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SOCIAL POLICIES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE MEDIA

Coordinated by
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SOCIAL POLICIES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE MEDIA

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SOCIAL POLICIES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE MEDIA

(Collective e-book)

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Abbreviations

AAI	**The Active Ageing Index**
AGS	**Annual Growth Survey**
AIDS	**Acquired ImmunoDeficiency Syndrome**
AMIF	**Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund**
AROPE	**At Risk Of Poverty and social Exclusion**
CARE	**Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe**
CCA	**Emergency and Crisis Coordination Arrangements**
CEAS	**Common European Asylum System**
CERV	**Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme**
CRC	**United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**
CRIN	**Child Rights Information Network**
CSR	**Country-Specific Recommendation**
EaSI	**European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation**
ECDC	**European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control**
ECEC	**Early Childhood Education and Care**
ECOSOC	**Economic and Social Committee**
ECRE	**European Council on Refugees and Exiles**
EEAS	**European External Action Service**
EEC	**European Economic Community**
EES	**European Employment Strategy**
EFS+	**European Social Fund Plus**
EGF	**European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers**
eID	**digital identity**
EMU	**Economic and Monetary Union**
ES	**European Semester**
ESC	**European Solidarity Corps**
ESF	**European Social Fund**
ETUC	**European Trade Union Confederation**
EU	**European Union**

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Abbreviations

EU-SILC	European Union Statistics on Income and Living
FEAD	Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMMP	Global Media Monitoring Project
HSC	European Health Security Committee
ICF	International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IORP	Institutions for Occupational Retirement
IPCR	Integrated Political Crisis Response
IPVAW	Intimate Partner Violence Against Women
LGBT, LGBT+, LGBTQI, LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer, Intersexual
MIS	Including through Minimum Income Schemes
MPI	Global Multidimensional Poverty Index
MS	Member States of the EU
NEET rate	young people Not in Education, Employment, or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRP	National Reform Programme
NSI	National statistical institute
NSVRC	National Sexual Violence Resource Center
OAED	Labour Employment Office in Greece
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
PBS	Public Broadcasting Service
PEPP	Pandemic Emergency Purchase Program
R&D	Research and Development
RFF	Recovery and Resilience Facility
SBC	Schengen Borders Code

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Abbreviations

SDGs	UN Sustainable Development Goals
SPOC	Single Point Of Contact
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICE	Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe
WHO	World Health Organization

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Introduction to the Book

By Savvatou Tsolakidou, National Kapodistrian University of Athens

Source: https://www.eapn.eu/eapn-welcomes-the-good-intentions-behind-the-european-pillar-of-social-rights-but-is-it-enough-to-save-social-europe/

SOCIAL POLICIES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE MEDIA

Introduction to the Book

What are the most important European and national social policies and how they are presented in the media are the two main questions that aim to present and analyse the specific curriculum. Social policy primarily means “redistribution” of wealth and transfer to the social categories in need of support: children, women, the poor, the unemployed, the elderly, and other groups. Social policy aims to take welfare measures for the most vulnerable and excluded from society with regulations, adoption of financing measures, and tax reliefs that favour the daily living of these groups and support their professional and social integration. In addition, it supports and promotes the social rights of vulnerable groups against the phenomena of racism and xenophobia, the rights of the LGBT community, the right of women for safe and legal abortion, the decriminalization of drugs, phenomena of juvenile delinquency, and other rights.

When examining the contemporary evolution of Social Policy in the context of the European Union (EU), it is found that the global economic crisis of 2008 and the subsequent health crisis with the Covid-19 pandemic had significant effects on the revision of the Social Policy systems in the Member States (MS) and consequently to the EU. Although Social Policy was the exclusive responsibility of MS from the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957 until the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007, many efforts were made to improve the social security and welfare systems. Social policy may not have been an exclusive competence according to the three pillars of policies defined by the Treaty of Lisbon, but in 2007 it remains as a shared policy for which both the EU and the MS agreed to cooperate and coordinate their actions for a sustainable future.

The decade of the presidency of Jacques Delors at the European Commission, from 1985 to 1995, introduced the social model as a means of strengthening economic cohesion and development on an equal footing with economic, monetary, and industrial policy. The social dimension with the adoption of directives and other institutional interventions, such as the Treaty of Single European Act (1986) signed in Luxembourg, highlighted changes in the functioning of the internal market and the free movement of people, products, and services, as well as strengthened the development of a coordinated social policy between MS The introduction of the qualified majority in Council decisions in areas such as health and safety at work (Article 118) allowed Community actions to be taken, strengthened the role of the European Parliament and emphasized the social dialogue of the EU, the MS, and social partners on various issues. In addition, the adoption of the Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights, although it is not a legally binding text, is a political declaration that codified the rights of workers at a pan-European level, highlighted the Community’s institutional deficit in social issues, and signalled the future directions of European social policy (Sakellaropoulos 2001).

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The subsequent treaties, the Treaty of Maastricht (Treaty on European Union), the Treaty on the transition to the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in addition with the adoption of a common currency (euro), as well as the Treaty of Amsterdam, delineated social policy issues. With the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty, social dialogue emerged as an element of the European social model and was incorporated into the national law of the then eleven MS (without its acceptance by the United Kingdom) in the form of a Social Protocol. Reference to equal opportunities for men and women, the promotion of employment, the improvement of working conditions, social protection, and the fight against social exclusion with investments through the European structural funds and especially the European Social Fund (ESF) were at the heart of the European social policy.

The Treaty of Amsterdam reestablished the inclusion of a strengthened social agreement, and all directives adopted by the 14 MS that signed this agreement were ratified by the UK. The creation of the Social Protection Commission as an advisory committee to the European Commission aimed to promote cooperation between the MS and the EU, as well as to monitor the social situation, in order to facilitate the exchange of information and draw up relevant reports which influenced the transfer of best practices for quality changes.

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU, 2007), introduced with Article 9 the "social clause" based on which the EU, when defining and implementing its policies and actions, is called to take into account the requirements linked to promoting a high level of employment, ensuring social protection, combating social exclusion, promoting education, training and human health protection systems.

Despite regressions in terms of decisions and the adoption of different Social policy financing measures such as the Initiative for Social Exclusion, the initiative promoting equal opportunities for women (NOW, COM(96) 67 final) and an initiative concerning persons with disabilities and certain other disadvantaged groups (HORIZON, 1990-1993)1 and the funding for Roma inclusion, and later on the Juncker package to strengthen young people's integration on the labour market under the Youth Guarantee2 policy measures, more drastic measures needed to be taken.

At the Lisbon European Council (on 23-24 March 2000)3 a new strategic goal was agreed upon to strengthen employment, economic reform, and social cohesion as part of a knowledge-based economy. The "to make the European Union the

1 Initiative HORIZON for handicapped people, article 11 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 4253/88, https://cordis.europa.eu/programme/id/EMP-HORIZON-1, accessed the 17.9.2022.

2 1 Council Recommendation of 22 April 201 (2013/C 120/01), on establishing a Youth Guarantee policy measures

3 Lisbon European Council (on 23-24 March 2000), https://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm

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most competitive and dynamic knowledge economy, worldwide capable of sustainable economic development with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" was expressed. The EU's shift towards a more social Europe was highlighted. Modernizing the European social model by investing in people and building an active welfare state was one of the main chapters of the Presidency's conclusions. Additionally, the MS agreed on the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) as a tool of the Lisbon strategy and as an intergovernmental method to achieve common goals in social exclusion, pensions, health, care, and long-term health care. The peer evaluation and the dissemination of best practices from country to country on social policy measures, the development of national and EU social policy reports, and comparative studies aimed to improve the situation and promote policy reforms for the integration of the most vulnerable in each country.

The OMC, based on the principle of subsidiarity, encouraged the MS at the local, national and intergovernmental level to undertake reforms with the contribution of the social partners and in coordination with the MS at EU level. The objective was to modernize the health systems, reform the pension systems and provide social measures for the most vulnerable groups, the children and the elderly, and to harmonize the social protection systems in a Europe where the free movement of citizens was now a fact. The OMC on Social Policy together with the European Employment Strategy were important pillars of the European Strategy "Europe 2020" This ten-year strategy for "smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" aimed at tackling five ambitious targets: covering employment, research and development, climate change and energy sustainability, education and the fight against poverty and social exclusion. The indicator for the reduction of poverty by at least 20 million people, the increase to 75% of the employment of people aged 20-64, and the reduction of school dropout while improving lifelong education systems throughout Europe were agreed upon by all MS.

The flagship initiatives of the "Europe 2020" strategy, among which are the Platform to fight poverty and social exclusion, the Agenda for new skills and jobs, and Youth on the Move, support the effort to achieve these goals in all MS who are asked to take them into account in the new planning of the cofinanced actions from the structural funds, as well as competitive programmes. The modernization of the social welfare systems and lifelong learning initiatives in education and training were social investments, but they remained at the level of instructions and recommendations for improvements as a result of the "European Semester", a monitoring and progress mechanism of changes and reforms at national and European policy level.

The economic crisis, as mentioned above, drastically limited and overturned the encouragement of social policy measures. MS, such as Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece, among others, had to reduce social expenses. Greece signed three memorandums of fiscal monitoring not only by the EU

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but also by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and was forced to reduce social spending. Despite the identification of needs and the will to revive the social model, investment in human capital and reforms to strengthen the most vulnerable remain in the competence of the individual MS. The EU failed to succeed to strengthen social policy as a key pillar of the EU's cohesion policy. Therefore, limited action was taken at a national level, e.g., promoting the modernization of national public policies, health care, the reconciliation of family and professional life, the sustainability of pension systems, the strengthening of education and of the employment of human resources.

The new programming period, 2021-2027, and the financial tools operating at European and national level are based on the adoption of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan during the Portuguese presidency in Porto, Portugal (7-8 May 2021)4. The Action Plan puts forward three EU-wide headline targets in the areas of employment, skills, and social protection to be achieved by 2030: (a) at least 78% of people aged 20 to 64 should be in employment; (b) at least 60% of adults should participate in training every year, and (c) the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion should be reduced by at least 15 million. The twenty principles support a fair and inclusive society full of opportunity. Actions under the scheme of NextGenerationEU5, the co-financing of Structural Funds, the new Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)6, and other competitive programmes should be based on each of the principles of the pillar. The sectors of intervention concern inclusive education, training and life-long learning, gender equality and equal opportunities for all, support to employment and socially fair conditions, fair wages for a decent standard of living, information in case of dismissal, work-life balance, health and safety at work place, measures for social protection and inclusion of children, social protection of unemployment and minimum income benefits, pensions for the elderly, health care, long term care and housing for the homeless, the right to access essential services (water, sanitation, energy, transport, digital communication) of good quality. The Action Plan for programming period 2021-2027 was endorsed by the EU institutions, the European social partners and European civil society, and its main targets will be monitored by the European Semester (ES).

In conclusion, it is evident that the European social policy, regarding all different phases of development, had positive and negative fluctuations which increased during the last economic crisis. However, both the health pandemic and the global developments after the war in Ukraine demonstrate the need for a greater shift by the EU and the MS towards a social model that will ensure better living,

4 The Portuguese presidency in Porto, Portugal (7-8 May 2021), https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/european-council/2021/05/07/social-summit/

5 NextGenerationEU, https://next-generation-eu.europa.eu/index_en

6 Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en

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working, health and care conditions throughout the Union.

The paradigm of the adoption of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) introduced a new model of governance and strengthening of social cohesion addressed to all MS, and fostered reforms for a better and more sustainable future. Arguably, the transformation and adaptation of the EU to the new dystopian, complex, and ambiguous reality in a globalized environment can only succeed, if the social dimension becomes a central pillar of policy and the investment in people replaces the close budgetary monitoring.

Media coverage of social policies on selected vulnerable groups and the impact of the pandemic are also part of the content of this book. Media reporting on the elderly, children, women, and the Romani people are more represented in the respective chapters.

Under the leadership of the National Kapodistrian Univerity of Athens (NKUA), the ERMIScom project consortium of the partnering universities throughout Europe is presenting in this e-book a course which could be utilised in the framework of a Master or postgraduate programme. The main objectives of this material in relation to a academic course aims to develop knowledge on the social policies of the EU and their representation in media. The main portions of theoretical knowledge in this book refer to:

The following distribution of the workload of this course is suggested:

- Time spent in class: 3 hours per week / 39 hours per semester.
- Time allocated for course readings: 2 hours per week / 26 hours per semester
- Time allocated for cases: 2 hours per week / 26 hours per semester.
- Time allocated for preparing the “course project”: 40 hours
- Time allocated for preparing/revising for examinations: 40 hours
- Total hours for this Course: 171 hours
- Other activities, e.g., study visits

This e-book is structured in thirteen chapters. In chapter one, “European Strategies and Policy Measures for Vulnerable Groups”, the EU’s approach, and its responsibility on social measures for vulnerable groups from 2010 onwards have been developed. Specifically, it presents the main provisions of the Europe 2020 strategy and its development and progress. Moreover, it focuses on the goals of the European Pillar of Social Rights to be reached by 2030. It also examines specific policies adopted by the Commission which complement

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the European Pillar, on children and persons with disabilities.

In chapter two, “Methods and Tools for Monitoring the Implementation of European Policies for Vulnerable Groups” are presented considered the Covid-19 pandemic. The European Semester is presented as a key monitoring tool. Furthermore, references to the Annual Growth Survey, the National Reform Programmes and the Country-specific recommendations, with a focus on vulnerable groups, are also presented in this chapter. In chapter three, “European Policy on Asylum and Migration”, a review of the main historical provisions of the European legislation on asylum is made in addition to the main provisions applicable today. It also presents the changes proposed by the new Pact on Migration and Asylum, introduced by the European Committee in September 2020. Additionally, it examines the role of humanitarian organisations in the provision of assistance and services to displaced populations. In chapter four “Employment Policies: European Strategy against Unemployment”, the European Employment Strategy and the evaluation of the key policy of EU for addressing unemployment are at the centre of the discussion. Chapter five, “Social Policy for Fighting Poverty”, focuses on how to gain a deep understanding of the main concepts related to poverty, how to measure it, and to evaluate and adjust related policies. Chapter six presents the” Social Policy for the Elderly”, the concept of “active ageing”, and the national pensions schemes. In chapter seven, EU Response to the Pandemic Crisis is tackled. In chapter eight, “Covid-19 Crisis in Turkey: Social Policies for Vulnerable Groups and the Media Coverage”, the social policies for vulnerable groups and their media coverage in Covid-19 crisis in Turkey are examined. In chapter nine, “Social Policies for Vulnerable Groups and the Media” is developed and it also presents the contemporary media landscape and the consequences new media and dissemination cover EU policies towards vulnerable groups. In chapter ten, “Gender Equality and the Media”, the concept, forms, and groups affected by gender inequality in media are developed. Different forms of gender-based violence in media are also examined. In chapter eleven, “Children and Media in the context of Social Policies” is tackled and children’s rights are presented. References to child abuse and the presentation styles of children with disabilities in the media are made. Chapter twelve, “Social Policies for Romani people in the Media”, focuses on the challenges to Romani integration within the EU and to selected social policies, as well as on the description of Romani people in the mainstream media. Finally, in chapter thirteen, “The Impact of EU Funds on Social Policy and Methodologies for the Evaluation of their Use” at EU level presented.

The book expects to be a useful source of knowledge for students of the departments of communication, media studies, and in general for those interested in the wider field of social policies at EU level. The different chapters include images, figures, and tables, to illustrate and reinforce the content. In addition, an extensive bibliography is listed at

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the end of each chapter, including online links, for further research by the readers.

In closing, I would like to express my special appreciation and thanks to the authors of the various chapters of the book. I would also like to thank emeritus professor Dimitris Charalambis for his substantial contribution to many chapters of the book, for his participation in the piloting of the book to Erasmus students of the Communication and Media Department of the NKUA and for his advice on the final version of the book.

Please note that any omissions and oversights in the e-book are the sole responsibility of the authors.

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2	Methods and Tools for Monitoring the Implementation of European Policies for Vulnerable Groups	Dr. Theodora Gazi, lawyer	NKUA
3	European Policy on Asylum and Migration	Dr. Theodora Gazi, lawyer	NKUA
4	Employment Policies: European Strategy against Unemployment	Dr. Stavros Protopapas & Dr. Dimitris Charalambis, Professor emeritus	NKUA, Communication and Media Department
5	Social Policy for Fighting Poverty	Dr. Stavros Protopapas & Dr Dimitris Charalambis, Professor emeritus	NKUA, Communication and Media Department
6	Social Policy for the Elderly	Dr. Stavros Protopapas & Dr Dimitris Charalambis, Professor emeritus	NKUA, Communication and Media Department
7	EU Response to the Pandemic Crisis	Dr. Stavros Protopapas & Dr Dimitris Charalambis, Professor emeritus	NKUA, Communication and Media Department
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9	Social Policies and the Media	Dr. Marina Rigou, Assistant Professor	NKUA, Communication and Media Department
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11	Children and Media in the Context of Social Policies	Dr. Figen Algul, Assistant Professor	BAU and Marmara University, Turkey
12	Social Policies for Romani People in the Media	Dr. Ani Arutuynyan & Dr. Atanas Dimitrov, Senior Assistant Professor	University of National and World Economy (UNWE), Bulgaria
13	The Impact of EU Funds on Social Policy and Methodologies for the Evaluation of their Use	Dr. Atanas Dimitrov, Senior Assistant Professor & Dr. Ani Arutuynyan, Assistant Professor	UNWE

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Chapter 1
European Strategies and Policy Measures for Vulnerable Groups

By Theodora Gazi, National Kapodistrian University of Athens

Source: https://gr.depositphotos.com/stock-photos/elderly-runaway.html

SOCIAL POLICIES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE MEDIA

Chapter 1
European Strategies and Policy Measures for Vulnerable Groups

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Aim

Economic growth, cooperation between Member States (MS) and social progress are key principles of the European Union (EU). While living conditions and social inclusion fall within the responsibility of each member state, soft law provisions and policy measures have been developed by the EU to promote social protection of vulnerable groups. This chapter reviews the European policies and policy measures from 2010 onwards. Specifically, it presents the main provisions of the Europe 2020 strategy and its development and progress. Moreover, it focuses on the goals of the European Pillar of Social Rights to be reached by 2030. Finally, it examines specific policies adopted by the Commission which complement the European Pillar, on children and persons with disabilities.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. **To define the EU's approach and responsibility on social measures for vulnerable groups**
2. **To review the main provisions of the Europe 2020 strategy and the European Pillar of Social Rights**
3. **To present specific policies adopted by the European Commission on two particularly vulnerable groups, i.e. children and persons with disabilities.**

Keywords

Social inclusion; European strategies; Policy measures; Vulnerable groups; Europe 2020; European Pillar of Social Rights; Children's rights; Rights of persons with disabilities

SOCIAL POLICIES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE MEDIA

Introduction

Section 1.1: Introduction

Improving living conditions for all EU residents and fighting against social exclusion fall within the responsibility of the MS. However, one of the key principles of the EU is that economic growth leads to social progress. Specifically, through economic growth, i.e. the creation of a single market, in addition to the four freedoms of the EU (free movement of goods, services, persons, and capital), MS can also ameliorate the living conditions of EU citizens (Eurodiaconia, n.d.). Consequently, the EU adopts soft law rules[1] on social inclusion, while MS set common objectives to fight for social issues (Offe, 2003).

Indeed, in the past years, poverty levels have decreased; however, this was not the case for vulnerable groups (Frazer, Marlier, Natali, Van Dam, & Vanhercke, 2010, p. 90). To be more specific, in this chapter vulnerable groups are referred to as persons who face a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion compared to the general population. Indicatively, vulnerable groups include children, older persons, people with disabilities, migrants and ethnic minorities (including Romani) and homeless persons (Gazi, 2021). Additionally, groups, such as youth and women which face obstacles in specific aspects, e.g. participation in the labour market, could also fall within this definition of vulnerability.

Common problems that vulnerable groups face are/include unemployment, low education, homelessness, and subsequently, their further exclusion from society. First, an important investment to end the intergenerational disadvantages for vulnerable groups is children's welfare. In other words, MS need to address the gap of opportunities, irrespective of a child's background. Second, access to basic services, such as sanitation, healthcare, energy, transport, financial services, and digital communications is affected by a person's income, age, and territorial inequalities. Regrettably, it is estimated that in 2018, close to 34 million citizens in the EU (medium and low-income households) suffer from energy poverty, meaning they cannot afford heating. This situation creates the need for sectoral policies on services of general interest, including consumer protection and public procurement rules, to support access to essential goods and services for everyone. Third, MS recognise that specific groups, such as young and low-skilled citizens, are vulnerable to the fluctuations in the labour market, meaning additional support is required when they are either employed in sectors affected by the health crisis or typically given fewer opportunities to enter the labour market (European Commission, 2021). Additionally, the health crisis caused by Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated inequalities and highlighted existing gaps in the efficiency of social protection policies (Frazer, Marlier, Natali, Van Dam,

1 Apart from soft law, the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (in 2009) made the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU legally binding on EU institutions and national governments. The Charter is an important legislative initiative which established fundamental rights protected in the EU, including provisions on civil, political, economic and social rights

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& Vanhercke, 2010, p. 90).

Under this scope, MS have committed to develop coordinated responses to address the multiple disadvantages of vulnerable groups through common European strategies and policy measures. EU's approach to overcoming discrimination and increasing their inclusion is three-fold (European Commission, n.d.):

- Increase of their access to services and opportunities,
- adoption of relevant legislation to overcome discrimination,
- development of targeted approach to respond to each group's specific needs, where necessary.

Based on the above, it is evident that social policies are multidisciplinary by nature. This means that they require interventions in various policy areas, such as law, economics, and sociology. This chapter focuses on the EU's role in developing strategies and policies on the promotion of social protection of vulnerable persons from 2010 onwards. It refers to the importance of social strategies and policy measures, discusses the main provisions of the Europe 2020 strategy, and presents the goals set by the European Pillar of Social Rights including its targets by 2030. Finally, it examines the goals set by the Commission on its specific policies for addressing the vulnerability and protecting two particularly vulnerable groups, i.e. children and persons with disabilities.

Section 1.2: The Europe 2020 Strategy

The EU had gradually begun to realise its vision of social inclusion through the Council Resolution on a social action programme in 1974 and poverty programmes, in 1975, 1985, and 1989 (Eurodiaconia, 2016). An important move towards social policy convergence occurred through the adoption of the "Europe 2020" strategy, adopted by the European Commission in 2010. This was a 10-year strategy for Europe to become more efficient, sustainable, and inclusive.

The Council also introduced the "European Semester", an initiative that changed the EU's Stability and Growth Pact to support economic policy coordination, macro-economic growth, and budgetary discipline. The European Semester is a cycle of economic, fiscal, labour, and social policy coordination. As evident from its name ("Semester"), it focuses on the six-month period from the beginning of each year (European Council; Council of the European Union, 2021). Each March, the Council identifies the main economic challenges for the MS and issues advice on policies to be adopted. Subsequently, MS review their budgetary strategies in April and produce national reform programmes which map the actions they need to adopt. During June and July, both the European Commission and Council share advice with the countries, prior to setting their budget for the next year and also evaluating how their suggestions were implemented during the prior year (Frazer, Marlier, Natali, Van Dam, & Vanhercke, 2010, p. 24). As a framework of

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CHAPTER 1:
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processes, the European Semester has a soft and hard law component. Soft law (meaning non-binding) provisions support the coordination between the EU states. However, the processes of budgetary and macro-economic assessments fall within hard law, thus they are legally binding, and states can be subjected to sanctions, in case of non-compliance (Trubek, Cottrell, & Nance, 2005).

It is important to highlight that the driving principle of "Europe 2020" was that economic prosperity and social progress should go hand-in-hand. Specifically, its main targets for vulnerable groups focused on three key areas: employment, education, and social inclusion. In the area of employment, the goal was that 75% of 20–64-year-olds would be employed by 2020. As for education, the aim was for school drop-out rates to be below 10%, with at least 40% of 30-34–year-olds completing third-level education. Finally, at least 20 million fewer people would face or be at risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020.

As evident, the Europe 2020 strategy applied to multiple sectors, including employment, research, education, and the fight against poverty and social exclusion. Despite that, while its objectives of fighting unemployment were almost met, this was not the case for the strategy's goals on social exclusion. Specifically, its ambitious targets on the employment rate, school drop-out and poverty were not reached. In 2019, 73.1% of 20–64-year-olds were employed (instead of 75%). Moreover, following the Covid-19 crisis, the employment rate for men was 78.3% for men and 66.6% for women by the third quarter of 2020. Similarly, the target for young people drop-out was not achieved (10.2% of young people left education in 2019, while the target was less than 10%). Finally, although poverty and social exclusion declined during the last decade, the social target of a 20 million reduction of persons at risk of poverty or exclusion was not met (i.e. 12 million fewer persons faced said risks compared to 2008) (European Commission, 2021).

Section 1.3: The European Pillar for Social Rights

The European Commission recognised that the previously mentioned objectives of the "Europe 2020" strategy were not met. It concluded that social protection systems across MS had to be reformed to minimise their differences. However, the Commission did not accept that welfare provisions should meet 'in the middle'. On the contrary, it adopted the view that all EU national systems should reach similar high standards. Under this scope, it introduced the European Pillar of Social Rights. In March 2016, the European Commission opened it for consultation, until the end of the year, so that individuals, trade unions, and civil society organisations could share their views on pressing challenges and effective solutions.

The European Pillar, as endorsed in November 2017, is based on 20 key principles which revolve around equal opportunities, access to the labour mar-

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ket, fair working conditions, social protection, and inclusion. It also proposes specific targets to be reached by 2030 (Eurodiaconia, 2016). Among other goals, the European Pillar aims for the reduction of poverty and social exclusion through social protection. In order to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by at least 15 million by 2030, the EU shall address needs at all stages of life and target to combat the root causes of poverty and social exclusion (European Anti-Poverty Network, 2017).

In the field of employment, the promotion of an inclusive high employment rate across the EU remains a priority. Based on the International Labour Organization, women face the following obstacles when accessing employment: they are simultaneously underrepresented in the labour market and overrepresented in occupying part-time positions in lower-paid sectors of work. Additionally, women receive lower salaries and wages compared to men, although they surpass them in educational level (International Labour Organization, 2012). Consequently, the European Pillar promotes equality of opportunities in the labour market. Specifically, the main issues identified which prevent women from entering or remaining in the labour market are the lack of adequate leave and care arrangements for children or dependent family members. Other barriers to female participation are the lack of work-life balance policies, and excessive taxation of income, in addition to stereotypes on the "expected" studies and jobs for each sex which leads to occupational segregation. Lastly, a factor which affects female employment is the inequality between sexes on leave arrangements. In other words, the existing policies and frameworks reinforce women's perceived role as primary caregiver. Interestingly, the Covid-19 pandemic presents an opportunity for MS to promote flexible working arrangements, partly derived from digital environments. This not only includes teleworking, but also adapting working times and policies to both workers and employees' needs (Rasnača, 2017).

Moreover, a goal set by the European Pillar is to decrease the rate of unemployed or low-educated people between 15 and 29 years to 9% by 2030 (from 12.6% in 2019). To facilitate this goal, the Commission called upon the MS to dedicate 22 billion euro to youth employment support, including traineeships or internships to gain first-hand working experience. Apart from youth, the European Pillar refers to the participation of under-represented groups in the labour market to the maximum of their capacity. Specifically, these groups include older persons, persons with disabilities, LGBT, Romani, refugees, and ethnic/racial minorities. (European Commission, 2021).

Additionally, the European Pillar recognises that lack of adequate housing is a concerning issue that results in increasing financial risk-taking, evictions of families, and homelessness. The lack of availability of adequate housing options is also linked with both the lack of affordable housing options and rental market distortions. For this reason, MS are required to guarantee access to social housing

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or housing assistance to persons in need. Moreover, states should protect vulnerable groups from eviction and offer support to low-income households to ensure their access to houses. As for the homeless, they need to be provided with shelter and be referred to social services to support their social integration (Lörcher & Schömann, 2016, p. 92).

Based on the above, the European Pillar sets concrete actions in the areas of employment, skills, and social protection, thus it can be considered a positive development toward the protection and social inclusion of vulnerable groups. However, it is unlikely to succeed, if its potential remains untapped by MS. In other words, its principles shall only become reality following a joint effort and collaboration between EU bodies, MS, and civil society actors (Brooks, 2017).

After reviewing the European Pillar, it is important to examine two other EU policies which complement its implementation; the Strategy on Children's Rights and the Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, both of which set goals from 2021 until 2030.

Section 1.4: EU Strategy on Children Rights

Children, i.e. persons below the age of 18, are arguably one of the most vulnerable groups; they are highly dependent on others to satisfy basic needs and lack the autonomy to make their own decisions about their course of life (Bagattini, 2019). For this reason, it is important to review the EU's strategy on children's rights, adopted on 24 March 2021. This strategy provides a framework for EU action to protect children's rights, through promoting the well-being of the most vulnerable minors, their rights in the digital age, the prevention, and fight against violence, as well as child-friendly justice. Interestingly, during the preparation of this initiative, the Commission asked and reviewed the input of over 10,000 children, in collaboration with child-rights organisations (Sacur & Diogo, 2021).

Specifically, the strategy also includes recommendations for action by EU institutions, MS, and stakeholders. It adopts the following thematic areas (European Commission, 2021):

Children's participation in civic and democratic life: The strategy proposes multiple actions towards this goal, including the production of child-friendly legal material and consultations with children in the context of conferences and pacts.

The right of children to realise their full potential, irrespective of their social background: The strategy promotes inclusive and quality education, as well as care standards for children across the EU. Moreover, it seeks to combat child poverty and social exclusion, in addition to addressing children's mental health issues and supporting the procurement of healthy food in schools.

The right of children to be protected from violence: The Commission shall propose legislation to combat gender-based (GBV) and domestic violence. In

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parallel, MS must build integrated child protection systems and strengthen their response to violent incidents in schools.

Child-friendly justice: MS shall adopt appropriate legal proceedings to cater to children's need when they are either victims, witnesses, suspects or accused as perpetrators of crime. Additionally, they should develop robust alternatives to judicial action, such as alternatives to detention or mediation in civil cases.

Safe digital environment: This aim includes both a safe online experience, the effective implementation of rules on child protection, and the development of children's basic digital skills. The Commission also encourages companies to address harmful behaviour online and remove illegal content.

Moreover, the EU accepts that children's rights are universal. For this reason, it reinforces its commitment to protect and promote their rights, globally, by allocating 10% of humanitarian aid funding for education in emergencies and protracted crises. EU funding to support these actions is available under the European Social Fund Plus (EFS+), which finances projects that promote social inclusion, fight poverty, and invest in people, as well as the European Regional Development Fund, Invest EU, and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (European Commission, 2021).

Section 1.5: EU Strategy on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities are defined as vulnerable, due to the attitudinal, physical, and financial barriers they face (Van Campen & Van Santvoort, 2003). In Europe, 87 million persons have some form of disability, while only half of them (50.8%) are employed. Additionally, more than 28% of persons with disabilities face the risk of poverty or social exclusion, while less than 30% attain a university degree. Consequently, the European Commission adopted an ambitious strategy to promote their full participation in society (Friscic, 2021). The "Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030" is based on its predecessor (i.e. the "European Disability Strategy 2010-20202) and supports the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

The new Strategy aims to improve the lives of persons with disabilities until 2030 through coordinated action at a national and EU level. The ten-year strategy focuses on three themes:

Rights: Persons with disabilities must be able to enjoy the same rights as other groups, especially when they travel to other states or participate in political life. This requires a mutual recognition of disability status between the member states to

2 Indeed, the evaluation of the previous strategy indicated that both accessibility for persons with disabilities and promotion of their rights were high on the EU agenda. However, persons with disabilities are still facing barriers when they access healthcare, education, employment, recreation activities and when they participate in political life (Friscic, 2021) .

facilitate their right of free movement and their participation in the electoral process by 2023.

Independent living and autonomy: Persons with disabilities should enjoy the right to choose the place and people with whom they live. For this purpose, the Commission offers guidance for states and proposes initiatives to improve social services for persons with disabilities.

Non-discrimination and equal opportunities: Persons with disabilities must be protected from acts of discrimination and violence. This applies to multiple areas, such as equal opportunities, access to justice, employment, health services, education, culture, and sports.

To sum up, the strategy for the "Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030" has incorporated the lessons learned from its predecessor. Its aim is to combat discrimination so that persons with disabilities have equal access to society and economy rights across the EU, irrespective of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion, age, and sexual orientation.

Section 1.6: Summary

As shown in the different sections of this chapter, combating issues linked with social inclusion is a complex process that requires the collaboration of multiple stakeholders. Under this scope, human rights, socio-economic developments, and political climate must be taken into serious consideration. This chapter presented EU policies, programmes, and projects developed for this purpose. However, it is important to note that other policy and economic developments, including globalisation and the Covid-19 pandemic, might have the opposite effect on marginalised persons. As a result, the implementation of the above policies is crucial at a national and EU level to close the gap of inequality and reduce stigmatisation. The various policies propose multidisciplinary and holistic approaches, by including lessons learned and available evidence. For this reason, they have a high chance to produce sustainable results and facilitate social inclusion for vulnerable groups. Therefore, it is important that the MS implement them appropriately, indicate potential obstacles and work together to promote human rights and combat social exclusion.

Question of Discussion, Case Study, Exercises

How can the MS protect victims of gender-based cyber violence?

Recent advances in technology have expanded the ways in which sexual violence is perpetrated. Specifically, gender equality can be hampered by cyber violence against women and girls. A study published by the European Parliamentary Research Service in March 2021 indicated that 4 - 7 % of women in the EU had experienced cyber harassment during the past 12 months, while between

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1 - 3 % had experienced cyber stalking. Without adequate support, existing research showed that victims of gender-based cyber violence must identify how to handle instances of cyber stalking and harassment on their own, including how to report this situation to the police (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2021, p. 110). Consequently, gender-based cyber violence reinforces their social exclusion and perpetuates stereotypes about women and other vulnerable groups.

Based on the above, MS need to adopt a coordinated response to address the needs of cyber violence victims, in addition to building a support and early prevention mechanism to combat gender-based cyber violence. These objectives can be fulfilled through the collaboration of national authorities with civil society organisations, in order to:

- conduct an evidence-based assessment of the training needs of students, school teachers, and parents;
- design and provide tailored, interdisciplinary training to enhance digital competence and awareness of human rights, data protection, and sex education;
- create a support network of focal points in schools to record and respond to incidents of online violence and,
- raise awareness of the general public, through campaigning, the production of videos and podcasts.

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Chapter 2
Methods and Tools for Monitoring the Implementation of European Policies for Vulnerable Groups

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Aim

Effective policy coordination in the European Union (EU) is of utmost importance, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impact. Among the key frameworks for integrated surveillance and coordination of EU policies is the European Semester. Specifically, the Semester allows Member States (MS) to discuss their policies, exchange best practices, and agree on a common way forward. There is also a clear link between the European Semester and the EU cohesion policy funds. In other words, the Commission has recognised that a swifter recovery requires effective programming and focused investments. This chapter reviews the architecture of the Semester, i.e., its aim and structure, in addition to the Annual Growth Survey, National Reform Programmes, and Country-Specific Recommendations, with a focus on vulnerable groups.

Expected Learning Outcomes

To learn how the European Semester serves as a tool for monitoring the implementation of EU policies;

To present the main structure of the Annual Growth Survey issued by the Commission;

To understand the aim and main objectives of the National Reform Programmes;

To learn about the logic behind country-specific recommendations issued by the Commission.

Keywords

Policy Monitoring; European Semester; National Reform Programme; Country-Specific Recommendations.

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Section 2.1: Introduction

Monitoring is essential to ensure the appropriate implementation of policies at national and European level. With the objective to identify successes or lags at an early stage, monitoring systems are a key element of evidence-based policy-making. Moreover, they also serve as an accountable source of information for citizens.

Under this scope, this chapter presents the "European Semester", i.e., the EU framework for integrated surveillance and coordination of economic and employment policies. Introduced in 2011, the Semester is an established forum for recognising fiscal and economic policy challenges, on an Annual basis. The Semester is a governance architecture for the socioeconomic policy coordination of the MS towards the sustainable growth objectives set by the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Next Generation EU (Verdun & Zeitlin, 2018).

This chapter first reviews the European Semester instrument, in addition to the Annual Growth Survey, and how National Reform Programmes are used by MS to inform the EU about their commitments to structural interventions and reforms. Then, it examines the role of Country-Specific Recommendations issued by the Commission, including measures proposed for vulnerable groups.

Section 2.2: The Structure of the European Semester

The EU's governance structure is anchored in the European Semester. The Semester was proposed by the Commission in May 2010, and it was approved by the Council in September 2010. It is an institutional process that aims at boosting coordination between MS on macro-economic and structural areas (Zeilinger, 2021).

The annual cycle of the Semester is as follows: during autumn, the European Commission presents its Annual Growth Survey (AGS) for the following year, laying out the key challenges the EU faces (in terms of its economic, employment, and fiscal policies) and issuing the recommended actions to overcome them. To be more specific, the AGS catalogue's EU priorities and identifies the objectives that could fulfil them. Subsequently, the European Council endorses the AGS, following a discussion in the Council and the European Parliament, and it then invites MS to consider the AGS for their budgetary and structural reform plans (Verdun & Zeitlin, 2018). Then, MS submit National Reform Programmes (NRPs) to the European Commission, which set out the country's reform agenda. The content of the NRPs is different, according to each MS' strengths and needs, and they are made public by the Commission (European Commission, n.d.), After their review, the Commission issues Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) on how each state may address the specific challenges identified (Federal Ministry for Economics Affairs and Climate

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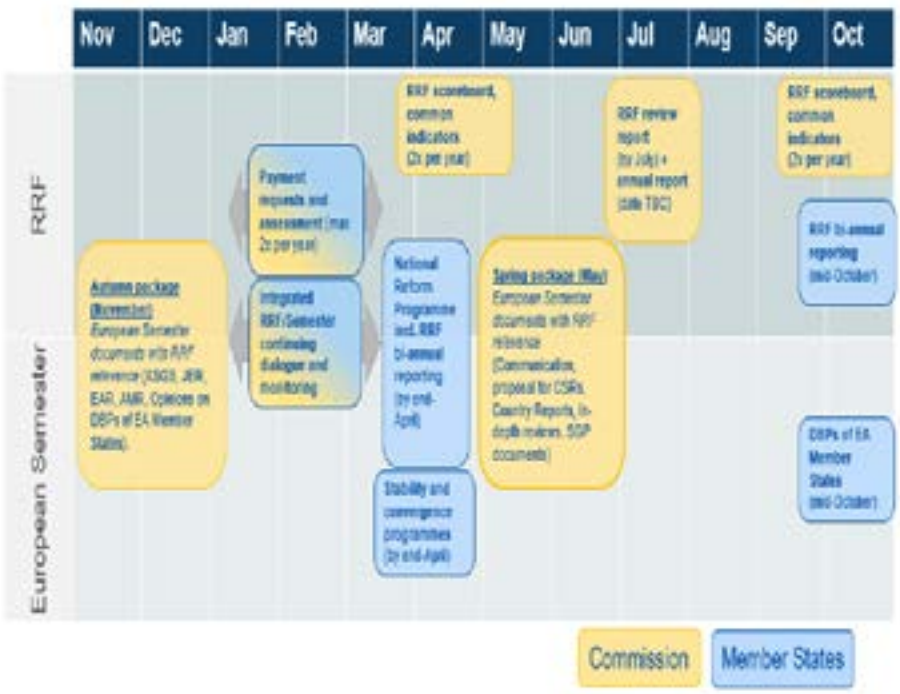
Action). An innovation introduced by the Semester is the fact that NRPs are submitted together with budgetary projections, so that states are mindful of complementarities and spill-over effects between policy areas (Hallerberg, Marzinotto, & Wolff, 2011).

The key stages in the European Semester are as follows (EU Alliance for a democratic, social and sustainable European Semester, 2004):



November - March	**• AGS is issued by the Commission, which sets out EU priorities for the following year for growth and job creation (November).** **• Several Council formations (i.e. General Affairs, Competitiveness, Environment, Justice, Employment and Social Affairs, Economic and Financial Affairs) present their feedback on the AGS (November/December).** **• The Commission publishes guidance on how states should form the NRPs (November/December).** **• The European Council and the European Parliament discuss the AGS (December/January).** **• The Commission holds bilateral meetings with the states on the actions taken and planned to implement the CSRs and in preparation for the NRPs and Stability and Convergence Programmes (February).** **• Different Council formations present their input on priority issues identified (February/March).** **• The European Council issues EU guidance for national policies based on the AGS (March).**

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April - July	**• The Commission holds bilateral meetings with states to discuss outstanding country-specific issues (April).** **• States submit their NRPs and Stability and Convergence Programmes to detail how target sets are to be reach, the national policies to be implemented, and how EU guidance received was incorporated (15 April).** **• The Economic and Financial Affairs Council conducts in-depth reviews based on the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure (May).** **• The Commission processes these NRPs and the Stability and Convergence Programmes (May).** **• The Commission provides CSRs to each state, while both several Council formations and the European Council endorse them (June).** **• The Economic and Financial Affairs Council adopts the CSRs (July).**
October - November	**• Governments of the Eurozone present the budget draft to the Commission (October).** **• The Commission holds bilateral meetings with the states (October/November).**

To better understand the logic of the Semester, this section examines the 2022 European Semester cycle until May 2022 (European Commission, n.d.):

NRPs: States submitted their NRPs and stability/convergence programmes (April 2022). A novelty was NRPs dual role; aside from the European Semester, they were also a requirement under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RFF).

Country reports: The country reports submitted provided an overview of the financial and social developments, in addition to the challenges identified which were not surpassed by the recovery and resilience plans (May 2022). The reports summarized the findings of the in-depth reviews based on the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure, where applicable. Interestingly, country reports also assessed the progress made on the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

CSRs: The Commission proposed to the Council to adopt CSRs in order to address the key issues identified in the country reports, and share recommendations on the budgetary situation of states.

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Moreover, the 2022 European Semester cycle provided consistent SDG reporting on Sustainable Development Goals across all MS by including a dedicated section discussing the country's status and progress in each area. Additional indicators that monitored MS' performance in view of key EU policy targets (i.e. European Green Deal, Digital Decade, EU 2030 headline targets on employment, skills, and poverty reduction) informed the country reports.

Following the review of the European Semester's structure, this chapter examines the Annual Growth Survey, National Reform Programmes, and Country-specific recommendations, in more detail.

Section 2.3: Annual Growth Survey (AGS)

The Annual Growth Survey (AGS) is the Commission's main tool for setting the general economic and social priorities for the following year (European Commission, n.d.). Specifically, the Commission provides MS with focused policy guidance to strengthen the recovery and foster convergence, in line with the EU's long-term growth strategy. The AGS catalogues EU priorities and identifies the objectives which could fulfil them.

To better understand AGS's aim, this section presents the suggestions of the AGS issued for the year 2022. In November 2021, the Commission published the 2022 AGS (European Commission, 2021) which outlined the following policy priorities (Social Justice Ireland, 2021):

1. Environmental sustainability: The Commission recognised that Europe faced severe heatwaves, floods, and wildfires, due to the impact of climate change. It also underlined that if MS remain inactive, the costs of this inactivity are higher than the cost of fulfilling climate ambitions. For this reason, the Commission stated that economic recovery should go "hand in hand" with green transition, based on the EU's commitment to becoming the first climate-neutral continent by 2050.

Under this scope, MS are urged to promote reforms and investments to decarbonise the EU economy and to ensure a socially fair green transition. However, the Commission recognised that pre-conditions for a just and effective transition are labour market transitions and support for reskilling and upskilling which require further investments. Despite that, the green transition can also create labour opportunities, boost innovation, and increase resilience to shocks.

2. Productivity: While productivity growth is considered a critical driver of economic prosperity over the long run, the Commission underlined that productivity has slowed down in the past decades. As a result, to boost productivity and competitiveness (both in the Single Market and on a global level), EU businesses need to incorporate digital technologies in their work, scale up activities and update their modes of production. For this reason, MS' recovery and resilience plans should envisage

reforms for the business environment to promote the adoption of digital and green technologies, complemented by the digitalisation of the public administration and the judiciary.

3. Fairness: The three dimensions of the European Pillar of Social Rights, i.e., equal opportunities, fair working conditions and access to social protection, remain the compass for policy action. Specifically, the Commission acknowledges that the Covid-19 pandemic unevenly impacted different population groups, sectors, and regions. It recognised that youth and low-skilled workers, in addition to persons with a migrant background, were disproportionately hit, while women and men were impacted differently. Moreover, new job functions were created, while others became less sought after; this caused a large amount of job transitions and the re-emergence of labour shortages in the MS. The pandemic had an asymmetric impact on European regions, due to their different economic specialisations (e.g., regions dependent on tourism or contact-intensive services were heavily impacted).

Under this scope, the Commission underlined that national labour markets must be able to anticipate and adapt to changes, without marginalising certain groups. Indicatively, tax benefit reforms may reduce inequalities and encourage labour market participation. Additionally, effective labour market policies, coupled with support by public employment services and social protection systems are key elements for workers, during the green and digital transitions.

4. Macroeconomic stability: Economy stability is crucial for addressing fragilities at a national and EU level. In addition to that, the Commission highlighted that coordinating the relevant policies at EU level ensured resilience against future shocks and facilitated green and digital transitions. Under this scope, MS were urged to provide targeted and temporary fiscal support in 2022, while safeguarding fiscal sustainability in the medium term.

After the publication of the AGS, the Commission continues the dialogue with states, stakeholders, and other social partners in order to gain a common understanding of the reform implementation. As described in the following section, states must first consider the guidance given by the Commission, then report on the measures planned and implemented through the National Reform Programmes (NRPs) in order to support growth and prevent macro-economic imbalances.

Section 2.4: National Reform Programmes (NRPs)

Under the European Semester, MS must consider the AGS and submit their NRPs to the Commission for coordination and evaluation. The NRPs are policy documents in which states outline their structural reform plan to promote growth and employment. Their role is crucial to achieving a collective monitoring and multilateral discussion of policy challenges and reforms at an EU level. The NRPs provide sufficiently comprehensive and concise in-

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formation on reform implementation and initiatives in each country. They are to be compiled based on a process that ensures broad ownership by multiple stakeholders at a national level (e.g. social partners and local authorities). While the policy areas reviewed are different in each state, common areas are employment, poverty and social inclusion, education, health care, rural development, public administration, and sustainable economy.

To better understand NRPs' role, this section will examine the main reform priorities presented by two MS for 2021: Cyprus (Cyprus National Reform Programme 2021, n.d.) and Luxembourg (National Reform Programme of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg under the European semester 2021, n.d.).

Specifically, the key policy response by Cyprus was focused on nine pillars:

1. Efficiency of the public administration and governance of state-owned enterprises.
2. Reduction of non-performing loans and enhancement of supervision capacity in the non-bank financial sector.
3. Improvement of labour market policies, also facilitation of access for youth workers.
4. Promotion of social sustainability and social protection for all citizens.
5. Reform of the education system and affordable childhood care.
6. Long-term sustainability of the national health system.
7. Productive investment, while focusing on sustainability and competitiveness, green and digital transition, research, and innovation.
8. Efficiency of the judicial system and the legal enforcement of claims
9. Acceleration of reforms to combat corruption.

As for Luxembourg, the NRP for 2021 targeted the following areas:

- Income and wealth: After acknowledging the increase in poverty risk, the state pledged to increase the income of its poorest civilians and prevent the marginalisation of vulnerable groups.
- Employment: Following the Covid-19 pandemic, the government promoted a structural short-time working scheme to support vulnerable sectors, as well as employment policy measures for jobseekers under 30 and older workers.
- Education and skills development: The national goal is to combat early school-leaving and support students in developing lifelong skills, by

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focusing on three areas of action: prevention, intervention, and the strengthening of skills. For instance, the government introduced a two-semester education programme between secondary school and working life or higher education to increase students' expertise and interpersonal skills, thus improving their chances of finding a job or succeeding in higher education studies.

- Affordable housing: Public action focuses on amending the law on housing assistance, making building-land available, combating land speculation, and improving price transparency in the rental market.

- Resilient health system: Emphasis is placed on strengthening the capacity of the national health system.

- Work-life balance: Reconciling work and family life remains a priority target, including the accelerated transition from face-to-face work to teleworking.

- Environmental protection: This area holds an important role in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals. The government adopted a global strategy that promotes sustainable mobility, introduces a carbon tax, and encourages electric mobility and renewable energy.

As evident from the NRPs presented, they serve as MS' response to the Commission's analysis of the challenges and imbalances identified. Interestingly, both Cyprus and Luxembourg included measures for the protection of vulnerable groups, especially when they access education, employment (e.g. youth workers), and health care (which should be accessible to everyone). The NRPs' aim is to present policy initiatives and overcome these obstacles, based on the available information and financial estimations. Countries with excessive imbalances must describe the policies adopted in detail to tackle said imbalances, while euro-area states need to also consider the priorities identified in regard to their currency (European Commission, 2015). In the next section, the chapter examines the role of Country-Specific Recommendations.

Section 2.5: Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs)

After the Commission reviews the NRPs, it issues Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs), regarding how the MS may address the specific challenges it identified (Hallerberg, Marzinotto, & Wolff, 2011). The CSRs cover a wide range of policy fields, including wage determination, education, and health care. Although these topics fall under the primary competence of the individual states, thus EU's legislative powers are limited, the Semester provides the EU with a monitoring and guiding role when it comes to national economic, fiscal, and social policies (Verdun & Zeitlin, 2018). In other words, the CSRs offer tailored advice on how to boost jobs, growth, and investment, while maintaining public

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finances. The CRSs guide states the goals which can realistically be achieved in the next 12-18 months.

To better understand the logic behind CSRs, this section will examine the Commission's communication in 2020 on CSRs and the Council's recommendations on Greece's NRP for 2020.

Firstly, the Commission stated that EU states should focus on adopting both immediate measures to address the social and economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and measures to restart economic activity. Specifically, the Commission identified the need to invest in health-related issues, income support to affected workers and liquidity to small and medium businesses. Restarting the economy requires the adoption of effective recovery strategies by states to achieve a symmetric recovery and preserve the integrity of the Single Market. Moreover, the Commission highlighted that a sustainable economic model using digital and green technologies can transform Europe into a "fron-trunner". Additionally, EU states should battle inequalities and support physical and human capital, through investment and reforms. Interestingly, given the increased role of the public sector in the economy, effective public administration and the fight against corruption and tax evasion are crucial to ensure macroeconomic stability (European Commission, 2020).

Secondly, the Commission recognised that, in spite of the unprecedented economic stabilisation measures in place (European Commission, 2021), many people found themselves in a precarious income situation. Specifically, prolonged income losses increased poverty risks, notably for vulnerable households. Moreover, the pandemic increased inequalities in access to healthcare, essential social services, and distance learning, especially for vulnerable groups, including families with minors, long-term unemployed, persons with disabilities, migrants, and Romani community. The Commission also highlighted that existing income inequalities are likely to be exacerbated. While access to social services and essential services (including water, sanitation, energy, and digital communication) should be ensured to all, EU states must also increase the efficiency of social spending. Under this scope, social protection systems must be swiftly adapted when it comes to their coverage and adequacy. This suggestion includes extending benefit duration to more persons and relaxing eligibility requirements.

To achieve these objectives, the Commission urged states to reinforce the cooperation between social services, healthcare, and long-term care. EU states must adopt adequate "means testing" to ensure that funds invested reach those who are most in need. Moreover, to protect households overburdened by housing costs, states should adopt both short-term measures (e.g., temporarily suspending evictions and foreclosures, deferring payments of mortgages, and rent for low-income families during the crisis) and medium-term measures to preserve financial stability and repayment incentives. Furthermore, the recovery must be gender-sensitive

and alleviate the disproportionate impact the crisis has on women, which comes on top of existing disparities.

Finally, the Commission underlined that states should prioritise the adoption of mitigation measures to stop the permanent rise in poverty and inequalities. As for the labour market, measures should protect workers who were already vulnerable prior to the crisis, such as employees on fix-term or involuntary part-time contracts, self-employed persons, migrants, and low-skilled workers. These groups are likely to be hit hardest, also due to unequal access to digital infrastructure and skills (European Commission, 2020).

Subsequently, based on the Commission's proposals, the outputs of this process are the CSRs addressed to every MS by the Council. Indicatively, using Greece as an example, the actions proposed for 2020 and 2021 were (Council of the EU, 2020):

Adoption of effective measures to address the pandemic, sustain the economy and support the recovery, through fiscal policies, debt sustainability, investments, and reinforcement of the health system.

Mitigation of the employment and social impact of the crisis through measures such as short-time work schemes and activation support.

Deployment of measures for liquidity and a continued flow of credit to the economy, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises. Other important initiatives are front-loaded/ing mature public investment projects and private investments to foster economic recovery (with a focus on green and digital transition).

Reforms to restart a sustainable economic recovery, after the gradual easing up of constraints imposed after the Covid-19 pandemic.

After the Council has endorsed the CSRs, MS are expected to implement them fully and in a timely manner, putting the received tailored recommendations into practice.

Section 2.4: Summary

Over the past decade, the European Semester became a key tool for the coordination of national economic and employment policies. Specifically, the European Semester maps out a binding timetable for the monitoring of economic, employment, and fiscal policies in EU countries.

The unprecedented situation caused by the Covid-19 crisis required a specific approach by the European Semester, which served as an integral EU instrument to counter the social and economic impact of the pandemic. When it comes to the protection of vulnerable groups, both AGS and NRPs include policy measures that target specific groups, such as youth jobseekers, unemployed, children,

etc. in order to ensure their fair access to services and the respect of the Pillar of Social Rights.

To sum up, the European Semester is a well-established framework for the coordination of the economic and employment policies of the Member States. Thus, the Semester can play an important role during the recovery phase from the pandemic and support in advancing twin transitions (Kang, 2018).

Question of Discussion, Case Study, Exercises

Compare two NRP's, e.g., Greece with Belgium, and discuss the policy measures for specific vulnerable groups (e.g., children, the elderly, people with disabilities).

Find the Country-Specific Recommendations for Greece for 2019 and discuss their implementation and possible challenges for the coming years.

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Chapter 3
European Policy on Asylum and Migration

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Source: https://www.wfp.org/stories/no-peace-sight-families-syria-struggle-survive

SOCIAL POLICIES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE MEDIA

Chapter 3
European Policy on Asylum and Migration

Aim

This chapter reviews the history of the European Union's (EU's) legislation on asylum, in addition to the main provisions applicable today. It describes EU states' obligations to asylum seekers and recognised beneficiaries of international protection, according to the Common European Asylum System. Subsequently, it presents the changes proposed by the new Pact on Migration and Asylum, introduced by the European Committee in September 2020, along with its purpose and opinions expressed by scholars. Finally, it examines the role of humanitarian organisations in the provision of assistance and services to displaced populations.

Expected Learning Outcomes

To review the main provisions of the European legislation on asylum.

To define the rights and obligations of asylum seekers and recognised refugees and beneficiaries of international protection.

To present the changes proposed by the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum.

To learn about the role of humanitarian actors, such as international organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs, in supporting the reception of migration flows.

Keywords

Common European Asylum System; Pact on Migration and Asylum; Humanitarian organisations.

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European Policy on Asylum and Migration

Section 3.1: Introduction

The EU is committed to the protection of forcibly displaced populations, due to persecution or serious harm in their country of origin. The right to apply for asylum is both a human right according to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (Article 18) and an international obligation for states, based on the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Protection of Refugees. Under this scope, EU states have a shared responsibility to treat asylum seekers in a dignified manner and adopt uniform standards for the examination of asylum claims, so that no matter where an applicant applies within the EU, the outcome will be similar.

Specifically, the European Council committed to establishing a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) in its Tampere conclusions of 1999, followed by The Hague Programme of 2005 (European Policy Centre, 2005) and the Stockholm Programme of 2010 (Fijnaut, 2019). Today, CEAS includes binding EU legislations (Directives and Regulations) which establish common standards for asylum seekers to access a fair asylum system and be treated equally across the EU member states (MS) (European Commission, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, 2014). It is also important to note that in September 2020, the European Committee proposed the reform of CEAS by publishing the New Pact on Migration and Asylum (European Commission, 2020).

This chapter presents the main provisions of the common European legislation on asylum. First, it examines the rules for the recognition of international protection and the procedures for the examination of asylum claims. Then, it provides an overview of the reception conditions of asylum seekers and the responsibility criteria introduced by the "Dublin III" Regulation to determine which EU state is responsible for the submitted asylum claims. Subsequently, it discusses the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, introduced by the European Committee in September 2020, along with its goals and key changes proposed. Finally, the role of international organisations and NGOs is examined, and conclusions are drawn regarding EU's policy on asylum.

Section 3.2: Overview of a Common European Asylum System (CEAS)

CEAS reflects the commitments undertaken under the Tampere Programme in 1999. Specifically, CEAS refers to the legislative instruments which determine the common standards for accessing asylum across the EU. Its aim is to ensure that asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection are treated equally through an open and fair asylum system, irrespective of the host country (European Commission, 2014). CEAS is comprised of four Directives, which are not immediately legally binding, i.e. MS are required to transpose them through national law to achieve their objectives,

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and two Regulations that are automatically binding across the EU. Between 1999 and 2005, six legislative instruments were adopted, establishing the minimum common standards. The second phase was concluded in 2013 through the reform of the majority of the texts, aiming at common and uniform standards for protection (EASO, 2016). This section presents the key provisions of CEAS, per legislation.

First, the conditions for accessing asylum are set in the Procedures Directive (2013/32/EU). Its goal is the establishment of common conditions for the issuance of fair and quick asylum decisions. The asylum interview is an important part of the procedure, thus specific procedural guarantees are introduced for asylum seekers with special needs to support their claim, based on their vulnerability due to gender, health, or other characteristics.

Second, common standards for reception are determined in the Reception Directive (Directive 2013/33/EU). This legal instrument ensures that all asylum seekers have access to basic needs in the host country, including housing, food, clothing, health care, education, and employment under certain conditions. These common rules across the EU aim at establishing a dignified standard of living, in accordance with fundamental human rights, as described in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU.

Third, the criteria for applicants to qualify for international protection (i.e. refugee status or subsidiary protection) are specified in the Qualifications Directive (2011/95/EU). It also provides access to rights and integration measures for beneficiaries granted international protection, including the right to a residence permit, a travel document, access to employment, education opportunities, social welfare, and healthcare. Specifically, the Qualifications Directive clarifies the grounds for granting and withdrawing international protection, the exclusion and cessation grounds, and the treatment of vulnerable beneficiaries, guided by the principle of the best interest of the child and taking into account gender-related aspects in the assessment of asylum applications.

Fourth, the Temporary Protection Directive (2001/55/EC) defines the decision-making procedure regarding the application for the temporary protection status, i.e., an exceptional measure to provide immediate and temporary protection to displaced persons from non-EU countries. This exceptional procedure can apply when a risk is identified for the operation of the asylum systems due to the mass influx of populations. However, its application is dependent upon a Council Decision based on a qualified majority. This Directive has never been invoked in practice.

Fifth, every asylum application lodged within EU territory must be examined by one state. Under this scope, the Dublin III Regulation (EU/604/2013) includes the criteria to determine the EU state responsible for the examination of the asylum application. To determine which state is responsi-

ble, the Dublin Regulation establishes criteria to be followed in hierarchical order, i.e., family considerations, recent possession of visa or residence permit in a MS, and the first country where the applicant has entered the EU irregularly. The objective of the Dublin III Regulation is to promote asylum seekers' quick access to the procedures and the examination of their claim by a clearly determined EU country. It should be noted that the effectiveness/function/effect of the Dublin system has been criticised, due to the significant burden it places on the countries of first arrival during mass refugee flows to the EU (Garcés-Mascareñas, 2015).

Sixth, the Eurodac Regulation (EU/603/2013) supports states with the implementation of the Dublin Regulation by creating an EU database of the fingerprints of asylum seekers. Moreover, the Regulation allows law enforcement, national authorities and the Europol agency to access fingerprints for criminal investigations, for the purpose of the prevention, detection, and investigation of serious crimes, e.g. terrorism, under strict circumstances and safeguards.

The reform of CEAS through a third phase of harmonisation was launched by the Commission in 2016. However, the legislative reform was blocked, due to disagreements between the Council and the European Parliament (Pollet, 2019). For this reason, in September 2020, the Commission presented the new Pact on Migration and Asylum, i.e., a new package of suggested legislative changes of CEAS which is currently under negotiations.

Section 3.3: EU Pact on Migration and Asylum

Great expectations were placed on the new Pact on Migration and Asylum to resolve the existing bottlenecks/challenges/delays in the implementation of the EU asylum policy. Based on the Commission's communication, the new Pact adopts a "humane approach", promotes solidarity between EU states, and adopts "a pool of projected solidarity measures" (European Commission, 2020). Indeed, the positive framing of migration can support the development of a coherent asylum policy, if translated into binding legal provisions.

The New Pact focuses on three pillars:

1. cooperation with international partners in the area of migration management,

2. strengthening of EU's external borders, identification mechanisms, and simplification of asylum procedures, and

3. promotion of solidarity mechanisms which are to be both mandatory and flexible.

To begin with, the Pact envisions a "tailor-made" approach for mutually beneficial partnerships with third countries. Specifically, this includes cooperation on readmissions and the effective implementation of return procedures of irregular migrants, in addition to establishing humanitarian admission schemes to support legal migration and mobility (Guibert, Milova, & Movileanu, 2021).

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Additionally, the Pact introduces a pre-entry screening process of migrants at EU external borders through the Proposal for a Screening Regulation. The pre-entry screening is completed within five days from either their apprehension in the external border area, disembarkation in the territory of the MS, or their presentation at a border crossing point. During this fast-track process, national authorities refer migrants towards the "appropriate" procedure, i.e. asylum or return. Additionally, persons with vulnerabilities and special needs are identified during this process and provided with the necessary services. Under this scope, the Screen Regulation aims at both identifying applicants for international protection and preventing the abuse of MS' asylum system. Finally, an independent body will be established to monitor states' respect for fundamental rights (Gazi, 2021).

Finally, the new Pact promotes solidarity between MS. It is important to underline that solidary is not viewed as a political favour, but as a legal obligation by the Treaty of Functioning of the EU (Article 80) (De Bruycker, 2020). Specifically, after each asylum claim, the EU country of first entry shall initiate the Dublin procedure to determine which EU state is responsible for its examination. In case the same state is responsible, and its asylum system is under pressure, other MS shall support it. Their solidarity can be expressed by either relocating asylum seekers and refugees to their territory, sponsoring returns, or providing "in kind" contributions, including financial and operational resources (Guibert, Milova, & Movileanu, 2021).

After presenting the main changes introduced by the new Pact, it is important to underline the scepticism expressed on whether it can achieve its aims. First, scholars claim that the Commission's process-focused approach sets aside the development of policies to address current bottlenecks of the asylum procedure. Moreover, the proposed Screening Regulation may hinder the respect of fundamental rights and the values enshrined in the principal treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. Finally, the notion of "flexible" solidarity poses the risk of diluting said measures, especially due to EU states' reluctance to implement resettlement schemes. (Ruy & Yayboke, 2020).

Based on the above, the Pact constitutes an opportunity to improve asylum systems in Europe, provided that the shortcoming mentioned are amended to ensure migrants' real access to asylum.

Section 3.4: The role of humanitarian organisations

A sufficient response to the needs of displaced persons may not always be addressed by domestic measures alone. Specifically, humanitarian organisations may support states in providing humanitarian assistance, in case of natural disasters, war, or long-term conflicts. During the second half of the 20th century, non-governmental organisations grew, due to the private sector's involvement in community development. Moreover, international organisations, such United Nations (UN) agencies

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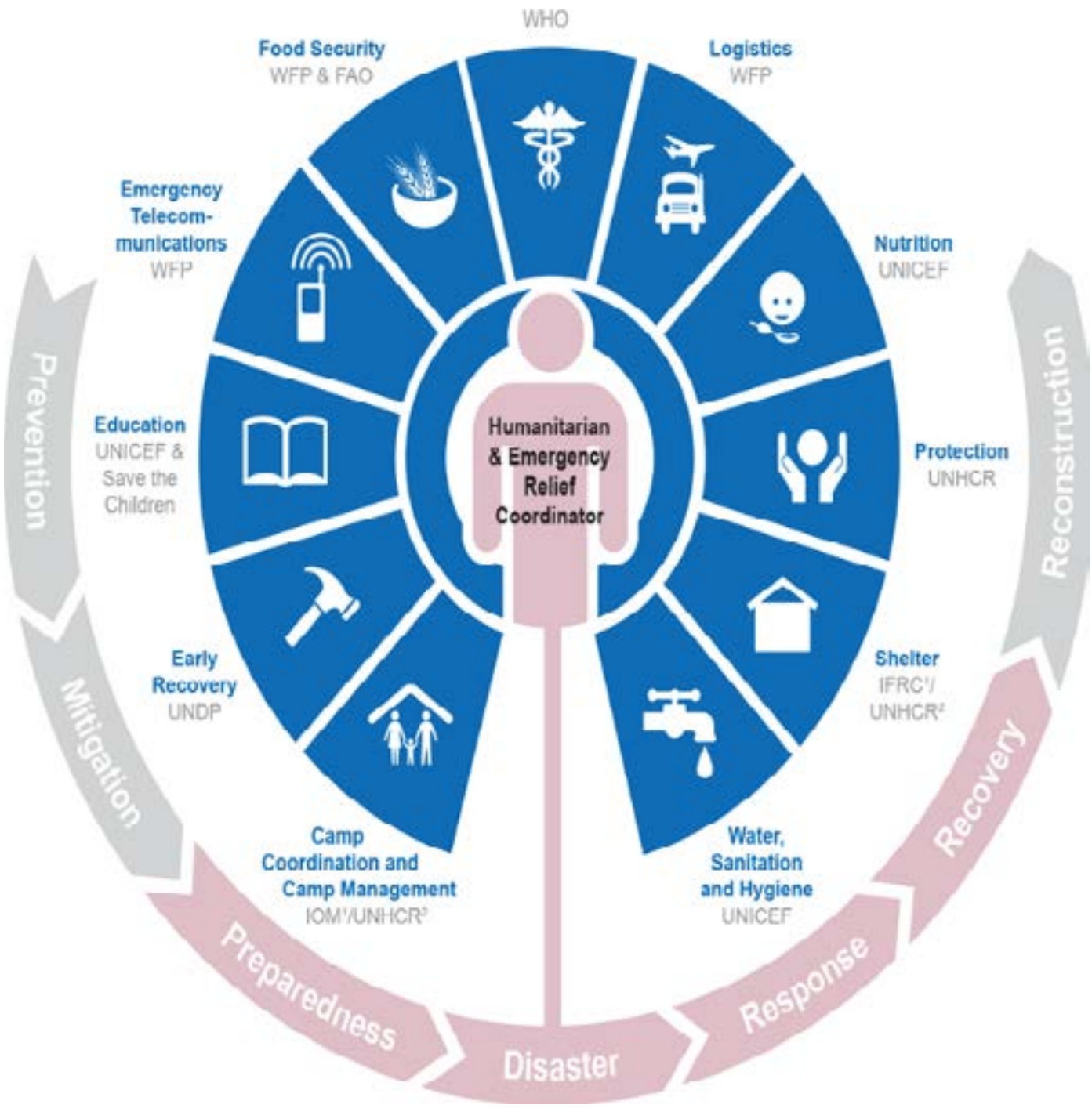

Figure 1 The Cluster Approach1

1 Retrieved from: https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/clusters/what-cluster-approach

and the International Committee of the Red Cross, have a crucial role in the implementation of aid projects. In any case, humanitarian organisations may become involved, provided their presence is welcomed by the state they are operating within (International Cooperation and Development Fund, 2002).

To coordinate the delivery of assistance, humanitarian organisations have adopted the Cluster Approach. Clusters are groups of aid organisations (led by UN agencies or a UN agency and an international NGO), working in specific sectors of humanitarian action, e.g., water, protection, education, and logistics.

Specifically, clusters are activated at a national level in response to a particular emergency (Translators without Borders; Global Education Cluster; Save the Children, 2021). This approach not only promotes a common strategy and best practices but also avoids the duplication of efforts and addresses gaps.

The added value of both national authorities and humanitarian agencies providing assistance is that the latter's capacity in staff and funding could exceed national resources. That is because humanitarian organisations have a defined mandate, they employ volunteers and specialists with experience, as well as have access to advanced technology and financial means. Moreover, international organisations and NGOs may influence policy formulation processes, through capacity building, training, financial assistance, literature, and other information resources (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2019). It is important to note that when humanitarian actors and national authorities work together, they can achieve an effective and accountable intervention.

Section 3.5: Summary

This chapter reviewed the rights of migrants when they apply for asylum, and after they are recognised as beneficiaries of international protection. As evident, there is a common set of rules (CEAS) across the EU which regulates their rights and obligations, in addition to the reception conditions and the procedural rules to be followed by states. During the past years, there have been attempts to reform CEAS and address bottlenecks. For this reason, it was important to review the provisions of the Pact on Migration and Asylum which was introduced in 2010, and the main proposed changes. Finally, the role of humanitarian organisations is presented, when providing assistance to displaced migrants. As noted, their intervention can be valuable, due to their experience in other contexts and their independent funding.

Questions of Discussion, Case Studies, Exercises

Research question 1: Based on the EU's policy on asylum and migration, which are the rights of a

migrant who applied for asylum in a member state?

All migrants entering the EU have the right to apply for international protection, based on the Qualifications Directive.

S/he must apply for international protection in one EU state, following the criteria set by the Dublin III Regulation.

S/he has the right to be heard by the asylum authorities to present the asylum claim, according to the Procedures Directive.

S/he has the right to material reception conditions, including access to housing, food, and clothing (see Reception Directive)

S/he can access health case and employment in the country of asylum, under the conditions of the Reception Directive.

S/he can receive additional assistance from humanitarian organisations, such as translation services, education courses, or housing in special shelters for vulnerable groups, etc.

Research question 2: What is the Pact on Migration and Asylum?

The new Pact was introduced by the Commission in September 2020. It proposed the reform of CEAS, by focusing on three pillars:

cooperation with countries outside the EU to achieve migration management,

EU external borders, identification of applicants, and simplification of asylum procedures, and

promotion of solidarity across the EU as a legal obligation for states (neither exceptionally, nor as a political favour)

When discussing the changes proposed by the Pact, it is important to consider the criticism expressed by scholars. They claim that the Commission did not focus on the current bottlenecks of the asylum process, and they voice concerns about whether the human rights of applicants will be respected by MS. Moreover, the concept of “flexible” solidarity measures poses the risk of diluting said measures and their impact.

Finally, it is important to note that the Pact on Migration and Asylum is not in effect yet, until the European Council and the European Parliament adopt the proposed changes.

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Chapter 4
Employment Policies: European Strategy against Unemployment

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Source: https://www.avatrade.com/education/economic-indicators/fundamental-indicators/unemployment-rate

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Chapter 4
Employment Policies: European Strategy against Unemployment

Aim

The aim of the present chapter is to understand and evaluate the key policies of European Union (EU) for addressing unemployment in vulnerable groups. Toward this target, the broader, long-lasting European Employment Strategy (EES) is presented and current policies for specific groups of interest such as those of long-term unemployed or youth are analysed. In the last section, the whole policy is evaluated, and the anticipated challenges are reviewed.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- **To provide a comprehensive understanding of the European Employment Strategy.**
- **To define and present the vulnerable groups in the field of unemployment.**
- **To be able to quote relative statistical data and evaluate the specific policy of EU.**
- **To present the upcoming challenges.**

Keywords

European Employment Strategy (EES); long-term unemployment; structural unemployment; minimum wage.

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Chapter 4
Employment Policies: European Strategy against Unemployment

Section 4.1: Defining the Problem in EU Context: The European Employment Strategy

After the global macro-economic disturbances in the 1970s, according to Blanchard & Wolfers (2000), the unemployment rate in EU was raised and the relevant gap in GDP per capita between Europe and the United States of America started to be widened. Once again unemployment in EU grew also rapidly between 1990-1994. During this short period of time, the fifteen – including Austria, Finland, and Sweden - Member States (MS) lost approximately six million jobs, almost 60% of the total created between 1985 and 1990 (Goetschy, 1999). Many citizens started to believe that there was a link between the Single Market and the poor employment performance of Europe. Furthermore, although the Maastricht Treaty gave considerable attention to employment (Articles 2), its various drafters "have seen employment policy [...] as a national rather than as a European matter" (Coldrick, 1995). Unavoidably, the need for a joint employment monitoring procedure emerged as an issue on the agenda in the following Essen Summit, in December 1994. =

The European Commission under Jacques Delors had already issued the White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness and Employment (COM, 93), setting the framework for social policy, integrating employment policy with other policy issues, and providing an initial reference point for further debate. Although this particular initiative essentially failed in practical terms, it had set the scene for a process of coordination of national employment and labour market policies at EU level. It had succeeded in mobilizing traditional allies on social affairs, such as the Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC), the European Parliament, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), and had signified a first attempt for linking Keynesian with supply-side measures.

In the following Essen Summit, the Council agreed on five key objectives to be pursued by MS, namely to promote investment in vocational training, to increase employment, particularly through a more flexible organization of work and working time, to reduce non-wage labour costs in order to encourage employers to hire low-skilled workers, to develop active labour market policies, and to fight youth and long-term unemployment. The MS were urged to transform these objectives into long-term feasible programmes and were obliged to submit an annual progress report.

Two years later in January 1996, unemployment was clearly considered the primary "common enemy" of the Union (Straehle et al, 1999). Jacques Santer, Delors' successor and new president of the European Commission, acknowledged that the persistently high unemployment rate "is jeopardizing the cohesion of our society" and "undermining the foundations of our European model" (Smith in Banchoff & Smith, 1999). Addressing the European Parliament, he presented a proposal for a "Confidence Pact for Employment", which pushed for/which included/ in order to encourage "an improved dialogue at

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all levels about unemployment"1. The European Council reaffirmed this given emphasis in the Summit of Florence five months later, considering "that the level of unemployment is unacceptable and that the fight for employment must remain the top priority for the Union and its Member States" and invited the MS to choose particular regions which would participate in a pilot programme to tackle unemployment. Remarkably, ETUC had just come to an agreement with UNICE, the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe, a few days ago regarding the rights of employees who work part-time jobs.

However, the European Commission was still in search of proper and efficient governance methods in order to enforce common employment policies. The approval and the implementation of directives in fields that remained under the competence of the MS became increasingly difficult. Furthermore, the structural funds, which were considered an important instrument for containing unemployment, were subject to complicated procedures and their allocation seemed to follow the logic of "fair shares" to MS.

The Amsterdam Agreement, signed on 2 October 1997, was the first step towards a necessary institutional reform. Although the new Employment Title in the Amsterdam Treaty did not bring radical changes, a process of multilateral surveillance – which had been put in place to ensure economic convergence before the implementation of the common currency – started to be applied in the area of employment and labour market policy.

Needless to say, the MS maintained the sole competence for employment policy. However, they were committed to coordinating their employment policies, and additionally a permanent Employment Committee with advisory status was formed. Setting common objectives such as "a high level of employment", exchanging good practices, and organising peer reviews highlighted this novel commitment of the states.

Box 1: A critical view: The "problematic" context of Amsterdam Treaty (2 October 1997) due to which employment became a priority.

- Absence of progress in other areas, such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy.
- Strike wave of December 1995 in France. The Renault Vilvorde affair in 1997.
- Elections in UK and France in May and June 1997 isolated Germany in its rejection of an employment chapter in the Treaty.
- Costly programmes at EU level should be avoided.

Moreover, the inclusion of a "social protocol" in the Treaty enhanced the involvement of social partners. The "open method of coordination" and its

1 According to many scholars, this pact constituted a counterweight to the "Stability and Growth Pact". The latter was proposed by the German Finance Minister Theo Waigel and aimed at ensuring budgetary discipline in the member states which were to form the Monetary Union.

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tools, the method finally drafted at the following Lisbon Summit in 2000, were gradually and unconsciously shaped and invented.2

Choosing this real European "path" (Raveaud, 2004), the European Employment Strategy (EES) was launched at Luxembourg Summit in November 1997. Nineteen guidelines, which were structured around four pillars (see next table) were approved and an annual monitoring cycle for national employment policies, based on the MS' commitment to establishing a set of common objectives and targets, started to take place. Based on proposals from the Commission, the Council would agree every year on a series of guidelines. Based on these, each MS would draw up an annual National Action Plan, which would reflect the long-term national strategy by defining particular priorities and analysing concrete measures. A Joint Report by the Commission and the Council would follow, and in some cases, the Council might issue country-specific recommendations. Taking this procedure into account, the EES recognised and set "the high level of employment" on the same footing as the macro-economic objectives of growth and stability.
The overall strategy was to preserve the European Social Model by reforming it. Its goal was to promote flexibility and risk-taking in order to promote innovation and employment, while at the same time diversifying the system of social protection to act as a safety net for the individual (Kenner, 1999). The first steps towards ensuring the success of the

Box 2: Four main objectives of the European Employment Strategy (1997)

- **Improving employability**. Indicative guidelines: within five years MS should offer every young person, within the first six months of unemployment, an opportunity for training or work experience / the number of early school-leavers has to be substantially reduced.
- **Creating a new culture of entrepreneurship.** Indicative guidelines: MS should encourage self-employment and job creation, and allow recruitment by reducing tax pressure and indirect labour costs.
- **Promoting and encouraging the adaptability of firms and workers.** Indicative guidelines: agreements at sectoral and company levels which modernize work organization and ensure a better balance between flexibility and security for workers.
- **Strengthening equal opportunities policies.** Aim: reducing discrimination in the labour market, mainly against women.

2 For the Renault-Vilvorde affair visit https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/it/publications/article/1997/the-renault-vilvorde-affair-euro-strike-against-the-closure-of-its-belgian-plant

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strategy of “flexicurity”, an integrated strategy to enhance simultaneously flexibility and security in the labour market which was finally adopted by MS in June 2007, were taken.

Although the first weaknesses of National Action Plans, such as the lack of quantitative objectives and the insufficient evaluation of the budget implications, were revealed, the Vienna Summit, under the Austrian Presidency on 11-12 December 1998, reaffirmed the coordinated efforts to promote employment as the top priority of the Union3 . It set “consolidation” and “continuity” as key features for the new employment guidelines for 1999. The first positive impacts of the EES, such as the modernisation of public employment services (Biffl, 2000; European Commission, 1998) and the development of territorial employment pacts (TEPs), were detected and recorded.

In 2000, at the Lisbon Summit, the European Council agreed on the new strategic goal of making the EU “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world”, capable of sustaining economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. Going beyond giving merely policy guidelines by starting to set actual targets, it embraced full employment as an overarching objective of employment and social policy and set concrete -quantitative- targets to be achieved in the following years. For instance, with the Lisbon Summit the MS agreed to increase the overall employment rate (of the 15-64 years old) to 70% and the employment rate of women to more than 60% by 2010. It also included the minimum benchmark of at least 20% of the unemployed to be involved in active labour market policy measures, e.g., training and employment subsidies.

In 2001, another target was added to raise the employment rate of older workers (55-64 years) to 50% by 2010. To reflect these conclusions, five new “horizontal objectives” were introduced in the 2001 guidelines:

- realizing full employment,
- stimulating lifelong learning,
- promoting the role of social partners,
- ensuring a proper policy mix between the four pillars of the EES, and
- developing common indicators in order to assess progress.

The improvement of the quality of work was added in 2002. The EES was revised in 2003 including more quantified objectives in the form of targets. In addition, emphasis was placed on improving its implementation and its governance. The new document/policy/structure was reduced to ten guidelines for employment that were no longer developed around the four pillars but were based on three main objectives -as they were set at the Lisbon Summit-, namely achieving full employment, improving qual-

3 https://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/wie1_en.htm#1

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Box 3: Wim Kok Report (2004)

It explained the lack of progress regarding the Lisbon Strategy objectives since 2000 and identifies the following key areas where taking action was seen as urgent:

- The "knowledge society", where research and development should be set as primary goals and the use of information and communication technologies promoted.
- The "internal market", where a single market for services should be created.
- The "business climate", where the total administrative burden should be reduced, and the start-up of businesses facilitated.
- The labour market, where strategies for lifelong learning and active aging should be developed.

lems and to give a new boost to the Lisbon Strategy, a second major review of the EES was undertaken. Preserving the focus on growth and jobs, a multiannual time framework was introduced (the first cycle was set to the period of 2005-2008) and the employment guidelines were integrated into the broad (macro and micro) economic policy guidelines. The integrated guidelines 2005-2008 and 2008-2010, which reflected a certain extent the Wim Kok Report4, contained a total of 23 guidelines.

Due to the financial crisis in the common currency area, the "Europe 2020" strategy was shaped in 2010 and the European Semester was introduced as the mechanism for financial and economic policy coordination. This ten-year strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth defined for the first time a number of headline targets such as reducing the proportion of early school-leavers from 15% to 10%. All headline targets had once again to be translated by MS into national targets.

Since 2018, the employment guidelines which contain policy priorities in the fields of employment, education, and social inclusion have been aligned with the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights. Since 2020 the focus has been transferred to the sustainability of the growth strategy as reflected in the Commission's January 2020 communication entitled "A Strong Social Europe for Just Transitions"5.

4 Wim Kok was a former Prime Minister of Netherlands (1994-2002). The report was entitled "Facing the challenge. The Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment" and was presented to the European Commission in November 2004.

5 Report available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_20_20

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Section 4.2: Groups of Concern: Long-Term Unemployed, Youth and Women

When designing policies for addressing unemployment, three main groups of concern arise: long-term unemployed, youth, and women.

Long-term unemployment, that is unemployment for more than twelve months, is one of the distinctive features of many current European labour markets, notably in the aftermath of the Eurozone crisis. It has multiple dire consequences for the persons concerned as well as a major negative impact on productivity, competitiveness, and economic growth. Its core problematic element is revealed by many surveys and reports (Heidenreich, 2015; Krueger, Cramer & Cho, 2014; Machin & Manning, 1999) and it is a downwards self-reinforcing spiral. The longer workers remain unemployed, the less attached they become to the labour market and the more difficult to find a job.

The challenges to reentering the labour market after a prolonged period of unemployment vary. They could be related to the supply side such as the growing personal discouragement and the less intensive searching for a job, or to the demand side i.e. the mismatching depicted in Beveridge curves or to employers' discrimination against long-term unemployed workers based on the hypothesis that a productivity-related reason accounts for their long jobless spell. Long-term unemployment has been also analysed as an outcome of rigid labour markets, that is markets characterised by strong unions, long benefit duration, and a high tax wedge between take-home pay and labour costs (Siebert, 1997). In any case, it is noteworthy that long-term unemployed workers easily find themselves trapped in structural and not cyclical unemployment (Levine, 2013). In other words, they remain unemployed - or outsiders according to the widely known theory of the segmentation of labour market into insiders and outsiders (Blanchard & Summers, 1986; Lindbeck & Snower, 1989) - no matter what the degree of economic demand is achieved or restored.

Looking at the statistics, the period of Eurosclerosis (Giersch, 1985) in the 1970s6 and the then high percentages of unemployment were followed by modest accords between workers and employers, such as the Wassenaar Accord in the Netherlands (1982), and wide reforms of European labour markets in the next two decades. As a temporary end to this trajectory, long-term unemployment almost halved in EU15 between 1995-2007. It fell from five

6 As Giersch (1985) defines Eurosclerosis: "It means two things: (i) Essential members of the body economic have become too rigid to permit a quick and painless adjustment. So they requested and obtained assistance. Instead of using it for regeneration, most of the beneficiaries took it as a protective device and asked for more of it. Measures that might have been justified along the lines of the infant industry argument for tariffs turned out to be devices for protecting senile industries. This kind of industrial policy is an almost necessary consequence of a full employment promise that has an inherent tendency to become gradually more specific, thus inducing economic agents in declining areas and industries to rely more and more on government aid, a phenomenon closely related to the well-known Samaritan's dilemma. (ii) In the problem industries and problem areas, partly as a result of actual and expected government aid, the innovative and regenerative forces turned out to be too weak to overcome the rigidities, notably the rigidities in the labour market."

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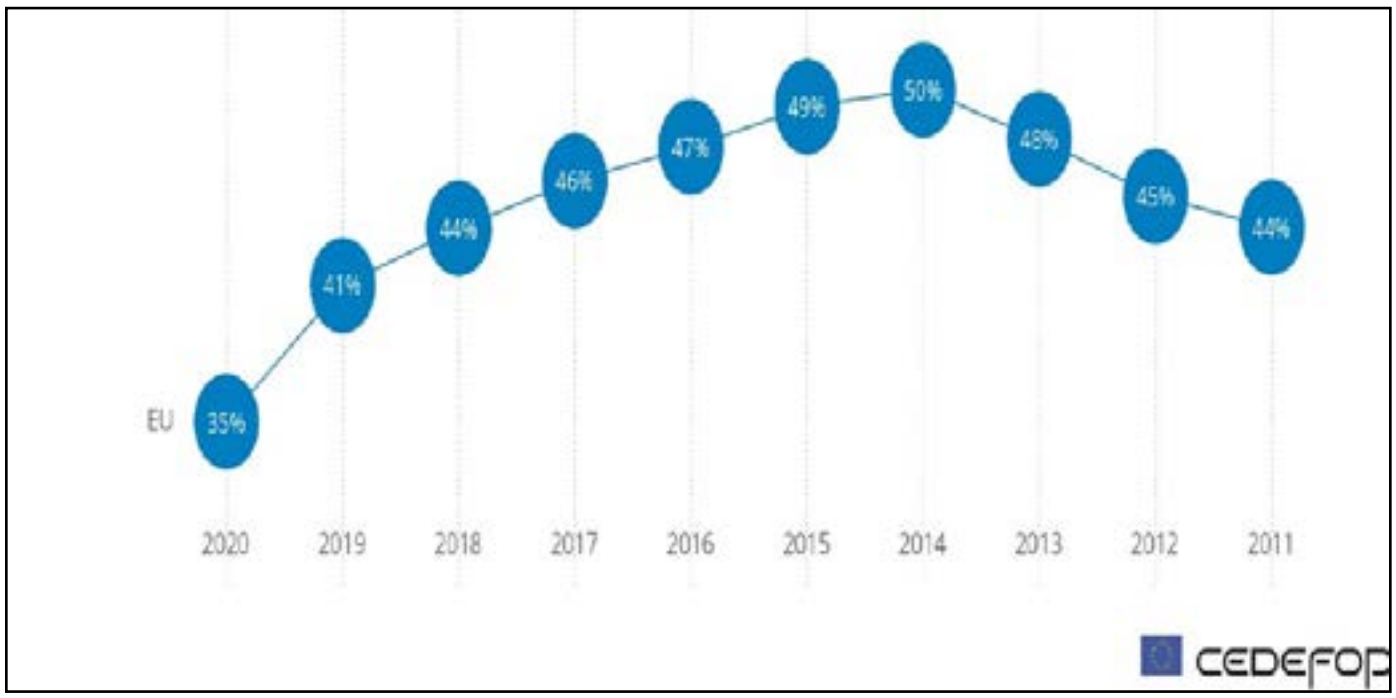

Figure 1: Development of long-term unemployment rate in EU.7

As depicted in the above figure, long-term unemployment rate in 2013 - that means the share of unemployed people out of work for longer than 12 months - was 47.8%, while in 2020 was 35.2%. Greece continued to be in the lead in 2020 with its long-term unemployment rate at 66.5%. Overall, the Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market, adopted in February 20168, had some positive outcomes before the break of the pandemic crisis (COM, 2019). First, it encouraged the registration of the long-term unemployed with an employment service. Furthermore, it promoted the continuity of support by coordinating services available to the long-term unemployed through a Single Point Of Contact (SPOC) and aimed at developing partnerships between employers, social partners, social services, government authorities, and education and training providers, as well as at developing services for employers. Although there are still gaps in the implementation of the Recommendation between the MS, particularly in the establishment of a SPOC, undisputed progress has been done. For example, the French project "Territoires zero chômeur de longue durée", within the frame of employment-oriented companies that hire the long-

7 Database available at https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/skills-intelligence/long-term-unemployment-rate?year=2020&country=EU#4

8 The report is available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016H0220(01)&from=EN

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term unemployed on paid permanent contracts was created, and conducted in ten localities in 2017, and almost fifty in 2019.

Leaving the long-term unemployed workers aside, youth and women shape the other two vulnerable groups who encounter unemployment and find themselves often on the margins of the labour market. According to OECD (2010), youth unemployment consists of "poorly integrated new entrants" who, although qualified, experience persistent difficulties in accessing stable employment. They get trapped in a series of precarious jobs (Standing, 2016) interspersed by relatively short periods of unemployment or economic inactivity.

Youth unemployment attracted significant attention during the Eurozone crisis, becoming a severe problem. It had sharply risen in most countries, reaching indicatively more than 50% in Spain and Greece during the period 2012-2014. It was also characterized by high shares of temporary and part-time work. In this frame, the European Commission launched the "Youth Opportunities Initiative"9 which aimed at supplying funds for apprenticeship and entrepreneurship schemes, helping with company placements, and providing advice for young people with business ideas. By December 2012 another initiative, the "Youth Guarantee" was introduced under the wider "Youth Employment Package" and successfully implemented in Nordic countries and Austria. This initiative ensured that all young people up to age 25 received a quality job offer, continued their education, or started a traineeship within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. Further policy initiatives regarding apprenticeships such as the "Quality Framework for Traineeships" followed as well.

In spite of the diverse remedies and policies implemented, youth unemployment continued to be a persistent problem for the EU. It is influenced not only by individual factors such as insufficient or mismatched qualifications and family legacies of long-term unemployment (O' Reilly et al., 2015) but also by country-specific factors such as traditions, institutions, and labour market flexibility.

Regarding gender in employment, the unemployment rate for men is lower than that of women across all MS. However, there are considerable differences in national gender unemployment gaps. Azmat, Güell, and Manning (2006) find out substantial gender unemployment gaps in the Mediterranean countries, followed by the Benelux and the Germanic countries, but no or negative unemployment gaps in Nordic and Anglo-Saxon countries, suggesting that the unemployment gaps negatively correlate with the extent of female labour force participation. Bicakova (2010) examines the new members of the EU and concludes that while there are substantial unemployment gaps in the four central European countries, namely the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, and Poland, and more recently also in Slovenia, there is no statistical dif-

9 The report is available at: https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/article/2012/commission-launches-youth-opportunities-initiative

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Figure 2: Employment rate of women and men in the EU (2018).

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ference between female and male unemployment rates in the three Baltic states.

The women's unemployment rate also varies significantly across the countries. For instance, in 2019, it was 16% in Spain and 2.4% in the Czech Republic. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that many women work part time. In 2020, almost a third of employed women in the EU worked part-time, compared with 8% of men. For Germany, the proportions were 48% and 10.1% for female and male workers respectively, while for France 27% and 7.6%. Regarding the senior jobs and the progress achieved in career paths, on an EU average, one in three executives is a woman. Latvia, Poland, and Sweden have the higher proportion of female executives at around 44%.

Nowadays, many MS have been undertaking reforms to enhance and increase the participation of women in the labour force. Such reforms are currently ongoing to significantly expand childcare (Austria and Malta) or to encourage a more equal sharing of family-related leave entitlements between women and men (Luxembourg and the Czech Republic).

Section 4.3: Summary

Taking into account the above-mentioned, it is certain that the European Employment Strategy contributed to the improvement and coordination of labour markets in the MS, addressed unemployment to a certain extent, and promoted fair working conditions, equal opportunities, and access to the market. However, as it has been somehow incorporated into the European Pillar of Social Rights, what remains to be evaluated in the near future is the effectiveness of the relative Action Plan presented and the political will of MS to adopt this reference framework and drive reforms at the national level.

As the EU still deals with the Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences, the challenges in the field of employment are various and diverse. They are related with existed problems such as long-term unemployment and the limited creation of new jobs, as well as with new issues like the new industrial strategy for Europe or the combination of the entry of young people into the labour market with the retention of older workers.

Questions of Discussion, Case Studies, Exercises

Case study I: Evaluate the five-year plan of the European Skills Agenda as it is implemented across the Union.

Case study II: To what extent do the active labour market policies of the Labour Employment Office in Greece (OAED) incorporate the Community Regulations?

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Chapter 5
Social Policy for Fighting Poverty

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Source: https://www.google.com/search?q=Social+Policy+for+Fighting+Poverty

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Chapter 5
Social Policy for Fighting Poverty

Aim

The aim of the present chapter is to examine the social policies for combating poverty in the Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU). In order to do so, it first clarifies the multifaceted concept of poverty, following the work of Anthony Atkinson. Then it explains the measures and the indicators that are used in the Union, namely the at-risk of poverty or social exclusion rate, the severe material deprivation rate, and the indicator persons "living in households with very low work intensity" and it examines their fluctuation during the last decade. The third section presents the legal basis and provides a historical account of supranational policies in the fight against poverty. The last section refers to the national minimum income schemes which, if coordinated, could lead to the eradication of poverty in the Union.

Expected Learning Outcomes

To gain a deep understanding of the main concepts related to poverty.

To gain a deep understanding of measuring poverty by explaining the existent indicators and examining their drawbacks.

To acquire knowledge about the population which lives in poverty or social exclusion in the EU.

To learn and get familiar with the supranational relative policies in the fight against poverty.

To be able to evaluate policies such as the minimum income schemes and to reflect on their necessary adjustments.

Keywords

Inequality; population at risk of poverty or social exclusion; material deprivation; minimum income schemes.

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Section 5.1.: Introduction. The meaning of poverty

Poverty is a contested concept. It may be interpreted in different ways in different countries and cultures, as well as acquire different implications for how it is measured. Without a doubt, poverty has been approached differently at different times in the past. Dealt with the confusion about the meaning and the connotations of the concept of the overall prosperity of each society, Atkinson (2019), an expert in the field, provides a comprehensive and elaborated explanation of poverty and clarifies two fundamental points' which signs of poverty bear value for being measured and which signs of poverty are ultimately measurable. Starting with the subjective views of poverty, Atkinson underlines the need for the collection of information by participatory input, but he also explains that there are limits to what can be learned from "asking people", acknowledging that not all views are equally valid. As he looks for, in addition to the subjective assessments, measures of poverty based on objectively observed features of households, he distinguishes between the different interpretations of poverty. Next to the basic needs approach which has played a major role in the development of poverty lines around the world, he discerns the approach within the basic needs is a moving, constantly redefined target, the approach of reassuring and achieving "capabilities", in Amartya Sen's words "the actual opportunities of living" (Sen, 1992, 2009), and finally the approach of reassuring the minimum rights as they are outlined by human rights and the diverse cultural traditions.

After these insightful remarks, Atkinson (2019) compiles a form of both subjective and objective criteria, trying to achieve a universal consensus about poverty measurement and at the same time to maintain fundamental functions of the concept such as its function of measuring inequality in the lowest part of the allocation of wealth in a society, or aspects and indications of poverty like the inability to afford "the linen shirt" for which a worker would be embarrassed two hundred and fifty years ago according to Adam Smith. Towards this direction, the $1.90 of the international poverty line, which is equivalent to the average of national thresholds of poverty of the fifteen poorest countries in the sample which was constructed by Ravallion, Chen and Sangraula (2009), and substituted the threshold of $370 annually of the World Development Report at 1990 (World Bank, 1990, Table 2.1), are added to the deprivations which are referred in Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of Alkire et al. (2015) in order for the poverty to be approached in "all of its dimensions". The monetary indicators of poverty which refer to income or consumption are combined with non-monetary indicators which refer to the social environment and depict the "gridlock" of poor people.

Section 5.2.: Measuring Poverty

In 2018 21.7% of the EU population, or in other words, almost 110 million people were at risk of

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poverty or social exclusion. In 2012 this group was estimated at 124 million (24.8%), while in 2008 at 116 (23.7%)1. The statistics by country depict the chronic, stable impact of the crisis in Southern Europe and the Baltic countries and the often sidelined in the public debate rise of this particular type (Box 1) of inequality in the western part of the continent.

Box 1: Types-forms of inequality

There are different types-forms of inequality. For instance, the social environment in the case where the richest decile or percentile accumulates disproportionate wealth and "walks away" from the distribution, is different from that in the case where a segment of the lower strata is trapped in long-term poverty and "cut off" from the rest of the population. The two phenomena may be observed simultaneously and often take place to different degrees, composing a unique reality each time. From this point of view inequality displayed in specific forms-types which, under the dominant use of synthetic indicators and the explanatory simplification that they ensure, are harshly discerned and separately analysed in the public debate.

Even in 2018 more than a quarter of the population in Greece (32.8%), Italy (27.3%), and Spain (26.1%) were at risk of poverty2, while even in Germany (18.7%), Austria (17.5%), the Netherlands (16.7%), or Finland (16.5%) the relative percentage was around 17%. The sharpest incremental changes within the ten-year critical period (2008-2018) were observed apart from Greece (+3.7%) and Spain (+2.3%), in the Netherlands (+1.8%), Sweden (+1.3%)3, and Luxembourg (+6.4%). Bubbico & Freytag (2018, p.32) additionally calculate the impact of social transfers on lifting people out of poverty for the period 2007-2015 and find out the weakening of their alleviating effects. They document the unique Irish case where more than 20% of the population does not confront the risk of poverty due to social transfers and juxtapose this reality with the extremely low – and consistently decreasing - impact of social transfers in Romania, Greece, Italy, and Poland.

1 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/10163468/3-16102019-CP-EN.pdf/edc3178f-ae3e-9973-f147-b839ee522578

2 These percentages are similar to those of Bulgaria (32.8%), Romania (32.5%), Latvia (28.4%), and Lithuania (28.3%). However, in these countries, the population at risk of poverty is -at least statistically - decreasing, and in fact, it is presenting the sharpest fall. During the decade 2008-2018, the rate decreased in Bulgaria by 12%, in Romania by 11.7%, and in Latvia by 5.8%. In Lithuania, it remained stable. The above reductions are expressed in absolute value, i.e. indicatively, the percentage of Bulgarian population at risk of poverty in 2008 was 44.8%.

3 In Sweden, the proportion of the population at risk of poverty and social exclusion has significantly increased during the period under review. In 2018, it was estimated at around 1.8 million people and this number did not even include those without a registered address such as the homeless or undocumented immigrants. https://www.eapn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/EAPN-EAPN-SE-Poverty-Watch-2018-En-Final.pdf.

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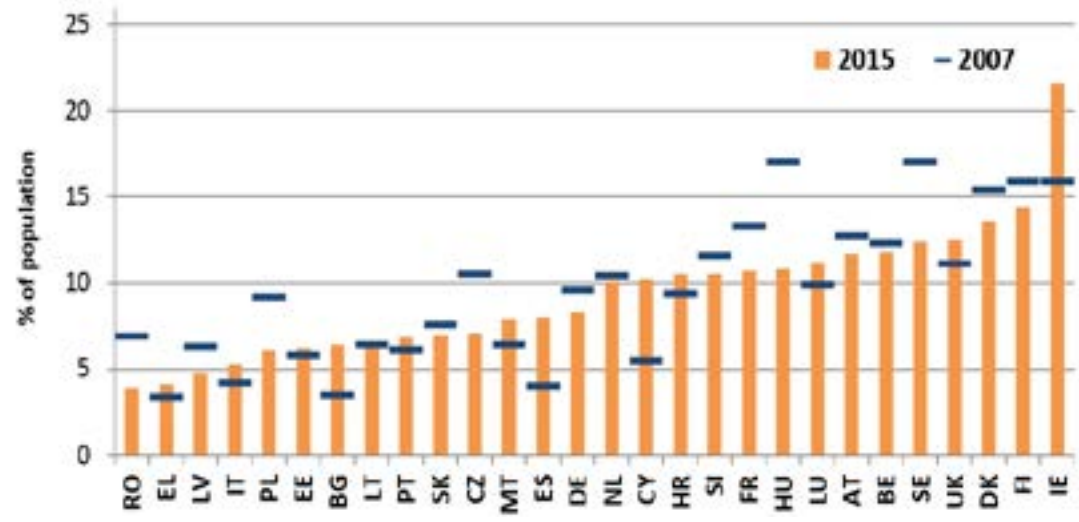

Feature 1: Impact of social transfers in lifting people above the at-risk-of-poverty line (Bubbico & Freytag, 2018, p.32)4.

The element/factor that measures the population at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE – At Risk Of Poverty and social Exclusion) was established as the main statistical indicator for assessing the effort to combat poverty within the framework of the EU policy "Europe 2020". It refers to the number of people living in households whose total equivalent disposable income after social transfers is lower than 60% of the national median equivalent disposable income5 and, as noticed by Darvas & Wolff (2016, p.47), in accordance with Eurostat6, it is more of an index of income inequality, showing a fairly high correlation with the corresponding Gini index, than a measure of poverty.

Needless to say, the discrepancy between the "thresholds" that define the different national

4 Data refer to the year 2014 for DE, EI, FR, IT, CY, LU, MT, PL, and SK, and the period 2010-2014 for Croatia (HR).

5 Be aware that there is a crucial difference between between the median income, i.e. the income below which the income of half the population is located and the average. In practice the median is always lower than the mean because the distributions almost always extend well up. For labor incomes the median is about 80% of the mean, while for assets it can be extremely low. See Piketty (2014/2017, pp.310-311).

6 "This indicator does not measure wealth or poverty, but low income in comparison to other residents in that country, which does not necessarily imply a low standard of living", clarification in the index (glossary) of Eurostat on the website https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:At-risk-of-poverty_rate. See in addition, the depth ~~(gap)~~ of the risk of poverty, with the calculation of which, the more detailed identification of those below the "threshold" of poverty is sought (ELSTAT, 2019, p.6).

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median incomes does not allow the clustering of these populations. For example, someone at risk of poverty in Austria can consume twice as many goods and services as someone in the same population group in the Czech Republic7.

Box 2: Priorities and Headline targets in "Europe 2020" Strategy8.

Non-monetary poverty measures are exactly what the EU's severe material deprivation rate seeks to encompass. This indicator focuses/examines/ highlights the population that lacks or is unable to afford at least four of a list of nine basic goods or services such as satisfactory heating during the winter period, telephone, paying off bills for the use of utility networks, or going on holiday for one week per year9. In Greece, this percentage increased from 11% in 2009 to 15.2% in 2011, to 20.3% in 2013 and to 22.2% in 2015. An increase in the indicator was also recorded in Spain, Ireland, and Italy. On the contrary, in Poland the rate shrank from 33.8% in 2005 to 4.7% in 2018 and the Czech Republic has now managed to show one of the lowest rates in the Union (2.8% in 2018), close to those of Austria (2.6%) and Finland (2.4%)10. Remarkably, in German society in 2011, as in the years 2008, 2009, 2013, when the Mercedes car manufacturer recorded in its 110 years of operation a high peak of export sales of cars to China, more than 4.2 million Germans faced severe material deprivation11.

7 Indicatively, the "threshold" of poverty in Greece for the year 2018 (with an income reference period in 2017) was calculated to be 4.718 euro per year per person and 9.908 euro for households with two adults and two dependent children under the age of 14 (ELSTAT, 2019 , p.2). For the problematic and ultimately insufficient calculation of the population of the Union that is faced with poverty by relying exclusively on national "thresholds" and for the necessity of forming the Union's policy of combating poverty in the context of the broader project of convergence between the MS, see the earlier work of Fahey (2005). In addition, see Goedemé's (2013) criticism of the EU-SILC database, as Eurostat does not publish the standard error and confidence interval in the relevant surveys.

8 See https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/europe-2020-indicators and more in depth https://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/COMPLET%20EN%20BARROSO%20%20%20007%20-%20Europe%202020%20-%20EN%20version.pdf. See as well, Nolan & Whelan (2011).

9 The list also includes the financial (enforced) inability to eat a diet that includes chicken, meat, fish, or vegetables of equal nutritional value every other day, the inability to afford a car, a television set, or a washing machine, and lastly the inability to deal with exceptional but necessary expenses of approximately 375 euro.

10 The index for Germany fluctuated in the period from 2005 to 2015 around 5% (4.4% in 2015 – 5.5% in 2008 – 5.4% in 2009 & 2013) while in 2018, following a downward trend in the last years, was estimated at 3.1%. The situation in France is similarly assessed, where a historic low of the period under review of 4.1% was recorded in 2017. In other words, in 2017, more than two and a half million French people and just as many Germans were facing severe material deprivation.

11 The values have been taken from the relative Eurostat database, which is available at http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do.

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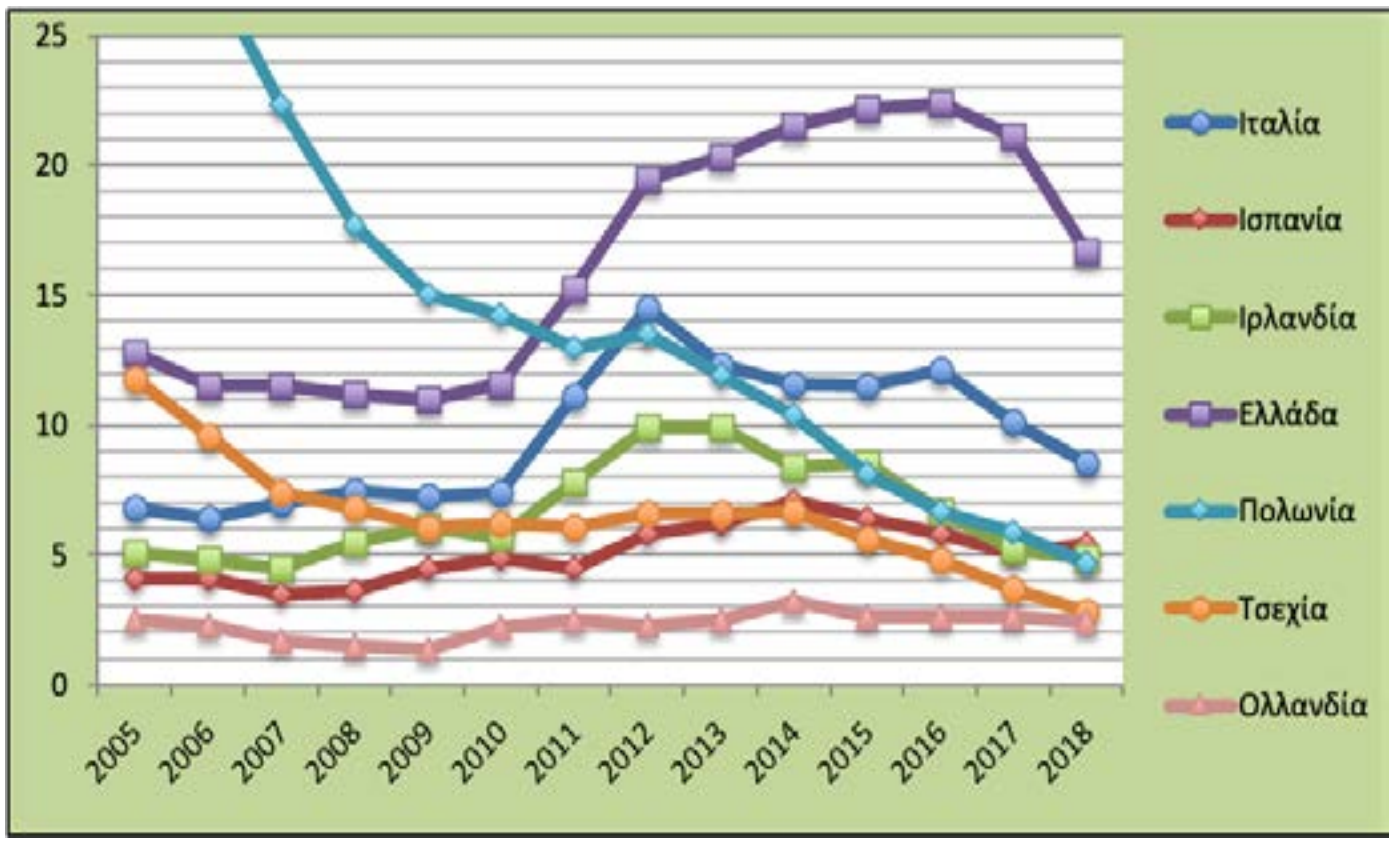

Feature 2: Percentage of population which confronts severe material deprivation 2005-2018 (Protopapas, 2022)12.

Consistently, both before and during the economic crisis, the majority of the population experiencing severe material deprivation has only completed primary or lower secondary education. Nevertheless, in Poland and Austria during the period 2008-2013, the percentage of the population that did not have a university education among those facing severe material deprivation decreased significantly and in fact, much more than the relative percentage of those who had a university education. On the contrary, in Ireland, Greece, Cyprus, and Hungary there was a significant increase in the number of people who, while having completed higher education, were faced with material deprivation (Darvas & Wolff, 2016, p.50). Looking further at the age groups in the Union of 27, Darvas & Wolff (2016, pp.48-49) come to a rather worrying conclusion. They find that during the above-mentioned period, the index of severe material deprivation increased disproportionately for children and still remains particularly high, considerably higher than for other age groups.

12 https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do

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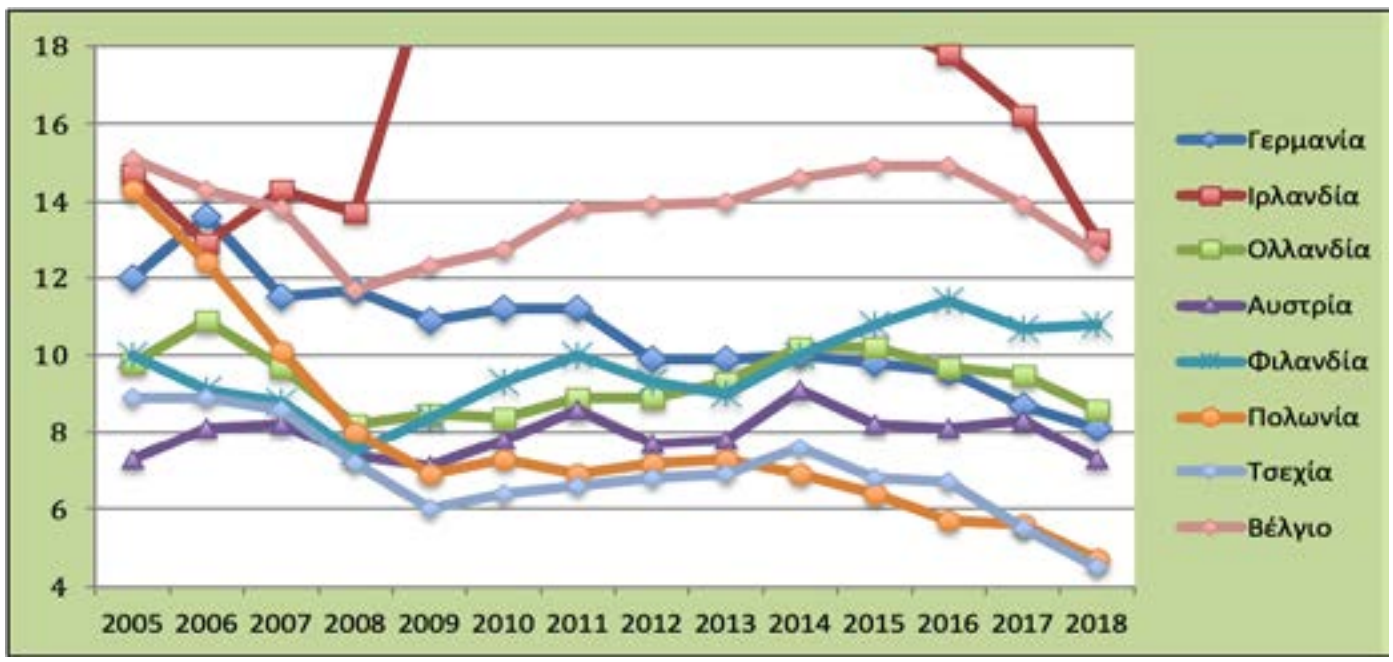
A final factor related to poverty is that of very low work intensity. The indicator refers to the population living in households whose members of working age worked a working time equal to or less than 20% of their total work time of the previous year. The examination of this factor seeks to highlight all those forms of "weak" employment, such as temporary or part-time employment. Although now around 9% of the population of the Union lives in households with very low work intensity, the changes in the indicator during the period 2008-2018, both in the common currency area and in the supranational formation of the 28 MS, illustrate, at the same time as a cause and causative, the fact of the crisis. Characteristically in Ireland, the percentage increased in just one year, between 2008 and 2009, from 13.7% to 20%, reaching an all-time high in 2011 (24.2%) and maintaining high values until 2017 (16.2%). Similarly, in Greece from 7.6% in 2010, it increased to 12% in 2011, reaching the highest value in 2013 (18.2%). But the indicator of very low labour intensity does not only reflect the slippage of employment in weak borrowing countries in terms of quality. It reveals a common unseen problematic aspect of the really - or euphemistically - powerful economies of the Union: the German, the Dutch, the Finnish and even the borrowed or the Belgian. Peculiar, different from those of full-time, forms of employment are formed, acquire a legal framework and are "normalized", gradually erode even the Swedish economy and attempt to become deep-rooted since they are maintained - to a lesser extent of course - persistent even in economies like that of Austria.

Feature 3: Percentage of population living in households with very low work intensity 2005-2018 (Protopapas, 2022)13.



13 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=sdg_01_40&plugin=1

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Box 3: The definitions of the indicator persons living in households with very low work intensity according to the Europe 2030 targets and the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Indicator	Europe 2030	Europe 2020
Low work intensity indicator	People from 0-64 years living in households where the adults (those aged 18-64, but excluding students aged 18-24 and people who are retired according to their self-defined current economic status or who receive any pension (except survivors pension), as well as people in the age bracket 60-64 who are inactive and living in the household where the main income is pensions) worked a working time equal or less than 20% of their total combined work-time potential during the previous year.	People from 0-59 years living in households where the adults (those aged 18-59, but excluding students aged 18-24) worked a working time equal to or less than 20% of their total combined work-time potential during the previous year.

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Section 5.3: Multilevel policies

The legal basis for reinforcing the inclusiveness and cohesion of European societies and for supporting the MS in the fight against poverty consists of Articles 19, 145-150, and 151-161 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). In the period of two decades (1975-1994), the European Economic Community led many pilot projects and three programmes14 designed to combat poverty and exclusion. Although original and significant, these preliminary initiatives were missing the legal basis and thus their impact was limited. The Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999 constituted a relative milestone. The eradication of social exclusion was defined as an objective of Community's social policy. A few months later, the Social Protection Committee was established to promote cooperation between the MS and in coordination with the Commission (Article 160 TFEU).

In the frame of the subsequent Lisbon Strategy, a monitoring mechanism was created. It consisted of objective setting, various poverty measurements, guidelines for the MS, and diverse national action plans against poverty. The need for active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market was reemphasized and came again to the front some years later, in October 2008, by the Commission. The Commission stated in its recommendation that "Member States should design and implement an integrated comprehensive strategy for the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market combining adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services'."

As aforementioned in Box 1, "Europe 2020" strategy, which was adopted in 2010, outlined specific objectives in the fight against poverty. As these headline targets were not achieved in the last decade, the Commission restated them in a more moderate way in March 2021 in the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan. In particular, the anticipated number of people lifted out of poverty was decreased from 20 million to at least 15, including 5 million children, by 2030.

After the "Europe 2020" Strategy and its flagship initiative of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, the Commission's Communication "Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion – including implementing the European Social Fund 2014-2020" in February 2013 – targeted investing in children by "breaking the cycle of disadvantage" and presented the new Social Investment Package as fully complementary to the existent Employment Package and White Paper on Pensions.

In October 2013 and following the establishment of the European Semester (2010), the Commission also proposed a blueprint for "Strengthening the Social

14 The first programme ended in 1980 and was followed by a second anti-poverty programme (1985-1989), which financed a range of projects. The third anti-poverty programme (1989-1994) included a range of model actions and initiatives and established the European Observatory on National Policies to Combat Social Exclusion (1991-1994).

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Dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union". A key component in that proposal was the creation of an employment and social indicators scoreboard that would be incorporated into the draft Joint Employment Report in order to provide a more focused basis for reinforced multilateral surveillance of employment and social policies, helping to identify developments that warrant stronger employment, and social policy responses. Headline indicators such as NEET rate (young people not in education, employment, or training), youth unemployment rate, at-risk of poverty rate of working age population, and inequalities (S80/S20 ratio) could help detect negative trends in early stages and were considered as crucial in the scoreboard.

Nowadays, the above-mentioned scoreboard is included in the Joint Employment Report of the Annual Growth Survey (AGS). The latter, which is the first step in the annual European Semester exercise, has been renamed as "Annual Sustainable Growth Survey" since 2020 by the von der Leyen Commission and integrates some of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely the goals of "No Poverty", "Zero Hunger", and "Reduced Inequality".

In the frame of the joint proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights (November 2017), the Commission published 2020 a proposal for a directive on adequate minimum wages in the EU and not many months after the presentation of the relative Action Plan (March 2021), the Council published a recommendation on minimum income (2022).

Section 5.4: Including through Minimum Income Schemes (MIS)

The recipient of minimum income schemes, means-tested cash benefits aiming to guarantee a minimum amount of resources to those who have insufficient means of subsistence and satisfy a set of conditions also based on their income and assets, is usually implicitly associated with the poverty status. As the concept of poverty remains vague, adopted national minimum income schemes and entitlement requirements to those differ so much. The criteria for eligibility, the benefit amount, the duration, the conditionality requirements, the total state expenditure, and the relative coverage are decided on a national basis (Raitano et al., 2021), and it seems that there is no political will for a relative supranational binding framework that would be legally feasible under current EU's constitutional architecture under Article 153(1)(h) and Article 175 TFEU (Van Lacker et al., 2020).

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Country	Coverage (% of the population)	Total Expenditure (% of the GDP)
Germany (2020)	7.4%	1.39%
Denmark	3.52%	0.86%
The Netherlands	2.74%	0.73%
France	5.31%	0.49%
Greece (2017)	6.44%	0.43%
Italy (2020)	5.10%	0.43%
Sweden	4.26%	0.25%
Austria	3.30%	0.24%
Portugal	2.85%	0.16%
Croatia	5.20%	0.15%
Spain	1.70%	0.13%

Table 1: MIS coverage and expenditure in comparative perspective, 2015.

Section 5.5: Summary

In this chapter, the multidimensional concept of poverty is clarified. Giving equal prominence to monetary as well as non-monetary measures of the concept, poverty, and social exclusion in the EU are examined through the official indicators of EU-SILC. Although it is not broadly acknowledged, poverty remains a problem for European societies, especially after the crisis in the Eurozone and the Covid-19 pandemic. A historical account of supranational policies in combating poverty is also provided, reaching the recent and innovative Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan. The last unavoidable issue which emerges, is sketchily presented in section 4. Notwithstanding the concerns about their efficiency and coordination, the national minimum income schemes seem to constitute a fruitful policy against poverty.

Questions of Discussion, Case Studies, Exercises

- **Research question 1: Does poverty exist in European societies?**
- **Research question 2: To what extent a common binding European framework of minimum income scheme could be efficient?**

Case study 1: Compare your country's minimum income scheme with those of Germany, Denmark, and Italy.

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Case study 2: Explore the link between employment and poverty in Germany and Greece.

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Chapter 6
Social Policy for the Elderly

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Photo by Agathi Sianoudi

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Chapter 6
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Aim

The aim of this chapter is to understand and evaluate the key policy of the European Union (EU) for addressing the challenging, growing demands of its ageing population. Towards this target, the demographic shift in Member States (MS) is demonstrated mainly through the old-age dependency ratio, the ratio which is used to measure the pressure on the working population to support those who are too old or too young to work. Consequently, the concept of "active ageing" which is found at the core of many, relative EU policies is comprehensively analysed. In the last two sections, the national pension schemes and their effectiveness are examined and the needs for health and long-term care for European seniors are reviewed.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- **To gain an understanding of demographic transition in the MS of the EU and of the anticipated challenges.**
- **To learn the concept of "active ageing" and study its criticisms.**
- **To delve into the concept of pension, understand the national pension schemes in Europe, and become aware of their nexus with public expenditure.**
- **To understand the present demands of European seniors and get familiar with the new forms of caregiving.**

Keywords

Longevity; demographic transition; pensions, active ageing; health; long-term care.

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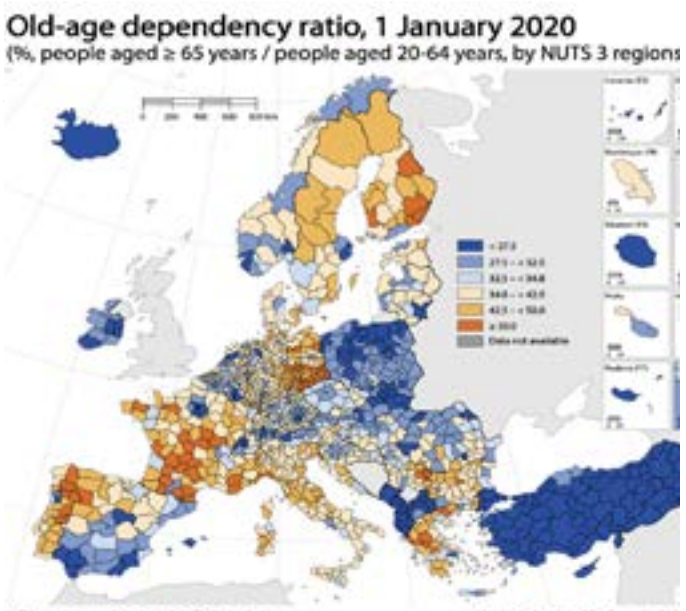
Section 6.1.: Defining the demographic problem in EU

Europe's population is ageing rapidly. This fact displays one of European societies' greatest triumphs, but also one of their greatest challenges. Medical developments, better diets, and technological advances have resulted in a substantial raise in life expectancy. In 2018, life expectancy at birth increased to 78.2 years for men and 83.7 for women. This growth is projected to continue. Men born in 2070 are expected to live 86 years and women 90.

Fertility rates have fallen, hitting a 60-year low in 2020. 4.1 million babies were born in the EU in the first year of Covid-19 pandemic, approximately 1.50 live births per woman. Indicatively, France, the country with the highest fertility in the EU, recorded its lowest birth rate since WWII. Besides fewer women giving birth in the EU, more women opt as well to have children later in life.

Taking the above numbers into account, the old-age dependency ratio, the ratio which is used to measure the pressure on the working population to support those who are too old or too young to work, has certainly increased in the last decades. In 2001, the EU's old-age dependency ratio was 25.9%, meaning there were roughly fewer than four adults of working age (20-64) for every person aged 65 years or more. Fast-forward to 1 January 2020, the ratio increased to 34.8%, meaning there were slightly fewer than three adults of working age for



Some of the highest values of old-age dependency ratios were observed in rural, mountainous, or relatively remote parts of Germany, Spain, Greece, Italy, France, Portugal, and Finland. Among the EU regions, the highest ratio (78.3%) was recorded in the mountainous region of Evrytania, in central Greece. This region was followed by the north-western Belgian region of Arr. Veurne (64.6%) and the German region/city of Suhl, Thuringia (61.3%).

Although the above trend is consistent with the trend of increasing ratios in all G20 members, except for Saudi Arabia, and countries such as Japan and South Korea have higher ratios, with just over one working-age person for each elder, the demographic transition is viewed as one of the biggest challenges facing the EU. Through projection, the old-age dependency ratio at EU level will be increased. The proportion of elderly people in EU

1 Source: Regional yearbook 2021, chapter 1: Population at regional level.

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countries is set to rise fast, while the proportion of working-age people is going to significantly fall. By January 2050, there will be fewer than two working-age adults for each older person. At the same time, the share of Europe's population in the world will have been shrunk and by 2070 it will account for just under 4% of the world's population. Then, the share of those Europeans aged 80 years and over, the share of "oldest persons", will have been over doubled (from 5% to 13%), becoming almost as numerous as young people under the age of fifteen.

Table 2: The definition of "older person".

The definition of "older person".
The age at which a person is considered old varies in terms of geographical location and context. According to a 2011 Eurobarometer survey, a person is considered 'old' at about 57 years in Slovakia, but only at more than 70 years in the Netherlands. Though in some contexts, such as that of employment, people may be considered 'older' as of age 55 or even 50, on average in the EU a person is thought of as old/senior just before he or she reaches 64 years of age.

In the historic first in 2019, the G20 Osaka Summit declared ageing populations a "global risk", urging members to pursue specifically targeted policies to tackle economic issues related to ageing and falling birth rates. In their communique, the Group stated that "demographic changes [...] pose challenges and opportunities for all G20 members" and that the issue requires a mix of "fiscal, monetary, financial, and structural policies"[2]. Dealing thus with this newly emerged "global risk", the EU attempts to reinforce the elder care infrastructure. Acknowledging that some countries are unequipped to deal with the new social and economic conditions and dynamics which an older population imposes and that there is no one-size-fits-all approach, policy-makers respond to the demographic shift with diverse proposals and policies regarding for instance the necessary adaptations of long-term health care systems and pension schemes. In this series of debates, a joined-up inclusive approach aiming for seniors to stay productively engaged and contributing to society (primarily by extending participation in the labour market), has become the most prominent scientific and policy approach. The concept of "active ageing", which re-negotiates the meaning and duty of old age has become mainstream and, when operationalized appropriately, seems to represent a valuable tool for considering ageing and the ways for optimizing it.

2 The ten key findings and the piece available at: https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/g20-osaka-summit-ageing

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Section 6.2.: The concept and policies of "Active ageing".

Following the policy framework, which was set up in 2002 by the World Health Organization[3], "active ageing" is defined by the European Commission (2012) as "helping people stay in charge of their own lives for as long as possible as they age and, where possible, to contribute to the economy and society". Needless to say, the target does not concern only the continuation of seniors' presence in the labour market. According to the straightforward guidelines by the WHO (2002), "the word "active" refers to continuing participation in social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs, not just the ability to be physically active or to participate in the labour force". The concept, similar to that of "successful ageing", challenges stereotypes of older age focused on passivity and dependency, emphasizing autonomy, and participation for the third age. It also recognizes the fact that ageing takes place within the context of others such as friends, family members, and associates at work, and promotes intergenerational solidarity. Furthermore, it focuses on activities that are aimed at ensuring the dignity, protection, care, and self-fulfilment of people as they age. It spotlights the term of "quality of life", an individual's perception of her position in life in the context of the culture and value system where she lives, and in relation to her goals, expectations, standards, and concerns.

Table 3: Active ageing as a policy shift

The approach of "active ageing" shifts strategic planning away from a "needs-based" approach, an approach based on the assumption that older people are passive, to a "rights-based" approach that recognizes the rights of people to equality of opportunity and treatment in all aspects of life as they grow up.

"Active ageing" concept entered for the first time the European policy discourse during the European Year of Older People in 1993. But it was only six years later, at the UN International Year of Older People, when the European Commission published the policy document "Towards a Europe of All Ages" (1999)[4] and reached four concrete conclusions:

- To raise employment rates of older people through promoting lifelong learning and flexible working arrangements, as well as reviewing tax and benefit schemes to improve incentives to take up job offers and training opportunities,
- To develop policies to further modernize and improve social protection, while particular attention has to be paid to ways to reverse the trend towards early retirement, to explore new forms of gradual retirement, and to make pension schemes more sustainable and flexible,
- To support health policies and medical re-

3 Available at https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/67215
4 Available at https://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_situation/docs/com221_en.pdf

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search related to ageing, and

- To develop policies to combat discrimination and social exclusion of ageing populations.

Despite the extensive scope of the report, the "active ageing" concept was narrowed, with the field of employment becoming the primary focus. This primitive "productivist" approach to ageing, evident in the proposed raise of retirement age and the greater links between pension contributions and benefits, was reinforced later on with a somehow neoliberal individualization of responsibilities and advocated the need for "activated" older workers to enhance economic growth. This, oppressive to a certain extent, shift was apparent in the so-called Lisbon target to raise the employment rate of those aged 55-64 to 50% by 2010, which only eleven EU countries managed to achieve. As Pfaller & Schweda (2019) state, where active ageing is operationalised in a manner which emphasizes personal responsibility, "it actually functions as a mere alibi for dismantling the welfare state and shifting risks and costs to the single individual."

The above observations and criticisms do not mean that one can ignore that some EU documentation considers a broader range of measures regarding seniors' life, interpreting the "active ageing" concept in a more comprehensive way. The EU declared 2012 to be the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations and provided successfully the focus for a wide range of initiatives that "establish active ageing firmly on the European and many national policy agendas"[5]. Following the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, launched by the European Commission in 2011 to foster innovation and digital transformation in the field of active and healthy ageing, the ESF-Age Network, which was supported by the European Social Fund, provided a showcase for good practice examples in the management of ageing workers in 14 MS. Similarly, the Best Agers initiative in the Baltic Region encouraged people aged 55 or older to work with different age groups in business and skills development. Furthermore, the Active Ageing Index, launched in 2013, was developed as a statistical tool based on 22 indicators of how well MS managed/operated in terms of social and employment participation of older people and their capacity to age actively. At the end of 2012, the Guiding Principles for Active Ageing were drawn up jointly by the Social Protection Committee and the Employment Committee. The principles contained a series of recommendations for action in three areas: employment, participation, and independent living. The relative policies were incorporated as priorities of the European Social Fund for 2014-2020.

The first EU-level cross-sector social partners' autonomous framework agreement on active ageing was signed in March 2017, after nine months of negotiations. Its target was to ensure a healthy, safe and productive working environment, and

5 https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/industrial-relations-dictionary/active-ageing

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work organisation to enable workers of all ages to remain in work until legal retirement age. It also aimed to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and experience between generations at the workplace. The agreement set out a range of tools, measures, and initiatives for the social partners in the following areas:

- strategic assessments of workforce demography;
- health and safety at the workplace;
- skills and competence management;
- work organisation;
- an intergenerational approach.

This agreement was negotiated within the framework of the EU social partners' multiannual work programme for 2015–2017 and is implemented at national, sectoral, and/or company levels in accordance with the procedures and practices specific to management and labour in the MS of the EU.

Table 4: The 2018 Active Ageing Index Analytical Report6

The 2018 Active Ageing Index Analytical Report, jointly launched by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the European Commission and published in October 2019, shows that since 2008 most countries in the EU have improved their overall AAI scores.

The country clusters, built based on the domain-specific scores (the domains are four, namely that of Employment, Social Participation, Independent Living, and Capacity and enabling Environment), identify four main groups of countries, each of them characterized by a particular set of active ageing policy challenges:

- Green cluster: composed of Central European and Mediterranean MS only, this cluster faces challenges across all domains, but especially in the area of social participation (this cluster includes Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain);
- Red cluster: spread across Continental Europe and Mediterranean islands, this group reports quite low employment rates in older age groups (Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, France, Luxembourg, and Malta);
- Blue cluster: symmetrically opposite to the red cluster, this more geographically dispersed cluster reports (with some exceptions) below-average scores in all domains except that of employment, with a problematic situation, especially concerning the area of social participation (Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Portugal);
- Yellow cluster: this "Nordic" cluster presents well above average results in three domains, and only slightly higher values in the domain of Independent living (Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom).

6 Available at https://unece.org/DAM/pau/age/Active_Ageing_Index/ECE-WG-33.pdf.

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Section 6.3.: Retirement Policy and National Pension Schemes

In general, in EU countries, insurance records are preserved until people reach the pensionable age, and then their pensions are calculated according to the pension scheme that each country follows. Pensions, which is the main source of income for about a quarter of the EU population, aim to protect retired people from poverty and allow them to enjoy decent living standards. The right for pension is enshrined in the European Pillar of Social Rights, which has been jointly signed by the European Parliament, the Council, and the Commission in November 2017. Following the general spirit of the Proclamation which aims to strengthen the social acquis and to deliver more effective rights to citizens, Principle 15 refers to the income of seniors: "Workers and the self-employed in retirement have the right to a pension commensurate to their contributions and ensuring an adequate income. Women and men shall have equal opportunities to acquire pension rights. Everyone in old age has the right to resources that ensure living in dignity."

Regarding the retirement ages, retirement at the age of 65 years is common in the MS. However, some countries - Greece and Italy between them - have decided to raise this threshold to 67 years. Early retirement, before reaching the general retirement age of the old-age pension, is also a choice/option in some countries, but only if the pensioner accepts to receive only a particular proportion of the full anticipated pension. The older population in the United Kingdom suffers from the lowest (proportionally) pensions, receiving just 29% of a working wage when they retire. At the other end of this scale, there are the Croatian and Dutch pensioners who receive a generous 129% and 101% respectively. The average for EU states is 71%, while for the OECD countries is 63%7. Considering that these numbers are percentages of the working wages in each country and recognizing that the salaries per month differ on a great scale within the Union and even within the countries, it is easily understood that retirement can be transformed from an expectation or reward for individuals' "productive" years to an undesirable status more associated with a lack of employment.

From a historical standpoint, the MS of the EU have been adapting their pension systems to conditions that differ sharply compared to those that prevailed when the systems were first introduced. The once effective concept of full employment, the division of the life cycle into three periods, education, employment, and retirement, and the non-contradictory conception of social protection and economics do not constitute prominent guidelines anymore. A significant diversity characterizes national pension schemes, but several common features, such as the abovementioned retirement age, are nonetheless identifiable in certain countries (Hughes & Stewart, 2000). The first consideration of EU pension policy, published in 2010 in a Green Paper and the follow-up White Paper, came

7 See OECD's Pensions at a Glance 2017 Report.

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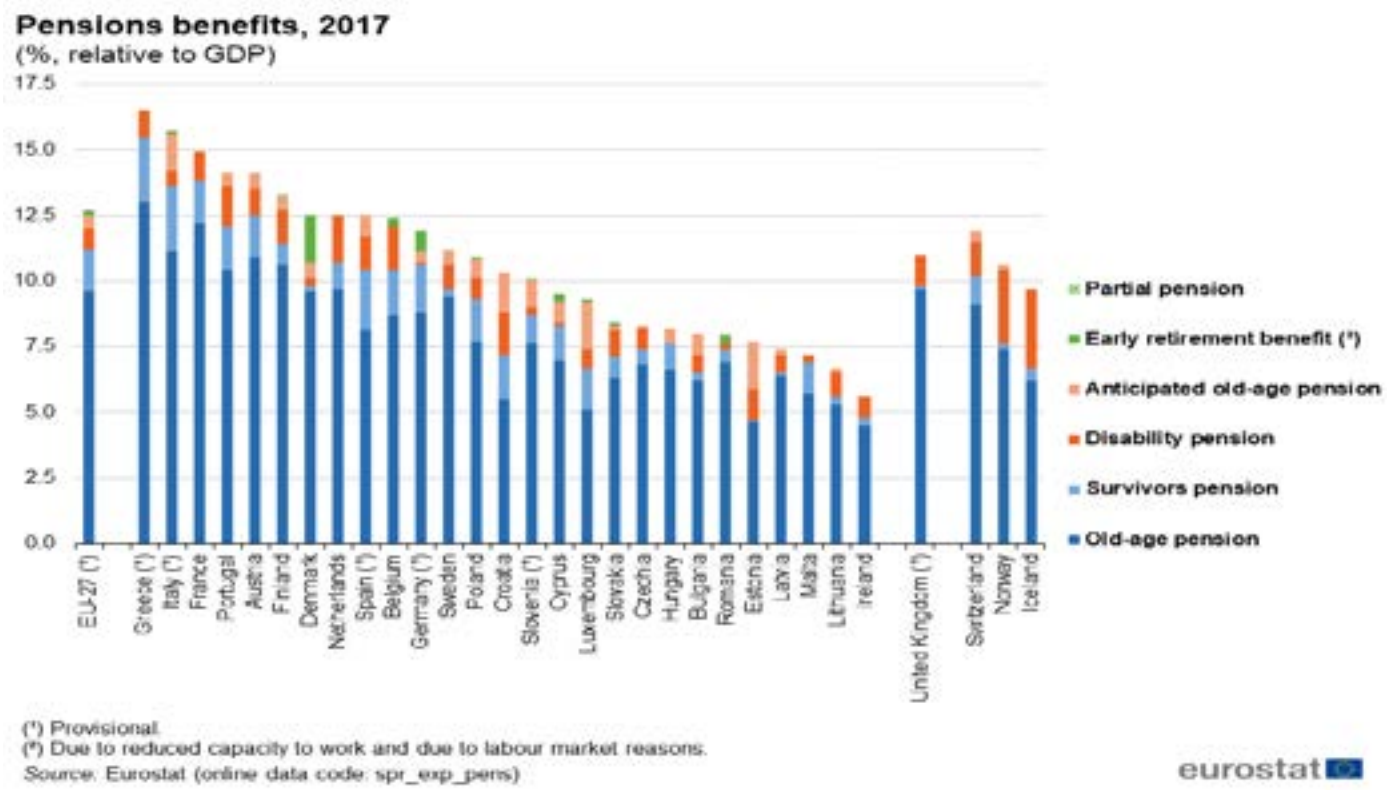

in February 2012. That White Paper, entitled Pension Adequacy in the European Union, 2010-2050, proposed:

- changes to workplace practices to create better opportunities for older workers;
- encouraging private pension saving through tax and other incentives;
- enhancing the safety of private pensions through better information for pension savers and the pensions (IORP) directive;
- linking retirement age with life expectancy, restricting access to early retirement, and closing the gap in pensions provision between men and women;
- supporting pensions reform in the EU;
- encouraging the promotion of longer working lives.

The most broadly referred challenge of European pension schemes is the need to adapt to stay financially sustainable and be able to provide citizens with an adequate income. This debate regarding the shift from public to occupational and private pensions schemes cannot be seen as irrelevant from the debate regarding the effectiveness of national systems of taxation and the de-politicization that the Open Method of Coordination inevitably brings on pensions policy, which is a typical

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redistributive and nationally rooted policy (Natali, 2009).

Section 6.4.: Health Care and Long-term Care Services

Demographic ageing has a major impact on health care and long-term care spending. Given the scale of public expenditure on health care and long-term care in the countries of the EU, the issue is at the centre of the policy debate on how to keep public finances sustainable in the future. In most MS, more than 70% of health expenditure is funded by the public sector.

But is this a real problem?

The public health costs in 2011 represented approximately 8% of GDP. And from what is widely known and rarely said, unlike the elder care crisis in the United States, the primary problem in European elder care is not a lack of funding; the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries spend only/as little as 3 to 4 % of their GDP on elder care. Rather, even when European countries are spending more on elder care than ever before, elder care programmes are failing to provide the type and quality of care that EU seniors need.

Most people prefer to age at home rather in a hospital or community care setting. And, unlike in countries where elder care is centralized in multigenerational living with immediate or extended family, more than 30% of European elders live alone in their homes. As the relative home-based programmes have so far shown, they prioritize subsidizing task-based care, which includes the cost for medical professionals or trained caregivers to perform discrete tasks in the home of seniors. However, as the Global Coalition on Ageing explains, relationship-based care, which prioritizes long-term relationships between elderly care recipients and non-family caregivers, finally leads to better health outcomes for seniors. European seniors who live alone often suffer from loneliness and social isolation, which can be a determinant factor for worsening elderly patients' health conditions. By prioritizing elder care that not only meets seniors' medical needs but also promotes supportive therapeutic relationships, relationship-based home care programmes could be transformative in meeting the needs of Europe's growing elderly population. European governments must move and invest towards this direction of new care givers and tackling furthermore the shortage of healthcare workers. According to a new study by the University of Bremen, Germany alone needs more than 120,000 caregivers to meet the current demand for home care services.

Taking these findings into account, the project on Healthy Ageing supported by Internet and Community, co-funded by the EU Health Programme and started in January 2014 for a period of over two years bears a particularly positive message. It encouraged people over 65 to follow a healthy diet, exercise and be involved socially. The first in-depth

evaluations of the Programme constitute a positive message for its repetition in the future (Garcia-Camacha et al., 2020).

Table 4: UN Decade of Healthy Ageing

In 2020, the WHO and UN members embraced a sweeping ten-year global plan of action to ensure all older people can live long and healthy lives, formally known as the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030). The UN Decade of Healthy Ageing is a global collaboration that brings together diverse sectors and stakeholders, including governments, civil society, international organizations, professionals, academic institutions, the media, and the private sector, to improve the lives of older people, their families, and communities. The collaboration focuses on four action areas that are strongly interconnected: • changing how we think, feel, and act towards age and ageing, • developing communities in ways that foster the abilities of older people, • delivering person-centred integrated care and primary health services responsive to older people, and • providing older people who need it with access to long-term care.

Section 6.5: Summary

Older people are assuming greater importance in the EU as both their numbers and their proportion of the population increase. The demographic shift constitutes a reality in the countries of the EU. The working-age population is constantly shrinking. The concept of “active ageing”, if implemented in a balanced framework, could be productive and support the prosperity of European societies. It has to maintain its broad scope and not be narrowed into financial terms. The national pension schemes have to be adapted to the demographic shift, always ensuring a dissenting way of living for the seniors, but also to be coordinated to a certain extent at EU level. Public expenditure on health and long-term care is not a crucial issue for our societies. The new policies should take into account the new data as well as the demands of older people and promote the long-term relationship-based home-based care.

Questions of Discussion, Case Studies, Exercises

Research question 1: Is the expenditure a sustainable limitation to the provision of public health and long-term care for elderly persons in the countries of the EU?

Research question 2: How the national taxation systems are linked with the pension schemes?

Research question 2: Examine the potential of funding the above-mentioned relationship-based home care programmes.

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Case study: Evaluate the programme “Βοήθεια στο σπίτι / help at home” which takes place in Greece during the last two years of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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Source: https://www.google.com/search?q=covid+19&sxsrf

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Aim

The aim of the present chapter is to examine the responses of EU to the pandemic crisis. The first EU responses to the identification of a novel coronavirus which could be transmitted from human to human, are described in the first section. The second section deals with the conflicts and the relative negotiations between the MS during the second quarter of 2020, specifically from the Middle of March to the Middle of June. It details the actions and the events, aiming to provide a deep understanding of the gradual shift of the political climate between MS from harsh antagonism to relative appeasement. The results of this delayed consensus are briefly analyzed in the third section. The last part focuses on the recovery plan, which was decided in July 2020 under the German presidency, namely the Next Generation EU, which coupled partially with the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, aim at repairing the immediate economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic and rebuilding a post-Covid-19 Europe.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- **To gain a deep understanding of the EU responses towards the pandemic crisis.**
- **To get familiar with the difficulties of consensus building in European Union.**
- **To acquire extended knowledge about the recovery plan, the NextGeneration EU.**

Keywords

Pandemic, reactive policies, emergency, consensus building, NextGenerationEU

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Section 7.1.: The Covid-19 Pandemic in Europe

As the rest of the world, the European Union struggled in its response to Covid-19. The pandemic crisis was -and generally is- undoubtedly a crisis of a hyperactive world, a new, unprecedented crisis (Zakaria, 2022). A tiny virus, about 1/10.000 the size of the dot that would be fit at the end of this sentence, disrupted the global economy, and put human societies into quarantine and isolation, confining most of humanity to their homes.

The detailed description of the virus by the global medical community on February 22nd, 2020, found several countries of the European Union, such as France, Denmark, and Spain, among the fifteen states with the best system for dealing with outbreaks of infectious diseases (Nuclear Threat Initiative and John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2019). However, as of 2017, nineteen of the twenty-five most connected countries in the world and five of the twenty busiest airports worldwide were located in Europe (Pan-European Commission on Health and Sustainable Development, 2021). In the context of a viral outbreak, Europe's global connectivity, a strength, and a leverage in general, would turn out to become an essential weakness.

This unexpected weakness and several constraints on the existing health care policy of European Union led to a rapid outbreak across all European countries. On the basis of a supranational health policy, historically developed primarily in the context of the economic pursuits of the common market (Forman & Mossialos, 2021, pp.57-59) and following the publication of a Report by the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the European Health Security Committee (HSC) held on January 17th, 2020, the first related to Covid-19 video conference on preventing the introduction of the virus into the Union. Unfortunately, the United Kingdom and only twelve of the now twenty-seven Member States participated in it, without reaching any common conclusion (Boffey et al., 2020). With many aspects of the new epidemic unknown and with the public debate focused, justifiably, mainly on Brexit, the first confirmed cases were recorded on January 24th and 28th in France and Germany respectively. While the USA president Trump stated in Davos that "We have it [the potential pandemic] perfectly under control.", the French health minister, Agnès Buzyn warned that "[we] have to treat an epidemic as [we] treat a fire," and China's lockdown was widened to include 56 million people1.

Under these circumstances, the Croatian Presidency was activating partially the Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR) mechanism for data disclosure and information exchange within the Community. At the same time, the European Commission through the Civil Protection Mechanism took actions for the repatriation of European citizens. At the end of February, and while some guidance from the Center for Disease Prevention and Control

1 https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2020/apr/08/coronavirus-100-days-that-changed-the-world

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(ECDC) on personal protective equipment had been shared, multiple cases began to be recorded in four regions of Italy, and within days the Lombardy region replaced the Chinese city of Wuhan as epicenter of the pandemic. On March 2nd, the president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, formed a response team for the pandemic at the political level, announcing the closer cooperation of five Commissioners. Janez Lenarčič, who was in charge of crisis management, Stella Kyriakides, who was in charge of all the health issues, Ylva Johansson, who was in charge of border-related issues, Adina Vălean, who was in charge of mobility and Paolo Gentiloni, who was dealing with the macroeconomic aspects would work together and bring together all the different strands of action required.

Box 1: Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR)[1]

The **need for a crisis response mechanism** at EU level emerged in the early 2000s in the aftermath of several events, such as:

- the 9/11 terrorist attacks, committed in the US in 2001
- the terrorist attacks in Madrid in 2004 and in London in 2005
- the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004

In 2006, the Council adopted the E**mergency and Crisis Coordination Arrangements (CCA)**. The CCA was designed to be a platform for exchanging information and coordinating action between Member States in the event of a major crisis.

Building on the CAA, the Council adopted in 2013 the I**ntegrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR) Arrangements**. This improved mechanism provides more flexibility, more scalability and more use of existing resources, structures, and capabilities.

In 2018, the Council adopted an implementing decision codifying into a legal act the IPCR arrangements.

The IPCR mechanism supports the Council presidency, the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the governments of the member states to the European Union (Coreper) and the EU Council, by providing concrete tools to streamline information sharing, facilitate collaboration and coordinate crisis response at political level

The main tool is an **informal roundtable**, which is a crisis meeting chaired by the Council presidency and attended by representatives of the European Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), the office of the President of the European Council, relevant EU agencies, member states and experts. Other tools include:

- **analytical reports** to provide decision makers with a clear picture of the current situation
- a **web platform** to exchange and collect information
- a **24/7 contact point** to ensure constant liaison among stakeholders

There are three operational modes, depending on the situation:

- a **monitoring mode** to easily share existing crisis reports
- an **information-sharing mode**, triggering the creation of analytical reports and the use of the web platform to better understand the situation and prepare for a possible escalation
- a **full activation mode**, involving the preparation of proposals for EU action to be decided upon by the Council of the EU or the European Council

The IPCR mechanism is currently activated in full mode for three crises, namely Russia's invasion of Ukraine, COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak and migration matters.

1 https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/ipcr-response-to-crises/

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The three months that followed, three months of a complete absence of supranational coordination, a revival of protectionist politics and controls at national borders and a restart of at least a stupid "blame game", were revealing of the logic and reflexes that the previous crisis in the zone of common currency had left as a legacy.

Section 7.2.: The first responses of EU

Despite the teleconference on March 10, where member states focused on the concepts of solidarity and cooperation by recognizing four specific priorities in dealing with the pandemic, several countries subsequently introduced bans on the export of protective equipment or quickly legislated provisions in their national law that allowed the stockpile of medical supplies. At the same time, deficiencies in some partners were evident and the resulting cases were increasing exponentially (Anderson et al., 2020). As the Union "sealed" its external borders on 17 March and intra-Community controls at the national borders of thirteen member states were reintroduced under the Schengen Borders Code (SBC), limited financial resources continued to be given to the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation and still limited funds, much smaller than those that would be decided four months later, were committed to fight the effects of the pandemic on the labor market, national health systems and businesses (Anderson et al., 2020)2. The warning on January 25th, of the European branch of the World Health Organization to MS to prepare for the arrival and spread of the virus and "act as one" (Kluge, 2020) seemed distant, as individual countries were now communicating with Chinese companies to supply masks and antiseptics. Indicatively, Germany alone imported, during the months of April and May, protective masks from China total worth of 3.5 billion euros3, thereby unexpectedly strengthening the Chinese "mask diplomacy" and logically weakening Merkel's argument

2 The €25 billion Pan-European Guarantee Fund, which was proposed by the European Commission on April 16, was approved by the European Council on April 23 and was overwhelmingly voted by the Board of Directors of the European Investment Bank on April 26 May. The SURE program "Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency" with resources of approximately one hundred billion was proposed by the Commission on April 2nd and activated on September 22nd.

3 http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/europe/2021-03/18/c_139820175.htm.

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of “reciprocity”4. By the end of March, two groups of MS, different from those that had been formed during the crisis in the common currency zone, were openly contesting each other.

The “frugal” countries of the North, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Austria, led by the last two (Ferrera, Miró & Ronchi, 2021, p. 1341) and supported by Finland, opposed the countries of the South. And the conflict was so politicized according to Schmidt (Wolff & Ladi, 2020) and overt, that it was perceived by European citizens (Ferrera, Miró & Ronchi, 2021, p. 1337), while the Hungarian prime minister posted pictures on Facebook of receiving medical material from China and Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic called European solidarity an “illusion”5 and appealed to “friend and brother Xi Jinping” to send medical equipment. At the European Council meeting on March 26, tensions between MS were running high as Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa hit back at Dutch Finance Minister Wopke Hoekstra. Hoekstra stated that the possible issuance of “coronabonds”, a formal possibility, among other things, of a true fiscal union, would usher in a period of what was infamous during the previous crisis in the Eurozone, “moral hazard”, and called on the competent supranational bodies to investigate in depth the fiscal situation of the countries that claimed that they do not have the margin to cope with the effects of the pandemic crisis. In the following press conference, the Portuguese Prime Minister called the statement “repugnant”, disgusting (Ganderson et al., 2021). A few days later, sensing the need to reach a quick consensus and mobilize the Union more effectively, former Commission President Romano Prodi, who had once called the Stability and Growth Pact “stupid”, warned that if the heads of state could not to reach an agreement, “even in such a dramatic situation, there [would be] no longer any basis for the European project” (Die Welt, 2020).

Throughout the first two weeks of April, the conflict between the four countries and the remaining member states was recorded acutely. However, as the German Social Democrat Finance Minister and current Chancellor Olaf Scholz “overcame” the silence of the German Chancellor Merkel, an idiom of her political presence, and publicly argued more and more strongly in favor of a common EU policy

4 As the Chinese mask diplomacy developed into criticism against the European Democracies for the way the pandemic crisis was managed, the German Chancellor clarified on March 18: "the European Union sent medical equipment to China when China asked for help. What we are seeing today is reciprocity. At a time when we are facing a crisis at the moment, we are very happy to see China helping us". See "Coronavirus: Germany's Angela Merkel plays down China's providing medical supplies to hard-hit European countries", South China Morning Post, March 18, 2020.

5 https://www.robert-schuman.eu/en/european-issues/0569-in-the-time-of-covid-19-china-s-mask-has-fallen-with-regard-to-europe.

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for the pandemic crisis6, the tension decreased. After a series of communications with the French finance minister Le Mair, which took place mostly in the background (Chazan et al., 2020), the Franco-German axis was mobilizing towards a "Hamiltonian Moment" through a number of joint declarations of solidarity. With this "shift" of Germany, the leaders of the member states reached, during the meeting of the Council on April 23, an initial agreement on a "common road map for the recovery" and the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte clarified that "Tensions, if they were there at all, are not there any longer" (Euractiv, 2020). Almost a month later, on on May 18, Merkel and Macron, in a joint press conference, reminiscent of those of Kohl and Mitterrand, proposed a European action plan and a Community Fund of five hundred billion euros, which would strengthen in the form of grants the countries that were hit hardest by the pandemic. Absorbing the reactions of Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz and effectively rejecting the frugals' proposal on 23rd May, the two leaders provided the background for the European Commission's proposal, which was presented on 26 May. Von der Leyen could now claim that Europe is managing the crisis "[walking] that road together" and not "go it alone? leaving countries, regions and people behind, accepting a Union of haves and have-nots" (von der Leyen, 2020). After an intense and long meeting of the European Council for four days in mid-July (17-21 July), a final agreement was reached on the establishment of the Next Generation EU program in loans and grants, and much later, on 10 November, the European Parliament approved the specific programme together with the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 (Multiannual Financial Framework). The funds that were committed in total exceeded two trillion euros and, in conjunction with the Pandemic Emergency Purchase Program (PEPP) of the European Central Bank, a monetary policy measure, already in place since March 24th (Decision 2020/440), led towards a community management of the pandemic crisis.

Section 7.3.: First Results

However, the imprint of the confrontations of the national governments and the sluggishness of the Union appeared in the following year. While the new president of the United States of America Joe Biden approved in March 2021 as a first step the amount of 1.9 trillion dollars to take measures to strengthen the national economy with the aim of dealing with the pandemic crisis, the Union approved the first installment of Next Generation EU, an aid program with a total value of just 800 billion dollars, four months later. For those who claim that the speed of the response and the size of the

6 See, for example, the article he co-authored on 5 April with Heiko Maas and published a day later in a number of European newspapers, available at https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/maas-scholz -corona/2330904 and his comments in the middle of the same month, available at https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-germany-scholz-idINKCN21Y12Y.

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financial aid do not prove anything negative for the Union, but simply testify to a different way of dealing with the pandemic crisis, could look at Trichet's statements on austerity policies in January 2011 and then in the relative economic growth charts, evidence that illuminates the consequences of this differentiation.

Similarly, the price of Union bradykinesia was also eventually paid in the field of vaccination. In the first quarter of 2021, while vaccine companies were experiencing delays and shortfalls in scheduled deliveries, Europe was predictably lagging behind. Although member states had approved a Commission vaccination plan as early as last June (European Commission, 2020d), the Union had only managed to sign the first vaccine supply agreement in mid-August. However, the United Kingdom had already entered into a relevant contract since May 1 for a quantity of vaccines sufficient to vaccinate its entire population with one dose and half the adults with a second, while the United States of America had entered into a contract since May 20 which provided 300 million doses (Ovaska & Kumar Dutta, 2021). The different communication and vaccination policies in the member states, combined with the skepticism of many citizens about the effectiveness of vaccines, magnified further the negative consequences of the aforementioned delay.

Section 7.4.: NextGenerationEU as a response to the crisis

The core piece of NextGenerationEU is the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) – an instrument for providing grants and loans to support reforms and investments in the EU Member States at a total value of €723.8 billion. To receive funds under the Recovery and Resilience Facility, Member States have to prepare Recovery and Resilience Plans outlining how they intend to invest the funds. Furthermore, they need to fulfil the relevant milestones and targets, and before any disbursements under the RRF can flow, the Commission assesses the satisfactory fulfilment of each milestone and target. There are five objectives:

a) Make it Green: It includes investments in environmentally friendly technologies. Particularly it aims at:

- improving water quality in our rivers and seas, reducing waste and plastic litter, planting billions of trees and bringing back the bees
- creating green spaces in our cities and increasing the use of renewable energy
- making farming more environmentally friendly so our food is healthier.

b) Make it digital: These initiatives will aim at:

- being able to connect everywhere with 5G and EU-wide ultra-fast broadband
- receiving a digital identity (eID), making it eas-

ier to access online public services and giving one more control over one's personal data

- our cities to become smarter and more efficient
- rendering online shopping more secure
- developing artificial intelligence so to help us to fight climate change and improve healthcare, transport and education.

c) Make it healthy: These initiatives will target

- the better coordination between EU countries in order for the citizens to be protected against health threats
- at investing more in research and innovation to develop vaccines and treatments, not just for new diseases like coronavirus, but also for cancer.
- at modernising our health systems so that hospitals in every EU country have better access to new technology and to medical supplies
- at training for Europe's medical and healthcare professionals.

d) Make it strong: These initiatives will aim at:

- encouraging young people to study science and technology, which open doors to the green and digital jobs of the future
- supporting further education and apprenticeships
- offering loans and grants to young entrepreneurs.

e) Make it equal: These initiatives will aim at:

- fighting against racism and xenophobia
- promoting gender equality and women's empowerment
- protecting the rights of the LGBTQI+ community and combating discrimination
- strengthening EU law to cover all forms of hate speech and hate crime.

Section 7.5: Summary

The severe socio-economic crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic reactivated those sharp tensions between Northern and Southern member states which had already shattered the EU during the 2010s. The risk of a new 'existential crisis' was, however, successfully averted by the shift of the position of Germany. What it is still on question in post-Covid-19 Europe, is the results of the NextGeneration EU and its various projects.

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Questions of Discussion, Case Studies, Exercises

Research question 1: Compare the response of your country to Covid-19 Pandemic with the responses of Germany and Greece. Which are your conclusions?

Research question 2: Examine the provision of public health and the relative investments during the pandemic crisis in three EU member states. Is there any common conclusion which applies to all the cases?

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Chapter 8
Covid-19 Crisis in Turkey:
Social Policies for Vulnerable Groups and the Media Coverage

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Photo by Agathi Sianoudi

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Chapter 8
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Aim

The aim of the chapter is to frame the social policies for vulnerable groups and their media coverage in Covid 19 Crisis.

- Trying to understand the social policies for vulnerable groups in Turkey in the times of Covid-19 Crisis.

- Giving examples of representation of different vulnerable groups in media.

Expected Learning Outcomes

To gain a deep understanding of the main concepts such as “other”, “othernesss”, vulnerable goups, ageism.

-Raise awareness on the danger of otherizing the vulnerable groups.

-Given three specific examples –senior citizens, women, children- as vulnerable groups, identify the social policies to protect them.

-Given a specific case, recognize the representation of children in media as an example for vulnerable groups

Keywords: Turkey, Covid 19 crisis, social policies, vulnerable groups, media coverage.

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Covid-19 Crisis in Turkey: Social Policies for Vulnerable Groups and the Media Coverage

Section 8.1: Introduction

COVID-19 has created a global health crisis that has had a profound impact on the way of how we perceive our world and our daily lives. Global epidemics, unlike natural disasters or tragedies, are not limited to one place or a group of victims, but have the potential to create unpredictable traumas; such as losing loved ones, not having access to health care and being forced into isolation. As a result, this situation exacerbates structural racism and inequalities.

Social exclusion is a multidimensional problem, such as the inability to access health, education, cultural services, and participation in cultural life and decision-making due to reasons such as unemployment, poverty, lack of education, old age or disability. It is not wrong to say that social exclusion and social integration are the exact opposite poles. The fragile/disadvantaged groups, in other words, “vulnerable groups”, facing the threat of social exclusion are also being stigmatized, and can be the potential witnesses to all forms of discrimination.

According to the (Covid 19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment Report, 2021) all components of social policies in Turkey (social insurance, social assistance, labour market policies) have remained operational during the Covid-19 epidemic, and additional steps have been taken, including cash transfers for those not covered by social insurance. Nevertheless, the risk of poverty, particularly among the self-employed, informal workers, and other vulnerable groups has increased.

COVID-19 has resulted in a global pandemic requiring immediate attention to fight and contain the virus and tackle the worldwide magnification of inequalities through sound health policies, social protections, and humanitarian actions. The world is at a historically crucial moment for multisectoral collaboration to mitigate the inequality gaps with universal health coverage and social protection, and to truly implement the health-in-all-policies approach (Barron et al, 2021).

Section 8.2: Vulnerable Groups: The Others

To identify the “vulnerable” is a process of otherizing. Otherness is due less to the difference of the Other than to the point of view and the discourse of the person who perceives the Other as such. Placing in opposition notions of Us, Self, Them, and the Other is to choose a criterion that allows humanity to be divided into two groups: one that embodies the norm and whose identity is valued, and another that is defined by its faults, devalued, and susceptible to discrimination (Staszak J.F, 2020).

When we question the concept of ‘the other’, we actually see that we are all the other to each other. The other is what we don’t know, what we’re afraid of. In a social sense, this concept becomes deeper and more complex. Every society and civilization has a concept of ‘the other’. Although ethnicity, reli-

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gion, and geography are qualities that make people different; the reason why they should be taken is mainly economic. From primitive communal society to feudal society and to the present –capitalism- "othering" was in the economic sense. Those who had the means of production turned others into "the other" and lived their lives through their labor. Today, the concept of" the other " describes the poor, the oppressed, the people who are excluded from society but have values that keep that society afloat. To admit that he is" the other " means to admit that he is not legitimate. But in many cases, the presence of the 'other' becomes uncomfortable after a while.

It is possible to briefly define the concept of" othering " as excluding, alienating, and making enemies of those we see as different from ourselves.

We will give three examples for vulnerable groups.

-The first one is Senior Citizens.

Like racism and sexism, age discrimination serves a social and economic purpose by legitimizing disparities between age groups. In fact, this is not about how old people are and look, but about how those in power see them and give them meaning; in other words, it consists of generalizations made by a group that does not perceive themselves as "old" and legitimizes their power.

Gerontologist Robert Butler (Butler, 1969) first defined the term age discrimination / Ageism as a type of ideology. Butler emphasizes that age discrimination works both at the individual (stereotyped judgments, biases) level and at the corporate (legal regulations, media representations, representations in social life) level, and that people are subjected to discriminatory behavior in employment, social relations and the access to services only because of their age.

Ageism/Ageism is the last bastion of prejudice in society. Phrases such as' he was still old',' he lived a good life ',' he won't pile on the world ' are used without thinking about what they really mean and what effect they have. Age-based prejudice is quite common and internalized in many societies, which naturally negatively affects the mental health of older people. Studies show that 85 percent of older people are denied access to health care, and so 95 percent of older people have psychiatric disorders, especially depression, over time.

Becca Levy, a professor in the Department of Community Health and psychology at Yale University, explained (2020) that their study had come to conclusions that stress caused by negative judgments about old age causes pathological changes in the brain. However, experts claim that older people are distracted from anxiety, despair and suicidal behavior if they are not referred to by negative judgments.

Professor Debora Price and Dr. Tine Buffel from University of Manchester emphasize that the society expresses its objection to any policy which differentiates the population by application of an arbi-

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trary chronological age in restricting people's rights and freedoms (Stafford, 2020).

According to Archard (2020), using age as a determining factor to decide which COVID-19 patient gets treatment becomes exposed as "wrongly discriminatory, because it licenses differential treatment based on 'unwarranted animus or prejudice' against old people". However according to Caplan, one reason for using age is if the "overarching principle for rationing" is to maximize the number of lives saved.

Section 8.3: The social policy measures taken for the vulnerable groups

Senior citizens

Criticism has been raised about the lack of an effective public policy and communication strategy for the ban on age practice in Turkey, which consists of about 9 percent of its population aged 65 and over. How fair and realistic is the practice consisting of partial measures when the families of citizens over the age of 65+ in our country walk in the streets, go to work and live in the same house with them? (İnceoğlu, 2020, a).

Ageism, a widely experienced form of discrimination, needs to be fought at every opportunity, whether at work, in hospitals, or in the headlines. What measures have been taken in nursing homes where people over the age of 65, who are considered high risk groups for coronavirus, are concentrated?

Individuals over 65 years of age are a high-risk group in Coronavirus outbreak. Therefore, it is of high importance to protect and control the nursing homes where this group is concentrated in the epidemic process. Eye, ear and throat scans are performed every six hours in nursing homes and fever measurements are followed. Care for elderly people who show one of the symptoms continues in the infirmary. Isolation and quarantine conditions are provided in addition to treatment processes in case of suspected disease transport. In addition to these follow-ups, joint activities have been cancelled to prevent possible contamination. It is also noted that private and common areas are regularly disinfected.

Monitoring whether officials who play a primary role in elderly care show symptoms in a similar way is also an important measure to prevent transmission of the virus from outside the institution. In this context, it is also stated that employees decommission work in case of similar symptoms.

b. Victims of male violence: Women

Globally, one in three women are subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by a man during their lifetime. Gender disparities in the epidemic process only deepened even more of women health, safety and welfare, but also on education,

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food security and livelihoods generally harmful effects are ignored, while female victims are also exposed to abuse for a long time, they are not able to benefit from social and institutional support.

The global epidemic has inevitably deepened all sorts of existing inequalities in society primarily the “freedom of the woman”, which faces the threat of “becoming a silent victim”.

Male violence, a global problem and a serious violation of human rights, targets women of all ages, cultures, and income levels. During periods when long-term stress disorder is common at times of financial crises, natural disasters, etc. - cases of domestic violence increase even more. Especially in times of social isolation forced by the global epidemic, women are more often and more easily exposed to all kinds of violence from their abusers, in their homes, where are accepted as the safest place.

Human Rights Watch says that home quarantine has triggered a trend of domestic violence, including increased stress, narrow and difficult living conditions, and disruptions in community support mechanisms.

It is clear that the virus has dealt a dangerous blow to the fight for gender equality around the world. In the process, dual-income couples in developed countries had to decide who should look after the house, with men generally the higher earners, while many women faced risk losing their jobs and income.

Inevitably, in times of such crisis, the salaries of both sexes fall, but when there is an economic recovery, it is often observed that men’s salaries rise much faster than women’s.

Especially in countries where social services are weak or nonexistent and housing opportunities are unsafe, women’s work is even more difficult. Women, who make up a significant proportion of informal and part-time employees in the world, are the first victims in companies that are necessarily shrinking, because they are the first to be dismissed from work.

Violence against women is chilling in Turkey, where stay-at-home calls are made due to the corona virus. In the 20-day period from March 11 to March 31, when the first diagnosis was made, 21 women were killed, most of them in their homes.

Women activists want the law No. 6284 for women who suffer violence to be effective and for this purpose, there are Courts on duty in courthouses, and women who suffer violence to be protected urgently. The transformation of the state’s #Alosiddet line into #Sosyaldestekhatti did not jeopardize the safety of women’s lives alone, but also created an obstacle to preventing domestic violence. (İnceoğlu, 2020,b).

Women’s organizations and women’s rights advocates demanded that the measure sent by the General Assembly of judges and prosecutors on March 30, 2020 on the implementation of law 6284, among the measures to be taken against the epidemic an-

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nounced under the title “additional measures under COVID-19”, be immediately canceled and issue a decision stating the urgency of the implementation of the law.

Because this measure put the safety of the violators against the epidemic ahead of the safety of women’s lives. For example, a woman must have a scar on her body to be admitted to the shelter, while a violent man is protected by not being removed from the house.

Purple Roof (Mor Çatı) during the Coronavirus outbreak, called for urgent measures in order to combat violence against women, such as online, social, psychological and legal support, to increase the capacity of 183 the Violence Against Women support hotline, shelter and housing needs.

Additional steps to empower women and girls in the face of the pandemic can include the following:

- Prevention and response services for women at risk need to be expanded rapidly, including specific programmes for the most vulnerable.
- Programmes addressing early, and child marriage and child labour need to be accelerated.
- Labour market policies and economic measures specifically targeting women are needed.
- Social policies also require a gender lens. Greater public involvement in caring for the elderly, persons with disabilities and children will increase women’s access to jobs and income earning opportunities. Media campaigns can be used to encourage the involvement of men in care-giving and domestic tasks.
- Women should be actively engaged in the design, implementation and monitoring of all Covid-19 response and recovery efforts, to enable women’s leadership and ensure that sufficient attention is paid to gender aspects.

c. Children

Children affected by domestic abuse, neglect and violence face a greater threat as schools close and quarantine restrictions increase during the pandemic. Many studies show that violence against children comes largely from their closest relatives.

What measures have been taken to protect children staying in childcare facilities from the Coronavirus outbreak? No doubt another important risk group in this process is children. Children living in poor households face heightened risks of malnutrition, learning gap, school drop-out, child labour and child marriage with potential lifetime and cross-generational consequences.

In this context, the ministry has also gone to a number of applications for childcare organizations that are cohabitation spaces for children. In addition to providing personal hygiene training to all children taking into account their developmental

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characteristics, fever, cough and respiratory checks of children receiving care in the relevant institutions are carried out every six hours. In addition, the Ministry announced that all maintenance organizations are disinfected at regular intervals and that the health status of the personnel working here is also checked.

In addition to children who are cared for in organizations, children who benefit from family-oriented service models and families who provide this service have also been informed by the Ministry in accordance with the "14 rules against Coronavirus risk" in this process (Toklucu &Baygeldi, 2021).

Finally, in order to manage the stress of children, both children in organizations and who are provided with homestay care are provided with psychosocial support by professional employees.

In order to protect the children from violence, abuse and exploitation authorities must (UNICEF, 2020):

- * Implement among all organs of the state regarding the Covid-19 outbreak and detained children and in order to ensure good management of interventions, it is necessary to ensure the continuity of services comprehensive and coordinated juvenile justice services and other social services are also identified creating a plan cooperation and assistance; justice, security, internal affairs, migration, finance, health, social ministries of welfare and education and social measures and health measures (mental health and psycho-social care (including), resources, legal and other issues, support and liaison with families and the community
- it should cover other relevant authorities.
- * Exercise the right of children to participate in decisions that affect them and express their views to ensure, children should be included in the development process of the plan.
- * Child safety policies, including those for the Prevention of violence, abuse and exploitation, processes and complaint mechanisms should be established and implemented.

UNICEF's (2020) "Lost at Home; The risks and challenges for internally displaced children and the urgent actions needed to protect them" report emphasizes that displaced children who are unable to access basic services, are victims of violence, exploitation, abuse and trafficking, and may also be exposed to risks that directly threaten their health and safety, such as child labor, child marriage and separation from the family.

- Social policies may need to be more child-sensitive and specifically address child poverty, including among migrants and refugees. Schools were closed in March and are due to reopen in September. Continuity of learning has been made possible for grades 1-12 through the use of TV and Internet programmes, including for special education. By April, 9.7 million students had accessed online learning. However, children

with no access to television or internet; children from low-income families; young learners; Syrian students; children with disabilities; and migrant children, working children and other vulnerable children are observed to have benefited less than others. School closures also deprive children of opportunities for physical, emotional and cultural development, and weaken certain lines of their protection from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect.

shares where the target audience is mainly young people. In Turkey, we have been exposed to a lot of videos that have been circulating in recent days accompanied by quite low-level jokes about it. We've also witnessed many incidents of old people being demonized. For example, in a news report, we saw a woman over 65 lying in front of a public bus protesting the driver for not be taken in. Two people approaches and insults her by saying "get off, you filthy Corona!".

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Section 8.4: Media Coverage of Senior Citizens, women, and children during the pandemic

Senior citizens

The media are undoubtedly the largest cultural arena where social images and attitudes towards the elderly are formed. Despite the ageing of the global population, the elderly are misrepresented in the media. Experts need to warn the media about the discriminative language they are using, which should not be the basis of age-discrimination policy to combat the new Coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic.

They are victimized, by being represented lonely, incompetent, vulnerable, in need of care or even a burden on society.

Older adults are caricatured as either the subject of ridicule or 'the other', especially on social media

Women

In media content, the inability to achieve gender equality in a real sense indicates that women are excluded, stereotyped, and misrepresented and/or underrepresented. This, in turn, leads to the proliferation and strengthening of deep-rooted prejudices.

In other words, the media should be sensitive to reporting on women's rights during the pandemic period, reflect on their active role, support their participation in public debates, challenge gender stereotypes and allow women to be active in decision-making processes. Journalists should make the following suggestions.

- It is very important to be sensitive about gender equality, even to take priority over this issue.
- Not always negative and bad examples, but also

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positive and good examples should be shared.

- Journalists should personally report this issue to their editors or management when they determine that women's points of view are not represented.
- The right of women to participate and participate in news should be respected, for example, a database of women experts should be created, and if any, it should be expanded.
- Stereotypes should not be thrown into judicial traps, sexist language should not be used.
- Expert organizations should be consulted and questioned whether the crisis is managed fairly and correctly.

As one might see, the call to "stay at home, stay healthy" unfortunately turns into the risk of women "if you stay at home, you will be subjected to violence and maybe you will be killed" these days. The Ministry of family and Social Services, the Ministry of the Interior, law enforcement agencies, Women's Organisations, NGOs and the media should form a joint action plan together.

Section 8.5: Summary

Covid 19 was the biggest challenges to health equity. The protection of the most vulnerable groups the elderly and marginalized populations was a bet for the public health and social protection systems in the countries worldwide. The media have an important role to play in a public health crisis. They must warn the public opinion and call for support the public authorities for fair management of the challenges faced by all vulnerable groups and the socially excluded. The right to equal treatment is a right of all citizens.

Questions of Discussion, Case Studies, Exercises

Case Study Example: How do/must media represent the vulnerable groups: Children

As is known," children's rights " are the rights of individuals under the age of 18. The United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (PRC), adopted in 1989, defines everyone under the age of 18 as a child; the convention affirms that children have all human rights.

According to the convention, individuals under the age of 18 have these rights, regardless of race, religion, or ability, what they think or say, and whatever family they come from.

Not only in Turkey but all over the world, journalists, academics, representatives of NGOs and rights groups for a long time, are trying hard for more inclusive and equitable representation of the

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children in the media. The principles guided by the United Nations Convention on the rights of the children are aimed at journalists trying to report on children violence.

According to Turkish Journalists' Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities, in the criminal cases related to children, regardless of being victims, witnesses or defendants in sexual assault; full names and photographs of minors under the age eighteen should not be published. The journalist should not interview or attempt to capture images of the child without the consent of an elder or other person responsible for the child in situations that could affect the child's personality and behavior. In news about children, it is stated that it should be aimed to draw attention to the problem (www.tgc.org.tr).

Non-appropriate content and publications mostly affect the children whose physical and emotional reactions are being shaped by observing the environment. So the media professionals must be aware if the media content is ethical or not. (Holmes et al., 2020).

The media tend to focus more on criminal issues, particularly sexual and physical abuse, than on child neglect and psychological violence. This could change the public perception of the mistreatment of children. Social determinants such as poverty and social exclusion and structural maltreatment of approaches that can contribute to the protection of Public Health is being largely ignored, or at least to take the necessary measures to prevent damage and will prevent families cope.

Raising public awareness of children's rights is a must for the principle of social responsibility. The media protect children's rights and help to expose cases of sexual abuse, while also protecting children's rights to absolute privacy.

- A journalist should avoid reporting unnecessary details.

- In child abuse cases, intellectual follow-up news should be made.

- Journalists should not report cases of sexual abuse alone, they should seek answers to questions about what sexual abuse is, what to do, or when and where to get help.

- Information about the crime scene should be given to a certain degree, avoiding details.

Journalists who report on sexual abuse should be aware of what sexual abuse is, its consequences, consequences, and relevant legislation. If a child has been sexually abused by a father or mother, the parent's name should not be published. Follow up news should be made about the fate of criminals, victims/victims.

In our country, it is possible to list the following few examples of the questions that the media should ask;

- Is there any information sharing on rights seeking

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mechanisms and other supporting services necessary for children to protect themselves from domestic violence?

- What measures have been taken to protect the child from his relatives?

- Does the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice have a joint work plan with the media as well as with children's rights organizations working on this issue?

'What can be done to reduce the financial stress on parents who have lost jobs and income?

- Does Turkey fulfill the requirements of international conventions on sexual abuse cases and child violence?

In order to solve children's problems, there is a need to create an integrated child protection policy that will be prepared on the basis of rights, with the participation of experts and children. The first step to create it is to be persistent in the struggle. The second step is to raise adult awareness. Thirdly, to encourage, empower children and reproduce these works. As the fourth step, we also need to raise the children's rights movement. Because it is only possible to ensure that all this can happen by strengthening the children's rights.

Discussion Questions

Do you believe that othering creates processes of exclusion and dehumanisation, why? Give some examples.

Why and who do you otherise? How do you cope when someone makes you feel othered?

What is the impact of COVID-19 on children and vulnerable groups in your country?

Can you discuss the possible results of lockdown measures on the elderly people?

Do you have other more suggestions apart from the ones that are mentioned in the chapter concerning the media coverage of vulnerable groups?

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Chapter 9
Social Policies and the Media

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Aim

The aim of this chapter is to present the contemporary media landscape and analyze the consequences new media brought on the publicity itself in order an understanding of the way media cover EU policies towards vulnerable groups is get. The European Social Policies and especially the European Pillar of Social Rights are presented and analyzed so the relationship of their content and their goals with news values can be understood. Particular reference is made to the way in which events are evaluated in order to become news and to be prioritized in news bulletins.

Expected Learning Outcomes

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the European Union Social Policy and especially of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

To define and present new media.

To understand the contemporary media environment and the news values

To present the media coverage for EU policies.

Keywords

New media, European Union Social Policy, The European Pillar of Social Rights, news values, publicity, vulnerable groups.

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Section 9.1.: The European Social policy

The European Union, having already faced two major crises in the last 10 years, the economic crisis and the pandemic, but also facing the challenges of the climate crisis, migration flows, the widening of inequalities, the seduction of authoritarianism and the expansion of populism, but also the digital and green transition, set specific goals for a more social face to strength the unity of the Union towards the future. Aiming to "bring opportunities for all, irrespective of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation"1 the EU, in 2017, adopted the European Pillar of Social Rights. The aim is clearly expressed in the Preamble of the Pillar: "The Union shall combat social exclusion and discrimination, promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child".2 This aim, with different words, is also underlined in the European Commission's Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy for 2021: "The recovery and transition process needs to be fair for all Europeans to prevent growing inequalities, ensure support from all parts of the society and has to contribute to social, economic and territorial cohesion".3 To do so, "in light of the European Pillar of Social Rights, Member States should adopt measures to ensure equal opportunities, inclusive education, fair working conditions and adequate social protection. Together with demographic change, the green and digital transition require rethinking today's social protection systems and labour markets", suggests European Commission.

Vulnerable groups were heavily affected by the crisis. This is a fact that EU and especially the European Commission take in consideration. The Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy for 2021, includes the remark that "in addition to the youth, the crisis has disproportionately affected women, and the disadvantaged groups such as, low skilled people and people with disabilities and people with a minority racial or ethnic background."4 That's why European Commission points out "this will require substantial efforts to facilitate their access to the job market, for instance by addressing the labour market segmentation in many Member States, strengthening active labour market policies, but also by increasing the inclusiveness of the education systems. In this regard, equal access to high-quality education and training for disadvantaged groups is particularly important, to compensate for the fact that socio-economic background is currently the most important determinant of children and young

1 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS*, https://op.europa.eu/ webpub/empl/european-pillar-of-social-rights/en/#chapter1.

2 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RI*GHTS, Preamble, p. 4, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/social-summit-european-pillar-social-rights-booklet_en.pdf.

3 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION. Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy 2021, COM(2020) 575 final, Brussels, 17.9.2020, p. 7, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0575.

4 Ibid, p. 8.

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people's educational outcome"5.

Section 9.2 The European Pillar of Social Rights

The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission proclaimed the 'European Pillar of Social Rights' in November 17th 2017 at the Gothenburg Summit.6 It was President Jean-Claude Juncker who announced the establishment of a 'European Pillar of Social Rights' in his September 2015 State of the Union Address.7 Ursula von der Leyen, successor of President Junker, on January the 20th 2021, reaffirmed the commitment of EU to implement the Social Pillar.8

Of course, this is only the latest social policy concerning vulnerable groups. Inclusion of vulnerable groups was one of the priorities of the European Social Protection Social Inclusion Process also in 2010.9 Member States had committed to develop integrated and coordinated responses to the multiple disadvantages and the need of particular groups.

The European Union tried with a three-fold approach to overcoming discrimination and increasing the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups:

- increasing access to mainstream services and opportunities,
- enforcing legislation to overcome discrimination and, where necessary,
- developing targeted approaches to respond to the specific needs of each group.

But crisis and politics broadened inequalities, so a new approach of policies and willingness to address the problem had to be set. That was the 'European Pillar of Social Rights'. The Pillar sets out 20 key principles aiming to lead EU towards a strong social Europe that is fair and inclusive, ensuring equal opportunities for all and that no one is left behind.10 It is divided in three chapters depicting the social policies' core: 'Equal opportunities and access to the labour market', 'Fair working conditions' and 'Social protection and inclusion'. "Re-

5 ibid.

6 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *SOCIAL SUMMIT FAIR JOBS AND GROWTH FACTSHEETS*, https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/social-summit-fair-jobs-and-growth-factsheets_en.

7 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *State of the Union 2015*, https://ec.europa.eu/info/priorities/state-union-speeches/state-union-2015_en.

8 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *Speech by President von der Leyen at the European Parliament Plenary on the presentation of the programme of activities of the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU*, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_21_168.

9 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups*, https://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/2010againstpoverty/extranet/vulnerable_groups_en.pdf , EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion*, https://ec.europa.eu/social/home.jsp?langId=en.

10 EUROPEAN UNION, *European Pillar of Social Rights*, Publications Office, .

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ducing inequalities, defending fair wages, fighting social exclusion and tackling poverty, taking on the objective of fighting child poverty and addressing the risks of exclusion for particularly vulnerable social groups such as the long-term unemployed, the elderly, persons with disabilities and the homeless", are the Pillar's main goals as were reaffirmed in Porto Declaration on 8 May 202111.

Some principles refer to rights already present in the Union acquis; others set clear objectives for the course ahead as EU has to address the challenges arising from societal, technological and economic developments. The third Chapter has 10 policy priorities and rights the majority of which is focused on vulnerable groups12:

- **1. (11). Childcare and support to children**

Children have the right to affordable early childhood education and care of good quality.

Children have the right to protection from poverty. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds have the right to specific measures to enhance equal opportunities.

Related Commission action: The EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the European Child Guarantee

- **2. (12). Social protection**

Regardless of the type and duration of their employment relationship, workers, and, under comparable conditions, the self-employed, have the right to adequate social protection.

- **3. (13). Unemployment benefits**

The unemployed have the right to adequate activation support from public employment services to (re)integrate in the labour market and adequate unemployment benefits of reasonable duration, in line with their contributions and national eligibility rules. Such benefits shall not constitute a disincentive for a quick return to employment.

- **4. (14). Minimum income**

Everyone lacking sufficient resources has the right to adequate minimum income benefits ensuring a life in dignity at all stages of life, and effective access to enabling goods and services. For those who can work, minimum income benefits should be combined with incentives to (re)integrate into the labour market.

11 EUROPEAN COUNCIL, *The Porto declaration*, Press release, 8 May 2021, .

12 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *The European Pillar of Social Rights in 20 principles, Chapter III: Social protection and inclusion*, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/economy-works-people/jobs-growth-and-investment/european-pillar-social-rights/european-pillar-social-rights-20-principles_en#chapter-iii-social-protection-and-inclusion.

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- **5. (15). Old age income and pensions**

Workers and the self-employed in retirement have the right to a pension commensurate to their contributions and ensuring an adequate income. Women and men shall have equal opportunities to acquire pension rights.

Everyone in old age has the right to resources that ensure living in dignity.

- **6. (16). Health care**

Everyone has the right to timely access to affordable, preventive and curative health care of good quality.

- **7. (17). Inclusion of people with disabilities**

People with disabilities have the right to income support that ensures living in dignity, services that enable them to participate in the labour market and in society, and a work environment adapted to their needs.

Related Commission action: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030

- **8. (18). Long-term care**

Everyone has the right to affordable long-term care services of good quality, in particular home-care and community-based services.

- **9. (19). Housing and assistance for the homeless**

a. Access to social housing or housing assistance of good quality shall be provided for those in need.

b. Vulnerable people have the right to appropriate assistance and protection against forced eviction.

c. Adequate shelter and services shall be provided to the homeless in order to promote their social inclusion.

Related Commission action: European platform to combat homelessness

- **10. (20). Access to essential services**

Everyone has the right to access essential services of good quality, including water, sanitation, energy, transport, financial services and digital communications. Support for access to such services shall be available for those in need.

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Section 9.3. The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan

The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan13 is the way European Commission tries to implement measures and policies for the realization of the social targets set by the Pillar. Taking in consideration the scope, the Action Plan proposes three headline targets for the EU by 2030:14

Targets by 2030		
Target n. 1	**Target n. 2**	**Target n. 3**
at least 78% of the population aged 20 to 64 should be in employment by 2030	**at least 60% of all adults should be participating in training every year by 2030**	**a reduction of at least 15 million in the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion**

Where we stand		
The coronavirus crisis has put a halt on a six-year positive employment progress, with an employment rate of 72.4% by the third quarter of 2020.	By 2016, only 37% of adults were participating in learning activities every year.	In 2019, around 91 million persons (out of which 17.9 million were children aged 0-17) were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU.

What to do

Target n. 1 (employment):

"In order to achieve this overall goal, Europe must strive to:

- **at least halve the gender employment gap compared to 2019. This will be paramount to progress on gender equality and achieve the employment target for the entire working age population.**
- **increase the provision of formal early childhood education and care (ECEC), thus contributing to better reconciliation between professional and private life and supporting stronger female labour market participation.**
- **decrease the rate of young people neither in employment, nor in education or training (NEETs) aged 15-29 from 12.6% (2019) to 9%, namely by improving their employment prospects.**

Making sure other under-represented groups – e.g. older people, low skilled people, persons with disabilities, those living in rural and remote areas, LGBTIQ people, Roma people and other ethnic or racial minorities particularly at risk of exclusion or discrimination as well as those with a migrant background – participate in the labour market to the maximum of their capacity will also contribute to a more inclusive employment growth. People currently discouraged from actively seeking employment must be encouraged to participate in the labour market for it to rebound quickly."

Target n. 2 (lifelong learning):

"Increasing adult participation in training to 60% is paramount to improve employability, boost innovation, ensure social fairness and close the digital skills gap. Yet, by 2016 only 37% of adults were participating in learning activities each year. For the low-qualified adults this rate only reached 18%. A key factor of success to ensure that adults are able to engage in up- and reskilling later in life is a strong foundation of basic and transversal skills acquired in initial education and training, in particular among disadvantaged groups. In 2019, 10.2% of young people left education and training with maximum lower secondary education and were not anymore involved in education and

13 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan*, .

14 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan. Three EU targets to set the ambition for 2030*, https://op.europa.eu/webpub/empl/european-pillar-of-social-rights/en/#chapter2, EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS EMPTY. The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan*, COM(2021) 102 final, Brussels, 4.3.2021, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EL/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0102.

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training activities. These figures risk to worsen as a result of the current crisis. Efforts must therefore be strengthened to increase adult participation in training and to improve the levels of achievement in initial education and training. In particular:

- **at least 80% of those aged 16-74 should have basic digital skills, a precondition for inclusion and participation in the labour market and society in a digitally transformed Europe.**
- **early school leaving should be further reduced and participation in upper secondary education increased."**

Target n. 3 (reduction of poverty and social exclusion):

"Poverty and social exclusion have declined in the EU in the last decade. In 2019, around 91 million people (out of which 17.9 million were children aged 0-17) were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU, close to 12 million less than in 2008, and around 17 million less than the peak in 2012. Still, the ambitious Europe 2020 social target of a 20 million reduction was not met. The COVID-19 pandemic is expected to worsen the situation, leading to higher levels of financial insecurity, poverty and income inequality in the short term. Out of 15 million people to lift out of poverty or social exclusion, at least 5 million should be children. The focus on children will allow not only to provide them with access to new opportunities but will also contribute to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, preventing that they become adults at risk of poverty or social exclusion and thus producing long–term systemic effects."

Delivering the Pillar of Social Rights is a shared responsibility for the EU institutions, national, regional, and local authorities, social partners and civil society. But how these principals and policies are being communicated to European citizens? Citizens' perceptions of the European Union, its policies and institutions are influenced by what they see, hear and read in various media. So, do media include European Union's decisions in the news and when that happens? Does the possibility of sharing content from the related webpages is enough to inform European citizens about European social policies especially for vulnerable people? Taking in consideration the contemporary media landscape and news production and consumption procedure is the key factor to answer these and other questions about EU's media coverage.

Section 9.4.: The Contemporary Media Landscape

Digitization and ICTs

Digitization has been a major shift in technology and can be considered as another milestone in mankind's history after the invention of electricity. It constitutes the so called binary or digital revolution which has changed people's life and accelerated technological development by tremendously pace. The storage, processing, delivery and reception of information, which have been altered to digitized formats, are changing the notion of space and time as have been conceptualized during analogue procedures. Digital computers became the core of the growing 'informatization' of society where information is crucial and valuable. Information about everything and everybody, even about our personal life.15 "Computers

15 About information, this decisive element of our life, see: James Gleick, *The Information. A History. A Theory. A Flood*, Pantheon Books, New York 2011.

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have moved from being the stuff of science-fiction to the stuff of everyday life. They have shrunk to the size of a single character on the page of a book and have been built into everything from cars to cookers, and from mobile phones to shopping trolleys".16
The 'digital turn'17 was realized by the combination of computer and communication which is known as the information and communication technologies (ICTs): "The computer based technologies that have enabled the rapid, efficient and accurate processing of information and the communication of text, audio, graphics and video material".18
ICTs became the vehicle for decisive social, economic and political changes and have been embedded in our everyday life. It was only on 1998 when Thomas Friedman asked Silicon Valley cutting-edge technology companies how they measure power and he received the answer "in networks per capita". "Bandwidth"' and "'degree of Internet and especially World Wide Web connectivity'' -- were the measures of power in the Silicon Universe.19

The arise and expansion of cyberspace characterized the end of the 20th century and in the beginning of the 21st century, wireless technologies and applications shift the locus of ICT's from the desktop to a range of portable, handheld devices. Terms like mobile internet,20 portable internet, broadband mobile internet, next generation wireless services, MMS, SMS, selfie and so on are embedded in our everyday vocabulary. The forefront of this development is mobile phones devices which can been instantly transformed to camera, video camera, game station, PDA, laptop and cellular phone, all in one. 'Media convergence' has become reality on smart phones. This is the new media environment.

The New Media

Media convergence was the obvious technological course after the digitization and -once again- new media is born.21 But it is a new generation of new media. "Convergence has blurred distinctions between different kinds of media delivery technologies; broadcasting, communications, electronics, computing, and publishing technologies and

16 Neil Barrett, *The Binary Revolution*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London 2006, p. 13.

17 Term introduced respectively to 'linguistic turn' term. See Marina Rigou, *From digital revolution to digital surveillance. Public sphere and politics in the 'new media' era*, Sideris, Athens 2014, Greek edition.

18 Nicholas Abercombie/Brian Longhurst, *Dictionary of Media Studies*, Penguin, London, 2007, p. 178.

19 Thomas Friedman, "The Internet Wars", *The New York Times*, April 11, 1998, .

20 P. van der Duin and S. Un (eds.), "Mobile Internet", in *Trends in Communication*, v. 9, Boom Publishers, The Netherlands 2004.

21 About new media see among else Leah, Lievrouw/Sonia, Livingstone (edit.), *The Handbook of New Media*, Sage, London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi 2006, Terry Flew, *New Media*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2005, Randall Packer/Ken Jordan (edit.), *Multimedia. From Wagner to Virtual Reality*, foreword by William Gibson, W.W. Norton & Company, New York 2001.

industries have merged".22
Digitization and convergence are strongly linked to connectivity, interactivity and participation. And these are the new elements which characterize new media as so. Nicholas Negroponte had suggested that one of the things that make new media different from the old ones is that new media is based on the transmission of digital bits rather than physical atoms.23
Furthermore, it could be said that new media is the transition from the multimedia applications on PCs to multimedia applications on interconnected PCs and other digital technological platforms, with the ability of inter-communication among users.
A definition of new media could be the following: "New media encompass media which are digital, have the ability of interactivity, can store, process, deliver and receive content that combines and integrates data, text, sound, images and video, can embed different media forms, they are interconnected wireless or with cables and the microprocessor is the core of their function".24
New media changes the communication model from one-to-many-communication to many-to-many-communication.25 "Never before have so many people been connected through an instantly responsive network; the possibilities for collective action through communal online platforms (as consumers, creators, contributors, activists and in every other way) are truly game-changing". 26
The digital revolution has opened new ways for telling and sharing stories. Interaction is facilitated by hypertext environments and the structure of Web 2.0 which is also known as 'participatory Web' contributes exponentially to users' participation in this cyber-world. This second phase of World Wide Web, based on broadband connections and the turn to "the internet as platform"27 which occurred, allows users to interact, share and collaborate. Tim Berners Lee has pointed out the simplicity of editing which Web 2.0 enables, a fact that

22 Lyn Gorman and David McLean, *Media and Society in the Twentieth Century. An historical introduction*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2003, p. 186

23 Nicholas Negroponte, *Being Digital*, Vintage Books, New York, 1996, p. 11-17.

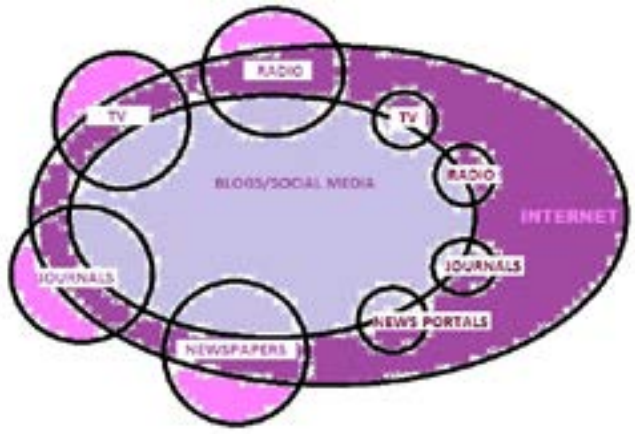
24 Marina Rigou, *From Digital Revolution to Digital Surveillance. New Media, Publicity and Politics*, Sideris editions, Athens 2014, p. 205, Greek edition.

25 Michalis Meimaris, "Contribution and limits of the new technologies to the international and the Greek communication environment", in: Panagiotopoulou, R/Rigopoulou, P./Rigou, M./Notaris, S. (edit.): *The 'construction' of reality and the Mass Media*, Alexandrea, Athens 1998, p. 228, Greek edition.

26 Eric Schmidt/ Jared Cohen, *The New Didital Age. Reshaping the Future of People, Nations and Business*, John Murray, London 2013, p. 10.

27 Tim O'Reilly, "Web 2.0 Compact Definition: Trying Again", December 10, 2006, .

transformed Web to a creative medium.28
The simplicity of uploading and editing content as well the easy way of producing content by the use of digital devices, have driven to the expansion of blogs and social networking sites in general. Blogosphere and social networks



The new 'refeudalization' of the public sphere

The 'new media' and the global networks' 'information superhighway'30 have been associated with the right to freedom of expression and the right to information. As for the users of the aforementioned media and networks, not only do they have access to a potentially infinite amount of data and information, but they can also readily upload digital content thanks to platforms and software programs that, as mentioned above, are constantly becoming easier to use.
Undoubtedly, the emergence and the subsequent development of the internet and the new media have contributed to a novel structural transformation of the public sphere, by virtue of the users' multilayered interactive communication and content production on the one hand, and the existence of alternative sources of information on the other.
Be that as it may, even though the changes that occurred in the contemporary public sphere, due to the 'digital turn' and to the emergence of new media, resulted in an expansion of current modes of public engagement, as well as in a historically unprecedented opportunity for citizens to participate in public discourse —thereby defining a second structural transformation of the public sphere,— the same media that contributed to this 'democratization' of the public sphere have also made total social control and mass surveillance much easier, and they have led to a restructuring of the publicity model itself and, consequently, to its 're-refeudalization'.
Thus, I assert that just as Habermas had

28 Mark Lowson, "Berners-Lee on the read/write web", *BBC*, 9 August 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/ hi/ technology/4132752.stm.

29 Marina Rigou, *From Digital Revolution to Digital Surveillance: New Media, Publicity and Politics*, Sideris, Athens 2014, Greek edition, p. 323

30 This term, which was particularly popular in the 1990s, is attributed to the former Congressman, and the 45th Vice President of the United States, Al Gore, who was amongst the first to realize the significance of developing the internet and played a continued role in promoting the expanded use of information technology.

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discerned the structural transformation of the public sphere and its 'refeudalization'31 when it became dominated by an expanded state and by organized economic interest groups, so has the appearance of new media initially led to a second structural transformation of the public sphere and in its ensuing 're-refeudalization'.32

A key factor in this development is the fact that information33 has been raised to the status of the most valuable asset, as far as both the commercial and the political markets of modern societies are concerned, hence the attempts to control information have greatly intensified. The right to privacy is crushed under the tracking practices applied in the new media environment, thus paving the way to either the relativization of freedom of expression, or even to the utter deprivation of individual civil liberties, depending on the political conditions. As David Lyon contends, in regard to surveillance in the digital era, "in terms of pervasiveness and intensity [...] surveillance is certainly amplified by electronics. [...] And we participate with it, routinely, often unconsciously, as the self-disciplined bearers of our own surveillance."34

Fake news

Beyond the surveillance procedure, the unaccountability of "fake news" and the barbarity of the headlines commendation relativize the freedom of expression that falls into obscene words which obviously does not constitute a free and reliable dialogue, whereas anonymity on the user level35 facilitates the expression of opinion without any accountability and responsibility. Hence, words such as "bullying "and "trolls" were added in the world of blogs and social media. In regard to fake news, during the 20th century, long before the advent of the new media, many a time have the traditional media been accused of distorting reality, which led to them facing a crisis of credibility. But new media, contributed to the multiply of fake news presence in the cyberspace, on the one hand, because of the exponential multiplication of the news possibility and, on the other hand, because of the multiplication of content

31 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Polity Press, Cambridge 1989.

32 Marina Rigou, *From Digital Revolution to Digital Surveillance: New Media, Publicity and Politics*, Sideris, Athens 2014, Greek edition.

33 For more on information, on its history and its dominance see, amongst others, James Gleick, *The Information: A History, a Theory, a Flood*, Pantheon Books, New York 2011.

34 David Lyon, *The Electronic Eye. The rise of Surveillance Society*, Polity Press, Cambridge 1994, p. 353.

35 In case of a warrant or an ICT specialist search, the tracking of the user is feasible, though on a first level of everyday use anonymity is maintained as long as the user wishes to.

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sources. But mainly because the simulant power of the new technologies today is much stronger.

Fake news was the term Donald Trump liked to use whenever something was expressed against him. The 2016 American Presidential elections are remembered as those of Facebook,36 and of fake news37 thanks to Trump. In 2017 Collins Dictionary's lexicographers, who monitor the 4.5bn-word Collins corpus, said that usage of the term "fake news" had increased by 365% since 2016. So "fake news" has been named word of the year by Collins. The dictionary defines fake news as false, often sensational, information disseminated under the guise of news reporting.38

In a Communication released on 26 April 2018, the European Commission put forward an action plan to tackle online disinformation in Europe and ensure the protection of European values and democratic systems.39 In that Communication, European Commission defined "fake news" as "a simplification of the complex problem of disinformation. Disinformation can be understood as false information deliberately created and spread to influence public opinion or obscure the truth. Disinformation does not include journalistic errors, satire, or parody".40 The Commission proposed an EU-wide Code of Practice on Disinformation, support for an independent network of fact-checkers, and tools to stimulate quality journalism.

The fake news and disinformation tactics were not used solely during the campaign for the United States presidential election of 2016. The same year, online manipulation

36 Sue Halpern, "How He Used Facebook to Win," *The New York Review of Books*, VOLUME 64, NUMBER 10, June 8, 2017, http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/06/08/how-trump-used-facebook-to-win/.

37 Claire Wardle, Hossein Derakhshan, "Information Disorder: Towards an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making," *Council of Europe report* DGI(2017)09, September 27, 2017, https://edoc.coe.int/en/media-freedom/7495-information-disorder-toward-an-interdisciplin ary-framework-for-research-and-policy-making.html, EUROPEAN COMMISSION, "A multi-dimensional approach to disinformation," Report of the independent High level Group on fake news and online disinformation, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg 2018, Rasmus Kleis Nielsen and Lucas Graves, "'News you don't believe': Audience perspectives on fake news," *Factsheet Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*, University of Oxford, October 2017, https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-10/Nielsen%26Graves_factsheet_1710v3_FINAL_download.pdf, Marina Rigou,"Fake News and the Politics of Post-truth: The Dark Side of Publicity in the Era of Social Networking Sites," paper delivered at the Symposium of the Research Network for the Analysis of Political Discourse, which is part of the Hellenic Political Science Association, "Antagonisms and 'Regimes of Truth' in Contemporary Political Discourse: Post-truth, Fake News and Propaganda," December 15-16, 2017, Athens.

38 Collins Dictionary, *Definition of 'fake news'*, https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/ fake-news.

39 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *Factsheet on Tackling online disinformation*, .

40 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *Digital Single Market. Tackling the Spread of Disinformation Online,* https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=51605.

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and disinformation were used in at least 18 other countries during elections.41 After all, according to the results of the Eurobarometer Survey in 2018, fake news is widely spread across the EU, with more than eight in ten respondents (85%) think that the existence of fake news is a problem in their country, at least to some extent. A similar proportion (83%) says that it is a problem for democracy in general.42 In 2022, Eurobarometer Survey indicates "over a quarter of respondents (28%) think that, in the past seven days, they have very often or often been exposed to disinformation and fake news. Respondents in Bulgaria are overall the most likely to reply that they have often been exposed to disinformation and fake news in the past seven days, with 55% estimating they have been 'very often' or 'often' exposed, while respondents in the Netherlands are the least likely to say so (3% 'very often' and 9% 'often' responses).43

The Media and the Pubic in EU

The July 2022 Eurobarometer Survey shows, public TV and radio stations are the most trusted news source in the EU (49%), followed by written press (39%) and private TV and radio stations (27%).

Television dominates as the primary news source with 75%, particularly for citizens over 55 years old. Next and quite distant are online news platforms (43%), radio (39%), and social media platforms and blogs (26%). The written press comes in fifth place with one out of five respondents (21%) citing newspapers and magazines as their primary news source. Younger respondents on the other hand are much more likely to use social media platforms and blogs to access news (46% of 15-24 year-olds vs 15% of 55+ year-olds). Although traditional news sources – particularly television – are important, 88% of respondents get at least some news online via their smartphone, computer or laptop. 43% of respondents use the website of the news source (e.g. website of a newspaper) to access news online, and 31% read articles or posts that appear in their online social networks.44 As social media activities concern, 49% of the respondents reply they use these media for

41 Sanja Kelly, Mai Truong, Adrian Shahbaz, Madeline Earp, and Jessica White, *Freedom on the Net 2017: Manipulating Social Media to Undermine Democracy*, Freedom House, November 2017, https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FOTN_2017_Final.pdf.

42 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, "Fake news and disinformation online," *Flash Eurobarometer 464*, Fieldwork February 2018, Publication April 2018, http://cyberpolicy.nask.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Flash-Eurobarometer-464_en.pdf, p. 7, The official portal for European data, Directorate-General for Communication, *Flash Eurobarometer 464: Fake News and Disinformation Online*, https://data.europa.eu/data /datasets/s2183_464_eng?locale=en.

43 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, *EU citizens trust traditional media most, new Eurobarometer survey finds*, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20220704IPR34401/eu-citizens-trust-traditional-media-most-new-eurobarometer-survey-finds.

44 ibid.

communication purposes – to send direct messages to friends and family – and 45% for information purposes – to stay updated on the news and current events.

The news consumption

Having a look around the world, interest in news and overall news consumption has declined considerably in many countries while trust has fallen back almost everywhere – though it mostly remains higher than before the Coronavirus crisis began, as the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2022 shows. 45
We're also seeing news fatigue setting in – not just around COVID-19 but around politics and a range of other subjects – with the number of people actively avoiding news increasing markedly.
On average, around four in ten of the total sample (42%) say they trust most news most of the time. Finland remains the country with the highest levels of overall trust (69%), while news trust in the USA has fallen by a further three percentage points and remains the lowest (26%) in the survey.
Consumption of traditional media, such as TV and print, declined further in the last year in almost all markets (pre-Ukraine invasion), with online and social consumption not making up the gap. While the majority remain very engaged, others are turning away from the news media and in some cases disconnecting from news altogether. Interest in news has fallen sharply across markets, from 63% in 2017 to 51% in 2022.
Meanwhile, the proportion of news consumers who say they avoid news, often or sometimes, has increased sharply across countries. This type of selective avoidance has doubled in both Brazil (54%) and the UK (46%) over the last five years, with many respondents saying news has a negative effect on their mood. A significant proportion of younger and less educated people say they avoid news because it can be hard to follow or understand.
In European Union, while national political topics interest citizens most (selected by 50% of respondents), European and international affairs (46%) is closely behind, on a par with local news (47%), the July 2022 Eurobarometer Survey finds. 72% of respondents reply that they have recently read, seen or heard about the European Union, either in the press, on the Internet, television or radio.46 Of course we must take in consideration that, as it is expected, during the economic crisis, the refugee/migrants flows, the pandemic and the Ukrainian war crisis followed by energy

45 Nic Newman et al., *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2022*, , Nic Newman, *Overview and key findings of the 2022 Digital News Report*, https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2022/dnr-executive-summary.

46 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, *EU citizens trust traditional media most, new Eurobarometer survey finds*, Press Releases, 12-07-2022, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20220704IPR 34401/eu-citizens-trust-traditional-media-most-new-eurobarometer-survey-finds.

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crisis, European Union and especially European policies dealing with the crises' consequences have a place in the news.
Given that, usually, crises primary target to or create vulnerable groups, news about crises more or less includes news about vulnerable groups: for example news about the fate of refugees or about the situation of the poverty stricken part of the population. Of course that depends on how journalists -and media- make decisions on what gets covered or not. So which are the criteria used to assess newsworthiness? The answer given by PBS is in the following box.47

PBS GUIDE	
1. Timeliness	**Immediate, current information and events are newsworthy because they have just recently occurred. It's news because it's "new."**
2. Proximity	**Local information and events are newsworthy because they affect the people in our community and region. We care more about things that happen "close to home."**
3. Conflict and Controversy	**When violence strikes or when people argue about actions, events, ideas or policies, we care. Conflict and controversy attract our attention by highlighting problems or differences within the community**
4. Human Interest	**People are interested in other people. Everyone has something to celebrate and something to complain about. We like unusual stories of people who accomplish amazing feats or handle a life crisis because we can identify with them.**
5. Relevance	**People are attracted to information that helps them make good decisions. If you like to cook, you find recipes relevant. If you're looking for a job, the business news is relevant. We need depend on relevant information that helps us make decisions.**

In 1973, Johan Galtung and Marie Holmboe Ruge developed the first model of conceptual news values and Pamela J. Shoemaker et al. followed up with a similar model in 1987.48 The two models are presented in the following

47 PBS News hour, *What is Newsworthy?* https://www.pbs.org/newshour/classroom/app/uploads/ 2013/11/What-is-Newsworthy-Worksheet.pdf.

48 Purdue Online Writing Lab, *The Components of "Newsworthiness"*, https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/ subject_specific_ writing/journalism_and_journalistic_writing/components_of_newsworthiness.html.

boxes.

GATLUNG AND RUGE, 1973	
1. Relevance	How relevant is a news story to the audience in question? For example, a California earthquake is almost always more relevant to a West Coast audience than to an audience in Calcutta.
2. Timeliness	How recently did the event unfold? Timing is of the utmost importance in today's 24-hour news cycle. Recent events, or events in the making, are most likely to lead the news.
3. Simplification	Stories that can be easily simplified or summarized are likely to be featured more prominently than stories that are convoluted or difficult to understand.
4. Predictability	Certain events, such as elections, major sporting events, astrological events, and legal decisions, happen on a predictable schedule. As the event draws closer, it typically gains news value.
5. Unexpectedness	On the other hand, events like natural disasters, accidents, or crimes are completely unpredictable. These events are also likely to have significant news value.
6. Continuity	Some events, such as war, elections, protests, and strikes, require continuing coverage. These events are likely to remain in the news for a long time, although not always as the lead story.
7. Composition	Editors have to keep in mind the big picture —the sum of all content in their media outlet. For this reason, an editor might select soft human interest stories to balance out other hard-hitting, investigative journalism.
8. Elite People	Certain individuals, like politicians, entertainers, and athletes, are considered, by virtue of their status, more newsworthy. If someone throws a shoe at an everyday person, it's probably not news. If someone throws a shoe at the President of the United States, it will likely be in the news for weeks.

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9. Elite Countries	**Famine, drought, and national disasters are more likely to draw attention if they are happening in wealthy, developed countries than if they are happening in developing countries.**
10. Negativity	**Generally speaking, editors deem bad news more newsworthy than good news.**

SHOEMAKER ET AL., 1987	
1. Timeliness	**Shoemaker et al. also recognize timeliness as a critical news value.**
2. Proximity	**Similar to Gatlung and Ruge's "Relevance." The closer an event takes place to the intended audience, the more important it is. This is why huge local or regional stories might not make the national news.**
3. Importance, impact, or consequence	**How many people will the event impact? Issues like climate change have become big news in recent years precisely because environmental changes affect the entire planet.**
4. Interest	**Does the story have any special human interest? For example, the inspirational story of a person overcoming large odds to reach her goal appeals to a fundamental human interest.**
5. Conflict or Controversy	**Similar to Gatlung and Ruge's "Negativity." Editors generally deem conflict more newsworthy than peace.**
6. Sensationalism	**Sensational stories tend to make the front pages more than the everyday.**
7. Prominence	**Similar to Gatlung and Ruge's "Elite People." The actions of prominent people are much more likely to make the news than non-public figures.**
8.Novelty, oddity, or the unusual	**Strange stories are likely to find their way into the news. Dog bites man—no story. Man bites dog—story.**

How could news be defined? "News is that part of communication that keeps us informed of the changing events, issues, and characters in the world outside. Though it may be interesting or even entertaining, the foremost value of news is

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as a utility to empower the informed. The purpose of journalism is thus to provide citizens with the information they need to make the best possible decisions about their lives, their communities, their societies, and their governments".49 In other words, news includes information on social, political, economic and cultural life so that people can understand the conditions of their existence in society and especially in the state as citizens.50 It should be emphasized that effective participation in the Democratic political process presupposes the information of the citizens about everything that determines the political-economic and social conditions of their existence.

Under that perspective, do vulnerable groups constitute a newsworthy story? Moreover are EU social policies towards vulnerable groups newsworthy? What happens when it's not about a crisis and its severe consequences on vulnerable groups but about the life circumstances of people with disabilities, ethnic minorities (including Roma), homeless people, ex-prisoners, drug addicts, people with alcohol problems, isolated older people and children. The problems these groups experience are translated into homelessness, unemployment, low education, and subsequently, their further exclusion from society. Are all these parts of media news storytelling?

Section 9. 4. Vulnerable Groups and EU Social Policies towards them in the media

There is no doubt media can play a crucial role in empowering vulnerable groups providing a channel for marginalized people to discuss and voice their perspectives on the issues that most concern them.

Traditional media such as television, radio and newspapers have stories about vulnerable groups when one or more of the aforementioned criteria is/are in force. The more of these criteria a story satisfies, the more likely is to be included in mass media outlets. Timeliness is usually the main criterion combined with the importance for the general public (importance, impact, or consequence). The same applies to European policies for vulnerable groups.

The difference concerning European policies is that EU has special media policies promoting everything done in Brussels or in Strasbourg. The European Parliament Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM) communicates the work carried out by its Members. Its core duty is to raise awareness about the European Union activities and decisions among media, stakeholders and the general pub-

49 American Press Institute, *What is the purpose of journalism?* https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/journalism-essentials/what-is-journalism/purpose-journalism/. See also, Bill Kovach, Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*, Three Rivers Press, New York 2007.

50 Marina Rigou, *From Digital Revolution to Digital Surveillance: New Media, Publicity and Politics*, Sideris, Athens 2014, pp. 288-289, Greek edition.

lic.51 European Commission has a Directorate-General for Communication too (DG COMM). It is "the Commission department responsible for explaining EU policies to outside audiences".52 Among other responsibilities, European Commission Directorate-General for Communication communicates to the media and public on political priorities and topics of political importance and/or public interest and run pan-European campaigns on the priorities of the European Union. So, it is more likely that EU policies on vulnerable groups will find a place in news reports than the problems of vulnerable groups themselves. However, the presentation of policies can provoke a debate on the problems faced by vulnerable groups.

On the other hand, new media can enable direct communication bypassing the gatekeepers of traditional media as has been already analyzed above. But it is doubtful whether members of vulnerable groups can access the new media. Certainly, however, non-governmental organizations and those interested in problems and policies aimed at the relief and integration of vulnerable groups can use the possibilities of new media to reach the public and make known the issues that concern vulnerable groups.

Nevertheless, during the crises, media had focused on vulnerable groups' problems and on EU policies towards these groups because of the crises consequences intensity. Extreme low income, unemployment, homelessness, and a growing social fringe were problems that EU policies had to deal with. Media followed the EU agenda. All European Union policies dealing with major crises were covered by the media and found a place in the news reports. Moreover, they were de facto fully compatible with the evaluation criteria for the inclusion of themes in the news bulletins. They concerned everyday life and the future of citizens, they were very important for the course of societies. And in the face of creating new margins and widening the older ones, European policy has emphasized "leaving no one behind". So did the media.

Section 9.5: Policies evaluation and conclusions

Taking into account the above mentioned, it is certain that the European Union had to address the socio-economic consequences and the widening fringe because of the crises Union has and still facing. The European Pillar of Social Rights, adopted in 2017, is an effort to "bring opportunities for all, irrespective of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation"53. Its contribution to the everyday life of people belong-

51 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, *Directorate-General for Communication*, .

52 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *DIRECTORATE-GENERAL. Communication*, https://ec.europa.eu/info/ departments/communication_en

53 EUROPEAN COMMISSION, *EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS*, https://op.europa.eu/ webpub/empl/european-pillar-of-social-rights/en/#chapter1.

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ing to vulnerable groups still to be proven but it was an absolutely necessary policy shift for the Union's true unity and compatibility with the EU values. In addition, the effectiveness of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan and the intention of the member states to implement the policies for vulnerable groups should be assessed.

As for the media, it is obvious that during the crises they referred to European Union policies which, given the circumstances, aimed at relieving vulnerable groups. The inclusion of European policies towards vulnerable groups in news and other broadcasting news programs and in the Press is considered self-evident for the additional reason that these developments constitute what is defined as news and the media tend to cover.

In an environment of normality, a rather unlikely situation in the near future, new media can contribute to the inclusion of policies for vulnerable groups in the news agenda, but mainly on the part of NGOs and concerned citizens sensitized to issues of vulnerable groups.

Questions of Discussion, Case Studies, Exercises

Case study I: Evaluation of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan

Case study II: Vaccination and misinformation

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SOCIAL POLICIES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS AND THE MEDIA

Chapter 10
Gender Equality and the Media

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Henri Matisse - Lorette with Turban and Yellow Jacket, 1917

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Chapter 10
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Aim

The aim of the present chapter is to identify the concept, forms, and groups affected by gender inequality in media.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. **To gain a deep understanding of the main concepts related to gender equality in media**
2. **To be able to recognize the groups affected due to gender inequality**
3. **To gain an understanding of the forms of gender-based violence in media**
4. **To have tools to promote gender equality in journalistic work**

Keywords

Gender equality, media representation, women in media, gender-based violence

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Section 10.1: Introduction

Gender equality refers to equal rights of sexes; their needs, responsibilities, opportunities, and access to resources. Equality of sexes is a human right and a precondition for sustainable development. (European Institute for Gender Equality., 2020) Gender equality is the United Nations Sustainable development goal 5 (SGD 5) and aims to "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" (UN, 2015). Even though gender equality is strongly tied to womens' and girls' rights (UNICEF, 2022) (UN, 2015), it affects and includes all gender identities (male, female, a blend of both, or neither) (European Institute for Gender Equality., 2020).

One of the SGD 5 targets is ending violence and exploitation of women and girls (UN 2015). Gender-based violence (GBV) is one of the most widespread human rights violations, and it affects not only those who are targeted by it but also the whole society (Council of Europe, 2019). GBV refers to instances where gender is the root cause of violence. Men and LGBT+ people can also suffer and be targeted with gender-based violence, even though GBV is often used in parallel with gender-based violence against women. GBV can happen in many forms: sexual, physical, verbal, psychological (emotional), or socio-economic, and it can be perpetrated by anyone (Council of Europe, 2019). Gender-based violence is not limited to countries with low levels of gender equality. For example, in Nordic countries which are rated as some of the world's most gender-equal nations, intimate partner violence against women (IPVAW) is alarmingly common (Karlsson et al., 2021).

Media has a vital role in shaping the representation of genders and ensuring their equal visibility in the media. The stereotyped portrayal of genders in media can serve as the basis of discrimination and even lead to gender-based violence (European Institute for Gender Equality., 2020). Vocabulary, illustration, stereotyped roles, and storylines define or at least influence public opinion and topics brought into public discussion. This chapter concentrates on the role of media as the promoter of gender equality and how inequality is rooted in the structures of the media industry. The media has a strong opportunity to fight against GBV and shape public opinion and understanding by carefully considering the methods they present, headline, illustrate and keep up the discussion about it.

Section 10.2: Gender equality in media

Mass media affects our thoughts and behavior (Segal and Demos, 2019) and according to studies, it plays an essential role in defining how individuals see themselves and others (Luther et al., 2018). Media has an enormous potential to mitigate or reinforce stereotypes in which sexes are presented in the media and advertising. According to studies by the European Institute of Gender Equality, there is still work to be done to reach gender equality in the media. (European Institute for Gender Equality., 2020) In all sectors of media (news, television,

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films, video games, etc.) genders are represented in stereotyped roles. Women for example are more likely to be referenced as physically attractive, represented in sexually revealing attire, partially or fully naked, or otherwise sexualized. However, streaming and on-demand services seem to have improved the portrayal of gender and the visibility of LGBTQI characters (European Institute for Gender Equality., 2020) .

In the news sector, women's visibility is still only 25 % (European Institute for Gender Equality., 2020) (GMMP, 2020, 8) even though the number has increased within the past decade. Men in news stories are more often experts, professionals, and commentators, especially in so-called hard journalism such as political and business journalism, and women are presented as private people telling their personal experiences or representing popular opinion (GMMP, 2020, 8). The interest in addressing gender equality-related topics is still very low which may be connected to the fact that the number of women in professional media decision-making roles is also very low. In general, women are well presented among newsroom professionals but the gender-based professional roles have not changed much within the past 20 years (GMMP, 2020, 9). Fortunately, employers have realized the importance and the benefit of having a diverse staff and management. Even though there has been a positive development in gender equality in the media field, and women are more often seen in different positions in the media industry, women's overall career paths as journalists still pose a serious challenge (Balczyńska-Kosman, 2017).

Female journalists and media professionals face depreciation, stereotypical and conventional roles, and even harassment in their work. In the worst case, women presenters or anchors are expected to look extremely attractive instead of credible and professional. Equal remuneration, a safe working environment, a policy preventing sexual harassment or mobbing, flexible work forms, and all employees' access to maternity/paternity leave or childcare leave are key elements in creating a more equal professional environment in the media field (Balczyńska-Kosman, 2017).

Sexualization, objectification, and emphasis on beauty and looks expose women to critique that is not related to their professional skills or the content of their work. Instead, they are subjected to sexual harassment, humiliation, and image-based sexual abuse. Social media platforms pose special challenges for female journalists: they are at a higher risk of different forms of online gender-based violence, such as cyberstalking, hacking, impersonation, and cyberbullying. These are attempts to silence women and attack their basic human right to participate in public conversation (European Institute for Gender Equality., 2020).

Section 10.3: Gender-based violence in the media

Media is a priority area for action on preventing gender-based violence because of its potential to

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influence public opinion and understanding. It is important how and who is selected to be presented in the media and how the people and the topics are portrayed. The mechanism that media influences the audience and their opinion is not very clear, but undoubtedly the way the information, phenomena, individuals, or topics are structured and presented can increase the understanding of gender-based violence (Sutherland et al., 2015). Several studies show that only a small proportion of GBV cases are reported in media and when they make the news, they are often reported as random acts by individuals (often male) with a social abnormality or mental illness. Furthermore, the cases are sensationalized, which means that the violence is described as bizarre and shocking, which emphasizes the picture of GBV as unusual and abnormal rather than commonplace. (Hart and Gilbertson, 2018)

Gendered, racialized, and classed social hierarchy and national identity influence the way GBV cases are represented in media. (Hart and Gilbertson, 2018) It is important for the media professionals to understand that structural discrimination and oppression can amplify the victim's experiences of violence and therefore vulnerable groups (elderly, refugees, LGBTIQ+, people with disabilities) are disproportionately affected by GBV (Our Watch, 2019). In other words, gender-based violence against people experiencing multiple forms of discrimination is more likely to be condoned. For example, violence, controlling relationships, or lack of equal access to education and work opportunities is being thought of as 'part of someone's culture', women from immigrant backgrounds are targeted and promoted for sex tourism or that age or disability would justify the violence (Our Watch, 2019).

As described earlier, gender-based violence can occur in different forms. The appropriate and sensitive reporting of different forms of violence depends on the groups affected and the problems they are facing when presented in the media. The following presents some examples of GBV and their media coverage issues.

1.3.1 Early Marriage, Child Marriage, or Forced Marriage

Early marriage or child marriage refers to any formal marriage or informal union between a child under the age of 18 and an adult or another child. According to UNICEF 12 million girls marry before the age of 18 and even though boys are also married as children, girls are disproportionately affected by child marriage (UNICEF, 2021). These marriages are a threat to child health and often lead to early pregnancies and dropping out of school, which leads to problems in employment, poverty, and subordination to their male relatives (UNESCO, 2019). Forced marriages refer to the imposition of a marriage on a non-consenting individual. Child marriages are forced marriages because the consent of the child is often given under social or emotional pressure. Forced marriages can involve violence, physical threats, or emotional blackmail

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(UNICEF, 2021).

Child marriages and forced marriages do not make the headlines very often. When they do, the media representations of child marriages are often problematic, sensationalist, and marginalizing discourse while focusing on individualized stories of girls' terrorized lives. (Atakav, 2020) The stories focus on the traditional and cultural issues rather than on the consequences of child marriages. (Nancy, 2018) Forced marriages are also presented in a stigmatized and stereotyped manner.

1.3.2 Sexual harrassment, sexual assault, and rape

Sexual violence in all of it's forms is abuse of power. Sexual violence in general is an issue tied to social systems and structural systems (Pollino, 2020). Sexual violence includes all engaging in non-consensual acts of a sexual nature, physical or verbal. (Council of Europe, 2019) Most of the verbal gender based violence against women and LTGB+ people is sexualised and is related to stereotyped gender roles: commenting and joking about gender or sexuality and presenting the victims as sex objects (Council of Europe, 2019).

The misrepresentation of sexual violence in society is problematic and part of the problem is how media represents this issue. Term 'rape culture' describes this society's tendency to tolerate, legitimize or ignore the sexual violence and media shapes the public opinion and discussion about it. Similarly, to other forms of GBV the reporting of sexual violence tends to shift the responsibility away from larger structural issues, that enable male violence. In practice this means for example questioning the survivor's integrity instead of the felon, for example stating that the survivor caused the assault with their behavior, appearance or claiming that the survivor is lying (Pollino, 2020).

Media portrayals can influence the way the public responds to sexual violence incidents, and help the public to understand the reasons, causes, effects and forms of sexual violence. It is important that all types of sexual violence would be presented as something that can be prevented. Language and illustration should be considered so that they do not place blame on survivors, diminish their experiences, mix together consensual sex acts and violence or sensationalize the act in general. (NSVRC, 2022) Media should expand the public understanding beyond the sensational and unusual sexual assaults to various forms of sexual assault.

1.3.3 Violence by an intimate partner and domestic violence

Violence in intimate relationships, or domestic violence as it is often called, is a widespread issue in almost every country. Violence by an intimate partner does not affect only the parties involved in a current relationship but all the members of the domestic unit, between former or current spouses, partners' families, and people closest to them:

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children, parents, siblings, and so on. Witnessing the abuse is also harmful and bystanders might get involved or even injured, sometimes accidentally or because they try to intervene in the situation (Council of Europe, 2019)

In media the violence by intimate partners tends to be presented as individual and isolated instances instead of a structural issue of the entire society. The gendered nature of this form of violence disappears and it is not seen as a form of violence against women. (Simons and Morgan, 2018) Perpetrators are pathologized and excused by referring to alleged mitigating issues such as mental illness, deviant personality, temper, intoxication, personal life situation or social problems. Reporting of domestic violence has a tendency to othering and is often falsely attached to immigration, cultural differences or traditions (such as so-called honor killings) (Karlsson et al., 2021).

Media portrayals of violence by intimate partners would require more structural understanding and discussion about gender inequalities in the society. News articles and cases should be placed in context with expert commentary, statistics or guidance to helplines. Pathologizing or excusing of the perpetrators allow the audience to keep a distance to the phenomena and not ask for societal change (Karlsson et al., 2021).

1.3.4 Trafficking in persons

It could be said that victims of trafficking are some of the most vulnerable human beings on the planet. These millions of people who often suffer from slavery and child labour or are migrant workers are in such vulnerable position in the first place that telling their stories require sensitive and careful consideration. Harmful and inconsiderate reporting of victims of human trafficking can enhance stereotypes, ignorance, hatred or even put the victims in more danger (ICMPD, 2017).

The public understanding of human trafficking often comes from the media, as few of us have personal experience of the phenomenon. The most often reported form of trafficking in persons, or human trafficking, is trafficking targeting immigrants or women. Instead human trafficking is a wide phenomena of exploitation and violations of human rights, such as criminal networks organizing forced labor, migrant smuggling, domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, slavery, removal of organs, etc. (ICMPD, 2017).

The media coverage of trafficking in persons should be structured so that it is compassionate, sensitive, careful, fact-based and solution oriented. The focus of the media should be on the root causes of trafficking in persons and creating public debate around the topic and its possible solutions.

Section 1.4: Promoting gender equality in the media

Strong media reporting on GBV can influence public policy and legislation, the way perpetrators understand their own choices to use violence, and

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maybe most importantly, support the victims of such violence to understand their own experiences of violence and their rights to take action or seek support (Our Watch, 2019).

UNESCO's "Reporting on Violence against Women and Girls - A Handbook for Journalists" (UNESCO, 2019) lists general recommendations for reporting GBV.

- Theme is under-represented and some forms of GBV are even invisible. This weakens gender equality in the media. Try to bring out the underlying mechanisms and structural problems.
- Change the reporting angles from sensational headlines to more analytic and discussion-oriented topics.
- Keep with the facts and avoid diminishing the responsibility of the perpetrator.
- Use considerate language and illustrations.
- Provide solution oriented and practical information to help the survivors.

10. 4. Summary

Gender equality starts from the understanding of how media reports and portrays genders and issues related to them. It begins from the everyday news, pictures and portrayals and goes all the way through the entire spectrum of stories published in the media.

Activities/ Further Discussion

Activity 1

Find from the medias of your choice examples of the following:

stereotyped representation of sexes

unconsidered choice of vocabulary concerning GVB

sensationalization of a topic such as sexual violence, trafficking in persons etc.

Rephrase the stories and discuss how the topics could be covered from a different perspective.

Activity 2

What topics of GBV are in your opinion under-represented or invisible in the media? Is there a difference between traditional and social media? Discuss the societal reasons behind this under-representation.

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Aim

The aim of the present chapter is to analyse the impact of media on various aspects of development. To identify positive and negative impact of media on children. Parental influence in children media influence. To reveal what needs to be considered while reporting on children in the media in the context of children's rights, to draw attention to the presentation of news such as child abuse in the media, and to focus on the presentation styles of children with disabilities in the media.

Expected Learning Outcomes

How to incorporate good mass medi habits in children.

To understand the general framework of children's rights.

To gain awareness about what needs to be considered when making news about children.

To understand the considerations for media coverage of sensitive issues such as child abuse.

To understand what needs to be considered in the presentation of children with disabilities in the media.

Keywords

Children and media, Children's rights and media, Child abuse and the media, Children with disabilities and media

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Section 11.1: Introduction

With knowledge, exposure, technology and accessibility we can devour positive and negative. Extreme caution in the choices we make for our children to develop skill, habits and moral and social values to grow up to be good human beings. Getting a perspective in how we can influence good media habits for appropriate child development.

It is crucial to understand how media impacts a child development to be able to control the impact. We will look at various developmental aspects and how media effects each area of development. We will also look at the psychological changes a child goes through due to the impact of media.

Section 11.2: Impact of Media on Various Aspects of Development

Media environment surrounding children has grown breathtakingly since 1992. Several hundred national and international cable and satellite channels, broadband internet, social networking sites have entered middle class homes. Children under the age of six spend more time watching television than they do playing outdoors.

Impact of Media on Children:

Positive Impact:

Educational:

- Powerful Learning Tool.
- Gives Knowledge about Science, Technology, History, Geography, etc.

Social Surrogacy Hypothesis:

- Helps Introverts relate to characters on TV shows.
- Gives outcasts a helping hand.

Communication:

- Used to Broadcast News

Important mode of Communication

- Makes the world a smaller place by broadcasting the same information throughout the globe
- Benefits of Modern Media: Research becomes easier, teaching and learning becomes easier, communications become easier, entertainment becomes easier.

Negative Impact:

Psychological:

- Takes to a Hypnosis Stage
- Leads to a loss of concentration & memory

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Physical:

- Reduces metabolic rate
- Increases risks of heart attacks
- Obesity
- Weakens the eyes

Decreases Sensitivity:

- Adults less sensitive to violence commit crimes easily

Academic Performance:

- Average teen watches 103 hours of TV every month
- Have learning difficulties which leads to poor grade

Children at an infant stage do not understand emotions or social behaviour. Surrounding environment determines the perception of a set emotional reaction and social interaction. Type of content children are exposed to makes a difference.

Children can not only witness and share emotions experienced by media characters, but also respond directly to emotionally charged events depicted in the media. Monster House, Corpse Bride, and Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix are just a few examples of horror-filled content that is targeted to children. Classic Disney films such as Bambi, Snow White, and The Lion King can also be upsetting to very young children.

Preschoolers and younger elementary school children (two to seven years of age) are most frightened by characters and events that look or sound scary. This pattern is consistent with younger children's perceptual dependence, their tendency to fixate on visual and auditory cues rather than more conceptual information such as the motives of a character.

Older elementary school children (eight to twelve years of age) are frightened more by scenes involving injury, violence, and personal harm. Older children also are more responsive than younger children are to events in the media that seem realistic or could happen in real life. This heightened responsiveness is consistent with their more mature understanding of the distinction between fantasy and reality. Several studies have found, for example, that older children or teens (age eight to twelve) are more frightened by television news than are younger children.

Moral development in children follows a predictable developmental path. Moral reasoning becomes more flexible and "other" oriented. Extensive viewing of television violence can alter children's views about the acceptability of violence and perhaps even hinder the development of their moral reasoning. Cheating, lying, stealing, yelling, cursing can be perceived as acceptable behaviour by children. Media can cause confused moral reason-

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ing. Some programs and genres can enhance moral development.

On an average a child views 200,000 violent acts on television by the age of 18. Kids become desensitized to violence and more aggressive. Violence is often promoted as a fun and effective way to get what you want.

Media and Antisocial Behavior

Many violent act are perpetrated by the "good guys" whom kids have been taught to admire. Even though kids are taught by their parents that it's not right to hit, television says it's OK to bite, hit, or kick if you're the good guy. This can lead to confusion when kids try to understand the difference between right and wrong.

Behaviour problems, nightmares, and difficulty sleeping may follow exposure to media violence. Young kids are particularly frightened by scary and violent images. Simply telling kids that those images aren't real won't console them, because they can't yet distinguish between fantasy and reality.

Violent television programming contributes to both short- term and long-term increases in children's aggressive behaviour. Video games act as fantasy violence. Exposure to violent media results in risky behaviour.

The impact of media occurs slowly as they hear the message over and over such as: Fighting and violence used as a way to handle conflicts Cigarettes and alcohol shown as cool and attractive, not unhealthy and deadly Sexual action with no negative result such as disease and unintended pregnancy.

Parental Influence in Children Media Influence

Parents play a key role in how media affects children. Your choices matter. Media is not just entertainment but a vast source of information. Guidance and reinforcement of messages indifferent portrayals can enhance the child's pro social learning. Be the boss. Helping children understand the Content.

Section 11.3: How to incorporate good mass media habits in children?

- Constant monitoring – Monitoring the quality of media that your child is exposed to is crucial. Avoid exposing children to violent Aggressive, scary, emotionally disturbing and any such other inappropriate media.

- Rating - Keep a check on the media rating to ensure children are exposed to media which is age appropriate.

- Guidance – When there is proper guidance and explanation to an action the child will be able

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to understand the messages better.

- Be a role model – Children learn from their surroundings and people close to them. Especially parents.

- Make rule and stick to them – As parents putting your foot down will only help your child's development. Do not compromise on that. Stick to the rules.

- Choose wisely – Depending on the development stage of your child choose media exposure that will help the developmental aspects of your Child. For example: Sesame street, Barney, Blue etc are series that are Educative and fun for children.

- Screen time – Children need both physical and mental activities for appropriate development. Limit screen time. Another way of diverting children from media to productive activities is by letting them earn the screen time.

- Respect for Technology – With ipods and tabs its not possible to keep kids away from technology however it can be control and directed to positive development.

- Restricted viewing – Put a child lock on the channels you think inappropriate for your child.

- Reality from Fantasy – Superman flies, spider man climbs walls and Amir Khan can ride a bike on anything even water and wire. A child does not understand the real message and emotion in all given instances. Explaining and even showing real from fake and fantasy helps the child understand the messages better.

- Communication – Communicating with your child helps you understand what understanding they develop from certain media exposure which will help you guide them better.

- Do not use high-tech devices as Babysitters – With more nuclear families today is understandable that stress gets to us. However in no given situation should a tech device be used as a babysitter.

- Creative and educational development - With exposure to so many avenues through media a positive direction will go a long way. Find what interests your child and develop on that through media and internet. If your child is inquisitive you can look up appropriate educative video on the internet. You can use internet to assist with homework or questions the child is inquisitive about.

- Family time – Media can be very effectively used for quality family time as well. It can be used to have encouraging discussion and sharing of knowledge and views. One can use this time to educate the child about the cons of media and how to use media effectively instead of being overwhelmed by it.

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Section 11.4: Social Media and the Children

Social media has become a part of everyone's daily lives. Almost every one you meet is involved in social media in one way or another. Just some examples are:

- A Facebook profile
- A Twitter account
- A blogging site
- YouTube
- wikis
- Instant messaging

But what is the appropriate age to introduce our children to this phenomenon? And does it have a positive or negative impact on their lives?

Interesting Facts:

- 22% of teenagers log onto social media sites more than 10 times a day
- Out of the 20 million Facebook users, 7.5 million of those are under the age of 13.
- 24% of teens use a gaming console for internet access
- 69% of teens have their own computer
- 75% of teenagers own a cell phone
    - 25% of them use them for social media
    - 54% of them use them for texting
    - 24% of them use them instant messaging

PROS & CONS TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Pros

- Socialization
- Communication
- Accessing Health Information
- Educational Tool
- Writing Skills
- Having the ability to access health information at their fingertips is a great asset. Children or teenagers can go online and chat in forums with others that may be experiencing the same issue. In the end, they realize they are not alone in what they may think is an embarrassing situation.
- With the aid of social media, teachers are able to foster collaboration and discussion among their students thus enriching their learning experience.

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Cons

- Depression
- Cyber bullying
- Sexting
- Online Harassment
- No Face-to-Face Communication
- Privacy Issues

Cyber bullying and Online Harassment are a few of the major issues to watch out for when taking part in any social media. The outcomes of this is not pretty; it can lend to depression, severe isolation and perhaps even suicide.

Sexting has also become a huge issue. Nearly 20% of teens have admitted to sending or posting seminude to nude pictures or videos of themselves.

While a child's communication can be great online, their communication when dealing with someone face-to-face may not be. This can cause issues when going for a job interview, being at social gatherings or in their own personal relationships.

Children need to be aware of all privacy issues and what type of digital footprint they can be leaving behind. Full names, addresses, phone numbers, etc... have to not be included on any profile, blog, or account that is available to the public.

Parents just should remember that it is up to them as the parent to set limits for their child and their use of social media. They should stay up to date with the latest technologies and social media trends. They should make sure to talk with their child about privacy and what kind of digital footprint they want to make. Social media is here to stay and its up to them, as the parent, to decide whether or not to educate their child about it.

Section 11.5: Children's rights and media

According to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child announced by the United Nations on 20 November 1989, every individual under the age of 18 shall be considered as a child, regardless of national, ethnic and social origin, property, disability, birth and other status, they will be protected by its legal heirs and state bodies (UNICEF, 2004: 5). The representation of children in the media is too important to ignore. So much so that the representation of childhood in the media reflects the perceptions and views of the society in which the media content is presented, about children and childhood, and can also create guiding effects on attitudes and behavior practices towards children (UNICEF, 2007, p.36).

There is not much place in the media for news concerning children. When it is given place, it is presented either as a crime or mostly as a victim. 20 percent of the news about children is news that only concerns them. The news that children are the

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subject of consists mostly of adult themes such as parents, doctors, lawyers and courts (Mazzarella, 2007). While Larry Grossberg describes children as the quietest population in society, the reason for this is the reluctance and failure of journalists to make children talk and write their stories (Cited by Mazzarella, 2007). Since interviewing children requires a special skill and sensitivity, the fact that journalists have reservations in this regard is a fact that supports this view.

Moeller (2002, cited in Salihoğlu, 2007, p.42) defines news about children in five categories:

I-Children are used as carriers of the future welfare of the country.

II-Children are used as victims. When the victim is a child, the disaster becomes particularly obvious. Even more intense is the spectacle of disaster, where there is likely to be a family member or adult but can do little to prevent the disaster.

III- Children are shown as “rescued victims”.

VI-Children are very clearly used as targets of opportunities. Crimes committed against special groups such as child victims draw more attention than others.

V-Children are depicted as “angels”. Their innocence blames and darkens the bad guys, especially when the innocent child depicted is a baby. The child depicted as an angel is sometimes older than he is.

The text, which was put forward in a meeting organized by the International Journalism Federation in Brazil in 1998, with the title of Principles and Ways to be Observed in Issues Related to Children, includes the following elements on children’s rights and the media (Bek, 2011: 28-29):

• Efforts should be made to show sensitivity when writing on topics involving the child and to minimize the harm that the child may suffer.

• Visual presentation and display of children should be avoided in cases where it will harm them.

• The use of children as sensational news material should be avoided.

• Children’s identities should not be disclosed unless in the public interest.

• The use of sexually explicit images of children should be prevented.

• Confirmation of the information provided by the child should be provided and the child should not be put at risk while doing this.

• While obtaining the images of the child, it should be fair and open, and the consent of the child or the person responsible for the child should be obtained.

• Identity information should be verified to ensure the accuracy of institutions that say they are protecting the child’s name or interests.

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• The family should not be paid unless there is a clear benefit to the child.

On the other hand, the principles determined by the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) can be listed as follows (Cited by Bek, 2011: 36-37):

• Do not publish images or news stories that put the child, siblings or peers at risk, even if names have been changed, hidden or even unused.

• Do not harm any child; Avoid questions, attitudes, and comments that are judgmental, insensitive to cultural values, that endanger or humiliate the child, or that rekindle the child's pain and sadness over traumatic events.

• Do not discriminate when selecting children to be interviewed because of gender, race, age, religion, status, educational background or physical abilities.

• Avoid using stereotypes and making sensational presentations to promote news material about children.

• Do not stage it: do not ask children to tell a story or take action that is not part of their past.

• Make sure the child or parent knows they are talking to a journalist. Explain the purpose of the interview and where it will be used. Get permission from the child and parent for any interview, video shooting and, where possible, documentary photography. Where possible and appropriate, this consent should be given in writing. The child and parent should be given their consent without any coercion, and they should be made to understand that they are involved in a news story that may be disseminated locally or globally. This can usually be achieved if consent is obtained in the child's own language and the decision is made with a trusted adult.

• Limit the number of interviewers and photographers. Make sure children are comfortable and able to tell their stories without pressure.

• Always provide an appropriate context in which the story or image of the children takes place.

• Change the child's name or hide their image if:

    • if the child is a victim of sexual abuse and exploitation,

    • the child is the perpetrator of physical or sexual abuse,

    • unless the child, parents or guardians give full informed consent,

    • where the child is HIV-positive or has AIDS,

    • the child is accused or convicted of a crime.

• Confirm with other children or an adult, preferably both, that what the child is saying is correct.

• If you are unsure whether a child is at risk, re-

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port on children in general rather than on just one child, no matter how newsworthy.

However, according to the inferences about how children are represented in the media in the project entitled "Children's Rights and Journalism Practices Rights-Based Perspective" prepared by UNICEF, children are not included in the media agenda at the same rate as adults. When they are the subject of news stories, they are pointed out as passive and silent "victims" who have been exposed to violence or accidents, or as the source or subject of violence and potential danger itself (UNICEF, 2007). It is subject to categorizations such as victim children, cute children, little devils, extraordinary children, children as accessories, today's children who have nostalgia for adults, little angels (UNICEF; 2007).

In the study titled "Children's Rights and Journalism Practices Rights-Based Perspective", these stereotyping are expressed as follows (UNICEF, 2007):

• Use of seriously expressed views by children to make adults laugh.

• Using cute children to add charm to the story.

• The use of photographs and depictions of children in miserable situations to exploit emotions, even if they do not contribute to the child's self-esteem or the adult's respect for the child.

• Pretending and looking down on children.

• Adults speak for children even though children know the subject better.

• Making children perform like circus animals.

• Adults revealing children's ignorance.

• Adults making children speak or interrupt in their own mouth.

• Showing children as if they are not passive.

• Gathering and naming young people in a problematic group called "youth"

Section 11.6: Child abuse and the Media

According to the World Health Organization (2014), child abuse; it is defined as bad behavior resulting in physical/emotional/sexual abuse and other types of exploitation that adversely affects the health, survival or sense of trust in relationships of individuals under the age of 18. As can be understood from this definition, contrary to popular belief, child abuse does not only occur sexually, but also includes all elements that negatively affect the physical and mental development of the child.

The concept of emotional abuse, which is considered as "the invisible type of child abuse" (Örnek, 2017), refers to the rejection, humiliation, isolation, intimidation and threat made by adults against the child, delinquency, self-interest, emotional inhibi-

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tion, emotional abuse. It is used to describe behaviors such as not meeting the requirements and giving the adult role prematurely (Garbarino and Garbarino, 1987; Cited by Erkman, 1991: 64).

The concept of emotional abuse, which is considered as "the invisible type of child abuse" (Örnek, 2017), refers to the rejection, humiliation, isolation, intimidation and threat made by adults against the child. It is used to describe behaviors such as delinquency, self-interest, emotional inhibition, not meeting the requirements and giving the adult role prematurely (Garbarino and Garbarino, 1987; Cited by Erkman, 1991: 64). Sexual abuse is defined as "any act of an adult or older person with the intention of sexually arousing himself or a child" (Engel, 1991: 15). Today, it is possible to say that sexual abuse cases are increasing day by day as a result of the great changes in the social structure and especially in the family institution. Estimates suggest that one in four girls (25%) and one in ten boys (10%) are sexually abused (Lannig, Ballard, and Robinson 1999).

Sharing photos and videos of children on social media accounts violates national and international regulations, especially the "United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)," which is the most comprehensive regulation on children's rights (Akyüz, 2012; Steinberg, 2016). In the UN CRC article 19 provision, it is stated that "the child should be protected against all kinds of abuse by the parties, especially by the relevant institutions and by the parents". In addition, the provision of Article 32 clearly regulates that "the child has the right to be protected against all kinds of economic exploitation and situations that adversely affect his psychological, physical, spiritual, moral and social development" (Uzun, 2020:9).

While it is a matter of debate whether sharing photos and videos of children on social media can be qualified as "child labour", there are legal regulations in France regarding the need to qualify children who earn income through social media as "child labour". In France, it has been decided that the income of children under the age of 16 from social media will be protected in a bank account that they can access when they reach the age of 16, and those who want to employ underage "social media phenomena" should get permission from the local authorities. In addition, the "right to be forgotten" has been established, which forces social media platforms to remove any video or content at the child's request (independent.co.uk, 2020).

Section 11.7. Children with disabilites-handicaps and the Media

The World Health Organization (WHO) introduced the International Classification of Disability system in 1980 to put an end to the confusion regarding disability status. According to this system, the phenomenon of disability is handled in 3 categories. Accordingly (Bilsin & Bosbakkal, 2014: 66):

• Impairment: It is a mental, physical or function-

al disorder of the body. Impairment refers to the temporary, permanent loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structures and functions in tissue, organ, extremity, functional system or body mechanism.

• Disability: It is a decrease or loss in functional capacity as a result of insufficiency. It is a deficiency or excess in expected behavior and functions, including daily activities, as a result of insufficiency.

• Handicap: It is expressed as a social disorder that occurs as a result of an impairment or disability and causes deviation from the individual performance or situation expected by the society. Handicap is the social and environmental consequences of impairment and disability.

WHO, on the other hand, made a statement as "the loss or restriction of the ability to do work compared to a normal person, which occurs as a result of a deficiency" (WHO, 2011: 3-4). According to WHO, the definition of disabled child included children with disabilities, children with health conditions such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy, down syndrome and hearing, vision, physical, communication and mental disabilities (WHO, 2012: 7). WHO states that children experience more stigma and exclusion, usually due to insufficient knowledge about disability and negative attitudes in the community and by their families (WHO, 2012).

The media is an extremely important part of our daily life and at the same time, it is possible to say that as an industry, it has a critical importance in disseminating information to the masses. However, it is a fact that the media's influence on society continues to contribute to the discrimination of people with disabilities, and it is not always used for the benefit of society, especially regarding disability (Pirls & Popovska, 2013: 42).

In the 1970s, studies on stereotypes about the representation of the disabled began to be published in the United States, and in the 1980s, there was an increase in such studies. After the 1980s, the deficiencies in the representation of people with disabilities in the media started to attract more attention and studies on the subject increased. In general, people with disabilities are represented in stereotypes that are widely repeated in mass media. These patterns are determined as pity and compassion for the disabled, object of curiosity or violence, sinister, ridiculous, own worst enemy, burden, asexuality and not being able to participate in daily life. These stereotypical characters are especially evident in television, newspaper and advertising (Barnes, 1991: 45-46).

According to Zhang & Haller (2013), without realistic representations in the media, stereotypes become the dominant image of a particular group of society, and thus the media portrayal of people with disabilities as "sick and helpless victims", "the life of a person with a disability [...] creates the perception that a person is inferior to his life. In their studies on how people with disabilities are perceived in the print media, Inimah, Ndeti, and Mukulu (2014) showed that they perceive the repre-

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sentations of people with disabilities in the media as a burden to society and as sad. Accordingly, 42.8 percent of the participants indicated that they felt that media organizations were biased against them.

There are two basic models regarding the interpretation of children with disabilities in the news. Accordingly, the first model is the medical model with a traditional point of view, showing the achievements of disabled people despite their disability. The second point of view is the model that considers the disabled as a minority in the society and focuses on their rights within this scope, and emphasizes cultural diversity (Almakanin & Alodat, 2018: 272).

Disability is a complex phenomenon related to both the person's body and the social structure. Accordingly, an approach that will provide a better understanding of disability will emerge by synthesizing these two models. The World Health Organization, which calls this approach the bio/physical/social model, creates the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) according to this approach (WHO, 2012: 9).

Matthews and Clow (2007) interviewed parents, librarians, teachers and children with in-depth interview technique in their study on the representation of disabled people in children's books. As a result of the evaluations, it has been revealed that there are no inclusive picture books in terms of participation and equality in children's literature and media. Cumberbatch and Negrine (1991), in their study on disability in early British children's programs, concluded that only 5 percent of children's dramas featured a person with a disability, and these disabled people were portrayed as adults rather than children. In order to better understand how the media shows physical disability, Bond (2013) analyzed how physical disability was shown in more than 400 children's television programs and concluded that characters with disabilities are rarely seen in programs. He found that in productions with disabled characters, these characters generally tend to be older white men with physical disabilities. Although disabled characters were not central to the programs, it was concluded that these characters were generally portrayed as good, attractive, and satisfied with life.

Section 11.8: Summary

To sum it up Media has both positive and negative implication on children. These cannot be eradicated however we can definitely ensure that we encourage the positive aspects and control the negative for our children to understand and use the resources available for growth and not destruction of self being.

Case Studies

A survey of more than 2,000 elementary and middle school children in US revealed that heavy television viewing was associated with self-reported symptoms of anxiety, depression, and post-trau-

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matic stress. Watching more than six hours of television a day put children at greater risk for scoring in the clinical range of these trauma symptoms. A survey of nearly 500 parents of elementary school children found that the children who watched television just before bedtime had greater difficulty falling asleep, were more anxious at bedtime, and had higher rates of nightmares.

Social media does have some positive attributes. Social media gives children and teenagers the ability to socialize and communicate in a setting that is not intimating to them. Jordan aka Doctor Mad Science is one of these children. He is a child with autism and posts science experiments on YouTube. In the end this has made him a more confident child. Check out one his experiments: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxPDrUqR4iI

STORY

Dexter is an American television drama series. The series centers on Dexter Morgan (Michael C. Hall), a blood spatter pattern analyst for Miami Metro Police Department who also leads a secret life as a serial killer, hunting down criminals who have slipped through the cracks of the justice system.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dexter_(TV_series)#Critical_reception

TIMOTHY F. WINTER

The TV series should not be broadcasted because "The biggest problem with the series is something that no amount of editing can get around: the series compels viewers to empathies with a serial killer, to root for him to prevail, to hope he doesn't get discovered."

http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/features/dexter-the-serial-killer-loses-his-mojo-1217792.html

CONCLUSION

Gratuit violence, justified and awarded

Repeated violent events depicted in details

Identification in the principal actor

Broadcasted in protected hours

Easily reachable for children

Steven Miles 16 years old Oxted, Surrey

Fanatic for horror films and the macabre Diagnosed as having an autistic syndrome

Elizabeth Thomas 17 years old Oxted, Surrey

A-level student Steven Miles girlfriend

Steve Miles throttle his girlfriend and dismembered her putting all the pieces of his body in plastic bags.

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He said at the questioning he had an alter-ego called

Ed who said him to kill her

Psychiatrists:

Not understand the “phenomenon” but the defendant was not psychotic.

He tried to emulate his “idol” Dexter doing what he saw severe times in the TV show

Charged with 25 years of prison

Lewis Power QC:

“The case is a sad testament to the perils of how young people can become entrenched in modern TV blockbusters involving violence which shockingly led to a copycat killing in real life”

http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/oct/02/teenager-steven-miles-murdered-girlfriend

What could have possibly prevented?

Did parents know how he was being influenced by the serie?

Had it not seen it?

Had it been co-viewed and explained better?

Had his behavior been monitored constantly?

Had it been presented diffrently, or presented not at all?

Had his paediatrician understood his behavior?

Did he have any external influence?

Critiques

The case does not look at the bright side of media “valuable skills “

Schools could play a role as well- Media literacy curriculum

Children’s reach to mobile phones and social network

Friends- feeding details about violent or inappropriate material he’s seen, or perhaps heard about from someone else

Consulting other parents

Discussion Questions:

Do the media affect our values as a society.....
or are they just a reflection that we can interpret however we like?

Do you think you personal values changed or reinforced by consuming media?

How do you find these social networking sites?

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As a student, do these sites benefit you?

Are there negative impacts you experienced with these sites?

If you were a journalist how do you aid the cause given the reach and influence of your particular media house?

In your country what type (length, angle, follow-up) of coverage does the media give to children's issues?

If you were a journalist how do you help the populace to understand the implications of the issue at hand?

Does the media in your country do research to identify the critical issues and frame the story in a informative and thought provoking way?

How can we create the environment for local children's programming to be developed?

How can we open more opportunities for children to get involved in the media?

How can our approach to reporting information allow for children to be informed as well?

If class, schedule, and family dynamics are most likely always going to be social issues, how will we ever get a solid conclusion?

If technology continues to progress at the current speed, how will we ever catch up in regards to the effect media has upon our youth, never mind our infants?

What if after all is said and done, media could actually have an overwhelming positive effect?

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Chapter 12
Social Policies for Romani People in the Media

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Source: https://www.humanium.org/en/roma-childrens-discrimination-in-education/ Posted on June 28, 2022

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CHAPTER 12:
CULTURAL MEDIATION II: COMMUNICATION

Aim

This chapter deals with the challenges to Romani (also referred to as Roma) integration in the European Union (EU). It pays particular attention to some social policies, as well as to how Romani people are described by the mainstream media. Concerning this, a case study is also included. Students are expected to become familiar with the main challenges facing both the governments of the EU Member States (MS) and their societies when it comes to Roma integration. In this way, they will have an additional tool to fight prejudice, populism, and racism at the local, national, and regional levels. The chapter also sheds light on some of the main EU documents regarding the Roma's inclusion in the political, economic, social, and cultural life in the MS.

Expected learning outcomes

- **To understand the challenges to Roma integration at the European level.**
- **To comprehend the media's role in presenting Romani people.**
- **To explore the EU integration policy in terms of Romani people.**

Keywords

Media; Romani people; Roma integration; Social Policies.

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Section 12.1: The Challenge of Roma Integration in European Societies

Throughout world history, the integration of minority groups into any given society has always been an important political topic, although not in the sense of the term as we know it nowadays. Many examples can be given in this respect – from the ancient times of Rome to the Medieval to the current migration flows towards the so-called Western world. For instance, Schneidmüller (2014, p. 17) notes that the spread of Christianity in Europe formed a community of people and nations sharing a common faith and religion. Together with the already existing Greek and Latin cultures of writing and scholarship, this contributed to the acquiring of further knowledge of the world and through the new peoples and realms of the continent to specific social order and norms (ibid., p. 17).

When speaking of the integration of minority groups and their social status among the local population, from a historical point of view, there were different contexts surrounding different time periods and thus, different interpretations of events and facts. However, within the past several decades, a particular group – the Roma people – has been regarded in a mostly negative way. The reasons for this are various. For example, the lack of their own state with a common language, writing, and norms can be seen as an important factor for the Roma community to stay more or less united in order to defend its members from attacks from other ethnic groups in a given country, especially when they outnumber them.

Nowadays, the Roma are considered Europe's largest ethnic minority with a total number estimated to be between ten and twelve million people living in Europe, about six million of which are citizens or residents of EU countries (European Commission, n.d.). Nonetheless, the exact number of Roma living per country in the EU is difficult to be determined. For example, in the 2011 National Population Census in Bulgaria, 4.9% of the population, or 325,343 people, indicated themselves as Roma (NSI, 2011). However, it can be suggested that their number is much higher, as many are reluctant to define themselves as Roma. In addition, there are challenges related to the address of residence (some live in illegally built houses and the number of people living at a particular address is uncertain), while others were or are currently abroad. In fact, according to some estimations, the number of Roma in Bulgaria is between 700,000 and 800,000 (EU Commission, 2011). Similar uncertain and variable data can be found in a number of other EU countries, for example, in Romania: between 1,2 million and 2,5 million, and Hungary between 400,000 and 1,000,000 (Ibid. p. 16-18). The miserable living conditions in which many of them find themselves in has led to the launching of numerous initiatives involving governments, international organizations, and NGOs, aimed at assisting Roma by addressing poverty and opportunities for greater inclusion of Roma in the economic, political, and social life across the countries. Despite this and the fact that they have been in Europe for centuries, it is very

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often claimed that it is extremely difficult for Roma to be integrated into a given country, that is, there are still many challenges to overcome. The European Commission (2019, p. 1-11) indicates that among the most urgent challenges to Roma integration are early leaving from education, the low number of Roma in higher levels of education, the high number of young Roma out of employment and training, as well as a lack of proper housing.

It can be stated that the existing challenges to Roma integration partly derive from the way they are named across the countries. The EU uses in its policy documents and discussion a terminology according to which the term "Roma" encompasses various groups such as "Roma, Sinti, Kale, Romanichels, Boyash/Rudari, Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenish, Dom, Lom, Rom and Abdal, as well as Traveller populations such as for example Gypsies, and Camminanti" (European Commission, n.d.). One particular name among these is commonly known and used, namely Gypsies. In this regard, Taylor (2014, p. 22) states that the word "Atsingani/Atsinganos", which derives from the Greek "atsinganoi", has become generally accepted as a base for how "Gypsies" are called in a number of European states (for example, "Tsigani" in Croatia or "Tsiganes" in France).

In Bulgaria, the word "Tsigani" (in Cyrillic "цигани") is also widely accepted and used by many without regard to their ethnicity, including within the Roma community. While some may claim that this term has historical roots and has been broadly used throughout the ages, it should be highlighted that its usage over the last few decades has had primarily a negative connotation. This is especially visible during football matches, for example, in some parts of Eastern and Central Europe. What is more, in some cases a number of media use the term, and thus, they can be seen even as contributing to such usage and consequently to discrimination and marginalization of the Roma community. For these reasons, many Roma and human rights activists and organizations consider the name Gypsy and its derivatives insulting. Others, however, prefer their own ethnonym and express disagreement with being called Roma (Britanica, 2021).

Marushiakova and Popov (2001, p. 12) note that, in an attempt to determine the exact routes and periods in which Gypsy migration from India to the rest of the world has taken place, scholars have usually relied on linguistic research, such as the development of their language, including the respective changes to it in the given period. However, this should only give a clearer picture of the main routes and stages of migration (ibid.).

Cressy (2018) highlights that Gypsies entered the European continent unlike, previous migration waves, not as conquerors, settlers, or competing for power, land, or recourses; instead, they did that more as infiltrators.

To a greater or lesser extent, the challenges to Roma integration also depend on the given state in which they live. Ringold (2000, p. 2) states that the years of economic and political transition in the

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former communist countries were for many Roma a painful process. This was mainly due to the loss of jobs, housing, and other services combined with the emergence of visible and severe poverty.

Section 12.2: The Roma Image in the Media

The mainstream media is a potentially important institution of social inclusion. While education, labour market, housing, and social care are discussed in policy literature as institutions for the inclusion of the Roma, the role of the media has been largely neglected. We argue that the media are an institution that has an important role in constructing and maintaining the image of society. By including or excluding certain groups from its representation of society, it defines who belongs to 'us' and who belongs to 'the others' (Riggins, 1997). By giving access to and portraying individuals or communities who belong to a given group, the media may contribute to the perception of these groups as inherent parts of a diverse society. This is even more important for certain minority or disadvantaged groups, who may face segregation and social marginalisation.

The media should not only be considered as an institution of inclusion but also as an important tool for the social and political empowerment of communities. Some scholars note that the concept of empowerment, which emerged in the context of the political participation of minorities, has been used in many different ways, and is therefore replete with ambiguities (Woodall et al., 2012). Still, this concept can be extremely useful in examining the relationship between minorities and the media. In thinking about the media as a site of empowerment, attention should be paid to the way in which existing power structures are sustained and legitimised.

It should also be noted that in a context where Roma people are described through the culture of poverty, such media representations will affect not only the society in general, but also the Roma, who will likely internalise such stereotypes and prejudices.

Studying the discursive reproduction of racism, Van Dijk (2000) claims that the news media play a very specific role in the distribution and acceptance of ethnic ideologies, and in the maintenance of racial hierarchies. He argues that attention has to be paid to both characteristics of the portrayal of a racialised minority group and the regimes of media content production. The deconstruction of racist speech cannot be independent from the scrutiny of actual power relations: racist constructs are ways to legitimise inequalities and domination (Stolcke, 1995).

Some can argue that the image produced and portrayed by the mainstream media can ideally be considered as the reflection of society. In other words, stories about different positive and negative characters can be translated into norms and identities shared by the audience. To a lesser or greater extent, the media show how the majority of the

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population sees society. It also transmits norms: for example, if a news title says that an individual from a Gypsy neighbourhood is being enrolled in a university, this may be intended as a success story involving a young person. However, it may also suggest that going to university, and generally being highly educated, is highly improbable for Romani people. Thus, such a news piece can transmit indeed a norm with the potential to negatively affect them. In regards to this, Oleaque (2019) argues that through a norm, we consider 'the roughest or most picturesque part' as representative of the whole group, without conducting a deeper analysis.

Most often than not, issues framed by mainstream politics targeting or affecting Roma, or those that fit the stereotypes about Roma – such as crime, poverty, and culture (mainly music) –, dominate the media coverage of Roma communities. At the same time, other issues that can be considered central for the social inclusion of Romani people, such as employment, education, housing, and healthcare, as well as the empowerment of the Roma community, are largely missing from the media coverage.

Another important factor concerning the media representation of minority groups is the role in which members of the group are portrayed. Roma are depicted in a very limited number of roles. Typically, Roma children and 'ordinary people' in the street appeared in the news, but they rarely get a voice. Roles that would present members of the community as equal, and would also give a voice to Roma – i.e., professionals, employees, experts – are usually absent. In general, if Romani people do appear in the mainstream news media, they are either given roles that fit mainstream stereotypes, such as criminal offenders or artists, or are depicted with the main characteristic of being of a particular ethnicity.

Cross-categorisation, when members of a minority group are portrayed in the media for other reasons than their minority background, is a very important tool in deconstructing stereotypes (Brewer, 2000). Such representations indicate that members of minority communities are inherent parts of our societies and are not important because of their ethnic descent, but because they are professionals, employees, mothers or fathers, activists, or have any other capacity.

It should be noted that even though news media have changed significantly in the past three decades, in terms of structure and composition, if the minority group itself remains disempowered, the chances of changing Roma's biased media image remain slim. Therefore, greater empowerment of Romani people through the media should be promoted. This can be implemented for example through more active involvement of Roma in both the newsrooms of the mainstream media and the discourses on issues regarding the Roma community as being an integral part of the whole society. Certainly, a fairer representation of Romani people in the media is also needed. In doing so, we have to take into account that some challenges will

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inevitably arise as the Roma integration topic is of great interest to political actors.

Section 12.3: European Integration Policy Focused on Roma

It is well known that the relationship between Roma and the authorities in a number of countries has been related to some social tensions. This is also true for the interactions between Roma and other ethnic groups of the local population, usually with the biggest one of them. There are a number of official documents (decrees, national strategies, programmes, etc.) in virtually every country with a visible Roma community aimed at solving some of the most pressing issues such as housing, financial assistance, and educational needs. Yet such documents often fail to achieve their aims. The reasons for this are various: from lack of persistence to setting unrealistic goals and the exclusion of the beneficiaries in the implementation of the respective strategies and programmes.

In historical terms there have been some notable cases in which Roma were treated in inhumane ways. The most famous and at the same time the most terrible of them was during the WW2 Holocaust when an estimated between approximately 130,000 and 290,000 Roman people were killed (Niewyk & Nicosia, 2000, p. 422). In modern times there are also many cases that can be seen at least as mistreatment of Roma including dismantling illegal Roma encampments in France and forced repatriation of their inhabitants, and open discrimination and marginalisation in Eastern Europe. Despite the predominantly negative policies in terms of Romani people of many European states over the years, it should be noted that some states actually tried to defend the rights of Romani people. For instance, during WW2, the Bulgarian government and King Boris III protected Gypsies and Jews (Crowe, 2016, xx) opposing the Nazis.

In recent times, the efforts in defending, supporting, and assisting Roma in the EU are clearly visible in many countries, although they can be primarily related to NGO activities. At the institutional level, the EU has long been involved in Roma integration. For Brussels, their integration is supposed to lead to significant economic benefits to the MS and their societies, most notably in those of them with a rapidly shrinking population (European Commission, 2010).

The Council of the EU has often declared that Roma inclusion into the EU policymaking should be a joint responsibility of the EU and its MS. To complete this goal, this is expected to be done in the sense of an inclusive society, contrary to any form of ethnic segregation (ibid.). In general, strategies dealing with Roma integration should address the whole set of problems related to their marginalisation, otherwise, such strategies would not be that effective.

In 2011, the European Commission adopted an EU framework for national Roma integration strategies

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up to 2020. This new tool was aimed at encouraging the MS to adopt or develop a comprehensive approach towards Roma integration, depending on the number of Romani people living in the particular country and the context there (European Commission, 2011). The main goal was to provide Roma with access to education, employment, health, and housing (ibid.).

Over the last few years, other important steps toward Roma integration have been made. On 7 October 2020, the European Commission issued the EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020 – 2030. The new document "sets out a comprehensive three-pillar approach: equality with all other members of society, social and economic inclusion, and participation in political, social, economic and cultural life" (European Commission, 2020). What can be considered new in this regard, is that it is expected to take into account, among other things, the diversity of Roma (age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.), as well as to improve data gathering, monitoring, and reporting (the Commission suggests that the MS use a portfolio of indicators) (ibid.).

Furthermore, on 12 March 2021, a Recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation in all MS was adopted by the Council of the EU, which is complementary to the 2020 EU Roma strategic framework. In addition, the European Commission produced annual reports (the last one concerns 2019), working with information from each country, as well as from civil society, international organisations, and the EU Fundamental Rights Agency.

Section 12.4: Case study: Media Misrepresentation of Roma in Bulgaria

Roma integration in Bulgaria has been among the main political topics in the country, since the end of the totalitarian system. Among the main reasons for this are the fact that the Roma are the second largest minority group in Bulgaria, their marginalisation and discrimination, as well as the financial resources that are spent every year for their integration, but without achieving some significant results in this regard. Certainly, a number of objective and subjective reasons related to the context can be given in order to explain the failure of Roma integration. Some of those also lie with the Roma community as well. However, this failure can be linked to a lesser or greater extent to the discrimination against the Roma. In the following lines, two examples (among many others) of the Roma image in some of the Bulgaria media are presented that can be perceived as discriminatory.

As it was mentioned earlier, some news titles regarding Romani people, represent them clearly in a negative light. Here are some examples: 'Gypsies attacked and beat a student in Varna for no reason' (in Bulgarian: 'Цигани нападнаха и биха

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ученик без причина във Варна')1. The article itself does not make it clear why the fight in question occurred, nor is any point of view presented other than that of the mother of the attacked (according to the article) boy. Many other aspects of journalistic ethics are also absent in the article.

One other title states 'Brazen and aggressive gypsies attacked a grandfather in Burgas, but eventually they got what they deserved' (in Bulgarian 'Нагли и агресивни цигани нападнаха дядо в Бургас, но си го получиха')2. This case is even more striking since the text of the article does not mention any physical or verbal attack. Again, only one point of view is presented - that of the daughter of the 79-year-old man that the headline claims was attacked. What is more, the words of the woman suggest that she was not present during 'the attack'.

Both cases should be considered discriminatory and examples of unethical journalism. What makes them even more disturbing in a democratic society is that other cases in which ethnic Bulgarians caused, for example, fatal road accidents, are not being presented with their ethnicity or religion, even if some of those cases involve people with criminal records. The list can go on and on and suggests that proper measures should be taken by those in power, by the media, and last but not least, by civil society. Concerning this, it should be highlighted that misrepresentation and discrimination of Romani people in the Bulgaria media is not only offensive and destructive to a democratic society and hinders their inclusion into society, but it can also be seen as dangerous in the long term in the country with the fastest shrinking population in the whole world.

12.5: Summary

This chapter states that the media misrepresentation and discrimination of Romani people hinder their chances of integration. Although some important steps in fighting prejudice and discrimination in the EU have been made over the last few years, those concern a much lesser extent the Roma community. While one can argue that Romani people should also be held partly responsible for relatively poor results in their integration into the EU countries, it should be underlined that without empowering them and fair media coverage, it is unlikely for those results to be improved.

Question of Discussion, Case Study, Exercises

What are the main challenges to Roma integration in the EU?

1 See the whole article at: https://fakti.bg/krimi/515709-cigani-napadnaha-i-biha-uchenik-bez-prichina-vav-varna.

2 The article can be retrieved from: https://blitz.bg/kriminalni/prestplenie/nagli-i-agresivni-tsigani-napadnakha-dyado-v-burgas-no-si-go-poluchikha_news784041.html.

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Should we have minimum national standards in terms of Roma integration common for all MS?

Should the word “gipsy” be regarded as offensive?

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The Impact of EU Funds on Social Policy and Methodologies for the Evaluation of their Use

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Aim

The aim of this chapter outlines some of the European Union (EU) funds that the Member States (MS) have at their disposal in supporting asylum seekers, refugees, and other vulnerable groups. Regarding this, it pays particular attention to the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). The chapter also reveals some of the aspects of the methodologies used in the assessment of the impact of these funds, as well as various methodological approaches in the evaluation of public policies and programmes.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- **To gain a further knowledge on the EU funds on vulnerable groups.**
- **To outline various aspects of the evaluation of public policies and programmes.**

Keywords

EU funds; integration; EU funding; AMIF; asylum seekers; migration.

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Section 13.1: Introduction

The EU funds are of great importance for integration across the MS. This is all the more important in those countries, where these funds are the main source of funding in this respect. In addition, due to the different geographical positions of the MS and the impact of the EU asylum rules, Barrett (2021, p. 333), among other scholars, argues that there is a need in the EU to have mandatory solidarity and a fair distribution of the burden arising from the migrant waves, for example through joint EU funding. In this line of thought, it should be noted that in some MS of the EU, there is social discontent among citizens regarding the spending of national funds for the living expenses of asylum seekers in reception centres, as well as on their subsequent integration.

Social inclusion in the EU is regarded as a process which provides those at risk of poverty and social exclusion the necessary opportunities and resources to be an integral part of the economic, social, and cultural life in the host country, including a normal standard of living and well-being in the host country and society (Di Nardo et. al./European Union, 2010, p. 1).

In order to build a more social and inclusive EU, the MS have various funds at their disposal. One of these is the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), with a total budget of €99,3 billion for the 2021-2027 period. It is mainly aimed at funding medium- and long-term integration initiatives and focused on social inclusion, better education, and skills development, as well as supporting employment. It is interesting to note that the ESF+ combines four separate funds from the programming period 2014-2020, namely the European Social Fund (ESF), the Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived (FEAD), and the Youth Employment Initiative and the European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI).

It should be mentioned that one of the main tasks of the European Social Fund, the predecessor of the ESF+, was to deal with negative public attitudes toward minority groups. For this reason, many awareness-raising campaigns were created and implemented across the MS to promote a more positive image of minorities and the positive contribution they can make to society, including as a labour force (Di Nardo et. al./European Union, 2010, p. 4).

The ESF+ is also aimed at supporting migrants and minorities (mainly Roma) among other vulnerable groups. This is due to the difficulties that these groups usually encounter, which can lead to social exclusion with all the respective political, economic, and social negative consequences that could possibly follow. The EU's solidarity for the vulnerable groups is expressed also through other funds, such as the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF), the Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme (2014-2020), and the Progress Programme: Anti-discrimination

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and Gender Equality strands (2007-2013). A broader analysis of the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund will follow in section 13.2.

Other funds and programmes aimed at supporting integration in the period 2021-2027, are the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme (CERV) and the European Solidarity Corps (ESC). CERV supports organisations working in the fields of social and fundamental rights within the EU. Migrants and minorities are also target groups of this fund, and are either directly involved or benefit indirectly from the implementation of the programme (European Commission, 2022, p. 3). For example, among the policy priorities funded in 2021 and 2022, were preventing and fighting xenophobia and anti-migrant intolerance (European Commission, 2021, p. 23).

Recently, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has led to more public attention to the EU funds, particularly to Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE), which is aimed at supporting MS in providing emergency assistance to those fleeing Ukraine.

Section 13.2: Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund

The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) is aimed at boosting national capacities and improving procedures for migration management, as well as at enhancing solidarity and responsibility sharing among the EU's MS (European Commission, 2022). This is mainly implemented through emergency assistance and the relocation mechanism. In fact, the AMIF has been increased to more than €10 billion for the 2021-2027 period (table 1), that is, more than three times the sum allocated in the 2014-2020 period. To put it simply, this shows not only that irregular migration and asylum-seeking are expected to be significant in the coming years, but also that EU funds are of crucial importance in dealing with these processes. The AMIF has four objectives: "strengthening the common European asylum policy; developing legal migration in line with EU countries' economic and social needs; supporting third-country nationals' integration; and tackling irregular migration" (Ibid., 2022). It should be noted that this fund can also support local and regional authorities to implement integration related activities.

Table 1. AMIF budget per year in million euro

Budget programming per year		Year
497,6		2021
1 370,6		2022
1 417,8		2023
1 500,4		2024
1 782,4		2025
1 702,5		2026
1 797,2		2027
Total	10,068,7	2021 – 2027

Source: European Commission, 2022

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Among the beneficiaries of the AMIF are state, federal, and local authorities, humanitarian organisations, NGOs, private and public law companies, education institutions, and research organisations. It is important to note that third countries can also be associated with actions of the AMIF and thus eligible to receive funding, but for the purpose that have to sign a specific agreement with the EU that includes a number of requisites (European Commission, 2022).

It should be noted that it is not that easy to assess the EU funds' impact on social policies. Yet, for some countries, these financial resources are of significant importance. Also, as the European Commission (2015) argues, 'for better socio-economic integration of asylum seekers and refugees, the policy response at the local level is very important'. This is due to the many challenges that employment and social services face locally in reaching out and supporting these targeted groups. At the same time, providing funds to local and regional authorities is all the more valuable because of their crucial role in integration activities (Council of European Municipalities and Regions, 2018, p. 3-4).

In terms of the impact assessment, one concerning the AMIF was carried out in 2018. It was focused on the changes and policy choices related to the Commission proposals for the funds in the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework. According to the impact assessment in question, the added value of the AMIF includes, among other achievements, creating of approximately 7,500 additional beds in reception centres across the EU, providing assistance to more than 800,000 asylum seekers as well as providing integration assistance to more than 1,400,000 third-country nationals (European Commission, 2018, p. 5-6).

Despite many achievements and positive aspects of the AMIF, it is necessary to be pointed out that some challenges also arose. Not surprisingly, these are expected to be related mainly to the financial framework, including how the financial assistance is implemented. For example, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles argued that the way in which the AMIF is implemented leads to incoherence and a lack of transparency of communication and information sharing at the national level (ECRE, 2018), as well as certain flaws when it comes to the distribution of funds across the MS (Nielsen/EU Observer, 2018).

Section 13.3: Methodologies for the Evaluation of the Use of EU funds - How Effectively the Funds are Supporting the Respective EU Policy Goals

Public policies are developed in different forms – concepts, strategies, bills, or laws. Less often, policies are presented in by-laws prepared and adopted by executive authorities and structures, although they usually have a leading role in the preparation of public policies at the national level. Sometimes public policies are proposed by both political parties and non-governmental organi-

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sations, and in many cases, they are debated and approved by national legislatures. In this chapter, "public policy" is used as a general term denoting a system of principles and guidelines for action aimed at achieving certain goals by certain means and often within a certain time frame, which are developed and implemented by state or supranational bodies, having political, legislative, executive, and financial powers.

Supranational policies are the subject of broad public and expert discussions with the active participation of member countries of relevant international organisations. After the development and approval of public policies, rules, programmes or action plans are developed through which they are implemented. Usually, programmes cover interrelated actions and means (technical, organisational, legal, financial, etc.) for the implementation of a given international, European, governmental, or departmental policy. Programme management covers all decisions, actions, and rules for the management, accountability, and use of human, financial, and material resources. The development and implementation of public policies and programmes is a complex and multifaceted process, proceeding through various phases, which generally includes:

1. Strategic planning.
2. Development of the policy and programmes for its implementation.
3. Implementation of the policy and programmes.
4. Monitoring.
5. Assessment.

One of the widely used definitions of the term 'assessment of public policies and programmes' defines it as a judgment of public policies and programmes based on their results, their impact, and the needs they are intended to satisfy.3 The evaluation of public policies and programmes can be carried out through different methods, among which the most frequently implemented are:

- Process evaluation: it is evaluated how and to what extent it fulfils public policy and whether the programme works, as planned. Usually, the assessment affects the compliance of the performed activities and interventions with the legal and normative requirements, the content of the program or action plan, professional standards, or societal/stakeholder's expectations.
- Analysis of the ratio 'costs/benefits' and analysis of cost-effectiveness: these are analyses that compare the results and achievements of the programme with the costs (resources expended) of

3 Communication to the Commission from Mrs. Schreyer in Agreement with Mr. Kinnock and the President. According to Action 16 of the Action Plan for Reform. Focus on Results: Strengthening Evaluation of Commission Activities {SEC (2000) 1051}

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obtaining them. Through the analysis of the 'costs/benefits' ratio, the expediency of the investments made, and the adequacy of the benefits received are determined. Cost-effectiveness analysis evaluates the appropriateness of spending to achieve a particular goal in order to identify the most cost-effective options and ways to achieve the intended goals.

- Evaluation of the results: it is evaluated to what extent the expected results of public policies and programmes are achieved. This evaluation focuses primarily on outcomes and achievements (including side, unintended, and unwanted effects) to assess the effectiveness of the programme. It is also possible to ask questions related to the evaluation of the quality of the products and services provided to the different target groups. Performance evaluations may also evaluate programme procedures to understand how results were obtained or why expected effects were not achieved.

- Impact assessment: the impacts of public policy on various aspects are evaluated, as well as the net effect of certain programmes. The effects of the programme can be compared to what would have happened if it had not been implemented. This assessment is used when programme outcomes are known to be influenced by external factors to distinguish the programme's contribution to achieving its objectives (European Commission, 2009). The assessment in this case is primarily aimed at the degree of achievement of the objectives of the policies/programmes, and at the achieved actual compared to the expected results of the implementation of these policies/programmes.

The social organisation and cultural characteristics of different social communities are the basis on which public policies and programmes are built. The different needs, interests, desires, beliefs, and expectations of people are among the factors that determine the nature of their response to public policy and programme implementation activities. The success and results of a policy or programme depend on many factors and characteristics of target groups, implementers, and stakeholders. In this sense, monitoring and evaluation should be selective and strategically oriented, concentrating mostly on factors relevant to the implementation of specific policies and programmes. The main groups of characteristics that should be taken into account in the evaluation of public policies and programmes can be narrowed to:

- Institutional, economic, and social or-

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ganisation of economic activity, public activities, public services in the sphere, and territory where the policy or programme is implemented.

- Economic and political interests of the persons, organisations, and institutions that are affected by the policy/programme (target groups, stakeholders, contractors).

- Economic, social, and political acceptability of the policy/programme and their compliance with the needs of target groups, stakeholders, and societal goals.

- Effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of the policy/programme, as well as its sustainability (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2017).

A major component of the evaluation of public policies/programmes is social analysis. It must be carried out with the involvement of stakeholders, taking into account their needs and interests that are affected. Social analysis can be orientated towards determining the effects of the implementation of policies and programmes, as well as possible solutions and activities for their improvement. Most often, social analysis systematically examines several types of factors influencing the implementation of public policies and programmes:

- demographic characteristics.

- socio-economic variables.

- social organization of the target groups.

- socio-political context.

- needs, interests and values of interested parties.

- affected or influencing institutions, organisations, and/or social groups.

Social analysis makes it possible to assess the consequences and risks of a given policy/programme, to mitigate the adverse consequences of their implementation, to increase the capacity of the institutions, organisations, and social groups that implement the policy/programme or are influenced by them. The content of the social analysis and assessment is determined in each individual case by the nature and type of activities and interventions provided for in the relevant policy or programme (Rietbergen-McCracken & Narayan-Parker, 1998). Analysis and evaluation should be selective and focused because various variables could affect the implementation of the policy/programme and have impact on them. The scope and intensity of analysis and evaluations for different types of policies and programmes are also determined depending on the proposed activities for their implementation. The most common questions that are answered at monitoring and evaluation of public policies and programmes are:

- What are the implications of the poli-

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cy/programme for the different target groups, stakeholders, and affected communities?

- What is the distribution of the positive results of the policy/programme between individual users and other stakeholders?

- Are there any unforeseen and unwanted side effects from the implementation of the policy/programme, and what are possible measures to neutralise them?

- Are there risks that threaten to thwart the successful implementation of the policy/programme? To what extent are the opportunities for their improvement combined with avoiding the risks of negative consequences?

- What institutional and organisational environment is needed to ensure the participation of stakeholders in the implementation of the policy/programme, their evaluation, and development?

- Has capacity been built to implement the policy/programme at all levels, what is needed to increase it to ensure the sustainability of the achieved results and impacts?

Through monitoring and evaluation, the results and priority problems in the implementation of a certain policy/programme can be identified and the ways to approach their development can be determined. Public policies and programmes could not be effective and sustainable without the full inclusion and participation of the main stakeholders and beneficiaries in their development, implementation, and evaluation (European Commission, 2001). Monitoring and evaluation enable target groups and stakeholders to be involved in self-determination of their needs, in proposing applicable solutions, in mobilising available resources while obtaining an adequate assessment of the results and side effects of the implementation of the policy/programme.

Section 13.4: Types of Assessments According to Methodological Approach and the Set Goals

Various methodological approaches can be distinguished in the evaluation of public policies and programmes. Some of them are listed below:

- Allocation and use of resources for implementing policies and programmes (how resources will be used and, retrospectively, how resources have been spent) – An example of this is the cost-benefit analysis, often used in the evaluation of public policies and programmes.

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- Developing standards and/or measurable goals, criteria, and indicators by which the success, quality of implementation, and impact of the policy/programme are assessed – Such a method, for example, is benchmarking, based on the degree to which certain goals have been achieved. It is mainly aimed at evaluating the effectiveness and impact of public policies/programmes.

- Understanding and explanation – looking for an explanation of the impacts of the policy/programme and causal links with its elements and the interventions carried out (what, how, when, under what conditions it "works" well). An illustration of this approach, aimed at improving the quality of public policy/programme implementation, is the thematic evaluation of different specific interventions in a given area, as well as the identification of those of them that we consider successful or unsuccessful under the given circumstances and the reasons behind that.

- Change and self-regulation – provides a more complex feedback loop to ensure self-correction and development of the policy/programme during its implementation (Furubo et al., 2002). Monitoring and ongoing evaluation, which provide feedback on policy implementation and programme implementation with a view to adjusting and changes, exemplify this approach, helping to improve the design and implementation of public policies and programmes.

- Inclusion and participation – aimed at developing partnerships, networks, communities, and territories through actively involving all stakeholders in the evaluation. Consultative, field, and workshop methods orientated to the active involvement of stakeholders in the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies/programmes are an example of this approach (Mann, 2000, p. 371-378).

The choice of a particular assessment method depends on several factors, for example, the aim of the assessment or whether we would like to assess policies and programmes that are to be implemented or those that have already been implemented. Also, the assessment will be influenced by the context in which it is carried out: for instance, whether it is commissioned and paid or not, who performs it, for what period of time, etc.

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Section 13.5: Summary

The social impact assessment as a form of evaluation can be carried out both before and after the launch of policies and programmes, during their implementation and after their completion. Social impact assessment covers all the social and cultural consequences for the citizens of the implementation of public policies/programmes that change the ways in which people live, work, relate to each other, arrange to meet their needs, and generally participate in the lives of a given community. Cultural influences refer to changes in norms, values, and beliefs that guide behaviour, attitudes, perceptions of people, and their ideas about the community in which they live. The social impact assessment analyses people's values, attitudes, and preferences regarding the use of resources, as well as their ability to accept and participate in the implemented policy/programme.

Questions of Discussion, Case Studies, Exercises

Point out the programmes and policies that support the integration of migrants and asylum seekers.

Which is the major component of the evaluation of public policies/programmes?

What is meant under "social impact assessment" as a term?

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Short Curriculum Vitae of the Researchers

Scientific Coordinators

Dr. **Savvatou Tsolakidou** is currently working as Laboratory and Teaching staff at the Department of Communication and Media Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) and as Consultant Professor at the Hellenic Open University in the postgraduate programme "Adult Education". She studied Sociology and French Literature and she worked at the Hellenic Ministry of Education, the National Centre for Public Administration, and the European Commission as National Detached Expert. Her research interests focus on lifelong learning and Communication, organizational communication, adult education, capacity building and skills, social policy, and the social integration of vulnerable groups. She is the Scientific Coordinator and Project manager of the ERMIScom university partnership project funded by IKY, the Greek National Agency forthe Erasmus+ programme

Dimitris Charalambis is Professor emeritus for Political Science of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, School of Economics and Political Sciences, Department of Communication and Media Studies. He is President of the Hellenic Political Science Association (HPSA). He is the author and editor of several books in Greek, German and English and of more than 50 scientific articles on political theory, European integration and traditional and digital media. He also was speaker in more than 60 national and international symposia and congresses and was invited for lectures in several Universities in Europe, the U.S., Canada and China. Between 1994 and 2004 Professor Charalambis was coordinator of 17 European and National Research Projects and between 1998 and 2022, partner in 7 Leonardo Da Vinci and Grundtvig European Projects.

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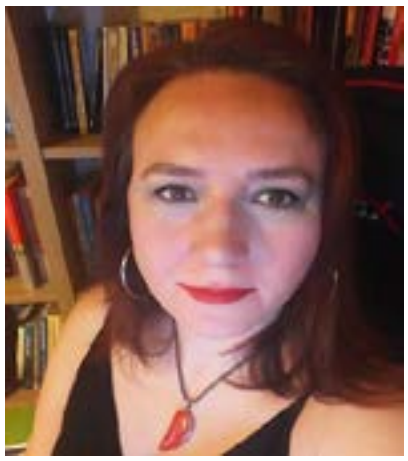
Reshearchers



Figen Algul was born in Istanbul. After completing her undergraduate and postgraduate education at Marmara University Radio-Television Department she studied at the FH Fulda Intercultural Communication and European Studies program in Germany in the 2009-2010 academic year, during her doctoral studies at the same department. Dr. Algül received her doctorate in 2012 with her thesis on Community Media in parallel with ethnic and minority groups in Turkey. She completed her Post Doctorate in Athens National and Kapodistrian University, Department of Communication and Media Studies in the 2018-2019 academic year, with a TÜBİTAK Post-Doctoral Research Scholarship, on the subject title of "Soft Power and Intercultural Communication: Perception/Reception of Turkey in Greece through the study of Turkish soap operas". She is still working as an Assistant Professor at Marmara University, Faculty of Communication.

Ani Arutyunyan, PhD, is a Senior Researcher at the Center for Research and Educational Projects at the University of National Economy (UNWE) in Sofia, Bulgaria. Dr. Arutyunyan is also a guest lecturer in Political Studies at UNWE. She possesses long-term experience in the sphere of research and refugee protection as she served as a CaseManager Assistant at the Center for Legal Aid - Voice in Bulgaria in the period 2017- 2019. Dr. Arutyunyan has taken part in numerous international conferences, symposiums, trainings, etc. related to International Relations and International Law. Her interests are focused on providing legal assistance to asylum seekers and migrants, and proper integration of beneficiaries of international protection in the Republic of Bulgaria. Ani speaks Bulgarian, English, Armenian, and Russian.

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	**Atanas Dimitrov**, PhD, has been teaching since 2015 at the University of National and World Economy (UNWE), Bulgaria, where he currently holds the position of Senior Assistant Professor. He has also been a guest lecturer in Italy, Poland and Spain. Former EVS volunteer, Consultant at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (E4J Integrity & Ethics Champions Programme) and a Transparency International School on Integrity fellow. Atanas Dimitrov has a PhD in Economics and Management (Defense and Security Economics) from the UNWE. His research interests and publications are focused on peace and conflict studies, migrant and refugee studies, tertiary education, ethics, and integrity.
	**Theodora Gazi** is a post-doctoral researcher in private international and refugee law at the University of Athens. She has published journal articles on human rights, data protection and asylum law, as well as an academic book on the international protection of vulnerable groups in crisis conditions. Theodora is also working as a lawyer for international non-governmental organisations which support the humanitarian response in Greece.

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	**Yasemin Giritli İnceoğlu** is a visiting professor at London School of Economics, Media and Communication Department in 2022-2023 academic year. She is also a member of the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen and of the American Biography Institute. Yasemin was a visiting scholar at Columbia University (1994) and at the Salzburg Seminar (2003), at New Delhi University Media Studies Center (2014), at EUI-European University Institute (2017) and at Birkbeck, University of London (2020-2021). She took place in many projects and has published several books: The Persuasion Process in Communications: With Some Examples of the Political Campaigns (1997); Media and Society, Women in the Media and Women Journalists (2002); International Media (2004); A Guide to Media and Children (2008); Text Analysis (2009); Women and their Body in the Spiral of Femininity, Sexuality and Violence (2010), Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (2012) Minorities, The Other and Media (2014), Internet and Street (2015) News Readings (2016), Journalism 'a Peacekeeping Agent' at the Time of Conflict (2018), LGBTI+ Individiuals and Media (2019) Covid Diaries (2021) Pandemics, Neoliberalism and Media (2021). Her areas of studies are media criticism and media coverage of hate speech towards minorities and the other Others. She conducts courses such as Alternative Media and Journalism Rights, Communication Ethics, Theories and Models of Communication and Media Criticisim.
	**Aura Kaarivuo,** is a Senior Lecturer & Head of Degree Programme at Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, working at degree programme of Film and Television since 2009. She is a doctoral researcher at University Jyväskylä and Master of Arts in New Media from Aalto University. She has a passion for pedagogy and has vocational teacher's qualification. As the senior lecturer in film and television sound, Mrs. Kaarivuo teaches TV, documentary, drama production, journalism, social media, podcasts and innovation projects. She has a long experience in HEI's media education and international academic project work in media, journalism, freedom of speech, democracy, digitalization, and capacity building. She has wide audiovisual working experience in Finnish media companies since 1999. She is an active member of the Union of Journalists in Finland and the president of Vikes, The Finnish Foundation for Media and Development.

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	**Stavros M. Protopapas** holds a Ph.D. (2021) from the School of Economics and Political Sciences of the University of Athens (NKUA). His thesis, under the supervision of Pr. D. Charalambis, is entitled "Democracy and Market. The binding function of the dominant economic paradigm and the transformations of the European integration venture". He also holds a Diploma from the Department of Civil Engineering in the University of Patras (2000-2005) and has completed undergraduate studies (BA) at the Department of Communication and Media Studies in NKUA (2006-2009), as well as the programme (MA) "Conflict Studies and Human Rights" at the University of Utrecht, in Netherlands (2009-2010). He has worked for the Greek Edition of National Geographic Magazine (2008-2013) and has taught for several years at the Professional Journalism College (2012-2016). He worked as a researcher in various programmes in the last years.
	**Marina Rigou** is an Assistant Professor of Journalism, Politics and New Media at the Department of Communication and MediaStudies - National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (UoA). She has been a journalist for more than 35 years and has worked for many organisations such as Greece's Public Radio Broadcaster, Flash Radio, Flash.gr, USA Today, The Christian Science Monitor, Global Post, and many others. She is the author of the book titled From Digital Revolution to Digital Surveillance. New Media, Publicity and Politics (Sideris Publishing House, 2014). Many articles and research papers of hers dealing with issues concerning communication, media, politics, e-governance, AI and new media have been published in scientific journals and books.