sense for their organization. However, when they did report that their organization was developing a strategic plan, it was more like a two-year plan rather than a long-term plan with a vision. Based on the results of the research, recommendations can be made for managers to improve the implementation of strategic management and for continuing education in this area.

*Key words: s*trategic management, strategic planning, social services, social service organizations.

ABSTRAKT: Strategické řízení je velmi důležitým vhledem, který nese vizi a směr organizace. Díky jeho aplikaci může organizace zjistit, kde jsou její silné a slabé stránky nebo jak nalézt potenciál celé organizace a její působnosti. Výzkum byl realizován s cílem zjistit jakým způsobem je realizováno strategické řízení, jak jsou vytvářeny a zpracovávány strategické plány v organizacích poskytujících sociální služby na území Jihočeského kraje, popsat podle jakých kritérií jsou strategické plány voleny a jaké metody se používají k plnění strategických plánů. Výzkum kvalitativní povahy byl prováděn v organizacích poskytujících sociální služby v Jihočeském kraji metodou polořízených rozhovorů s jejich manažery. Výsledky výzkumu byly zpracovány za pomoci programu ATLAS.ti s využitím otevřeného, selektivního a axiálního kódování. Na základě zjištěných výsledků výzkumu ne pro všechny organizace je strategické plánování nedílnou součástí managementu. Manažeři oslovených organizací nedávali takovou váhu strategickým plánům, dokonce uváděli, že pro jejich

organizaci jakási strategie nemá smysl. Pokud však uváděli, že v jejich organizaci vytváří strategický plán, měl spíše charakter dvouletého plánu nikoli dlouhodobého s vizí. Na základě výsledků výzkumu lze formulovat pro manažery doporučení pro zlepšení aplikace strategického řízení a dalšího vzdělávání v této oblasti.

*Klíčová slova: s*trategický management, strategické plánování, sociální služby, organizace poskytující sociální služby.

INTRODUCTION

In an ever-changing world, where all technologies are advancing, the management of social service organizations also needs to progress. The management style of organizations needs to change as well because every manager wants a thriving and prosperous business (Williams, 2019). Therefore, changes must be made in all lines of the organization´s structure, from the top management to the first-line management. It is imperative that organizations have competent employees who will work expertly in their positions (Hougaard, Carter, 2018). Society is placing increasing demands on social services and the organizations that provide them because, as in all other sectors, citizens want to get quality services for their money. Therefore, the task of the top management is organization and planning, using strategic thinking to ensure the prosperity of the organization, and achieving previously set goals (Guhr, Lebek, & Breitner, 2019). It is quite evident that the main task of these organizations is to implement and use strategic management capable of responding to changes in society as well as customer demands and needs (Lee, L., Hillier, et al., 2019). Strategic management can thus influence the goals that the organization wants to reach. The implementation of strategic management can also lead to improvement and enhancement of services provided as information is obtained directly from clients (Bryson, George (2020).

Strategic management is a tool that translates vision into practice by using knowledge and experience to create a balance between the organizational goals, current needs, and future needs (Filipa Šebestík, 2020). Its core is primarily a strategic plan, which is defined as a path or trajectory towards predetermined goals, which is made up of business, functional, and competitive areas in an attempt to position the enterprise and manage the overall mix of its activities (Mallaya, 2007). Máchal, Ondrouchová, and Presová (2015) define strategic management as the top level of management (also referred to as top management) that focuses on the long-term activities (in the horizon of 2 to 5 years). According to Kotler et al. (2016), the structure of a strategic plan should include an analytical section with the characteristics of the area the organization operates in and strategic analyses (e.g., SWOT analysis), as well as the organization´s development vision (i.e., what changes the organization wants to make, and an outline of the issues included in the strategic plan), its mission, and strategic objectives. (Kotler et al., 2016).

Proper determination of the goals of an organization or enterprise requires the formulation of the vision and mission (Jeong, 2020). According to Kerzner (2018), mission sets out a particular time-bound direction or purpose for the existence of an organization or enterprise. According to Martin and Horner (2018), strategic planning involves the creation of strategic scenarios and options, predicting the probability of their implementation, and controlling the execution of the strategy in the present. The authors further state that the main objective of strategic planning is to minimize risks and uncertainties while leading the organization to success and prosperity (Martin and Horner, 2018).

Strategic management should also be applied appropriately in social service organizations. Social services can be characterized as all services (long-term, short-term) that are provided to the needy (i.e., people who find themselves in unfavourable life situations) and are not able to solve their difficult situation independently or with the help of their family (Association of Social Service Providers of the Czech Republic, 2016). According to Owen and Poon (2020), social services are an essential part of the activities of the state, local governments, and non-state organizations engaged in solving problems of individuals, families, and population groups, and trying to influence the social climate of the whole society. The mission of social work is to provide services to individuals, families, population groups, or communities in order to help them with their problems, reduce or eliminate problems that can be solved, or help to improve conditions (Malik Holasova, 2014). Working with social service clients involves the administration of social programs, which represent a set of planned and managed activities through which a social service provider responds to the needs of the target entity. The program provider expects the given situation to improve or be entirely resolved through the program (Lorenz et al., 2020).

METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the research conducted within the GAJU project entitled "Selected Aspects of Social Work Management" (GAJU registration number 052/2019/S), was to determine how strategic management is implemented, how strategic plans are created and processed in organizations providing social services, to describe the criteria used to create strategic plans, and describe the methods used to implement strategic plans.

The research was conducted using a qualitative research strategy and semi-structured interviews with managers of South Bohemian social service organizations. Respondents were selected from all organizations providing social services in the South Bohemia Region (based on the register of social service providers). The criteria for the selection of respondents were based on the size of the organization in relation to the number of registered services (according to the Register of Social Service Providers), the type of organization, and the representation of types of social services (again according to the Register of Social Service Providers). Managers were asked about their competencies, skills, knowledge, and characteristics and job description of a social work manager and the specifics of the work activities of individual managers in social services with regard to the selected types of organizations. The total number of interviews was 24. The average duration of the interview was about 1 hour. The structure of the research population (gender, age, and length of experience of the respondents) is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Research population for qualitative data analysis - directors of organizations.

	Gender		**Age**			**Length of Experience**					
Directors	Male	Female	Less than 36 years	36-50 years	51 years and over	Less than 1 year	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-9 years	10-13 years	14 years and over
Frequencies	7	17	0	13	11	1	2	2	4	4	11
Percentage	9.2%	70.8%	0%	54.2%	45.8%	4.2%	8.3%	8.3%	16.7%	16.7%	45.8%
Total	**24**		**24**			**24**					

Source: Own processing.

Data from the qualitative part of the research were processed in ATLAS.ti using open, selective, and axial coding; the resulting graphs describe the selected phenomena in the field of Strategic Planning in social service organizations. The first interview was conducted on 30 August, 2019, while the last interview was conducted in mid-March 2020. The research was thus not affected by the the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project and its research focus, including data collection and processing, were approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, University of South Bohemia. All personal data were processed within the research project in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and the Council of 27 April, 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC. Anonymity was ensured during data collection, and no risks for respondents resulted from participation in the research.

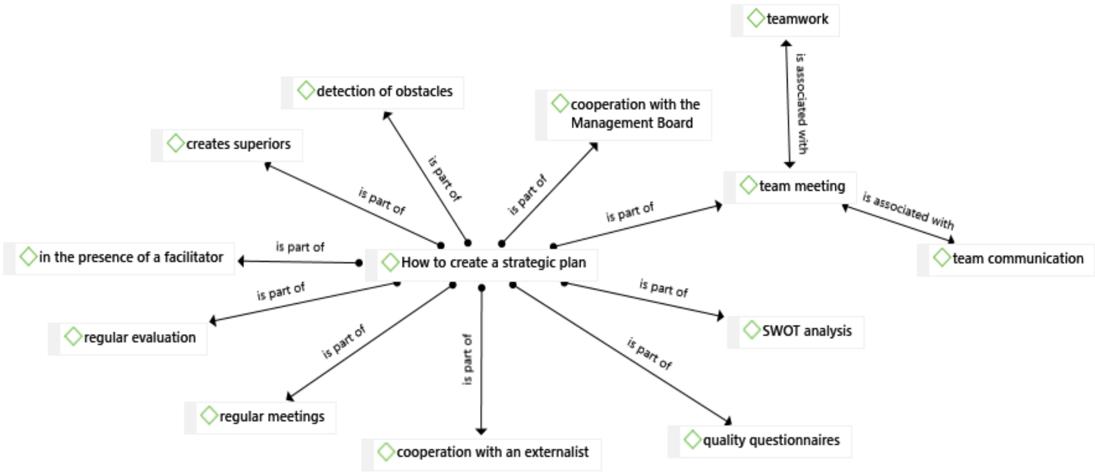
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The qualitative research was conducted to determine how strategic management is used in organizations providing social services in the South Bohemia Region. Interview questions in interviews with managers of these organizations aimed to determine whether a strategic plan is implemented in their organization, and if so, how the plans are created and what form they take.

The first question aimed to find out whether the social service organizations had a strategic plan. Respondent 1 stated that their organization did not have a strategic plan. The answer of respondents 5, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, and 23 were the same. The remaining respondents stated that their organization had a strategic plan. Respondent 21 stated that "*We have a strategic plan for one year, three years, and five years. I always try to make a strategic plan based on feedback from all leaders. My vision is to move our organization forward; this is my strategic plan. Unfortunately, there are a lot of qualified persons in my organization who are not effectively utilized. My goal is to use the full potential of every employee.*" It followed from the interviews that some organizations have rich experience in strategic management; they enjoy creating plans and want to lead the organization towards coordinated development.

How to develop a strategic plan

Diagram 1 - How to develop a strategic plan.

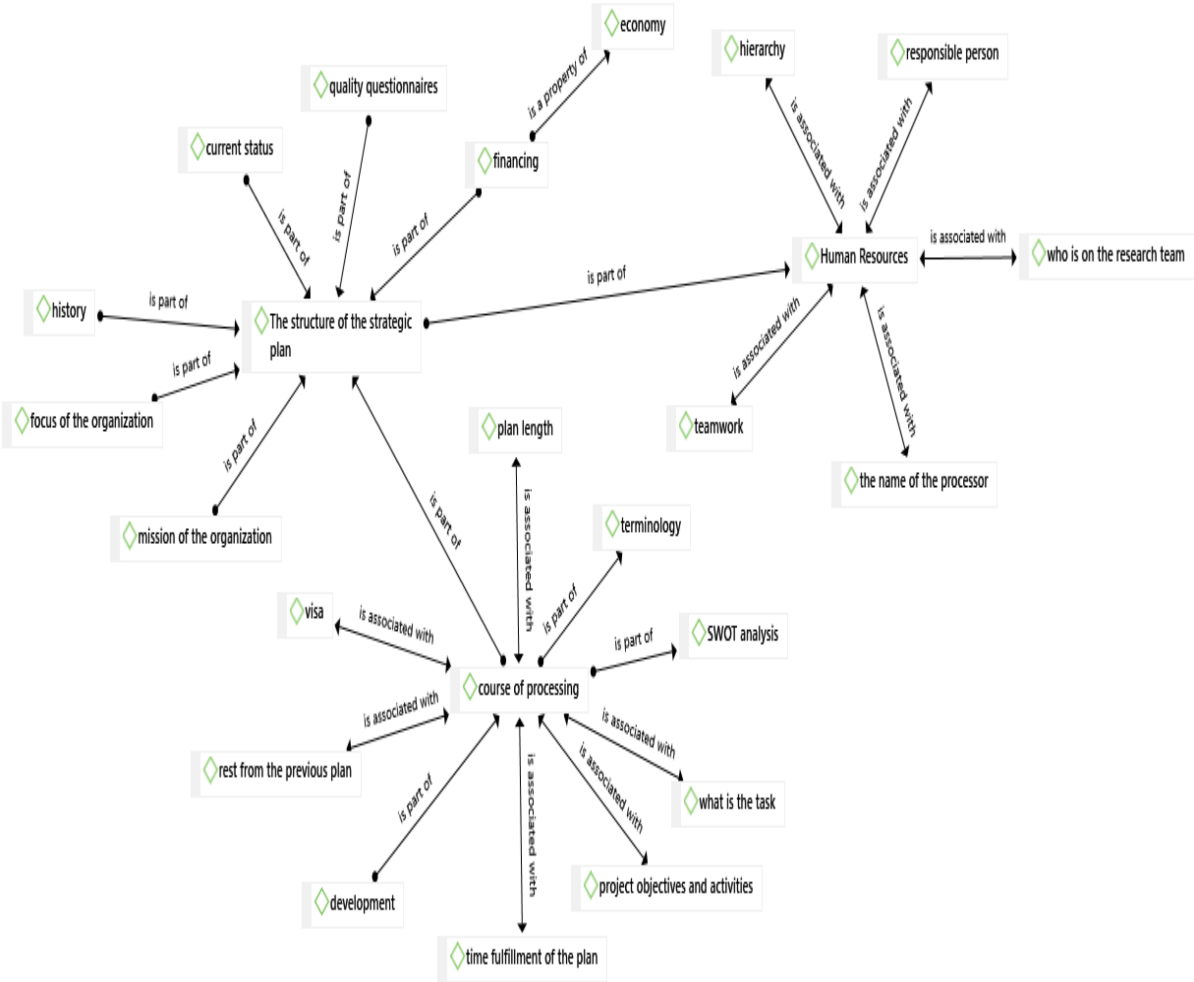


Source: Own processing.

Common organizational problems include communication and financing of individual activities. As social services are financed through multiple sources, problems in the implementation of strategic management can grow. Time needs to be allocated for all staff involved in the implementation of the strategic plan, i.e., time needs to be allocated during or outside working hours. Some managers do not believe in strategic plans and visions and see no advantage of them; the time needed for their formulation is hard to find for them. Another point mentioned in terms of creating plans is funding, which was commended by respondent 21 as follows: *"It all comes down to funding. One thing is to make a plan; another thing is to get the funding for its implementation. I apply for funding during the year. I usually get it, but one must not be disappointed if is not possible to get enough funds for implementing the plans made.*

Structure of a strategic plan. Diagram 2 Structure of a strategic plan shows the structure of strategic plans in organizations that provide social services. According to the respondents, the structure of a strategic plan is very similar in organizations that provide social services. The structure includes the organization's vision and mission, starting with the history and development to its current state. It must also include the goals set in the strategic plan and the timeline to achieve them (the goals may not all be met for whatever reason). It also includes the name of responsible person and the names of team member preparing the strategy.

Diagram 2 - Structure of a strategic plan.



Source: Own processing.

Respondent 16 answered, *"Questionnaire, from regular communication. Usually, more than fifty percent always answer."* According to respondent 18, the whole structure of the plan includes*: project goals and activities, SWOT analysis of the organization, introduction to the design part of the strategic plan, mission, and vision to 2022. Next, other sections, such as administration and management of the organization, human resources, social services provided in the city."* Respondent 19 sees the structure of the strategic plan in the organization differently: *"It's about funding the services provided, whether we are going to expand, whether we are going to continue the existing quality, whether we are planning any changes, so actually, it has several aspects."*

The results of the research are based on survey responses to questions on how strategic management is implemented in social service organizations from the perspective of their managers. Strategic management includes the formulation and subsequent implementation of long-term organizational goals (Zuzák, 2012). According to Steiss (2019), this process refers to specific actions taken to achieve a set goal, i.e., the organization's vision. However, it is crucial to understand the critical functions of the strategic plan in this process, i.e., how the entire organization will continue to move forward, how it will address its offer in comparison with its competitors, and how it will address current weaknesses (Amaron, Ward, 2020). Kotler et al. (2016) state that a strategic plan must include specific steps to meet these objectives.

Organizations that provide social services need to have a strategic plan - this was confirmed in most organizations. Of the 24 organizations participating in the research, 14 had a strategic plan.

The results provide information on how the staff of social service organizations develop strategic plans and what criteria and methods they use in developing these plans. In the interviews, only three organizations agreed with criteria in this research and not all of them fully agreed. According to Munier et al. (2019), it is highly unlikely that all organizations would agree on the same criteria since each organization is different, has different needs, and has different goals. The majority of organizations agreed that their strategic management and planning is done for the well-being of their social service users because strategic management is influenced by them: *"…development is done with the individual needs of clients in mind, they can change from year to year"*. This is confirmed by Malik Holasová (2014), who states that it should be at the top of the agenda in all social services organizations. The development of organizations is thus carried out under the umbrella of strategic management, as stated by respondent 8: *"Whenever we think of something, we have to get the money for it right away. Without it, not much can be done. The company has to grow. If you don't grow, you stagnate."* The funding of the organization needs to go hand in hand with the development of the organization as a whole. This view is confirmed by respondent 18: *"Absolutely, because the development of the organization is more or less directly dependent on whether we get funding for it. That's what we managed to get."* According to Ansoff, Kipley, Lewis, and Helm-Stevens (2019), organizational development and strategic plans are seen as a kind of setting own rules. Before their determination, it is essential to map the current situation and evaluate the formulation of a strategic plan based on the data collected (George, B., Walker, 2019). Most of the interviewed managers developed a strategic plan either themselves or with the help of a small circle of authorized individuals, e.g., heads of departments or sections. Grewatsch, Kennedy, and Bansal (2021) point out that it is about selecting the problems to solve rather than about the problems associated with the strategic plan. Solving poorly chosen problems often completely distracts from the main thrust of the strategic plan.

While developing strategic plans, funding issues of the organizations under review were also addressed in the plans. Overall, there are multiple possible sources of funding social services. According to Šamalová Vojtíšek (2021), municipalities, cities, and regions are local governmental units particularly active in social administration as public corporations. Examples of such financing include financing their contributory organizations, providing subsidies to non-state entities for the operation of social services, and ensuring sponsors for other social projects in a particular locality (Šamalová and Vojtíšek,2021). Another funding option is the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (2019) - *"subsidies from the state budget are provided only to cover the necessary costs of the social service provided."* According to Munier (2019), health insurance companies do not cover the actual costs incurred for nursing care provided in residential facilities. The author also states that the second-largest source of funding after the state is reimbursement from clients, amounting CZK 8.5 billion in 2018 (Munier, 2019). The crucial aspect in setting up the financing of the strategic plan is to minimize possible losses while making longer-term investments (Zlotenko, Rudnichenko, Illiashenko, Voynarenko, & Havlovska, 2019).

CONCLUSION

The conducted research provides results on the implementation of strategic management in organizations that provide social services, the way the strategic plan is created, and on its structure.

For most organizations, strategic planning is necessary for the smooth running of the organization. However, some organizations still do not see the advantages of the implementation of strategic management. Based on interviews with managers in social service organizations, the structure of their strategic plans was examined. It was found that their strategic plans tend to be short/intermediate term, i.e., covering only the period of one or two years. The most critical points in creating a strategic plan are communication, funding, and understanding the organization's strategic vision. The information regarding strategic management in social service organizations can be used to make recommendations for improving strategic management and to provide motivation for further research. The authors also found that some managers do not have a complete understanding of how to use strategic management and strategic plans. Therefore, the research also points to the need for improved managerial training in this area.

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ADDRESS & ©

Mgr. Kateřina ROZSÁROVÁ
Institute of Social and Special-paedagogical Sciences,
Faculty of Health and Social Sciences
University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice
J. Boreckého 1167/27, 370 11 České Budějovice
Czech Republic
rozsak00@zsf.jcu.cz

Ing. Radka PROKEŠOVÁ, Ph.D.
Institute of Humanities in the Helping Professions,
Faculty of Health and Social Sciences
University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice
J. Boreckého 1167/27, 370 11 České Budějovice
Czech Republic
rprokes@zsf.jcu.cz

doc. Mgr. et Mgr. Jitka VACKOVÁ, Ph.D.
Institute of Social and Special-paedagogical Sciences,
Faculty of Health and Social Sciences
University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice
J. Boreckého 1167/27, 370 11 České Budějovice
Czech Republic
vackova@zsf.jcu.cz

Mgr. Šárka MICHALCOVÁ
Department of Social and Special-paedagogical Sciences
Faculty of Health and Social Science
University of South Bohemia
J. Boreckého 1167/27, 370 11 České Budějovice
Czech Republic
michas04@zsf.jcu.cz

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ON EUROPEAN UNION PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY AND DEFENCE

O partnerství a spolupráci Evropské unie v oblasti bezpečnosti a obrany

Radoslav IVANČÍK

Bratislava, Slovak Republic

ABSTRACT: European society is currently facing several security challenges resulting from the gradual deterioration of the global and regional security, the worsening security situation on its eastern borders, and the further growth of tension in international relations (not only due to the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine). Due to deepening globalization, as well as the complexity and interconnectedness of current security challenges, European society is not able to cope or deal with them alone. Therefore, cooperation with several partners in the effort appears to be essential. For this reason, the author of the article focuses on the issue of partnership and cooperation of the European Union in the field of security and defence in the framework of his interdisciplinary research.

Key words: European Union, partnership, cooperation, security, defence.

ABSTRAKT: Evropská společnost dnes čelí řadě bezpečnostních výzev v důsledku postupného zhoršování globálního a regionálního bezpečnostního prostředí, zhoršující se bezpečnostní situace na východních hranicích a dalšího růstu napětí v mezinárodních vztazích (v neposlední řadě v důsledku vypuknutí konfliktu na Ukrajině). Vzhledem k prohlubující se globalizaci, jakož i složitosti a vzájemné provázanosti naprosté většiny současných bezpečnostních výzev není možné, aby se s nimi EU vypořádala nebo je řešila sama. Je proto nezbytné, aby ve snaze o jejich řešení spolupracovala s řadou partnerů. Z tohoto důvodu se autor článku v rámci svého interdisciplinárního výzkumu zabývá problematikou partnerství a spolupráce Evropské unie v oblasti bezpečnosti a obrany.

Klíčové slova: Evropská unie. partnerství, spolupráce, bezpečnost, obrana.

INTRODUCTION

The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) of the European Union (the EU or Union) currently represents one of the most important policies of the EU, given the gradual deterioration of the global and regional security environment, the worsening security situation in the immediate and distant surroundings of the EU, and the further growth of tensions in international relations (resulting not only from the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine). The EU and its citizens face a number of security challenges in the form of global risks and threats. The individual EU member states are relatively small in comparison with global powers, but the EU has the ambition to act as a global actor, which it also expressed in its global strategy (European Union Global Strategy - EUGS).

The document states that the EU will be a responsible global actor; however, given the current development in the world, this responsibility needs to be shared and requires investment in partnerships. Responsibility and accountability shall be the main principles in the promotion of a global rules-based order, with states, regional authorities, and international organizations being called upon to promote of the goals of the EU. The EU is expected to work with key partners, like-minded countries, and regional groupings (EU, 2016).

Shared challenges require joint responsibility for their solution. Partnerships in the field of security and defence are a fundamental tool for increasing the level of security and defence of the EU and are also of practical importance for the security and defence of EU partners. In addition, EU partnerships also have a positive impact on: a) the consolidation of the rules-based multilateral order; b) regional security; c) reforms in partner countries concerning the development of good governance structures, including democratic accountability; d) respect for the rule of law; and e) the participation of partner countries and the EU in multinational cooperation as members of the wider international community.

CSDP as an integral part of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) has been an open project based on a comprehensive approach since its very beginning (Brhlíková, 2013). This includes not only using all the strengths of the EU, but also cooperating with international and regional organizations, such as the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or the African Union, as well as with countries outside the EU. In this way, the Union and its partners can benefit from their knowledge, expertise, and specific capabilities, and thus strengthen their cooperation.

The increasingly challenging and constantly changing security environment and the efforts made in recent years to redesign and improve the EU's security and defence policy, especially after the adoption of the EUGS, point to the need to review the framework of the EU's partnership in this area. In this context, the EU has responded to the urgent request of several partners to review and in some cases improve their relations, emphasizing the need for a more strategic approach to partnerships.

METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVE

The Vice-President of the European Commission and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borell, identifies building security and defence partnerships as one of the key priorities of his mandate (EEAS, 2020a). According to him, Europeans must deal with the world as it is, not as they would like it to be. This means that they must – whether they want to or not – relearn the language of power and combine the available resources of the EU and its partners in a way that maximizes their geopolitical influence. And since there are multiple crises in Europe and the world, the EU urgently needs to intensify its operational engagement with its partners and find common synergies (EEAS, 2020b).

In the current multipolar world, human society has recently witnessed the return of increased geopolitical and geostrategic competition between major powers, especially between the USA, China, and Russia (Ivančík, 2022). In this context, many third countries see the importance of strengthening their partnership with the EU. Naturally, EU citizens also want a Europe that protects them in a context that is increasingly challenging both within and outside the territory of the EU. Moreover, addressing new security challenges and emerging threats goes beyond what is now understood as traditional defence. Hybrid threats, cyber-attacks, foreign interference, disinformation, vulnerable critical infrastructures, as well as challenges related to climate change, migration, space, and disruptive technologies, including artificial intelligence, are areas where the EU needs to engage more and more effectively.

For this reason, the author of the paper deals with the issues of security and defence of the EU primarily in terms of the current development of the global and regional security environment and the security situation in the immediate and distant surroundings of the EU borders. In the framework of his interdisciplinary research, the author draws on theoretical constructs and scientific works of both domestic (Dušek, 2012; Slepecký, 2022; Kavan et al., 2014; Nečas and Kollár, 2018; Kazanský, 2018; Jurčák and Martaus, 2021, Murdza, 2005) and foreign (Heywood, 2015; Ayrault and Steinmaier, 2016; Smith, 2017; Fiott, 2018; Chipman, 2018; Tocci, 2019; Rodriguez, 2022) authors dealing mainly with the fields of security sciences, political science, international relations, and European studies while using relevant scientific methods including analytical-synthetic method, content analysis, trend analysis, comparative analysis, scientific method of document study and others, with the primary goal of highlighting the necessity of achieving an increased level of security and defence of the EU and its citizens through partnerships and cooperation with international and regional organizations and third countries.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Cooperation with international and regional organizations

1.1 Cooperation between the EU and the UN

Cooperation between the EU and the UN in the fields of crisis management and peacekeeping is constantly evolving. It brings added value to both organizations. The cooperation between Mali and the Central African Republic is a good example of how the EU and the UN coordinate support in the national security and defence, with EU missions deployed alongside UN peacekeeping operations. There have also been EU bridging operations in support of UN peacekeeping missions, such as the EUFOR RCA operation in the Central African Republic.

Of the 17 EU CSDP missions and operations, 13 were deployed alongside UN peacekeeping operations: in Mali, the Central African Republic, Somalia, Libya, the Horn of Africa, and the Western Balkans. The EU´s cooperation with the UN in the field of peacekeeping places EU CSDP missions and operations in a wider political and operational framework, making them more effective and enabling the EU to play its role in promoting effective multilateralism. In addition to on-site cooperation, there is regular dialogue between the two organizations on planning, strategic assessments, and the implementation of mandates (EEAS, 2022).

Operational cooperation is accompanied by multi-year initiatives through which the UN and the EU continue to strengthen their partnership. Key principles and priorities are updated in line with the latest developments within the UN and the EU and in the field of international security (conflict prevention; peacekeeping; youth, peace, and security; the security-environment nexus). The scope has been extended beyond peacekeeping to focus more broadly on peacekeeping operations and crisis management. Eight priority areas[1] have been identified and specific actions are outlined under each of them. The overall emphasis is on improving efficiency, effectiveness, the use of comparative advantages, complementarity, synergy, and reciprocity (EC, 2022).

The partnership also includes regular high-level dialogues, including the biennial EU-UN Steering Committee on Crisis Management, regular meetings of the EU Political and Security Committee and the UN Security Council, the participation of the UN Under-Secretary-

[1] The eight priorities include: 1) women, peace and security; 2) strengthening cooperation between missions and field operations; 3) transitions; 4) facilitating EU Member States' contribution and support to UN peacekeeping operations and the UN Secretary-General's peacekeeping initiative; 5) preventing conflicts in peace operations and supporting political processes and solutions; 6) cooperation in the field of police, rule of law and security sector reform; 7) cooperation and support of peace operations in Africa; and 8) training and capacity building.

General for Peacekeeping Operations in high-level meetings of EU member states (e.g. informal meetings of defence ministers), and the annual visit of a high representative to the UN Security Council.

1.2 Cooperation between the EU and NATO

The EU and NATO are key partners in the field of security and defence. In the current strategic context characterized by the return of "power politics", transatlantic cooperation remains extremely important. For the EU, it is a mutually reinforcing equation. The first element of this equation is that a stronger NATO can contribute to a stronger EU. The leaders of the allies have repeatedly affirmed their unity, solidarity, and cohesion (NATO, 2022). This is of fundamental importance for the EU citizens and, more broadly, for the defence of the whole Europe.

The second element is that a stronger EU also makes NATO stronger. EU defence initiatives such as the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), the Coordinated Annual Defence Review (CARD), and the European Defence Fund (EDF) will bring more capabilities not only by spending more funds on defence, but also by using these funds better and more efficiently. This will strengthen Europe's defence capabilities and technological industrial base, and thus Europe's security and defence. Given the principle of a single set of forces, these efforts also strengthen NATO's European pillar and support the development of interoperable capabilities among member states in full compliance with NATO's requirement that these capabilities should be potentially available for NATO operations. EU defence efforts thus strengthen NATO and contribute to transatlantic security and burden sharing (Wiermann, 2022).

Cooperation between the EU and NATO, which represents an indispensable pillar in the field of security and defence, thus remains a key political priority of the EU. The EU has already adopted a program of very close cooperation based on the framework created by the two joint statements of 2016 (EC, 2016) and 2018 (EC. 2018a) and the subsequent 74 joint actions. Cooperation between the EU and NATO covers a wide range of areas, including:

- fight against hybrid threats;
- operational cooperation (including cooperation at sea and in the field of migration);
- cyber security and cyber defence;
- defence capabilities, industry, research and exercises;
- building partners´ defence and security capacities;
- political dialogue.

These measures build on the key principles that support and guide the cooperation between the EU and NATO, openness and transparency, inclusiveness and reciprocity, and full respect for the decision-making autonomy of both organizations without prejudice to the specific nature of the security and defence policy of any member state. An unprecedentedly high level of cooperation has been achieved in the last few years, which is being further increased after the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine. Given the many challenges that both organizations face, the continuing cooperation between the EU and NATO remains very important.

1.3 Cooperation between the EU and regional organizations

Partnerships with regional organizations also play a key role. For example, the EU's partnership with the African Union and African actors in the fields of peacekeeping, security, and crisis management has gained a strategic basis thanks to the joint Africa-EU strategy adopted in 2007 (EC, 2007), which is expected to make peace and security a priority across the continent. EU support for building peace and security capacities in Africa has been gradually growing in recent years using various instruments and across various policy areas. This includes both long-term structural support and time-limited support. Activities can be financed from the general budget of the EU or bilaterally by EU member states. CSDP activities in Africa are the EU's main defence and security tools for cooperation with African security and defence forces, either as part of national forces or in close coordination with UN or African Union contingents.

In May 2018, a Memorandum of Understanding on Peace, Security and Governance was signed between the African Union and the European Union. The MoU envisages enhanced cooperation throughout the whole conflict cycle, from conflict prevention to crisis management. It commits both sides to take practical steps towards a more coordinated approach to ensure effective multilateralism, including building a stronger partnership with the UN to address the issues of peace and security and other related challenges (EC, 2018b).

1.4 Cooperation between the EU and Asian partners

The EU has expressed its willingness to intensify cooperation not only with African but also with Asian partners, while in the conclusions of the European Council of May 2018, it set the goal of strengthening security cooperation in and with Asia (EC, 2018c). The result is a new impetus in bilateral engagement, as evidenced by the conclusion of framework agreements with some Asian countries. This commitment is also reflected in multilateral activities. For example, cooperation between the EU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is extensive and covers many areas. In 2020, the EU and ASEAN agreed to upgrade their relationship to a strategic partnership (EEAS, 2020c). As part of practical steps towards closer cooperation, the EU aims to gain observer status and join the East Asia Summit.

The EU and ASEAN have also agreed to increase the involvement of ASEAN Member States in CSDP operations and missions through the promotion of bilateral framework agreements. The two parties continue to strengthen political and security dialogue and cooperation also in the ASEAN Regional Forum, in an increasing range of security areas. For example, in 2019, the EU co-chaired the sessions on maritime security and the fight against terrorism and actively participated in other sessions (cyber threats, disaster relief, etc.).

2. EU cooperation with third countries

The EU Treaty (2007) Article 21 states that *"The Union shall seek to develop relations and build partnerships with international, regional or global organizations and with third countries that share the same principles [...]. It supports multilateral solutions to common problems, especially within the framework of the United Nations."*

Since 2017, the European Council has emphasized even more than before the need to work on a more strategic approach to security and defence partnerships, building on existing practice and learning from past experiences. This new approach is guided by the following objectives:

- improving the security and defence of the EU and its partners by developing common strategic interests in the field of security and defence objectives;
- increasing effective support to the common goals of the EU and its partners, especially contributions to EU missions and operations conducted within the framework of the CSDP;
- increasing international legitimacy and recognition of the role of the EU and its partners as providers of security, as well as the EU's global strategic role;
- ensuring effective implementation of partnerships by promoting inclusiveness, integration, and mutual responsibility between the EU and its partners.

For the above reasons, the EU began to develop more complex partnerships with third countries in the fields of security and defence. These partnerships go beyond crisis management and participation in EU CSDP missions and operations, addressing also multifaceted challenges such as hybrid threats, climate security, strategic communications, disinformation, foreign interference, maritime security, counter-terrorism, capability development and capacity building.

These partnerships are organized in three key areas of cooperation:

- strengthening dialogue and cooperation on security and defence issues in a manner adapted to the concerns of both the EU and the partner country and by making use of existing cooperation forums in the field of security and defence to the greatest extent possible;
- facilitating the participation of partners from third countries in CSDP missions and operations;
- strengthening mutual support between the EU and its partners, e.g., through EU missions and operations within CSDP and programs to support capacity building.

For example, the EU concludes Framework Participation Agreements (FPAs) with selected partner countries in order to facilitate their contributions to EU missions and operations. So far, 20 such agreements have been signed, and 12 partners are currently participating in 10 of the 17 missions and operations led by the EU in the framework of the CSDP. In addition to this cooperation, the EU regularly organizes bilateral dialogues with more than 20 countries covering a wide range of security and defence-related topics.

The EU has also taken several steps to improve its capacity to engage in security and defence issues with the partners by sending experts to selected EU delegations. To date, the EU has deployed 18 counter-terrorism advisors and is in the process of deploying the first wave of uniformed military advisors to EU delegations in the US and Canada, China, Serbia (the mandate will gradually expand to all Western Balkan countries), Indonesia, Kenya, and others. This initiative will enable the further development of the EU security and defence partnerships through cooperation with security and defence authorities of third countries, strengthening the profile of the EU as a security actor, improving coordination with Member States at the local level, and providing support to Member States that do not have any security and defence advisors.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above information, it can be concluded that the EU is determined to strengthen its ability to act as a security provider and to strengthen its Common Security and Defence Policy as an essential part of the EU's external activities in the light of the current developments in the world. CSDP can be considered the EU's global "business card" when it comes to crisis management. A well-functioning CSDP, with its missions and operations, is a key to the implementation of the EU's priorities within the global strategy, namely security and defence, building the resilience of the state and society, an integrated approach to conflicts and crises, strengthening cooperative regional orders, and creating rules based on a global governance system. This effort must be anchored in cooperation with partners around the world, which enables the EU to strengthen not only its global strategic role, but also its ability to act autonomously or with partners when necessary and where possible. In this context, the EU tries to systematically strengthen cooperation with partner international and regional organizations and third countries. At the same time, it advocates a more strategic approach to these security and defence partnerships so that they are mutually beneficial and contribute to strengthening the EU's security and defence efforts while fully respecting the EU's institutional framework and its decision-making autonomy.

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ADDRESS & ©

doc. Ing. Radoslav IVANČÍK, PhD. et PhD., MBA, MSc.
Akadémia Policajného zboru
Sklabinská 1
817 35 Bratislava
Slovak Republic
radoslav.ivancik@akademiapz.sk

RECENZNÍ ŘÍZENÍ PRO Č. 2/2022

Jednotliví oponenti (9) recenzovali 1–2 články. Redakce od nich obdržela na každý příspěvek 1–2 posudky, celkem 12 posudků.

Ing. Jiří **ALINA**, Ph.D.	Katedra aplikované ekonomie a ekonomiky, Ekonomická fakulta JU v Českých Budějovicích, **ČR**
PaedDr. Ing. Kateřina **BOČKOVÁ**, Ph.D., MBA	Katedra managementu a ekonomie, Vysoká škola DTI, Dubnica nad Váhom, **SR**
doc. Ing. Marie **HESKOVÁ**, CSc.	Katedra managementu veřejné správy, Vysoká škola evropských a regionálních studií z.ú. České Budějovice, **ČR**
Mgr. Eva Hendrych **LORENZOVÁ**, Ph.D.	Katedra ošetřovatelství a porodní asistence, Fakulta zdravotnických studií, ZČU v Plzni, **ČR**
Dr. h. c. prof. Ing. Pavel **NEČAS**, PhD., MBA	Katedra bezpečnostních studií, Fakulta politických věd a mezinárodních vztahů, UMB, Banská Bystrica, **SR**
Mgr. Jaroslava **NOVÁKOVÁ**	Katedra ošetřovatelství a porodní asistence, Fakulta zdravotnických studií, ZČU v Plzni, **ČR**
doc. PhDr. Miroslav **SAPÍK**, Ph.D.	Katedra managementu veřejné správy Vysoká škola evropských a regionálních studií, z.ú., České Budějovice, **ČR**
doc. Ing. Jaroslav **SLEPECKÝ**, PhD., MBA	Katedra právních oborů a bezpečnostních studií, Vysoká škola evropských a regionálních studií, z.ú., České Budějovice, **ČR**
prof. PhDr. Miroslava **SZARKOVÁ,** CSc.	Katedra managementu, Fakulta podnikového managementu, Ekonomická univerzita v Bratislavě, **SR**

POČET OBDRŽENÝCH VĚDECKÝCH ČLÁNKŮ:	8
POČET RECENZOVANÝCH VĚDECKÝCH ČLÁNKŮ:	7
POČET OBDRŽENÝCH RECENZNÍCH POSUDKŮ:	12
POČET PUBLIKOVANÝCH VĚDECKÝCH ČLÁNKŮ:	6

INFORMACE O ČASOPISU AUSPICIA

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- mezinárodnost;
- otevřenost;
- výběrovost;
- kontinuální zvyšování kvality.

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Časopis Auspicia je vydáván od r. 2004 Vysokou školou evropských a regionálních studií (VŠERS) a Vysokou školou technickou a ekonomickou (VŠTE) dvakrát ročně, pouze elektronicky. V dosavadních 41 číslech bylo otištěno zhruba 860 příspěvků a recenzí.

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V roce 2016 byl recenzovaný vědecký časopis Auspicia zařazen do mezinárodní databáze ERIH PLUS.

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Na základě úspěšného recenzního řízení jsou jednotlivé vědecké příspěvky řazeny do sekcí:

1. Společenské vědy, 2. Bezpečnost, 3. Veřejná správa, řízení, 4. Recenze

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Kontaktní adresa:
Vysoká škola evropských a regionálních studií, z. ú.
Žižkova tř. 6
370 01 České Budějovice
doc. PhDr. Miroslav Sapík, Ph.D.
Telefon: +420 386 116 839
E-mail: sapik@vsers.cz, https://vsers.cz/auspicia/

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Contact address:

College of European and Regional Studies
Žižkova tř. 6
370 01 České Budějovice
doc. PhDr. Miroslav Sapík, Ph.D.,
Telephone number: +420 386 116 839
Email: sapik@vsers.cz
https://vsers.cz/auspicia/