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**Formation of the European Local Self-government
Model in Ukraine: Developments and
Expectations**

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Abstract:

The article examines the issues of the formation European local self-government. The analysis of the local self-government development in Ukraine is presented. The author explores the existing local self-government legal framework with regard to a possibility of applying the European experience in this sphere to the Ukrainian legislation. Special attention is paid to the existing implementation problems of the adopted laws.

Keywords: local self-government, decentralization, Magdeburg Law, cross-border cooperation, European legislation

Introduction

Historians, lawyers, and political scientists link the emergence and development of local self-government on the European continent with the urban growth – the trend, which originated in Western Europe in the 11th century and continued over the course of the 12 until 14th centuries. During this period, the main principles of local self-government in most European cities were formed under the influence of the Charter of Liberties. The Charter included provisions concerning the rights of citizens towards the urban community, and stipulated the right of self-government. All citizens of the city swore an oath to the municipality, providing for mutual assistance, paying taxes to the city treasury, protecting the city from enemies etc.

Legal formalization of the local self-government is closely connected with the formation of the so-called Magdeburg Law. Many researchers note that the medieval urban governance based on the Magdeburg Law was the first historical form of the local self-government.

The very notion of “self-government” was first used during the French Revolution. It reflected the self-dependence of the communities with regard to the state. According to Yurii Paneyko (one of the most famous European political scientists of Ukrainian origin), the German scholar Rudolf Gneist contributed to the diffusion of term “local self-government”. He sought to adjust the English term “self-government” to describe the system of local governance in the mid-19th century Prussia. Gneist borrowed the term “local self-government” from the J. Smith’s paper “*Local self-government and centralization*”. In his work, J. Smith used the expression “local self-government” to define the type of functioning of local English administration. In some other countries- for example, in France – this terminology has not been used at all. As an alternative, the legislation the refers to the term “decentralization” (Paneyko 2002).

Depending on its structure, historical, national, and geographical as well as peculiarities, each and every state has a specific legal form of local self-government.

The modern legal understanding of the “local self-government” is determined by the norms of international law, as well as by national laws. The basic document is the European Charter of Local Self-Government, adopted on October 15, 1985 in Strasbourg. The Charter denotes the local self-government as the right and the ability of local governments to manage a substantial share of public affairs, “within the limits of the law, within their competences, and in the interest of the local population”.

Speaking of Ukraine – right after the adoption of the Act of the Declaration of Independence of Ukraine by the Verkhovna Rada on August 24, 1991, when the country de-jure gained independence, it faced the problems of building a modern state with all its attributes, dealing with both internal and external challenges. The future of the country, which finally gained independence after the hundreds of years-struggle, largely depended on its ability to properly react to the above-mentioned problems.

An important component of the state-building process was the distribution of powers between the center and the regions, districts, cities, and villages. The experience of most European countries shows that local self-government structures play a very important role in these matters. And that is what determines the relevance of the selected topic of this scientific research.

Many European, American and Russian scientists and politicians focus on the subject of local self-governance. It is also the topic of the heightened interest among the Ukrainian scholars

(Czachor 2017; Dębski 2014; Ksenicz 2015; Szapowalenko 2010; de Tocqueville 2000; Paneyko 2002; Cherniak 2010). The relevance of the selected topic and the high level of its scientific developments made it possible to define the purpose of this paper. It is the analysis of historical preconditions and their influence on the formation of a European local self-government model in Ukraine.

The stated purpose implies dealing with the following tasks:

- tracing the historical preconditions for the development of local self-government in Ukraine;
- analyzing the formation of the legislative base of the European local self-government model in Ukraine and its actual implementation on the ground.

Historical preconditions for the development of the local self-government model in modern Ukraine

The modern version of the local self-government emerged in Europe after the French Revolution. Scholars argue that the term “self-government” can be interpreted in a broad and narrow sense. In a broad sense it refers to any state, where the central governing structures (parliament, president, government) are elected by and depend on the people.

But for the most part, “self-government” is defined in a narrow sense. In this case, it characterizes the self-governing communities, which emerge and function within the state. As a rule, this definition is synonymous with the local self-government, which stipulates that the affairs of an administrative-territorial unit are managed by its citizens via various elective structures. The effectiveness of such self-government model depends on a number of factors: the level of consciousness and responsibility of citizens, the maturity of civil society, the quality of the legislative framework, and the historical traditions.

The formation process of the local self-government system in Ukraine within its current internationally recognized territorial borders has been rather complicated and controversial. For a better understanding of these developments, it is necessary to trace the dynamics of the evolution of Ukrainian statehood and its local government elements in their historical retrospective.

It all goes back to the times of Kyivan Rus, which had all attributes of the state-territory, population and public authority. The development and consolidation of state structures by the Kyiv princes facilitated the formation of quite powerful and centralized forms of government. However, at the local level, an important role of the local government body was assigned to

viche – the popular assembly of the residents of a particular locality. The viche was called upon in order to implement the state policy of Kyivan Rus.

Following the dissolution of Kyivan Rus, the cultural and political center of Ukrainian statehood moved to its direct successor – the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia. The rapid development of the cities, particularly Galych, Lviv, Lutsk, Volodymyr, and Holm, benefited from the development of trade and various crafts in the region. It sparked the interest of Germans, Poles, Hungarians, Jews, Bulgarians, Armenians, and Balkan peoples in this area of Eastern Europe. They started sharing their own management techniques, culture, and education with the locals. This led to combining the existing local self-government models with the elements of Western European self-government structures. Since most of the settlers were Poles and Germans, the local self-government was based mainly on the so-called German law, which was widespread throughout the German and Polish cities. Historians, lawyers, and political scientists usually refer to it as the “Magdeburg Law”. It had the decisive impact on the formation of the local self-government model in Ukrainian cities.

Most studies define the Magdeburg Law (*Ius municipale Magdeburgense*, *Sachsische Weichbild* or *Magdeburger Weich bildrecht*) as the medieval city law, which partially exempted cities from the authority of the central (royal) or the feudal administration, and allowed for the creation of local government bodies.

Its name derives from the name of the city of Magdeburg in Saxony, which was entitled to the right of self-government in 1188 by the Archbishop Wichmann. In 1294, this right was reaffirmed by the Saxon prince-electors Albert. The credentials, along with the compilation of the Saxon customary laws “*Sachsenspiegel*” (“Saxon Mirror”) written by Eike of Repgow and the municipal law (*jus municipale*), formed the so-called Magdeburg Law (Kaminska 2010). In Galicia, the Magdeburg Law appeared in the times of the Rus’ princes. Thus, Volodymyr-Volynskyi fell under the Magdeburg Law in 1324, while still being a part of the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia (For details see: Khvedchuk 2012).

The first cities on the Ukrainian lands to receive the right of self-government were the Transcarpathian cities, which belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary (Khust, Tiachiv, Vyshkovo). In 1339 the last Galician prince Yuri-Boleslav granted the Magdeburg rights to the city of Sianok. Soon thereafter, as some of the Ukrainian lands came under the Polish rule, almost all Galician cities were privileged with the Magdeburg Law: Lviv (1356), Kamianets-Podilskyi (1374), Stryi

(1431), Lutsk (1432), Mukachevo (1445), Rivne (1493), Kyiv (1494), Dubno (1507), Ternopil (1548), Pereiaslav (1585), Bila Tserkva (1588), Chernigiv (1623), Vinnytsia (1640) etc. During the period from 1324 to 1797 various Ukrainian cities and towns were granted 85 Magdeburg credentials (*Magdeburgskoye pravo*).

In general, the transition of the Ukrainian cities and towns to the Magdeburg Law can be perceived as a positive and progressive phenomenon, which contributed to the development of the local self-government.

In the second half of the 17th century, during the days of the Cossack State, local self-government based on the principles of the Magdeburg Law was still in place. This allowed for a certain degree of localities' independence from the central Cossack administration. At the same time, the Cossack type of self-government (particularly in Zaporizka Sich) had its own fairly democratic institutions: an elected Sich Council, an elected leadership – *koshovyi*, *palankovyi* and *kurinnyi* leaders, as well as *kurinnyi* chieftain. Various economic, military, and judicial matters were addressed according to the principles of self-government.

However, the adverse political and military situation, the internal strife, and the struggle among the Cossack leaders' for the hetman's mace led to the Pereiaslav Council in 1654. As a result, a significant part of the Ukrainian lands came under the control of the Moscow Tsar (Mahun 2014), while the other part remained in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. But then, because of the three partitions of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (carried out by Austria–Hungary, Russia and Prussia), the once-mighty Polish state disappeared from the map of Europe for quite some time. The Ukrainian lands were divided between the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. By 1830, about 80% of Ukrainians became subjects of the Russian Tsar, and 20% - of the Austro-Hungarian Emperor (the modern territories of Bukovyna, Galicia, Transcarpathia) (Lytvynenko 2002). Russia had never applied the Magdeburg Law; therefore, by a special royal decree of 1831, Magdeburg Law was abolished in the Ukrainian territories, controlled by Russia (Kamińska 2010). The traditional national unity and sovereignty of the Ukrainian community, based on the customary law and enshrined in the Statute of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, was being deliberately destroyed. The provisions of the Statute of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which had been an integral part of the legal norms on Ukrainian lands for several centuries, were abolished in 1840. In this context, it is worth mentioning that in the documents signed at the Pereiaslav Council in 1654, Moscow committed not to abolish the Magdeburg Law in Ukrainian cities.

Following the World War I and the revolutions in the Russian Empire, Ukrainians once again tried to re-establish their statehood. The Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) and the West Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR) were established on the territory of the modern Ukraine. The concept of the local self-government was proclaimed as an integral part of a new democratic constitutional order. The draft Constitution of the UNR (1918) provided for the creation of a local self-government system, where the local authority would belong to the municipal councils and town halls. This culminated in the proclamation of the Reunification Act of the UNR and ZUNR (*Akt zluki UNR i ZUNR...*), which claimed the local self-government to be the crucial component of the re-established Ukrainian state. However, in this historical period Ukraine was not able to uphold its independence.

The interwar 20-year period *brought new challenges* for the Ukrainian statehood. Bukovyna was incorporated into Romania; Eastern Galicia and Volhynia – into Poland; Transcarpathia – first into Czechoslovakia, but after 1938 Munich agreement (between France, Britain, Germany and Italy) it ceded to Hungary. Consequently, the issue of local self-government on these territories was addressed in accordance with the domestic legislation of the respective countries. The largest share of the Ukrainian lands formed the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic within the USSR. After the World War II, Northern Bukovyna, Eastern Galicia, Volhynia and Transcarpathia were permanently integrated into the Ukrainian SSR, which was an integral part of the Soviet Union until 1991.

During this period, the local councils at all levels were functioning in the Ukrainian SSR. De-jure their objective was to carry out the duties of the local government and self-government bodies. But de-facto they were deprived of any degree of independence, and were functioning as the mere elements of a centralized administrative apparatus.

Summarizing the historical development of the local self-government in Ukraine, one must note that there was a certain experience of the local self-government on Ukrainian lands even before the introduction of the Magdeburg Law – during the times of Kievan Rus. But due to the peculiarities of the geopolitical location of Ukrainian lands, over centuries the local self-government was subjected to the constant influence of Western and Eastern political cultures. Therefore, the emerging problems of the local self-government legislative framework formation and implementation process in modern Ukraine are understandable.

*Formation of the legislative framework of European local self-government model in Ukraine.
Theory and practice*

What were the main tendencies in the development of the self-government legislative framework in independent Ukraine? What was the Ukrainian perception of the European local self-government model and European laws, which proved to be rather successful in the EU member-states?

We have already mentioned the European Charter of Local Self-Government. After many years of discussions that took place in the Council of Europe since 1968, the Charter was finally adopted on October 15, 1985. The purpose of the Charter was to compensate for the lack of common standards in assessing and protecting the rights of a local government unit. The document summarized and defined the generally accepted principles of the implementation of democratic norms in Europe at the local and regional levels, and obliged all parties to guarantee the political, administrative and financial independence of the local self-government units.

The well-developed legislative framework at both European and domestic levels served as a vivid example of the local self-government formation for the independent Ukrainian state. It provided Ukraine with the possibility to choose the most effective course of action for building its own national self-government legislation, and to avoid mistakes that occurred during the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government.

Ukraine, as well as other post-Soviet states, started looking for its own optimal model of local self-government, taking into account the national peculiarities, historical traditions etc. In order to say whether this process has always been successful or not, one should analyze its implications in practice.

The re-establishment of the local self-government in Ukraine and the formation of the respective legislation began with the adoption of the Law “On local councils of the Ukrainian SSR’s people’s deputies and local self-government” in December 1990. This law initiated the process of transition to a democratic system of governance, based on the decentralization and the local self-government. The term “local self-government” became common; the main principles for building the self-government bodies were set. One of these principles was the prerogative of the local self-government structures to resolve the issues of local importance, based on the need to “... satisfy the socio-economic interests of the population concerned” (Article 5 of the Law) (BBP 1991).

The next step in the reformation of the state structures was the introduction of the institution of the presidency. In early 1992, the two laws were passed: the Law “On the Representative of the President of Ukraine” (BBP 1992) and “On local councils of the Ukrainian SSR’s people’s deputies and local self-government” (BBP 1993).

According to the first law, the President’s representatives in regions and districts formed the executive branch of power. They exercised the state executive power and controlled the local government bodies. The second law envisaged the creation of a system that would ensure the central public administration’s authority, while allowing for a broad autonomy of the local self-government bodies.

Whereas looking for more progressive models of the local self-government, the Verkhovna Rada adopted the Law “On the formation of local government bodies and self-government” on February 3, 1994. The law provided for the elimination of the regional and district local state administrations (BBP 1994). They were, however, already restored in 1995. These pseudo-reforms led to an increase of the authority of the government, whilst the scope of application of the mandate of the local self-government unit decreased significantly.

The further development of the local self-government in Ukraine was closely connected with the process of drafting the new Constitution. This quite contradictory constitutional process ended on June 28, 1996 with the adoption of the Constitution of Ukraine (BBP 1996). Article 140 of the country’s Basic Law established the fundamental principles inherent to the functioning of the local self-government. It enshrined the right of local communities to deal with the issues of local importance within their competences in accordance with the Constitution and other relevant laws. Despite the fact that the Constitution took account of the recommendations of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, it set out only the general provisions for its formation in Ukraine. Therefore, it was necessary to further develop and adopt a more comprehensive law on the local self-government. There were all the legislative prerequisites for this process. But the lack of clarity with regard to a number of constitutional provisions, the not yet ratified European Charter of Local Self-Government etc. caused the emergence of different views on how the new law must look like. It resulted in the creation of the two new draft laws, which were submitted for consideration by the Verkhovna Rada. After a long debate, mutual concessions and compromises, on May 21, 1997 the Law “On local self-government in Ukraine” was adopted (BBP 1997a), and on July 15, 1997 the European Charter of Local Self-Government was ratified (BBP 1997b).

The new law determined the model, basic principles, legal status and responsibility of the local self-government bodies, and outlined a number of other important provisions that were designed to stimulate the development of the local self-government in accordance with the European standards. However, there were a lot of difficulties during the implementation process, as illustrated by the fact that 103 amendments (calculated by the author) to the Law “On local self-government in Ukraine” were made since its adoption till December 2016. A number of amendments was circumstantial. And even though the reform process is still ongoing, it should be noted that the existing legislative framework clearly defines the general competence of the local self-government structures in Ukraine. It derives both from the provisions of the World Declaration of Local Self-Government, adopted at the 27th Congress of the International Union of Local Authorities on September 26, 1985 in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), as well as from the European laws. The existing international practices make it possible to complement the Ukrainian national legislation with the standards of local self-government seen elsewhere in Europe. In this context, the Ukrainian legislator should examine in detail the European Charter of Urbanism. The Charter was adopted by the Permanent Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CE) in 1993. The drafting process began in 1980, when the Council of Europe introduced a new program entitled “For Better Life in Cities”. The European Charter of Urbanism is especially relevant for Ukrainian borderland cities. Over the centuries, Ukrainian borderland cities were developing with in different states, absorbing different traditions of urban development and urban culture. Thus, they require some special comprehensive methods of dealing with the question of the preservation of architectural masterpieces of different epochs and styles, solving the complex issues of modern urban development etc. And the local self-government bodies are directly responsible for the management of these issues.

Among the other important documents, which might be useful for the modernization of Ukrainian legislation on local self-government, there are the European Declaration of Urban Rights and the European Charter of Cities. Both documents were adopted at the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) on March 18, 1992 in Strasbourg (*European Urban Charter*). The provisions of these documents were used for drafting the Charter of Ukrainian Cities, which was adopted by the Association of Ukrainian Cities on June 28, 1997 (*Khartiya ukrayins'kykh mist*).

The international standards of social order, developed and adopted by the majority of the European states, are also aimed at regulating the multidimensional issues of international economic and social cooperation of territorial communities and authorities. They are reflected in the “European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities” (*Evropeyska ramkova...*) adopted by the Council of Europe in 1980 in Madrid. From the Ukrainian perspective, the cooperation between the local self-government units of the border regions and their neighbors on the opposite side of the border is very important. This is due to the fact that Ukraine has common borders with the EU countries - Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Hungary. At the same time, Ukraine borders with the countries that are not part of the European Union – Belarus, Russia, and Moldova. In European countries, the activities of the local government units, including the cross-border cooperation, have long been considered as the important elements of integration processes. Moreover, they also contribute to eliminating the economic and social imbalances of border areas, which ultimately leads to the improvement of the intergovernmental relations. Meanwhile, the post-Soviet sentiments are still very strong in Belarus, Russia and the eastern regions of Ukraine. Local authorities are de-facto controlled by oligarchic clans. The adoption on July 14, 1993 by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the Resolution on accession to the European Outline Convention (BBP 1993b) was an important step in providing the legislative basis for the development of cross-border cooperation, creating the Euro-regions. Since 1993 till 2015, 10 Euro-regions were created on the territory of Ukraine (“Bug”, “Carpathian”, “Upper Prut”, “Dniester”, “Lower Danube”, “Black Sea”, “Donbas”, “Slobozhanshchyna”, “Yaroslavna”, “Dnipro”). This was augmented by the adoption of the Law “On cross-border cooperation” by the Verkhovna Rada on June 24, 2004 (BBP 2004). Besides, Ukraine is actively using the European experience in organizing the Euro-regions. But, unfortunately, the rapid creation of the intergovernmental structures has not yet produced tangible results either in the economic or social sphere. In the east and south of the country, the question of the establishment of effective self-government structures and creating the Euro-regions is off the table. The Crimean peninsula was annexed. This is the fourth year now that an undeclared war continues. And one of the reasons for the escalation of the situation in the eastern borderland has been the lack of strong Ukrainian local government units.

Aware of the importance of safeguarding and promotion of the traditions of local self-government, the European community gives considerable attention to the involvement of young people in the development of the local self-government systems. In 1994, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe adopted the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life (*Evropeyskaya Khartiya...*). In Ukraine, this problem is strategically relevant. The Ukrainian state structures, particularly those at the regional level, need smart, determined, immune to corruption, capable of exercising reforms young politicians. On September 27, 2013, the President of Ukraine issued a decree “On youth policy development strategy for the period up to the year 2020” (*Ukaz Prezidenta Ukraïni...*). Furthermore, in 2014 the draft of the “State programme of youth policy up to the year 2020” (*Nova Kraïna 2014*) was presented to the society. The document included the provisions of the European Charter, as well as the policy guidelines announced in the “Youth policy development strategy for the period up to the year 2020”. The next step is to implement the provisions of these documents in practice.

Despite the significant progress in the development of the local self-government legislative framework in Ukraine and harmonization of many provisions of national legislation with the European standards, there are still a number of obstacles preventing its full implementation. This particularly applies to the public authority decentralization and continued local self-government reforms. It is important to clearly define the competencies of the respective authorities, especially in the sphere of budgetary discretion. Addressing these pressures remains of critical importance to ensuring the quality and accessibility of public services, the realization of citizens` rights, the satisfaction of their needs and interests in various spheres of public life. Early efforts to this end have already been undertaken.

On approval of the Concept of reforming of local-governance units and executive power on April 1, 2014 (Order #333-p), the process of decentralization was launched. On 5 February 2015, the law of Ukraine „On Voluntary Amalgamation of Territorial Communities” was approved.

The considerable rise of amalgamated territorial communities (ATC) testifies their empowerment and effective outcomes of the decentralization reform of Ukraine. Noteworthy, according to statistics, in Ukraine in 2015 there were 159 ATC, whilst in 2018 – so far 874 merged communities have been merged.

Today dozens of international programs and projects facilitate the decentralization process in Ukraine. Further development of this process requires amending and supplementing the

Constitution of Ukraine. On August 31, 2015 the Verkhovna Rada adopted the corresponding Resolution “On preliminary approval of the bill on the amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine concerning power decentralization” (*Postanova Verkhovnoi Radi*). The debate in the Verkhovna Rada surrounding the Resolution demonstrated a struggle between the statesmen who understand the importance of European experience for the successful development of the local self-government in Ukraine on the one hand, and the politicians expressing the interests of oligarchic clans on the other hand. Yet, despite the internal political difficulties, the decentralization of State power in Ukraine and the local self-government reforms move in the right direction. As of early June 2018, 743 joint territorial communities had already been established. Currently, more than 6.4 million people live within these associations (*Decentralization – About Reform*).

The Verkhovna Rada adopted a legislative package to extend the powers of the local self-government bodies, and to optimize the provision of administrative services. So, the following laws were adopted: The Law of Ukraine “On cooperation of territorial communities” (BBP 2014) and The Law of Ukraine “On fundamentals of state regional policy” (BBP 2015a). This allowed for delegating powers to the local authorities, who are now responsible for dealing with the issues of the residence registration; issuance of passports; state registration of legal entities and individuals, entrepreneurs, associations of citizens; civil registration; resolving the land issues etc.

The new legislative framework has greatly increased the inter-municipal consolidation within the country, created the adequate legal and institutional structures and mechanisms necessary for the formation of self-sufficient territorial communities of villages, settlements, and cities. Besides, a new model of the financial management, according to which local budgets received a certain degree of autonomy and independence from the central budget, has already proven to be beneficial.

Conclusions

Firstly, the studies regarding the emergence and development of the local self-government on the Ukrainian territory, along with the complex analysis of the historical experience of its functioning, make it possible to use both the modern European legislation, as well as the historical peculiarities of Ukrainian lands, which over the course of centuries acquired a specific legal form.

Secondly, the results of the study help to understand the existing differences in the functioning of the local self-government structures in the western and eastern regions of Ukraine, especially in the borderland. In this context, the experience of the Euro-regional cooperation is very revealing. It shows that one of the main obstacles for the development of fruitful and transparent cross-border cooperation is the selfish interests of the Ukrainian political elite. Indeed, the transparency of Euro-regional cooperation would harm the interests of the practical politicians by making it harder to create and implement various corruption schemes.

Thirdly, the existing difference in the level of the local self-government decentralization between the European countries and Ukraine is a significant deterrent to the development of cross-border cooperation. For example, the decentralization process in Poland took place in 1999, while the adoption of the law on local self-government decentralization in Ukraine has always been deliberately delayed.

After all, the main thing is that the reform process has been triggered. The only possible way now is further development and improvement of the local self-government system in Ukraine, following the example of the European model of local self-government.

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**Human Rights in the Remnants of a Conflict: Has
the Legacy of Dayton Impaired Minority Inclusion
in Bosnia-Herzegovina?**

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Abstract:

More than two decades following the end of civil conflict made possible via Dayton Peace Accords (DPA) instated in 1995, Bosnia-Herzegovina still utilizes this international legal instrument as the sovereign's official constitution. This paper addresses the impact that the international community's failure to implement the appropriate locally considerate solutions needed to sustain peacebuilding has left behind. To this end, the paper highlights the quotidian ways in which the socio-cultural landscape of the Bosnian Federation and Republika Srpska remain stratified along ethno-religious divisions. Directing its' attention on the practical aspects where minorities face discrimination and remain excluded from social spheres the paper calls for a necessary advancement on the human rights protection of safeguarding minority members in both of the country's de-facto territories. In closing, it argues that society's schism from the residual consequences of the DPA can be achieved through the practices of change-drivers taking advantage of their training and capacity-building skills in the forms of: inter-ethnic dialogue, inter-cultural reconciliation and inter-religious peace. Constructing competences which demonstrate respect for human rights, encourage co-existence and the equal integration of minority members in society also bear the potential to strengthen the currently fragile relations with the out-group community, reducing a society's propensity for conflict regression.

Keywords: inter-religious dialogue, inter-cultural communication, political exclusion, minority rights, post-conflict society legislation

Introduction

Although the Dayton Peace Accords (DPA), signed on November 1st, 1995 in Dayton, Ohio maintained and officiated the ceasefire to the Bosnian conflict, the country's ability to

recover after the war and develop into an advanced democracy has proven challenging (Emkic 2018; Russo 2000; Tolomelli 2015; Lovic 2017). In recent years, episodes of inter-ethnic discrimination and inter-cultural hostilities continue to surface within institutional sectors, such as education and expression of religion and belief (Emkic 2018; Russo, 2000; Tolomelli 2015). As corroborated by sociologists, such as Russo (2000) and Tolomelli (2015), a majority of post-war authorship on this issue posits that the fractured legislative framework of the DPA's design is fundamentally culpable for such shortcomings hampering the State's ability to achieve a positive peace process. Allocation of power to constituent group's enacted via Dayton within the two territorial entities of Republika Sprska (RS) and The Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (FBiH) has created a tense atmosphere, where friction between the ethno-religious groups prevails in the socio-political arena. Today, Bosnian-Muslims, Serb-Orthodox, and Croatian-Catholics compete for securing their handle of power in the post-conflict environment. In most cases, it is the majority ethno-religious group who enjoys the enactment of the policies, programs and social practices institutionalized to their benefit (Russo 2000; Tortsu 2009).

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate with specific social examples how the DPA has systemically excluded minority groups from engaging in inter-cultural communication and participating in inter-group dialogue. In order to best explicate the marginalization of ethno-religious groups occurring within Bosnia-Herzegovina the paper is organized in the following manner. First, theoretical insights from Foucault's work on Social Exclusion theory are provided to understand *what* is happening within Bosnian society; this theory is complemented by Galtung's theory of Negative v. Positive Peace in order to address *why* such discriminatory practices remain prevalent in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the second part of the paper, the specific social realms, where minority isolation is experienced as a result of the DPA's enactment, are identified and defined with supporting evidence from educational curriculum and the expression of religion or belief. In the final part of the paper, the *Council of Europe 2016-2017 Guidelines on Education for Democracy* are recommended in order to appropriately redress the field of education and inter-religious dialogue based upon principles of social inclusion, equality and fairness. This piece contributes to wider human rights discourses on the criticality of securing minority member's equal participatory governance and expression within transitional post-conflict societies making strides to transform such countries into advanced democracies.

Theoretical Framework***Social Exclusion Theory***

In Bosnia-Herzegovina we can perceive that the exclusion ethno-religious minorities from socio-political ambiances are the result of the country's conflict, which placed a group of majority members in seats of reserved, limited and concentrated power. As articulated by Foucault (Peters & Besley 2014), dominant social paradigms are the byproduct of a series of inter-related socio-cultural, economic and historical forces which generate a group of persons who occupy the upper-echelons of the social system and are therefore able to monopolize their control over the administration of governance. Persons, who fall on the fringes of these 'precious' networks, are excluded from enjoying participation within such confines and typically suffer reduced socio-economic capacities and opportunities for self-betterment as a result of their label and stigmatization (Peters & Besley 2014). In his work, Foucault also cautioned that such process are cyclically pervasive as he advised that the beliefs and values instituted by the in-group will be constantly reinforced by society's adherence to such norms; therefore organically continuing the longevity of the existence of such behaviors (Peters & Besley 2014). Reserving power and retaining controlled preferential systems of order remain possible solely because other members populating the 'lower ranking' social tiers are prevented from joining the ranks of political elites and are, therefore, incapable of dictating any political influence over alternative policies that could effectively democratize social actions (Peters & Besley 2014). Foucault's argument that hyper-concentrated power structures perpetuate social exclusion is further supported by the following quotation: "In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a number of certain procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers and gain mastery of it" (Peters & Besley 2014: 103). The inclusivity of democratic beliefs and egalitarian standards for citizenry as a whole therefore represent a threat to the bearers of absolutist power.

Over the years, social exclusion theory has evolved. Since the early 2000s, there has been a peak in scholarship in parallel to a rise in organizational research on this front (Peters & Besley 2014). For example, ideas on the integration of minority group members have gained precedence on the European Union (EU) agendas. We can observe this gradual shift away from conglomerate power and movement towards the implementation and monitoring of societies that position equality, inclusion and participation citizenship at the cornerstone of their national legislation and domestic practices. The safeguarding of Foucault's theory is manifested in the

relevant scientific literature which focuses on the positive social impact of respecting human dignity, national unity and solidarity. Results indicate that when a State invests interest on the advance of a social justice system that is committed to protecting vulnerable groups' marginalization from socio-cultural realms and economic spheres deviance and criminality tend to become reduced within the focus society, catalyzing overall social betterment for citizenry at a community and national level (Peters & Besley 2014). While the theory of social exclusion may have metamorphosed as its relevance to modern society has been maintained; it's guiding principles continue to demonstrate the efficacy of its approach as we perceive that most advanced and fully-functioning democracies represent those, where a citizen's equal rights to attaining and enjoying the highest quality of life are respected and fulfilled through the commitments of the democratic state in which they live.

Negative v. Positive Peace

Galtung's creation of Negative v. Positive Peace Theory can also help us to understand the structural causes regarding the conditions of Bosnia-Herzegovina's post-conflict social status (Galtung 1969). As articulated by Galtung although there is an absence of direct violence, anytime there is a conflict or difference of opinion, when you have negative peace it is settled via a regression to violence. Because of this, many post-conflict societies are wrongly labeled into categories of 'peacebuilding', yet were never able to shatter through overcoming the negative peace plagued by forms of discrimination and inequality. In cognition of this atmosphere, Galtung's insights prove valuable for deliberations on the programs need in post-war societies; he cautions that negative peace processes will endure and be perpetuated by generations of post-conflict reform is not instituted appropriately according to the unique needs of the target society. This is largely connected to the implementation of the DPA which left Bosnia-Herzegovina in a up-hill battle in their attempt to transform out of negative and into positive peace (Galtung 1969; Pasalic-Kreso 2002; Russo 2000). Whereby positive peace processes are characterized by integration, optimism and the settling of opposed views in a civic manner; negative peace is marked by fear, inequality, and injustice (Galtung 1969). A pivotal description of negative peace forces a society to undergo a process of civic and social reflection and profoundly understand which indicators of positive peace are the missing components within the focus country or area (Galtung 1969). For example, as the father of peace studies Galtung discusses, a major feature of positive peace is seen societies where there is access to justice and access to equal economic

opportunity; this examination and post-conflict evaluation is especially critical to purging social orders of the corrosive indicators that can hamper a community's ascension into the enjoyment of positive peace processes. Galtung defines peace as the 'integration of human society'; suggesting that positive peace is reflected by conditions where diverse persons, communities and families experience low levels of violence and are able to bask in mutually harmonious relationships. As further conceptualized by Adams, empathy and pluralism are two pillars of social peace.

Just as Foucault's Social Exclusion theory was popularized by EU directives in the early 2000s, the United Nations (UN) endorsement of positive peace became integrated at an institutional level around 2005 (MacGinty 2010). At this point, the UN expanded its peacebuilding approach and began to complement its traditional peacekeeping operations by working together with the host country to adopt a series of measures to achieve a well-functioning government, equal distribution of resources and acceptances of the rights of the other (MacGinty 2010). The field of conflict resolution is no stranger to criticism and often times scholarship on this issue has emphasized that there are a series of profoundly longitudinal factors and socio-cultural conditions related to a conflict, which supersede the immediate ceasefire period that ought to be dealt with monitored through effective programs in the critical years following the war (MacGinty 2010; Pasalic-Kreso 2002). This approach is precisely explicative of the method in which peacebuilding tends to be championed by international human rights agencies at a superficial level, however, the layers of the deep-rooted underlying injustices are not properly investigated and resolved. In the following section of the paper we will see how the peacebuilding framework of Dayton is emblematic of the international community's 'quick fix' to installing immediate human rights oriented legislation and policy without considering the layers of deep inter-ethnic and inter-cultural conflict that lie below the surface of such arrangements.

The Post-Conflict Education System in Bosnia Herzegovina: Cites of Minority Exclusion 'The Dayton Effect'

In practice, the DPA separated Bosnia-Herzegovina into two entities, one being the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina composed of a majority Bosnian Muslim populace and the other being Republika Sprska with a majority of demographics belonging to Serbs (Pasalic-Kreso 2002). In the Federation, governance is divided into ten cantons while in RS there are 7 regions

(Pasalic-Kreso 2002). As written Dayton (1995), ‘Cantons are solely responsible for developing policies, including declarations for education and implementing cultural policies’. In the Federation, trends indicate that, when educational policies are implemented, the question of its public education should instruct via segregated or generic national curricula arises annually (Pasalic-Kreso 2002; Russo 2000; Lovic 2017). This is reflective of the exacerbated level of political exploitation of the education system; which, research demonstrates, is completely devoid of democratic principles; this position is further emphasized by in the following quote: “There is much manipulation of education for political and ideological purposes in Bosnia-Herzegovina today (...) education is often misused (by) providing students with different interpretations of the same facts (...) for example, curricula and textbooks may present the start of the war (diversely) as aggression, occupation or a fight for liberation and national emancipation” (Pasalic-Kreso 2002: 7). This phenomenon occurs because ‘truths’ are missing and the society as a whole has not overcome the traumas of the war; the incentives of entering into dialogue for the youth generation in order to share wartime experiences, reconcile and bring out a unified national identity become especially salient when we analyze the field of post-conflict education in Bosnian society.

Curricula

Segregation of schools being stratified along the lines of ethnicity, language and religion are commonplace. At the beginning of each academic year, there are intensive debates regarded integrated schools and common core curricula (Pasalic-Kreso 2002). The teaching of history also remains a point of discussion. As noted by Emkic (2018), problems in this realm surfaced, when displaced returnees came back to their hometown which was occupied by other ethno-religious groups; making them out-numbered and the ‘new minority’. Education was not the sphere where discrimination was experienced, however, many families homes were damaged and destroyed and in the years following the war property restitution has not been effectuated nor has equal economic employment in the area of capital and unskilled labor been experienced by the focus on minority populations (Emkic 2018). In terms of educational curricula, there is a true rejection of a multi-ethnic social fabric, whereby minority pupils are granted access to educational instruction and lessons that service the affiliations of the majority students. There are no alternatives to opposing majority curricula, the only option is to not receive an education given these structural conditions many minorities are forced to conform to majority learning

instructions and lessons which typically include versions of history bearing offense to their ethnic, cultural and/or religious identity. Nationalist leaders have a heightened degree of discretionary leverage in their power to evade the inclusivity of multi-ethnic curricula; this is readily seen in the educational programs of cities who experienced extreme devastation resulting from the conflict, such as: Sarajevo, Tuzla, and Zenica (Emkic 2018; Paslic-Kreso 2002). The Dayton Peace Agreement neglected to mention education as a special topic but education was regarded in this international legal charter as a basic human right, which left the implementation of educational reform for the local municipalities to manage. Overall, this omission of education as a ‘special item’ represents a piecemeal approach to institutional redress within an especially critical social sector in the country’s aftermath of war.

Today, in zones where the majority population is Croat, Croat head ministers have been to go to such extremes to locking the entrances of children and teachers belonging to Bosnian Muslim minorities. There are also episodes where instructors have refused to attend shared buildings with Bosnian Muslims (Emkic 2018; Paslic-Kreso 2002). Political leaders become empowered by such occurrences and use such discriminatory practices to harness the indoctrination of Bosnia and Herzegovina mixed youth population. On a practical level, this means that nationalist ideologies dominate the field of education and resolution of problems are biased which strengthen the discourse of ethnic separatism and evade the development and inclusive, tolerant and heterogenic approach to a national new identity which is learned within domestic schools.

Language

Linguistic differences have also become problematic following the war; as the areas closer to the borderlands such as Serbia and Croatia you see the power of such nationalist rhetoric stems from Belgrade or Zagreb rather than Sarajevo (Emkic 2018; Paslic-Kreso 2002). Today, there are cases where populations are only offered classes in majority language courses; it is important to note that Serbian follows the Cyrillic alphabet. During the war, Croatian students were taught in Serbian and only afforded the opportunity to have pocket dictionaries in order to aid in the translation of the language of educational instruction to their native language (Emkic 2018; Paslic-Kreso 2002). This phenomenon explicitly violates the basic human right of a child to receive an education in their maternal language (De Luca 2018). As mentioned above there is still widespread intention to ‘cleanse the motherland’ by instituting education via the

Cyrillic script (Torsti 2009). These practices are emblematic of a post-conflict culture's refusal to come to terms with a pluralized post-conflict narrative and post-war national identity increasingly representative of negative as opposed to positive peace which would be manifested by themes of unity, nationhood and uniformity of a people across a territorial state.

The teaching of history

Textbooks also served as 'quick-fixes' when international pressures in the post-conflict atmosphere mainly from the Organization for Security Co-operation Europe required that material, which could be regarded by pupils belonging to minority groups as offensive, is to be removed from textbooks. Often times the text was simply blackened and replaced with wording that said 'the following material contains passage of which the truth has not been established or that may be offensive or misleading and is currently under review' (Paslic-Kreso 2002). Because this practice was essentially imported, and pragmatically top-down the power of the pen was in the hands of the educators; in some cases, the text was removed or blackened but the material was placed in even more obvious classroom location such as the bulletin-board; such behavior manifests a strong volition for contesting a common-core curricula. Sociological authorship on this issue has mentioned that if the implementation of national curricula was guided with equal representation and participation of minorities it is plausible that a complete re-structuring process could have taken place and offered the entrance of democratic citizenship education for Bosnian society.

Inter-religious dialogue and religious pluralism in the classroom setting

The institutionalization of the "Two Schools Under One Roof" post-war educational policy is a quintessential example of the difficulty of achieving religious freedom within the Bosnian school system. Tolomelli (2015) explains that the program of allowing Bosnian and Croat students to attend classes in the same building, but being physically separated and taught completely diverse curricula (with different educators) was seen as temporary solution to be tolerated by the international community. Despite international pressures to absolve its segregated school program, Bosnian Education Ministers have since halted progress on the development of inter-religious classes. In 2007, Education Minister Kuna rationalized this decision by stating that: "The two schools under one roof project will not be suspended because you can't mix apples and pears...apples with apples and pears with pears". (Tolomelli 2015:

102). The prejudicial attitude on the reluctance to institute learning about world religions is further exacerbated in the following quotation “Croatian students attend classes in the morning while Bosnians in the afternoon. The Bosnian textbooks state that ‘unlike others’, Muslims do not destroy sacred objects and the Croat students learn that Muslims are only an ethnic group and not a religion.” (Tolomelli 2015: 101).

Trends of minority religious groups having little alternatives to learn about their faith and the faith of others in the company of their peers is not well corroborated in the literature or international reports by quantitative and statistical evidence, underlining that additional research is merited in this realm. As explicated in the current scientific literature courses such as: ‘*Society, Culture and Religion*’ as well as ‘*Culture of Religion*’ involving lectures on inter-religious dialogue, religious tolerance and religious freedom have been implemented in schools in Sarajevo and Tuzla districts, however, longitudinal data evaluating their level of societal impact remains unavailable (Tolomelli 2015). In the following section of the paper we will see how the usage of education and freedom of religion as channels for discrimination can be over-come in the post-conflict period by raising awareness on the benefits for introducing measures advocating for inter-cultural competences and inter-group communication and dialogue at the micro-level of society.

Recommendations of a Policy Model

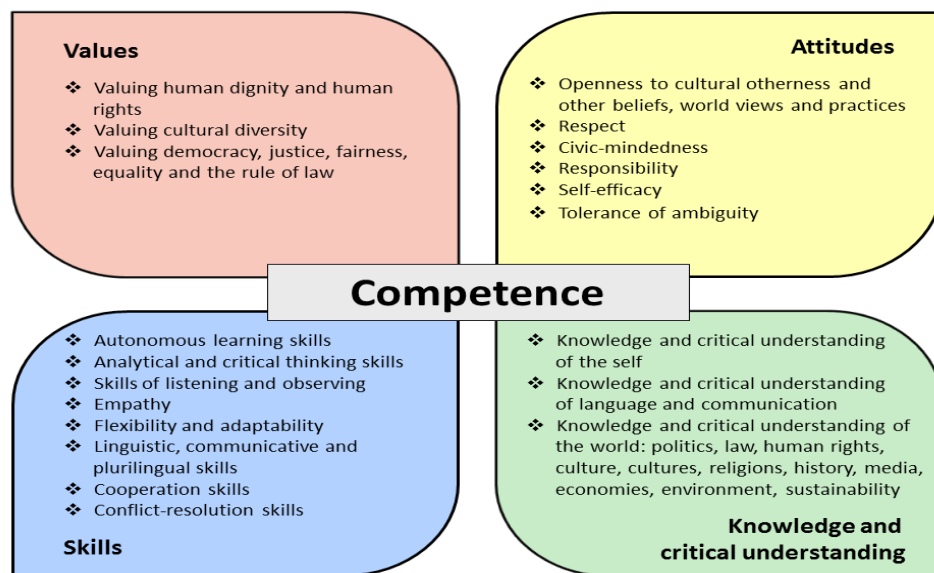
Cultural separatist ideology emerges alongside assimilation trends, yet as opposed to the latter it stresses the importance of ethnic identity and the necessity of developing a feeling of belonging to a single ethnic cohort (Hing 1993). According to the concept, members of an in-group attain personal fulfillment by through their belonging to their own minority ethnicity; in Bosnia-Herzegovina it becomes apparent that the development of the curricula not only favors social-exclusion, while the country finds itself in a state of negative peace, yet the political insistence on the development of educational and religious expression policies demonstrate that students retain cultural uniqueness, fully explore their own ethnic history and remain generally un-informed of diverse viewpoints, and counter-narratives of wartime memories. As mentioned by Hing (1993), research indicates that youth who are unable to move outside of their ‘inner-circles’, functionally reinforce the cyclical hegemony involved in such practices and encourage the generational longevity of such polarized practices. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, pluralism in pedagogy is susceptible to backlash, misused and exploited for strategies of political and nationalistic gain. What you have are cultural cells whose objective is dominate separatist

policies and practices that overall hamper the opportunity for reconciliation and the restoration of civic relationships amongst a once peaceful society.

Council of Europe has recommended that the exclusion of minorities from political capacities, educational spaces, and religious expression can be overcome through the building of core competences (see Figure 1). For the purposes of Bosnia-Herzegovina the strategic policy model is divided into four parts: 1) Values, 2) Skills, 3) Attitudes, 4) Knowledge and Understanding. Given the current state of the art and international perception on the dire situation and lacking democratization in Bosnia-Herzegovina, it seems critical that the adoption of competences adhere in the building of a positive peace process where minority social exclusion is annihilated from society work to build the following competences: 1) Valuing cultural diversity, human dignity and human rights (Values); 2) Empathy, Conflict Resolution Skills (Skills); 3) Openness to cultural otherness, Civic-mindedness (Attitudes); 4) Knowledge and critical understanding of the self, knowledge and critical understanding of world: cultures, religions and finally, history (Knowledge and critical understanding).

Though vehicles of media campaigns, schools and centers of faith and worship society can learn about the benefits of having a pluralistic and ‘positive peace’ society. These three inlets mentioned above are valuable because they represent realms whereby persons have already an esteem for and confidence in; therefore they are likely to give credence to the ideas shared by persons whom they already trust and respect.

Figure 1. Council of Europe Competences for Democratic Culture



Source: Popović (2017).

Conclusion

The cleaved architecture and fragmented implementation of the DPA has crippled BiH's complete ascension out of a ceasefire and into a positive peace process. In weaving this tangled legislative web majority group members manipulate pieces of the choppy legislation to be exploited their constituents' religious/ethnic majority group benefit as policies are applied to their entities educational, religious/ cultural and economic market practices. This can, however, be overcome via the implementation of competency-building frameworks in policy-making procedures; through the aperture of inter-cultural communication and the encouragement of inter-faith dialogue the agency of minority group members can be advanced and safeguarded in order to achieve social equality via diverse channels, such as awareness raising via the media, at schools and faith centers.

The role of education and religious expression in Bosnia-Herzegovina today are fighting to ascertain their homogeneity in the face of changing society. If these two sectors embrace the vision of pluralistic and democratic society that values freedom of expression from persons of diverse cultural and religious background not only can social exclusion be overcome but the potential for achieving a positive and durable peace can rise. If the promotion of human dignity and social cohesions can triumph the country's current regression to ethno-political and nationalist agendas then competence building in the areas of: civic-mindedness, tolerance, and empathy can begin to gain precedence with the currently turbulent social system.

In practice, having a set of competences proves to be an insufficient shield in defense of mentalities. which constantly attempt to counter pluralism in the education field, religious sphere and beyond. Norm seeding practices gain momentum. when persons begin to understand the person incentives and social benefits of exposing war-time truths, engaging in reconciliation, and moving forward as a new, diverse, and cohesive society. Some first steps. which can spur these types of changes that take time, are: engaging in-cultural dialogue in the classroom, enjoying democratic participation in the political arena, and the ability to manifest your religion free from the fear of stigma with your peers. These preliminary actions may seem small in size and scope, yet they are the building blocks to the construction of an innovative social order which is grounded by a set of fundamental principles and guiding belief systems that reinforce the existence of a fair, just and equal democracy.

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Internal Communication and its Impact on the Efficient Functioning of the Company

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Abstract:

Communication in the internal environment of the enterprise is the primary tool that is used to transmit information, experience, knowledge, standards and principles which represent an essential pillar of the corporate culture and business management. In the current age of competition, businesses are trying their best to keep their position on the market. They are aware of the fact that behind the success of the company is a satisfied customer. And for the customer to be satisfied as well as the company to have positive outcomes – it's necessary for a company to focus some of their activities on the internal communication. Therefore, the aim of this article is to show the importance of internal communication within the organisation, because through the correctly set process of internal communication the company integrates people, communicates targets and its mission – what nowadays is the key to success. Equally, it's an important part of every corporation communication which forms a part of the whole reputation of the organisation or a business.

Keywords: internal communication, organisation, company, human resources, education, motivation

Introduction

Nowadays, organizations put more effort to create the positive relationships with the public, especially with their current or potential customers. Communication of the organization with the public, media, building a positive image and unified company identity are now the conditions for keeping the competitive edge in the current world, which, for the customer, is filled with too many choices. The aim of the communication with public is not only to make, but „also to tighten trust, understanding and beneficial relations with key and important public

groups that have or in the future might have impact on marketing success of an institution.” (Lukáč 2015).

Building a good reputation is not only about communicating its strong sides in all media but foremost about building a good reputation inside, in the direction of its employees. Internal communication therefore is a tool to not only influence the image and reputation but also positively affect the performance of employees and to achieve strategic targets of the organisation.

Research Methods

The object of this paper is to highlight the importance of internal communication in the company. We have decided to implement a pilot project in the form of a questionnaire survey. Its task was to identify the importance of internal communication in the company and level of efficiency and previously used internal communication tools in the enterprise. In the practical part of the paper we used information from the questionnaire survey and additional data from external analysis which were primarily focused on the usage of tools of internal communication in the company and the future development of internal communication in the company. Information from external analysis was used as an additional material to implement the theoretical results into the practice. The object of the investigation was three medium-sized enterprises in Slovakia which were selected randomly. The questions were addressed to middle-level managers.

To achieve the stated objective of this paper, we used the following scientific methods of investigation:

- descriptions - it describes theoretical and practical background of internal communication in the company,
- synthesis - it is ideational linkage of various parts of internal communication and business,
- comparison - it compares the data from domestic and foreign authors,
- analysis - is focused on the importance of internal communication in the company,
- inductive-deductive method - is based on a comparison of theoretical knowledge of internal communications in the enterprise and application of this knowledge into the practice,

- marketing research - is focused on the importance of internal communication in the company as well as the level of effectiveness of internal communication tools used in the enterprise,
- graphical methods - it is an evaluation of marketing research in the form of pie and bar chart.

Foundations and the purpose of the internal communication within the organisation

Communication and information flow is the foundation of the execution of all manager's functions and processes. In this case it's necessary to realise, that people spend the vast majority of their lifetime at the workplace. So that people can do their job well, they need to communicate between each other and they also need well established systems for exchanging information.

Communication within the organisation is quite a difficult system of internal formal and informal channels and networks, which is used for the flow of information, knowledge and expertise, which further influence the execution of work tasks and in the end, it can influence even the strategic targets of the organisation. Therefore, from our point of view it's very important that well established communication flow creates the adequate conditions to fulfil the company's targets. As Jozef Matúš (2008) noted "if the communication in the organisation is well directed, then in this case influences positive behaviour in its employees when it comes to the fundamentals of business".

But on the other hand, if there is not enough attention given to the direction of the communication flow, the whole organization is endangered. The responsibility for the correctly set internal communication is in the hands of leadership and management.

I also agree with the view of Růžena Petříková (2007), who says that "internal communication is like a blood flow in the organisation, because if it stops working or if there are some issues, the organisation will stagnate and it's actual position on the market will decline." What is important to remember, is that the basic conditions for well-functioning communication is the feedback, responsibility of organisation for in-organisational communication and also the cross connection of formal and informal communication channels. Leadership of the organisation therefore have to make sure that the internal communication is in line with the company policies, basic social and work processes, culture, strategy, concepts and the level of information system.

Functions and goals of the internal communication

When we look at defining the main goal of the internal communication, it's important to realise that in the end it's not about the satisfied employee but it's about the satisfied customer through that employee. Needless to say, it's easy to understand that the satisfied employee is the precondition for the success of the whole process. In that case, the satisfied employee is more about the added value to the internal communication, rather than being its primary goal. As Jozef Matúš (2009) observed, “the way the organisation communicates and the way it's managers communicate, creates an opportunity for cooperation of all co-workers and thus it influences fulfilment of strategic targets of the organisation and the prosperity of the business”.

We can therefore conclude that the main goal of internal communication is information and work leadership connection through which can communicate all departments within the organisation. The main goal of the internal communication is further supported by the following smaller targets:

- ensuring a well-functioning system of communication – informing employees about all important changes in the organisation,
- ensuring the collection, transmission, understanding and usage of all relevant information needed for the effective performance of all employees in the interest of the goals of the organisation,
- usage of internal communication to increase the motivation and development of desirable working tools, which will be reflected in the behaviour of employees,
- usage of internal communication in the organisation for the understanding of process of implementation of new forms and methods of management by all employees (Holá 2006).

We can divide functions of internal communication within the organisation into primary and secondary. Some of the **primary functions** of internal communication, which are considered as fundamentals, because they influence the managing of the organisation, are:

- exchanging information about the main goals of organisation and how they are going to be achieved,
- coordination and dividing the workload,
- clarification of tasks,
- communication about the encountered problems and about solutions,
- effective procedures to achieve strategic targets of the organisation.

Secondary functions of internal communications, which are evolving in interpersonal relationships, affect the organisation only indirectly. Some of them, according to Jana Holá (2011), are:

- avoiding conflicts on the workplace,
- motivating of employees,
- satisfaction of employees.

In connection with internal communication, it is also necessary to draw attention to the importance of a communication audit that performs the following functions in the management process (Bruhn 2009; Zajkowska et al. 2011):

- informational function – it is the starting point in development of a communication strategy and it examines the degree of conformity with the strategy of the company's operations; in particular it can show organizational irregularities in communication activities (determination of the audience group, selection of appropriate communication channels and tools); it diagnoses how the information flow is functioning in three basic dimensions: from the management staff downwards in the organizational hierarchy, from employees to senior managerial staff, as well as between departments and inside teams.
- control function – it shows the effectiveness of internal communication in the process of realization of company's strategic goals.
- persuasive function – it stimulates the awareness and responsibility of the executive staff and involves in communication activities, which constitute an example to follow at lower levels of the organizational structure.
- motivational function – it gives a signal to employees that their opinion is important and that their suggestions and proposals for improvements will be considered.
- educational function – it strengthens the awareness of everyone's own role in the organization, promotes proper organizational behaviours, as well as defines the responsibilities and communication roles in the organization.

Preconditions of the effective internal communication in the organisation

To develop an intentional system of internal communication in an organisation it's necessary to abide the basics of the system of communication. Mostly it's about the qualified personal strategy and its execution by all managers, matching the organisation of workload while the expertise and quality of management is also important.

Precondition for the effective internal communication in the organisation is also the training of senior management and other managers in the area of communication as well as regular assessments of all employees in the organisation.

From our point of view, the feedback of employees towards the management and how the employees view their leadership are extremely important. František Bělohávek (2009) noticed that „The close cooperation between the top management with other groups of management and keeping the communication standards and etiquette by the managers in the organisation are also a key to the properly set internal communication in that organisation”. Top management of the organisation is responsible for the standard of the internal communication within the organisation. Managers of the organisation should therefore understand and correctly execute communication and also explain their communication acts in a way other employees could clearly understand it.

Barriers in the internal communication within the organisation

One of the most common reasons for non-functioning communication is that company doesn't define the communication strategy and rules which would subsequently coordinate this strategy. In this case it could happen that when the information is passed on, it is passed by the wrong communication tools (Holá 2011).

Barriers, which are lowering the level and are making the communication less effective, according to Vlasta Střízová (2005), are:

- outdated ways of organising work – the need to upgrade to the modern way of organising things, for instance, the project management,
- communication barriers of the partners of communication – low communication skills, inability to listen others, personal repulsion,
- the different status of communicating partners – the employees don't communicate enough with their managers, the majority of requests from upwards to downwards and absence of proposals from downwards up,
- factors of the environment – the communication noise.

In small and mid-sized companies the attention is mostly focused on communication with the outside environment and not enough attention is given to the importance of internal communication. Leadership of a company is often not aware that the success of the organisation, or how the company is perceived from outside by customers, is directly reflected from inside life

of the company and relationships there, conditioned by internal communication. It is often a case, that „management of the company communicates only information, which they consider suitable without the consideration of what employees actually wants to and need to hear” (Holá 2011).

Results

For this article we carried out a pilot project in the form of a questionnaire. Its main purpose was to find out the level of effectiveness and of the actual significance of internal communication within the organization as well as assess the effectiveness of tools used for communicating. Within this pilot project we approached 3 selected companies in Slovakia to which we distributed the questionnaires in the written form. The questionnaire consisted of 23 questions and it was designed for managers of companies. To better understand the outcomes of the questionnaire, the questions were separated into three groups. First one had 4 initial ‘identification questions’. Second group of questions was focused on importance and level of internal communication within the organisation between managers and other employees. The final part was focused on the level of effectiveness of current tools for communicating, out of which there were two open questions to give space where participants could voice their opinions, make suggestions or proposals to this subject. The research used a suitable selection of respondents at the level of management and employees of the company.

As we could see from results, 12 managers participated in the project, from 3 selected mid-sized companies with the no. employees 25-99 and area of business was manufacture and trade. Managers who participated have been working on their current position for the last 3-5 years.

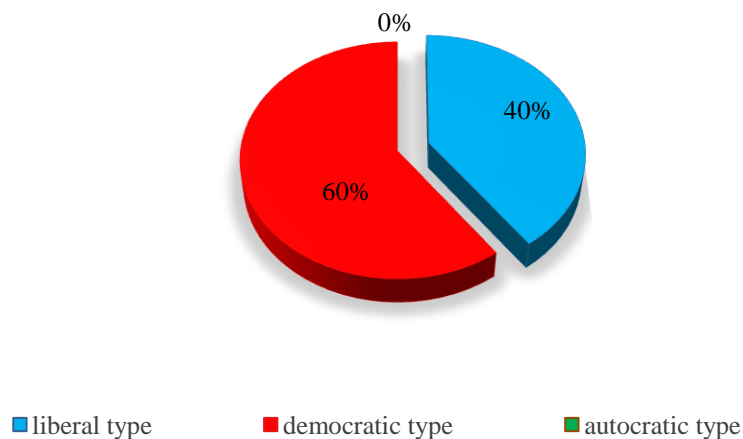
To summarise the whole outcome of this questionnaire, we could say the outcomes of this project study are mostly positive and satisfactory in the sense that managers in selected organisations are in majority satisfied with the level of communication with the leadership of the company as well as with employees. Further, outcomes revealed that participating managers communicate with their staff, on average, half of their working time. It means 4 hours. Very positive outcomes of this questionnaire were recorded in regards to feedback downwards-up and vice versa; it means from staff to managers, which is very important in internal communication. Even 90% of participants said that feedback in the company is important for them. It is so because it helps employees to be more effective in doing their tasks and mostly its motivating for

employees. It helps in their work performance. These positive outcomes of this questionnaire are mostly due to the fact that these companies in Slovakia were inspired by their parent companies and in the companies there are boxes for suggestions installed, which can be used for all employees to communicate directly with the leadership of the organisation.

Another quite interesting finding in the outcome of the questionnaire, as is shown on the figure 1, that 60% of the participants consider themselves as a democratic type of manager. This type diligently and fairly splits tasks between staffs, tries to motivate them to work and lead them to make logical decisions rather than make orders.

Quite high percentage, it means 40% participants said that they consider themselves more a liberal type of manager, who doesn't interfere much with the staff, doesn't have much authority despite having a few years of practice which also means, they don't have much authority between staff. This finding is very important in the view of internal communication because it points to unsatisfactory communication abilities of managers within the organisation.

Figure 1. What type of manager do you consider yourself to be?



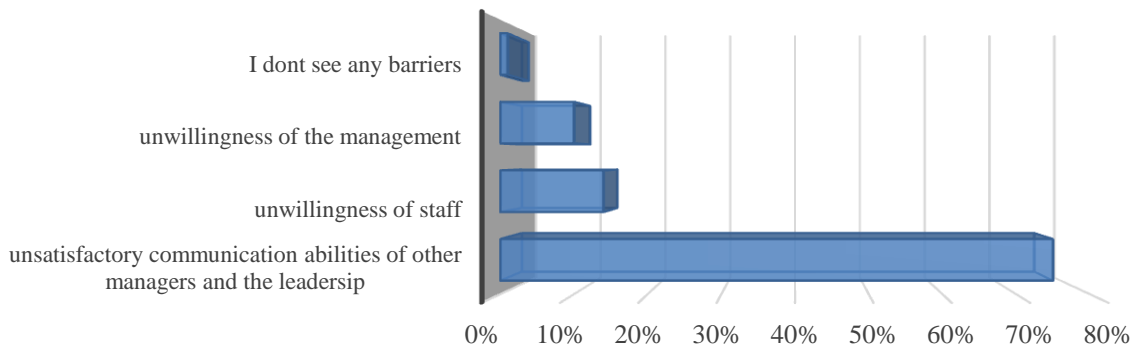
Source: own elaboration.

All participating managers also said that wishes, needs and requests of their staff are very important to them. Despite the majority of positive outcomes, the questionnaire has also pointed out some weak links in internal communication in selected companies. One of the negatives is the finding that participating managers are happy about information they get from leadership of the company about important facts. But in the open question where they had the space to explain their own thoughts whether the organisation in which they work, puts enough emphasis on

internal communication, in majority they were negative. In our opinion, this finding points to the incoherent internal communication within the organisation and mostly it indicates the absence of clear communication plan, which the company should follow.

In the next question the participants were asked, what are the most common obstacles they encounter at the workplace in regards to the internal communication. It was an interesting finding to see that 75% participants selected answers like unsatisfactory communication abilities of other managers and the leadership of the organization. In our opinion, this high percentage is also caused by unsatisfactory communication abilities, which need to strengthen on the side of line managers as well as leadership of the organization. We will point this out in the proposal part of this article. Another 14% of participants see the obstacle in the unwillingness of staff, 10% in the unwillingness from the higher management of the organisation and rest 1% of participants have not experienced any obstacles in terms of internal communication at the workplace.

Figure 2. What are the most common obstacles of internal communication at your workplace?



Source: own elaboration.

The next part of the questionnaire was focused on tools, which are being used for internal communication in selected companies. At the beginning, we were trying to find out from our participants what are the most common tools of internal communication used in their organisation. Based on the feedback, where we checked the suitability and intelligibility of questions, we have found out that managers couldn't really answer this question. From our point of view it's because managers didn't have enough knowledge about the subject. What is more, we found out that they didn't know what tools to imagine in terms of introductory and ongoing

information, personal systems and outside influences. In the further 4 questions, where were named each single tool of internal communication, the problem to answer did not appear anymore.

Within the introductory information participants said, that in their organisations they distribute brochures explaining how the company works and what is its scheme of organisational structure. In terms of ongoing information about the company, managers had the preference for annual statements/review, notice boards and e-mail.

In terms of personal systems, 92% of participants selected the form of financial reward and only 8% preferred the rating systems in the organisation.

From the viewpoint of outside influences, which can largely impact the general image of the company, participants said that within their organisation advertising and company PR are most commonly used.

Based on the next question, participants were asked to select 3 communication channels which were mostly missing in their organisation. We found out that in their companies they would welcome the company intranet, company rituals such as ‘coffee time’ and hosting of more educational events.

Proposals and suggestions

Based on the outcomes from the market research questionnaire we came to the conclusion that identified negatives are the result of the absence of a communication plan in all three organisations as well as the lack of knowledge at the management level on the subject of communication.

Because of the purpose of this market research and its execution using the primary quantitative research, it’s hard to determine the root causes of the above mentioned negatives. We can just assume that negatives which we identified haven’t got fatal consequences on the effectiveness of the internal communication in organisations and with some effort from the higher management and leadership of the company it is possible to eliminate them.

Within the collected facts we would like to suggest companies to approach internal communication as a direct tool of the organisation. Equally, we would like to propose to organisations create creation of a communication plan on the basis of which information flows evenly and consistently. Through the communication plan/scheme the management of the

company can fulfil the strategy and targets of the internal communication. The time schedule must be a part of this plan. It will describe every single activity with its clear goal, person responsible and budget. From our point of view, the communication plan therefore appears to be as a suitable tool to increase the effectiveness of internal communication within the organisation. If it's being adhered to, the leadership of the organisation can be sure that information will get to all staff at the right time.

Based on the collected facts we consider it important to suggest that organisations should create several new opportunities for development of communication abilities of management. It is mostly due to the fact, that our findings have shown that a lot of participants believe the main barrier in internal communication at their organisation is due to unsatisfactory communication capabilities of other managers and of the leadership of the company. Because of this, we think that some communication trainings and courses are suitable to strengthen the communication abilities on both sides. On these trainings the management and the leadership of the organisation could clarify and learn the skills to communicate effectively, which they could further better apply in practice. Outcome would be demonstrated, in our opinion, in the positive effect on the effectiveness of staff because their single goals and intentions will be better communicated and it would also strengthen the interpersonal relationships at the workplace.

Conclusions

On the basis of the analysis of theoretical knowledge from the field of internal communication of organisation and the market research questionnaire we found out, that correctly set internal communication of a company strengthens the prosperity of the company. But building a reputation and a positive image in the society is a constant, planned and mostly never ending process. Therefore it is important for organisations to give enough attention to internal communication, keeping in mind the general thought, that the human resources represent the biggest wealth of a company.

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**The Effects of Political Advertising on the
Perception of Political Images: a Case Study of
Polish Presidential Election in 2015**

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Abstract:

The presented article explores the effects of TV political advertising on political images of candidates competing in the 2015 presidential election in Poland. For this purpose, the empirical research (N=507) to check the reactions to campaign spots among voters with different political preferences was carried out. The conducted research shows that political preferences significantly affect both the perception of political images and the emotional attitude to candidates. The study also confirms that political advertising has a moderate importance in creating the images of commonly known politicians. Interestingly, the obtained results prove that emotional attitude towards politicians are more permanent and resistant to change under the influence of advertising messages than political image characteristics.

Keywords: political advertising, effects of political advertising, political image, political preferences, presidential elections in Poland

Introduction

Election campaigns before presidential elections are definitely the most personalized (Garzia 2014: 12). For voters, it makes the perception of the sphere of politics much easier, because data concerning the image of a particular candidate can be processed more easily. Thus, the voters often base their electoral decisions on image characteristics of politicians (Skarżyńska 2005: 212; Hardy 2017). Therefore, campaign staff focus on creating and adjusting candidates' images to the needs and expectations of the electorate. This strategy is also used in Poland. It becomes evident, when we analyze the expenses incurred during the electoral campaigns and the

importance of TV political advertising¹, as well as the growing role of online activity. During the 2015 presidential campaign in Poland, candidates spent almost PLN 7 million on paid TV ads. Traditionally, the highest amounts were spent by candidates from the two main political forces: Civic Platform (PO) and Law and Justice (PiS). Bronisław Komorowski running for re-election had spent nearly PLN 3.5 million on the broadcasting of spots even before the first round, and Andrzej Duda spent over PLN 2.8 million (KRRiT 2015). Interestingly, Paweł Kukiz did not use this communication tool at all due to his limited budget. Instead, he broadcast his messages in the unpaid time all the candidates could use².

The aim of this article is to determine how the images of the main presidential candidates were evaluated by different electorate groups during the 2015 campaign, and to find out whether TV electoral ads³ affected the perception of candidates' images and emotional attitude to them.

Theoretical Framework

Poor knowledge about political issues shared by the citizens is a common phenomenon in many contemporary democracies. This trend occurs both in consolidated Western democracies (Stroud et al. 2005: 26) and new democracies (including Poland). What is more, the youngest voters display significantly poorest political knowledge (Żerkowska-Balas et al. 2017). As a result of the lack of political sophistication, citizens tend to focus on other factors when they make electoral decisions. One of the most important factors is definitely the emotions evoked by particular politicians. Emotional attitude is the first reaction to the politician, which also has an impact on their image (Turska-Kawa 2012: 153). Furthermore, voters do not need to have any knowledge about the politicians to be able to express their emotional attitude to each of them (Wattenberg 1987: 58-59). Empirical studies reveal that the level of liking for politicians has a much stronger influence on voting preferences than cognitive judgements concerning particular components of the candidate's political image, such as e.g., honesty or competence (Pawełczyk & Jankowiak 2013).

¹ Expenditure on the broadcasting of paid electoral advertisements. In the case of the 2005 presidential election: PLN 2.9 million (KRRiT 2005), in 2010: PLN 8.4 million (KRRiT 2010).

² Pursuant to the Election Code of 2011 (Journal of Laws Dz.U. 2011, no. 21, item 112), the division into free "election broadcasts" and paid "electoral advertisements" was used. Electoral committees have the right to use free broadcast time starting from 15 days before the election until the end of the election campaign.

³ Election broadcasts emitted in free electoral time slots were used in the study. There were two reasons for that. First, most candidates in the election did not use paid electoral advertisements. Second, the candidates who did presented the same materials in the paid and unpaid time.

Electoral ads are one of the most important instruments used in election campaigns to shape the images of parties and candidates. Apart from the cognitive and conative dimension, researchers studying the political advertising identify the affective dimension, which involves the perception of the candidate's image and emotions associated with the candidate (Wimmer & Dominick 2010: 382-388). Analyses of the effects of TV spots on the perception of political candidates show three potential directions of change of the political image. First, political advertising may have a positive effect on the candidate's image (Kaid et. al. 1992). Positive evaluation of the candidate's qualities based on electoral ads may also affect the voting intention (Johnston et al. 2004). Second, they may cause poorer evaluation of political actors' images, especially if negative ads are used (West 1994). Third, the character of the effect may be mixed: exposure to spots does not have a uniform impact on the candidates or the change only occurs in some dimensions of the image (Olszanecka 2014).

Methods

The presented study followed the experimental procedure involving before-and-after measures, used successfully in studies on effects of TV political advertising by American (Kaid & Chanslor 1995), Italian (Mazzoleni & Roper 1995) and Polish scholars (Cwalina & Falkowski 2006, Turska-Kawa & Olszanecka-Marmola 2016). The research procedure involved three stages. In the first stage, the group of participants anonymously filled in a study questionnaire (pretest), including questions concerning their interest in politics⁴, political preferences, self-identifications on the left-right scale⁵, their emotional attitudes to the candidates competing for the office of the head of state, and the evaluation of the candidates' image characteristics.

Then, the participants were shown three randomly chosen electoral spots of each running candidate (in each group, the order of the candidates was also chosen randomly), acting as a stimulus that could potentially change the perception of the analyzed politicians. After watching the ads of each candidate, the third stage of the experiment followed, in which the participants filled in a posttest referring to the political image characteristics and their emotional attitudes to the candidate.

⁴ Interest in politics was measured using a 1-5 scale, where 1 meant that the respondent was not interested in politics at all and 5 meant a very high interest in that sphere.

⁵ Self-identification on the left-right scale was tested using a 1-7 scale: 1 reflected an extremely left orientation, 2 – left, 3 – center-left, 4 – center, 5 – center-right, 6 – right, and 7 – extreme right. Apart from that, the respondents could choose the option “I don't know / It's hard to say”.

The instruments used in the study were semantic differentials and the feelings thermometer scales⁶. For the purpose of this study, 13 seven-degree scales were produced⁷: *dishonest vs honest, conflicting vs conciliatory, unreliable vs reliable, effective vs ineffective, focused on the good of the party vs focused on the good of Poland, inexperienced vs experienced, incredible vs credible, lazy vs hard-working, incompetent vs competent, weak leader vs strong leader, arrogant vs tactful, looking bad in the media vs looking good in the media, physically attractive vs physically unattractive*. They were used to prepare the index of evaluation of each candidate's image, calculated as the mean value based on the mean scores obtained in all scales of the semantic differential. The coherence of the instrument was confirmed by the test of reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient⁸.

The study was carried out in the week before the first round of the 2015 presidential election. The study sample was made up of students of international security, internal security, European diplomacy, journalism and social communication, European studies, foreign language studies, physiotherapy, medicine, political studies and sociology from six Polish universities: University of Warsaw, University of Wrocław, University of Silesia in Katowice, University of Economics in Katowice, Medical University of Silesia and Silesian University of Technology. The final analysis involved 507 persons, including 311 women (61.3%) and 196 men (38.7%). Their voting preferences (see table 1) considerably corresponded with the distribution of support in this age cohort in the studied election (TVP INFO 2015). The highest number of respondents declared to vote for Paweł Kukiz (23.3%). Support for Bronisław Komorowski (14.4%), Andrzej Duda (11.6%) and Janusz Korwin-Mikke (10.8%) was much lower. The other candidates had the support at the level of 6.9%. One-fifth of the respondents were unable to decide at that stage of the campaign who they would vote for. 12.2% of the respondents declared electoral absence. Due to marginal declared support for the remaining candidates, I decided to include in the analyses the electorates of four candidates plus the undecided ones and the non-voters.

⁶ Emotional attitude to the candidates was assessed by the respondents using a 101-point scale (0-100). Scores between 0 and 50 degrees meant that the respondent had negative feelings toward the candidate, 50 degrees meant a neutral attitude, and values above 50 degrees indicated the respondent had positive feelings toward the candidate.

⁷ Semantic differential is also sometimes called the semantic scale, the semantic projection test, or Osgood scale. Despite many attempts, a uniform scale used by all researchers has never been produced (Kanievska-Sęba 2016).

⁸ In all cases, Cronbach's alpha was over 0.90, which proves the good fit of the applied semantic differential scales. Cronbach's alpha for respective pre- and posttest image scales were .94/.96 for Andrzej Duda, .95/.96 for Bronisław Komorowski, .93/.94 for Janusz Korwin-Mikke and .93/.94 for Paweł Kukiz.

Table 1. The distribution of political preferences in the research sample

Electorate of candidate	N	%
Andrzej Duda	59	11.6
Bronisław Komorowski	73	14.4
Janusz Korwin-Mikke	55	10.8
Paweł Kukiz	118	23.3
other candidates	35	6.9
undecided voters	105	20.7
non-voters	62	12.2

Source: own elaboration based on conducted research.

During the study, three research hypotheses were made concerning the image characteristics of the candidates and the political preferences of the experimental procedure’s participants.

H1: Political preferences will significantly differentiate the evaluations of the candidates’ images.

It was assumed that in the specific conditions of the 2015 presidential campaign (including Bronisław Komorowski’s image problems, PiS appointing Andrzej Duda as their candidate, and high support for candidates from out of the political establishment), leading to strong polarization of electorates, the competing candidates will be evaluated significantly better by their own voters and perceived negatively by the electorates of their competitors.

H2: Regardless of declared political preferences, TV electoral ads will not lead to reconfiguration of image characteristics of commonly known candidates.

The above-mentioned hypothesis is based on the findings of Andrzej Falkowski and Małgorzata Michalak concerning changes caused by positive and negative information in the case of familiar and unfamiliar politicians. The study proved that both negative and positive messages have a less influence on the perception of a commonly known candidate, of whom the voter already has an established opinion (Falkowski & Michalak 2009: 252). This results from the fact that if the image of the politician is stronger and more permanently established in voters’ awareness, so it is harder to change it using contents shown to them. Presumably, a similar mechanism will occur in the case of TV electoral ads. Therefore, it was assumed that the change under the influence of

political spots will be smaller in regard to Bronisław Komorowski and Janusz Korwin-Mikke, who are well-known candidates with long-established images⁹.

H3: The presented spots will have a greater impact on undecided voters.

First studies on the impact of the media suggested that all the viewers receive information from the media in the same way (hypodermic needle model). Hence, in this case, campaign activities reaching the highest number of viewers would be the most effective (Postelnicu 2008: 793; Cwalina 2000: 62). Following analyses, however, changed this approach to media influence towards focusing on factors that would increase the campaign's effectiveness. One factor that reduces the influence of campaign content presented in the media is political preferences. As researchers show, individuals with established preferences resist campaign messages that are incompatible with their opinions (Franz & Ridout 2007). Undecided voters are much more susceptible to this form of persuasion (Bowen 1994). Presumably, a similar tendency will be diagnosed in the presented study.

Results

First, the hypothesis that political preferences would cause significant differences in the evaluation of candidates' images was verified. It was performed using one-way ANOVA, which confirmed the hypothesis: political preferences affected the evaluations of image characteristics on semantic differential scales in the case of all the analyzed candidates. Political preferences explained the highest percentage of variance in the case of evaluation of the image of Bronisław Komorowski [$F_{\text{Welch}}(6, 178.483) = 45.888, p < .001, \eta^2 = .36$], followed by Andrzej Duda [$F_{\text{Welch}}(6, 180.180) = 42.290, p < .001, \eta^2 = .34$], Paweł Kukiz [$F_{\text{Welch}}(6, 175.744) = 39.337, p < .001, \eta^2 = .32$] and Janusz Korwin-Mikke [$F_{\text{Welch}}(6, 183.348) = 32.219, p < .001, \eta^2 = .28$]. Post-hoc tests (Games-Howell) showed that the electorate of each politician evaluated own candidate significantly better than did the voters of other candidates, undecided ones and those who did not intend to vote. Interestingly, the evaluation of the incumbent president by his electorate was the least positive, and the evaluation of Andrzej Duda by his voters – the most. The respondents who

⁹ I assume that Andrzej Duda did not have an established political image in voters' awareness. This is proved by public opinion polls carried out six months before the presidential election, directly after Jarosław Kaczyński's announcement that Duda had been appointed as the candidate of Law and Justice. In the research by the Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), nearly half (43%) Polish voters declared they did not know Andrzej Duda (CBOS 172/2014). Paweł Kukiz did not have a clear political image, either. He was perceived by the voters as an artist engaged in promoting single-member districts rather than as a representative of the sphere of politics.

did not yet have particular preferences assessed the image of Paweł Kukiz as the best. This candidate also received the best mean, involving all the respondents.

Table 2. The evaluations of presidential candidates’ images among voters with specific political preferences

Electorate of candidate	Komorowski’s image	Duda’s image	Korwin-Mikke’s image	Kukiz’s image
Andrzej Duda	2.76	5.75	3.67	4.28
Bronisław Komorowski	5.34	3.15	2.99	3.46
Janusz Korwin-Mikke	2.83	3.65	5.54	4.63
Paweł Kukiz	2.98	3.97	4.18	5.39
other candidates	3.12	3.82	4.09	4.08
undecided voters	3.86	3.90	3.50	4.21
non-voters	3.75	3.88	3.55	4.01
all respondents	3.56	3.99	3.87	4.40

Source: own elaboration based on conducted research.

In the same way, political preferences caused differences between the feelings towards candidates expressed on feelings thermometers with regard to all the analyzed candidates. Political preferences explained the highest percentage of variance in the case of Bronisław Komorowski [$F_{Welch}(6, 179.976) = 54.922, p < .001, \eta^2 = .40$], followed by Paweł Kukiz [$F_{Welch}(6, 175.354) = 48.252, p < .001, \eta^2 = .37$], Janusz Korwin-Mikke [$F_{Welch}(6, 184.307) = 44.038, p < .001, \eta^2 = .35$] and Andrzej Duda [$F_{Welch}(6, 182.755) = 43.478, p < .001, \eta^2 = .34$]. Post-hoc tests (Games-Howell) showed that the electorate of each politician had warmer feelings for own candidate than the electorates of other candidates, undecided voters and non-voting ones. Also in this case, the electorate of Bronisław Komorowski liked him less than the voters of other candidates liked their candidates. Undecided voters had the warmest feelings for Paweł Kukiz, although the score of 52.29 shows that he is a neutral candidate for this group of voters.

Table 3. Emotional attitude to the candidates in different voter groups

Electorate of candidate	Komorowski's feelings thermometer	Duda's feelings thermometer	Korwin-Mikke's feelings thermometer	Kukiz's feelings thermometer
Andrzej Duda	21.86	82.20	35.76	55.25
Bronisław Komorowski	76.99	20.96	18.22	35.48
Janusz Korwin-Mikke	18.55	31.27	85.09	62.00
Paweł Kukiz	23.81	39.41	45.76	81.78
other candidates	28.86	36.00	42.86	53.14
undecided voters	44.29	36.86	30.67	52.29
non-voters	39.52	38.71	33.87	47.10
all respondents	37.18	40.00	40.12	57.55

Source: own elaboration based on conducted research.

To verify the second hypothesis, the t-Student test was carried out to compare the means of candidates' images in pre- and posttest. The hypothesis was only confirmed for Bronisław Komorowski, because the presented TV ads did not have an impact on the perception of his image. As regards the other candidates, watching the spots caused the significant changes. The affective impact of political advertising was twofold: the image of Andrzej Duda was perceived as worse after watching the spots, while the images of Kukiz and Korwin-Mikke were evaluated better by the study participants. It is interesting that – contrary to the hypothesis – the greatest differences were observed in the case of Korwin-Mikke. It may result from the fact that the spots created an image of this politician that was completely different from the one established in media, focusing on his controversial declarations concerning women or disabled people.

Table 4. Candidates' images before and after viewing the spots (all voters)

Candidate's image	pretest	posttest
Andrzej Duda	3.99**	3.88**
Bronisław Komorowski	3.56	3.60
Janusz Korwin-Mikke	3.87***	4.04***
Paweł Kukiz	4.40**	4.48**

*** test results significant at the $p \leq .001$ level

** test results significant at the $p \leq .01$ level

* test results significant at the $p \leq .05$ level

Source: own elaboration based on conducted research.

In-depth analysis allowed to identify particular image characteristics whose evaluation changed after watching the spots. As a result of the effect of the stimulus of political advertising, Duda was perceived as less honest (pretest $M=3.83$; posttest $M=3.66$; $p=.001$), less effective (pretest $M=3.97$; posttest $M=3.78$; $p=.001$), less hard-working (pretest $M=4.51$; posttest $M=4.37$; $p=.010$), less competent (pretest $M=4.20$; posttest $M=3.99$; $p<.001$) and less tactful (pretest $M=4.27$; posttest $M=3.95$; $p<.001$).

In the case of Korwin-Mikke, after watching electoral ads the respondents evaluated him better in terms of eight characteristics: conciliatory (pretest $M=2.22$; posttest $M=2.49$; $p<.001$), physically attractive (pretest $M=2.68$; posttest $M=2.89$; $p<.001$), effective (pretest $M=3.74$; posttest $M=3.97$; $p<.001$), focused on the good of Poland (pretest $M=4.04$; posttest $M=4.43$; $p<.001$); credible (pretest $M=3.71$; posttest $M=4.00$; $p<.001$); competent (pretest $M=4.12$; posttest $M=4.31$; $p=.001$); tactful (pretest $M=2.46$; posttest $M=2.77$; $p<.001$) and reliable (pretest $M=3.95$; posttest $M=4.08$; $p<.001$). What is more, after watching TV spots, the respondents had warmer feelings towards him (pretest $M=40.12$; posttest $M=42.76$; $p<.001$).

With regard to Kukiz, the evaluation of some image characteristics worsened, and of some, improved. This candidate was perceived by the respondents as less honest (pretest $M=5.04$; posttest $M=4.95$; $p=.036$), less hard-working (pretest $M=5.04$; posttest $M=4.94$; $p=.046$) and looking bad in the media (pretest $M=5.32$; posttest $M=5.18$; $p=.016$), but more conciliatory (pretest $M=3.97$; posttest $M=4.30$; $p<.001$), more reliable (pretest $M=4.53$; posttest $M=4.64$; $p=.020$), more focused on the good of Poland (pretest $M=5.30$; posttest $M=5.41$; $p=.025$), more experienced (pretest $M=2.82$; posttest $M=3.07$; $p<.001$), more credible (pretest $M=4.53$; posttest $M=4.67$; $p=.015$), more competent (pretest $M=3.84$; posttest $M=3.96$; $p=.021$) and more tactful (pretest $M=4.25$; posttest $M=4.50$; $p<.001$).

The next step, aimed to verify the third hypothesis, was to check whether and how the TV political ads affected the perception of the candidates and feelings towards them in different groups of the electorate. The voters of Law and Justice candidate proved to be quite resistant to the effect of the messages they saw. A significant change was only observed in the case of Paweł Kukiz, whose image was evaluated more positively (see table 5).

Table 5. Candidates' images before and after viewing the spots (Duda's voters)

Candidate's image	pretest	posttest
Andrzej Duda	5.75	5.83
Bronisław Komorowski	2.76	2.69
Janusz Korwin-Mikke	3.67	3.86
Paweł Kukiz	4.27**	4.53**

*** test results significant at the $p \leq .001$ level

** test results significant at the $p \leq .01$ level

* test results significant at the $p \leq .05$ level

Source: own elaboration based on conducted research.

With reference to specific characteristics, Kukiz was better evaluated after watching the spots by people declaring the intention to vote for Duda in terms of the following characteristics: conciliatory (pretest $M=3.90$; posttest $M=4.27$; $p=.010$), reliable (pretest $M=4.32$; posttest $M=4.76$; $p=.002$), experienced (pretest $M=2.73$; posttest $M=3.32$; $p=.001$), credible (pretest $M=4.19$; posttest $M=4.63$; $p=.036$), competent (pretest $M=3.63$; posttest $M=4.00$; $p=.033$) and a strong leader (pretest $M=4.15$; posttest $M=4.46$; $p=.046$).

In the group of respondents declaring support for Bronisław Komorowski, viewing the electoral ads led to a change in perception of two candidates: Andrzej Duda and Janusz Korwin-Mikke. The difference was that after watching the spots, Law and Justice candidate was perceived significantly worse, whereas the image of Korwin-Mikke significantly improved.

Table 6. Candidates' images before and after viewing the spots (Komorowski's voters)

Candidate's image	pretest	posttest
Andrzej Duda	3.15**	2.88**
Bronisław Komorowski	5.34	5.34
Janusz Korwin-Mikke	2.99**	3.18**
Paweł Kukiz	3.46	3.54

*** test results significant at the $p \leq .001$ level

** test results significant at the $p \leq .01$ level

* test results significant at the $p \leq .05$ level

Source: own elaboration based on conducted research.

With regard to specific characteristics, Andrzej Duda was perceived as less honest (pretest $M=3.08$; posttest $M=2.75$; $p=.006$), less conciliatory (pretest $M=2.77$; posttest $M=2.41$;

p=.033), less reliable (pretest M=3.22; posttest M=2.74; p<.001), less effective (pretest M=3.25; posttest M=2.78; p=.001), less competent (pretest M=3.29; posttest M=2.86; p=.005) and less tactful (pretest M=3.26; posttest M=2.74; p=.004). Janusz Korwin-Mikke was perceived by members of Komorowski’s electorate as more focused on the good of Poland (pretest M=2.75; posttest M=3.34; p=.006), more credible (pretest M=2.26; posttest M=2.66; p=.009) and more hard-working (pretest M=3.73; posttest M=4.04; p=.047).

The voters declaring support for Janusz Korwin-Mikke were definitely most stable in their judgements and resistant to impact of spots they watched. In this group of voters political ads did not have a significant influence on the perception of any of the studied candidates (see table 7).

Table 7. Candidates’ images before and after viewing the spots (Korwin-Mikke’s voters)

Candidate’s image	pretest	posttest
Andrzej Duda	3.65	3.63
Bronisław Komorowski	2.83	2.87
Janusz Korwin-Mikke	5.54	5.63
Paweł Kukiz	4.63	4.72

*** test results significant at the $p \leq .001$ level

** test results significant at the $p \leq .01$ level

* test results significant at the $p \leq .05$ level

Source: own elaboration based on conducted research.

The electorate of Paweł Kukiz perceived Janusz Korwin-Mikke significantly better after watching the spots. They perceived this candidate as more physically attractive (pretest M=2.59; posttest M=2.86; p=.009), more effective (pretest M=4.06; posttest M=4.39; p=.007), more focused on the good of Poland (pretest M=4.53; posttest M=4.91; p=.008), more credible (pretest M=4.24; posttest M=4.59; p=.005), more competent (pretest M=4.46; posttest M=4.75; p=.018) and more tactful (pretest M=2.53; posttest M=2.96; p=.002). In this group, the feelings for the candidate also grew significantly warmer after viewing the ads (pretest M=45.76; posttest M=51.69; p<.001).

Table 8. Candidates' images before and after viewing the spots (Kukiz's voters)

Candidate's image	pretest	posttest
Andrzej Duda	3.98	3.98
Bronisław Komorowski	2.98	3.03
Janusz Korwin-Mikke	4.18*	4.34*
Paweł Kukiz	5.39	5.37

*** test results significant at the $p \leq .001$ level

** test results significant at the $p \leq .01$ level

* test results significant at the $p \leq .05$ level

Source: own elaboration based on conducted research.

The last group identified in the sample was the undecided voters. In this group of electorate, the change in the image perception occurred in the case of Duda and Korwin-Mikke. The former was perceived significantly worse than before watching the spots, and the latter was perceived better (see table 9).

Table 9. Candidates' images before and after viewing the spots (undecided voters)

Candidate's image	pretest	posttest
Andrzej Duda	3.90**	3.68**
Bronisław Komorowski	3.86	3.95
Janusz Korwin-Mikke	3.50*	3.66*
Paweł Kukiz	4.21	4.27

*** test results significant at the $p \leq .001$ level

** test results significant at the $p \leq .01$ level

* test results significant at the $p \leq .05$ level

Source: own elaboration based on conducted research.

With regard to specific characteristics, Andrzej Duda was perceived by this group of voters as less honest (pretest $M=3.70$; posttest $M=3.35$; $p=.002$), less conciliatory (pretest $M=3.66$; posttest $M=3.37$; $p=.042$), less reliable (pretest $M=3.93$; posttest $M=3.58$; $p=.004$), less effective (pretest $M=3.88$; posttest $M=3.63$; $p=.032$), less experienced (pretest $M=3.99$; posttest $M=3.74$; $p=.040$), less competent (pretest $M=4.06$; posttest $M=3.76$; $p=.019$) and less tactful (pretest $M=4.05$; posttest $M=3.56$; $p<.001$). The image of Korwin-Mikke was better evaluated in terms of the following characteristics: conciliatory (pretest $M=1.97$; posttest $M=2.22$; $p=.037$), physically attractive (pretest $M=2.24$; posttest $M=2.53$; $p=.007$), focused on the good of Poland

(pretest $M=3.57$; posttest $M=3.98$; $p=.004$) and experienced (pretest $M=4.35$; posttest $M=4.65$; $p=.031$).

Based on the above-mentioned findings, it can be concluded that the electorate of Bronisław Komorowski and undecided voters proved to be the most susceptible to the influence of TV political advertising. In their case, watching the spots changed the perception of images of two out of four candidates.

Conclusions and discussion

The study showed that political preferences affect both the perception of the images of candidates and the emotional attitude towards them. Candidates are best evaluated by members of their electorate, which seems natural, yet some differences can also be found in this aspect. In the presented analysis, the respondents declaring they would vote for Bronisław Komorowski evaluated him worse and declared cooler feelings for him than the other electorates with regard to “their” candidates. Hence, we may suppose that for some members of his electorate, voting for him was motivated by “the lesser evil”, not his particular qualities¹⁰. The results obtained by Paweł Kukiz in different groups of the electorate are also interesting. In all groups, except of the voters of Bronisław Komorowski, he scored above the mean on the seven-point scale, which indicates that his image was also positively evaluated by people voting for his political opponents. Similar relationships are visible with regard to feelings thermometers. Kukiz evoked positive emotions in most groups (those who declared electoral absence described their attitude as close to neutral). Only the voters of the incumbent president had negative emotions for him.

The conducted research also confirms that political ads have a negligible importance in the process of creating the images of commonly known candidates. This effect was evident in the case of the incumbent, Bronisław Komorowski, whose image characteristics proved to be resistant to the persuasive effect of advertising. Interestingly, the study showed that emotions towards politicians are more permanent and resistant to change under the influence of advertising messages than specific image characteristics, which can be modified much more easily during the campaign. Watching political spots led to shifts in the perception of three candidates (Duda,

¹⁰ In the study carried out by the Public Opinion Research Center after the first round of the election, among the key motivations for voting for Bronisław Komorowski the respondents declared the choice of a “lesser evil” (CBOS 88/2015). From voters’ point of view, such a choice is psychologically not very satisfying, since voters expect some emotional benefits from politicians. Such benefits occur if the preferred candidate evokes positive emotions (Korzeniowski 2002: 251).

Kukiz, Korwin-Mikke), but only in one case (Korwin-Mikke) there was a change in emotional attitude measured on the feelings thermometer scale.

The results were also ambiguous in the case of the impact of TV ads on undecided voters. Although in this group a change in the perception of the images of two candidates (Duda, Korwin-Mikke) was diagnosed, a similar phenomenon was also observed in the case of Komorowski's electorate. Both groups were more susceptible to the effect of political advertising than the voters supporting other candidates.

The presented analysis had some limitations that may have affected the research results. First, there may be some doubts regarding the study sample, made up of students. Samples like this may display a high level of homogeneity, resulting not only from the age of education level but also from the similarity of psychological qualities (Sears 1986). However, I tried to limit this factor, including students of different fields (social, humanistic and medical sciences) in the study. This choice of the study group allows to compare the results with similar analyses carried out in American and Western European conditions. Second, in the applied experimental procedure it is impossible to eliminate factors that could distort the findings. Such factors are i.a., the experimental stimulus in the form of real messages used in the campaign by the candidates. The participants could be exposed to these broadcasts before the study. I tried to reduce this problem by asking the respondents whether they knew the presented spots.

Research on the affective impact of political ads in Polish conditions requires further deeper analyses. A similar study should be carried out in the future in laboratory conditions with a control group. It is also important to ensure that the experimental groups will be more diverse in terms of socio-demographic characteristics, which would make it possible to identify the groups of voters which are the most susceptible to this form of persuasion. Analyses involving voters with a low level of education and low interest in the election campaign would surely be interesting. Specially prepared advertising messages would allow to avoid the risk connected with previous exposure to the stimulus. Such communications should have various forms so as to investigate the response to different types of political ads (image vs issue ads, positive vs negative ads). Participants should also be asked about their secondary candidate choice, which would allow in-depth analysis of the obtained data.

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**Political (Electoral) Activity of Poles in Romanian
Bukovina (in The Light of Field Research)**


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Abstract:

The article presents the results of field research conducted among Poles inhabiting Bukovina in autumn 2016. The main goal and subject of the research conducted by means of an In-Depth Interview (IDI) was the political activity (especially electoral activity) and political views of local Poles. The article analyzes closely such issues as: (a) the degree of interest in politics; (b) support for particular political parties; (c) motivation behind support for particular parties; (d) activities of Poles in local government elections; (e) ways of choosing local leaders; (f) comparison of political activities shown by Poles and Romanians; (g) the role of a Polish member of parliament in Bucharest; (h) political activities of Poles outside the Association of Poles. The article presents synthetic conclusions from the conducted research and quotes selected fragments of respondents' statements.

Keywords: Poles, Bukovina, Romania, politics, elections, political activity

Introduction

Within the field research conducted in the community of Poles inhabiting Bukovina twelve in-depth interviews were conducted with people who might be considered leaders of the Polish minority in Romania. The interviewees included: a member of the Romanian parliament, members of local council (two of councilors are postmen, one is the owner of a company), a teacher, a school headmaster, clergymen, an employee of the Association of Poles, a head of the Polish House. The research was conducted by means of the in-depth interview (IDI) in

September 2016 in the following locations: Suceava (Suczawa), Pleșa (Plesza), Solonețu Nou (Nowy Sołonec), Cacica (Kaczyka), Păltinoasa (Paltynosa), Poiana Micului (Pojana Mikuli) (towns and villages with significant percentage of Polish nationality inhabitants).

The main goal and subject of the conducted research was the political activity (especially electoral activity) and political views of local Poles. During the interviews we tried to obtain answers to the following questions:

- (a) To what extent are Poles interested in the political life of the region and the country? What issues interest them in particular? Why is it so?
- (b) What political parties enjoy special support of Poles (left or right parties)? Do their representatives solicit for the votes of Poles?
- (c) What are the motivations behind the Poles' choices: do they vote as in the family and community? (*socio-structural paradigm*); or do they vote – in their opinion – to maximize the benefits, and thus everyone votes according to their individual motivation (*rational choice paradigm*)
- (d) What is the activity of Poles in local government elections? Are they interested in standing for the local council? Who is interested in standing in the election, who feels the calling to represent the local community?
- (e) What and what features in local circumstances predestine someone to assume the role of a local leader? What features are necessary in order to be an authority and to gain the trust of local Poles?
- (f) Do Poles participate in elections more or less frequently than Romanians and members of other national minorities? Which elections are the most popular (self-government, parliamentary, presidential)? Has there been any changes concerning the above issues over the past 30 years? Is passive and active political participation lower, higher, or on the same level?
- (g) Does the representative of the Polish minority, having practically a secured place in the parliament, have to solicit for votes? Or is it obvious that Poles will vote for a Pole? Why do people who are not Poles and are not in any way related to Polish issues vote in parliamentary elections for Gerwazy Longher?
- (h) Do Poles take up political activities in local and nationwide level outside the Association of Poles? What drives them? Are they successful?

This article thus attempts to summarize and analyze the information obtained in in-depth interviews on the political (electoral) activity of Poles inhabiting Romanian Bukovina.

The concept of political activity

Political activity is the key concept for our field research and further analyses. We understand it as “human behavior consisting in formulating and accomplishing political goals, related to roles played by individuals or groups within the political system” (Chodubski 1999: 25). Andrzej Chodubski claims that political activity as conscious behavior in the sphere of politics “is gradable in social reception, from very low to very high”. He lists five grades: “1) slight interest of an individual or a group in political life (sphere of privacy); 2) limiting oneself to exerting basic political duties (rights), for example participation in election; 3) membership in socio-political organizations, for example in political parties or interest groups; 4) social performance of leader roles in political organizations; 5) professional political career” (Chodubski 1999: 26). More on forms and dimensions of political activity deliberates Krystyna Skarżyńska (2002: 26-57).

Political activity of national minority members

Depending on various factors determining their political behavior national minorities participate in the political life of a country or its particular region in a different way. The scale and type of political involvement may depend on such factors as:

- (a) the population of the ethnic (national) minority and the degree of its territorial concentration (percentage of the country population or the population of a selected region; generally we can assume that the higher the percentage, the bigger the political activity);
 - (b) the ethnic politics and the legal system of a country inhabited by the national/ethnic minority, especially concerning its formal and legal status (recognized versus unrecognized minority), creating institutional frameworks for the development of social and cultural life of a minority, and finally the election law allowing (or disallowing) effective political participation (division into electoral districts, preferences for national/ethnic minorities, etc.);
 - (c) the degree of organization of a given minority, including the existence of properly educated elites who express the interests of a given community outside, and inside – effectively integrating its members;
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- (d) homogeneity of the socio-political representation (towards the authorities of the state in which they live) and not revealing the conflicts within the group to the outside world;
- (e) the way in which other national and ethnic minorities function, especially those with comparable demographic potential (the effect of competition) – their involvement in the development of the political and socio-cultural life;
- (f) relations with other ethnic minorities (cooperation, hostility, indifference);
- (g) financial, organizational and political support from the “foreign homeland” (the national state of a particular minority) aimed at strengthening the dispersions which may be potentially used as an instrument in foreign policy (as an element of pressure on the government of a given state, or – more positively – as an important partner in the process of accomplishing public/civic diplomacy tasks);
- (h) formal or informal pressure from international organizations and NGOs.

In multi-ethnic states, where at least one ethnic (national) minority accounts for relatively high percentage of the population, the so-called ethnic parties are often established. Here we can observe the translation of one of the socio-political divisions onto the structure of a party system. An ethnic party should be perceived as “a party which openly presents itself to the voters as the best representative of the interests of one or a few ethnic groups, while the representation and the accomplishment of these interests is achieved with the exclusion of other groups and constitutes a key element in the political party mobilization strategy” (Kasprowicz 2014: 84). Martyna Wasiuta (2017: 4). notices that an ethnic party is characterized by “ethnic (regional) criteria membership structure and leadership, the electorate and the type of appeal, from which specific functions that it performs towards the ethnic group and its surroundings stem. These parties rely on socio-political center-peripherals schisms”. Referring to Donald Horowitz, Wasiuta claims that “an ethnic party is a political organization located between the political party and the interest group” (Wasiuta 2017: 4). She also notices that “the features according to which ethnic parties are classified include: the size of support received in the election by the party from a particular ethnic group on which the party relies and whether the party presents itself as a representative of this group. As such, an ethnic party would not be ethnic if it did not receive the majority support from a particular ethnic group and if it did not define itself in such categories (especially in the name of the party), excluding thus other segments of the electorate” (Wasiuta 2017). An example

of a Polish ethnic party is Poles Election Action in Lithuania, operating since 1994 (Leśniewska 2016: 73-85).

An ethnic party makes a particular ethnic (national) minority a fully-fledged and autonomous political actor. In some countries of Central and Eastern Europe, ethnic parties co-created governments in certain periods of time (vide: Slovakia, Macedonia, Romania, Bulgaria) (Woźnica 2016: 187-198) thus having real influence on national policy and sometimes – on foreign policy as well. In a situation when a given ethnic (national) minority is not large enough to establish an ethnic party operating nationally or regionally, an alternative is to create local structures – electoral committees focused on local or regional elections. Another option is to establish political parties uniting various national and ethnic minorities in order to present their common interests to the government and ensure their accomplishment. An example here can be Political Movement Coexistentia–Wspólnota–Együttélés–Spivžitja–Soužití–Zusammenleben (in short: Coexistentia–Soužití–Wspólnota–Együttélés; COEX). It is a political group operating among national minorities of Czechoslovakia and then The Czech Republic, whose aim is to ensure the rights of national and ethnic minorities in the Czech state. As a political movement it has been operating since 1993, its history dates back to 1989. Representatives of ethnic (national) minorities may also conclude agreements with leaders of nationwide parties in order to enable their candidates to stand in the election using the party’s list.

The last option is to establish institutions whose primary goal is social and cultural activity and integration of the ethnic (national) minority community, which also performs the functions of political representation and is treated as such by regional and central authorities. An example of such an institution is the Association of Poles in Romania. It is “a federation organization, association local organizations – Associations of Poles. There are 15 of them at present (Bucharest, Constanta, Craiova, Iasi, Suceava, Siret, Ruda, Radowce, Nowy Sołonec, Kaczyka, Plesza, Pojana Mikuli, Paltinoasa, Gura Humorului, Moara)” (*Association of Poles in Romania*). The Association has been a member of the National Minorities Council since its establishment in 1993. The Council is “a consultation organ of the government, without legal entity, coordinated by the Department of Inter-Ethnic Relations, and its main goal is to maintain relations with national minority organizations. The Council supports the activities of national minority organizations which are represented in the Parliament, analyzes and presents to the Government, through the Department of Inter-Ethnic Relations, proposals of solutions

concerning the operations of national minority organization, teaching native languages, cultural and social life of minorities and reflecting the picture and the problems of minorities in mass media” (*Association of Poles in Romania*, more on non-party forms of political representation of ethnic /national/ representation minorities in: Ganowicz 2013: 21-39; Ganowicz 2016: 247-261; Pieńkowski 2015: 379-428; Kosiek 2015: 171-188).

Sławomir Łodziński points to four main strategies of political activity of ethnic (national) minorities. The first one is ethnic (national) organic work. It is characterized by the desire to maintain and develop culture through work and involvement of one’s own members; the evolution from the popularization of folklore towards achieving national and organizational maturity; relying on one’s own activity, not on support from the state. The second strategy is the civic treatment of the minority. It consists of focusing on the state while leaders of minority organizations emphasize the necessity of executing the rights of the minority, resulting from both the national and the international law. The third strategy emphasizes cooperation and “going outside”. It consists of including the minority in the social and political life of the region and the country inhabited by the minority. The recipients of these activities are not only the minorities but also representatives of the majority. And finally, the fourth strategy – “being minority in majority”, consists in maintaining one’s identity without provoking any negative associations in the majority society, enabling the minority to take advantage of all the rights of the majority (Łodziński 2005: 264 and next).

The conditions and circumstances of the field research

Before we move on to the discussion of the results of the conducted research, we need to point out significant conditions and circumstances in which the research was conducted.

Firstly, the interviews were conducted **three months before the parliamentary election**¹ in Romania, which took place on 11th December 2016 and in which, following a series of sensational corruption scandals in which major politicians of the ruling party took part, The

¹ Due to the strong role of the conflict-prone dual executive power (president versus prime minister), the role of the parliament, consisting of two chambers – House of Representatives and Senate in this system is somehow of secondary importance. It is not the law-making power, but a legislator. As a result, presidential elections are more popular than parliamentary elections, which is reflected in a great difference in attendance. At the same time – from the minority point of view, especially scarcely populated and dispersed, the election to the parliament is the most important one, giving them a chance to be represented on such a high level. Taking into account strong personalization and party dependency of the politics, it might be an effective method of gaining influence on decisions vital for the minority. More on various strategies of political activity in: Koźbiał (2014).

Social Democratic Party (PSD – Partidul Social Democrat) won, **and three months after the local government election**², held on 5th June 2016. Thus the survey was conducted in the “hot” post- and pre-election period, when public interest in political matters in the whole population is usually higher than in other periods.

Secondly, the research concerned **a very small group of Polish population inhabiting Bukovina**. According to various estimates, this community consists of 1.8-3 thousand people, dwelling in a few villages located a few or several kilometers from each other. **The Polish population, however, is highly organized**, which is manifested by: (a) universal membership in the Association of Poles in Romania as an official representative of the Polish minority in contacts with the Romanian and Polish authorities; (b) active participation in church life – in current religious practices, but also in socio-cultural ceremonies held by the parishes;; (c) a developed network of Polish Houses, which are material signs of the community life of the Polish national minority, standing out very clearly in the local social landscape and being the object of envy of other minorities inhabiting Bukovina, but also of the Romanians; (d) maintaining regular contacts with Poland in form of summer holidays for children, tours of folklore groups, visits of official state delegations, also on the government level, etc. Thus, compared with other national and ethnic minorities, Poles, though they do not constitute a large minority, as far as the institutional dimension of their social activity is concerned, stand out.

(...) well, as I told you before, these Polish Houses, which are, which are open to everyone, thanks to this open policy, thanks to information, the Association of Poles informs a lot in Romania, it informs everyone, thanks to this policy where we inform, all the time the Romanian society, we are doing what we are doing, we are even considered to be the strongest minority living in Romania, here in this area, right? (5)

² Territorial self-government – introduced in Romania in the Act of 1991 – has a two-level structure. There are 2951 communes, 41 districts (and the capital city of Bucharest). Elections for communal and district councils, as well as for the mayor or president of the district, are universal and direct. The clear administrative division has never been accompanied by a clear division of competencies between central and local authorities. Central authorities are unwilling to share their income (budgets, especially communal budgets, are based most of all on procedurally complicated transfers from central budget), which accounts for the fact that the scope of the self-government powers is very limited. There have been disputes in this field, not only internal, but also – even before accession to the EU – with the European Commission. In spite of reforms, the role of the self-government is limited mostly by the tightness of their own income, whereas the quality of local government is still unsatisfactory and receives the lowest evaluations in Europe (see [EQI](#)). More on the history of local government in Romania in: Burakowski (2014). For development problems see Bondar (2014), for comparative presentation in the Central and Eastern Europe region see Czyż (2011).

Thirdly, **the political aspect of the activities of the Association of Poles in Romania** has a local dimension through participation in territorial self-government organs, especially in the places where Poles account for a significant percentage of inhabitants. Poles live in villages located in ten communes (see the table below), of key significance are the communes of: (a) Cacica (Cacica, Solonețu Nou); (b) Mănăstirea Humorului (Pleșa, Poiana Micului).

Table 1. The population of Poles in Bukovina according to the national census from 2011

Town	Commune	Village	Total population	Poles	% of Population
Suceava			92121	111	0.12
Rădăuți			23822	35	0.15
Gura Humorului			13667	34	0.25
Siret			7976	55	0.69
	Cacica	Solonețu Nou	3712	744	20.0
	Moara		4384	142	3.24
	Mușenița		1871	76	4.1
	Păltinoasa		4909	56	1.14
	Scheia		9577	13	0.14
	Mănăstirea Humorului	Pleșa; Poiana Mikuli	3233	624	19.3
			Total Poles	1890	

The above reflects the villages where 10 or more Poles live.

Source: own elaboration on the basis of *Comunicat de presă privind...*

Moreover, the political activity of the Polish representatives is of parliamentary nature. “The Polish minority since the moment of reactivating the Association of Poles in Romania has been represented by three members of parliament. The first one was elected in the election district of Prahova, the others represented the Suceava district, where the office of the association was moved and located in the regained premises of the Polish House” (Rajczyk 2010: 148). Since 2002 Gerwazy Longher has been the representative of the Polish minority in the Romanian parliament. Polish members of parliament, along with 18 other members, comprise the parliamentary club of ethnic minorities. As the results of the parliamentary election show, not only Poles vote for Gerwazy Longher, he also gains a significant number of votes (though relatively small in the whole district) in the districts where, according to the census, the

Polish population is negligible or there are no Poles. It is difficult to explain such results with the votes of the people who do not declare to be Poles in the census, but due to the fact they have Polish ancestors, they reveal some kind of sentiment in voting. Similar situation happened in the case of support for the representatives of German minority in Romania, associated with Forumul Democrat al Germanilor din România (Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien) (Kozbial 2014: 37-52).

In the local election in 2016 the Association of Poles in Romania put forward its candidates for councillors in the commune of Kaczyka (17 candidates) and the commune of Mănăstirea Humorului (5 candidates). In each communes the Association managed to win one post of a councillor (Tadeusz Revai in Cacica and Józef Iriszek in Mănăstirea Humorului). However, only 296 votes in total were given for Polish councillors, which may show that an overwhelming majority of Poles in local election (contrary to parliament election!) are not guided by the ethnic origin of a candidate and vote for Romanian candidates. (Birou Electoral Central). Due to this fact, the Association of Poles did not attempt to put forward a candidate for the head/mayor of any commune.

Research results

The responses of our respondents allow us to make a few important theses which, although they need appropriate clarification, determine important directions for further research aimed at understanding the causes and conditions determining political attitudes of Poles living in Bukovina.

Firstly, we can observe **the withdrawal and passivity of the Polish community concerning the local government elections**. It would seem that “near is my shirt, but nearer is my skin”, whereas from the opinions of particular respondents it turns out that Poles in Bukovina either consider local government elections to be of lesser importance or largely do not think that the ethnic origin of the candidate is an important aspect to be considered. We might get an impression that in local government elections Poles lose to the Romanian majority by default and instead of fighting for another post of a councilor in the commune (potentially, taking into account the ethno-demographic data, it is possible to win another post) are satisfied with the symbolic representation, as if not realizing that in key issues for the commune every vote and every mandate of a councilor may be of key importance. From the conducted interviews it turns

out that local Poles prefer the strategy of beneficial accommodation to the current political situation in the commune rather than willingness to take part in political rivalry with undoubtedly stronger representatives of the Romanian majority. What is more, Poles inhabiting Bukovina generally eagerly support Romanian candidates, taking at face value their pre-election promises concerning, inter alia, improving the living standards of the Polish minority members, especially in such places as Pleșa, which is practically “cut off from the world”, as there is no beaten track joining it with the system of local roads (it is possible to reach the place only by the dirt road, which in winter or after heavy rainfall poses many difficulties). Respondents point at older people as most prone to manipulation by the Romanian candidates for councilors. On the other hand, from one statement we can infer that there are situations when the vote of a Polish councilor turns out to turn the scales (the last quote). It is generally believed that the commune authorities cannot do much in reality, contrary to district authorities and especially contrary to the members of parliament, chosen with votes of Poles (but not only them). Respondents were not willing to talk about local government elections or the activities of the commune authorities. To some extent this can be explained by their cautiousness as they had no idea what would happen with the collected material, but on the other hand we could notice their lack of interest in how commune authorities function, contrary to the opinions concerning the activities of senator Gheorghe Flutur or member of parliament Gerwazy Longher. An important topic in the respondents statements is the phenomenon of economic emigration of a large part of the Polish population, which can be attributed to the lower socio-economic activity of Poles in Bukovina, since emigration was very often chosen by the most energetic and entrepreneurial individuals.

Well, I don't know it, I was not interested. I am not into it so much. (1) / (...) well, such ambitious political interest cannot be found, I'm saying a man is busy to earn to buy some food, to earn some money, especially now, they are leaving, they are going out to the world and they can see in another country that people can live differently, an elegant house (...) buy a better car a so on, and politically, well, the elderly may read a newspaper and they do not always have reliable information and when the salary is increased by a few lei, they are satisfied and the party which increased pensions, and we know which one usually manipulates the elderly, is the best (11) / (...) this is so, that's why here locally, we can say, we don't have so much, we do not fight so fiercely, because we simply have what we want and we can do what we want even if we have one councilor less (...) (5) / (...) well

you know there are so many parties and there were so many parties and sometimes when one talked and talked so that I believed him that he would be good and nothing happened (6) / (...) now for these elections nobody was going because everybody knew that for that Polish House, because it is ours and we have to because it is ours, but from Mănăstirea Humorului they came many times, they visited our houses and called and there were meetings in church, they said something, they promised everything, the road, everybody promised that, the road would be built, would be built, would be built, and nobody knew, for example there were people who didn't know where Pleșa is (6) / (...) when we went we saw that there won't be more, three at most, there could be three, but five – no well there are many of them in this Mănăstirea Humorului, but well, if all voted, let's say if all Poles voted for those three, there was a chance that three would win, if more, then probably not. But they took one (here the surname is given) or another (surname) or some (surname), or I don't know which one and they promised: wait because you will be the member of parliament from this party or another party, or yet another party, and they took them on the lists, but people as always, well they thought that there would be something, but anyway, they weren't on the first or second place, they were on the third or fourth place, and these are such parties, such little parties, right (9) / (...) Rather not, well, listen to me, everybody likes talking politics, everybody asks what is happening, how it is, where, maybe this one is better, maybe this one is worse, well this kind of politics is everywhere, on the ditch, on the road, or elsewhere, but not really in fact (9) / (...) here as far as local matters are concerned, well, you just go directly, inhabitants go directly to the village head and talk with him, well sometimes if I see something, then I will say: Listen I don't like this, it shouldn't be so, it shouldn't be so, everybody goes to the village head and tells him what troubles them and that's how it works, either its Romanians or Poles, that is, there aren't any such, there isn't such a level, that you go to the councillor and then the councillor tells the council about it (9) / (...) all the time it is so, well if it was so, I know, maybe better, then people wouldn't be eager to come, and generally they say, why should I go when it is as it is, they do not care if there is a councillor, from Poles, no, they say what, for the village head we will not vote, and if this one leaves, there will be another and he will also be Romanian and that's how it ends, some people are really discouraged. (9)

Here, unfortunately, we do not have our councillor. No, and we had one, but it is interesting that he is usually in France, working (...) Nineteen votes, for me it is a big event, because he is more outside the village than in the village. (1) / (...) two because there is one in Cacica and simply many people went to work abroad (8) / (...) ha ha, yes. In the past election we could have even those three (2).

(...) Romanians had big influence here, they wanted to get there and you know, they came, they walked a lot and they came to Poles. Simply to Poles, yes, and they voted a lot. As there are many such, they usually go to older people, the people who do not understand what is going on (...) You know, and they went about and there were such who went from the cottage to the cottage. And you know, they convinced people in a manner, you know, if you choose me, there will be everything, well, politically you can see it, there are many, you know, many older people (2) / (...) they come from various parties and they come to our villages, to Poles and they say, I will have a great success so you will also take, well some money because you will be this, this, this and they lie to them and then they tell the family, well you will be with this and that is how it is divided (...) (6) / (...) and here not even Pleșa, in this moment there are few of them, but they are pushing hard to get there, they have their own politics, their methods for elections, so it is difficult to get there, in the past tenure we had two, as there was also Gienek. (...) now I am alone (...) rather Poles, but here it was also that they have their methods they try to break and if they break, they rule, well they have already broken something. (9) / (...) and recently there was a possibility, as there was one from Pleșa who was a candidate, but he was withdrawn, he didn't have much chance, but when they saw that there was one Pole, they concentrated there, almost everybody, well maybe not everybody, but 80 or 90% who voted so that the Pole would not rule (9)

(...) well here, on the local level I know, but somewhere, somewhere higher – I didn't hear about such a thing that someone from the Association would be the candidate on some lists for some more ambitious functions, but also for the head of the commune, In Solonețu Nou, for example there were two candidates, no, probably two, well they ruined everything for us because we didn't have, we don't have the second councillor, only one, the other one didn't have enough votes, because they were thrown for those guys, they were simply dispersed, obviously one is not a Pole, he was from outside, what I mean is that he is not of

Polish origin, but us, Poles, some of us, voted for him and these votes automatically and we lost because of this, right. There is something, but I also think that it is not bad will or to hit someone, but maybe more naivety (11)

(...) well there are thirteen councillors here and there six from one side and six from the other and I am the thirteenth one (13)

Secondly, respondents notice that **the natural platform constituting the representation of Poles in local government election or in parliamentary election is the Association of Poles in Romania “Polish House”**. Nearly all candidates in local government elections decide to stand for the election from the list of the Association of Poles. One of few exceptions discovered during the research was councilor Sylwester Aleksandrowicz, who was on the election list of the National Liberal Party (*nota bene* one of our respondents), though it is difficult to claim that his decision was detrimental to the interests of the Association. Polish candidates solicit Polish votes as a priority, though they also try to encourage Romanians and Ukrainians to vote for them. In two cases the occupation of the candidate (postman) helped him in the election.

(...) we always in the Association of Poles in Romania we have our friends in all districts, very many people, very many Poles are spread all over Romania, they are not listed, well they do not have to be listed on population census lists (...) (5) / (...), when you are active and people see that you can help them, they leave all the parties aside and they go to the Association of Poles in Romania (5) / (...) and people don't know much, for whom, for what, that it can be like this (2) / To have your own councillor there is not much interest in it, because we, as the Association of Poles, have only one councillor, and this is especially due to the fact that even Poles subscribe to the lists of other parties, and possibly there are councillors of Polish origin, but in another party (5) / (...) but that's because, I don't know, I don't know, maybe they do not want to vote for the Association, but there are Romanians, for example from Pârteștii, who vote for the Association, and Poles who are Poles, and so on, they do not vote for the Association, and so on (10) / (...) and in Solonețu Nou I had one hundred and five there, and here in Cacica forty six, and then in Pârteștii, but there are Romanians there, they gave me only ten votes, (...) and then there was this little village, there with Romanians, where I also delivered stuff, and they gave me nine, nine only, [so, if you summed up

those votes, one hundred and seventy five, or so, so Romanians also voted for you]there were Romanians (13)

Actually our statute says that if you stood in the election from another party's list, if you were on other lists, you cannot be the member of the Association of Poles in Romania, you cannot be the Association's candidate for any post if you go to another party, but you can be a regular member, there is no problem with this (5) / (...) [and don't they cause problems or complain that you are in this party?]no, [in Liberal National Party? Don't they complain?] who would complain? [the Association] no [they don't say anything?], no, no [they don't encourage you to start from their list?] no, well, no (12)

Thirdly, **the activity of the member of parliament representing the Polish national minority** is perceived as very important. The liberal election law in Romania clearly favors national and ethnic minorities, which, to some extent, reflects Romania's attempts to become the member of the Council of Europe and the European Union. Be that as it may, it is difficult to find another Central and Eastern European country where the candidate officially nominated by a national minority organization obtains 3 thousand votes and becomes a member of parliament. The MP seems to be the key figure in the political landscape of "Polish villages" in Bukovina. Most respondents emphasize that in the election he also wins support of Romanian citizens, who do not have Polish background and that this support from non-Poles is a consequence of his efforts and taking care of the well-being of all inhabitants of the region, regardless of their national/ethnic origin. Respondents pointed to a number of initiatives of MP Gerwazy Longher, which also served the Romanian and the Ukrainian communities (Since 2016 Victoria Longher – the wife of the President of the Association of Poles, Gerwazy Longher, has been an MP nominated by the Association of Poles). In the respondents' opinion, Gerwazy Longher stands out when compared with his predecessors [in 1990-1992 the first MP representing the Polish minority in the Romanian Parliament was Antoni Linzmeier. The next president for two tenures – Jan Piotr Babiasz (1994-2002) was at the same time the Polish minority MP]

Well, I think that with his help some projects were completed, there was his contribution. (1) / Well, as far as know, he helped renovate the school, the commune did that, that's a plus, that's a large plus. (1) / As far as I know, I don't know if there are other people apart from our MP, who would do this, right? (1) / (...) this is our MP,

right, we are glad to have him, we are really satisfied. (2) Yes, sure, and you know how? How he helps Romanians? Here, in our village, there is this Polish House, we have a room, right, we have everything, and when there is some meeting, he invites Romanians too, well, many Romanians from our village vote for him. (2) He walks, well he has those, there are chairmen from every village, with important, normal ones, but firstly, and then he walks in villages, hm. (2) (...), so far, you know, there was an agreement, because they are all his acquaintances and there is nobody that could become his competitor (2). / (...) thanks to our member of parliament, Gerwazy Longher, who helped us a lot, a lot, (...) and not only us (...) he renovated the school, because he also helps Romanians? And not only us, us and Romanians (3). / (...) this is the most important thing, he represents us, he defends us, he does everything for us, he cares for us, and this Ukrainian one, well not really, well (...) he just does his best (3) / (...) he was born here, so he knows heavy work, he worked like us, went to the forest, he knows them all (3) / (...), yes, yes, and Romanians vote for him, too. They often vote for him and why? Well, they know him and he helps them (...) mostly in school he helps them a lot (...) How? Here in Pârteștii, he gave so much money to renovate the school and there are no Poles there, are there any Poles there? No, there aren't any Poles there and he helped organize the money, yes, there were a few children, who, well I went there for some classes, I had Polish there (3) / (...) I just wanted to say that for this long time, for a few years, our kindergarten kids said that when they were asked who they wanted to be in the future, they would all say: member of parliament! (3) / (...), no, the campaign is in the whole country, all over Romania, where we have acquaintances we send leaflets or whatever we have, now it will look different in this election, but we always phone, we always have some people somewhere and these people know some other people who know more, this is like in Timișoara – everybody knows which ones are of Polish origin, because they either meet in church or, and everyone here has some friends or take some people, and ask do you have someone to vote for, there are many cases that people say I don't want to go to vote, there are no good candidates, it's all the same. And then our man tells them, come with me, help me here (5) / This is even shown in the results, for example in 2004 we had only 5500 (five thousand five hundred) votes, then it was a bit more, 7000 and something more, I guess, and in the last election

it was 8 thousand votes, right? Well, as I said, I never make any difference between people, it does not matter if a Romanian comes to deal with something, because he has a problem, I don't know, with transport in Poland, or it doesn't matter in what, we as the Association, help him. And people do not forget about it. There are very many various contacts, people, various businessmen, who cooperate with Polish companies or come to us if they have a problem or if it isn't a problem, they say, look what it is, we cooperate with a Polish company, well maybe someday there will be something, you might be able to help us, or here the whole network is being built, step by step and sometimes people get frustrate and say: I will go and vote for Gerwazy because there is nothing better here, a Romanian may say something like this. There are also many people, I know because I get phone calls, who go to vote, they come out and say, high Gerwazy, I was there, well, it is clear that they voted for you and this really motivates you that an ordinary Romanian comes and says: OK, look I helped you here, because I know you are doing a good job and you are OK (5) / (...) yes, this unity because if you are the president and say I am the president of the Association of Poles in Romania, everybody will just shrug their shoulders and when you go as an MP, then everyone will admire you and say – Oh, a member of parliament. In Romania it is perceived slightly differently (5) / (...) Well before Gerwazy there was some older man, but you know what, we didn't know him in the village and he didn't help us at all, we didn't even know that he could help us (6) / (...) we knew him at the beginning because he lived not very far, he is from Solonețu Nou, yes, and now we know him, because he always goes through Pleșa and he is a nice person, he stops and chats with older people, good morning what are you doing, he talks with everyone and people like him a lot here, well, first of all he did a lot for our village, there was an old school and people didn't have a place to meet, he built the Polish House, he fights with those roads, he always calls somewhere, we are glad because he helps (6) / (...) because you know what, for example in the area of Solonețu Nou everybody likes him (7) / (...) after 1989 there was a member of parliament and we have one there, who sometimes, well all the time he works for us and this can be noticed, this can be noticed. (9) / he drives around and meets Poles all over the country (8)

(...) well, because he makes no difference, when he does something, he doesn't differentiate between Poles and Romanians. For example I know that at the beginning Santa brought parcels only to those children who learned Polish and didn't give anything to others and now, when he is an MP, well he gives parcels to all, to Pertesti, where most inhabitants are Romanians, they are Orthodox ones, but he also gives parcels, and here in Cacica, when he organizes summer camps, he takes Polish and Romanian children, and so on, when he does something, he does it for everyone (10) / (...) because politicians from Poland come, marshals, ministers and so on, various delegations, and he is the figure that could represent with dignity our Polish community and now we have Gerwazy, who does a great job and he really knows these structures (11) / (...) I know him, he really cares for Polish matters and this is clearly seen, he is not a person who would be interested in his own business, I can see that he is active, that he is interested, he wants to do something, to leave some legacy (11) / (...) if Romanians didn't vote, well, I don't know, or friends or people supporting him, because he works not only for Poles, for the community, but generally and generally Romanians and other nationalities take advantage of it (11) / (...) that's why a member of parliament for us is something, it is very important, for sure (11) / (...) because there is this person who works, who works not only for Poles, but who also works for Romanians (...) well, he built those Polish Houses, Poles are in Solonețu Nou and in Pleșa, right, he built those Houses and for too, that's good, and he built the road, for Poiana Micului, so it is used now by Romanians and that's why they voted for him too (12) Ukrainians go with Gerwazy, right? Ukrainians also go with Gerwazy, yes Ukrainians [and why don't they go with their own candidate?] and what their candidate did for them? [so he doesn't do anything?] He didn't do anything, I didn't see him, I never saw him come to our village, right? (...) they go with Gerwazy, Gerwazy will do everything they need, they support him just as Poles do (12) / (...) such a nice and reasonable man (12) / (...) [and how was it with Babiasz? What MP was he?] well I only saw him once, in the village [And did he do a lot for Poles?], Well, no (12) / (...) why, well there, his village, Partestii and Cacica, there are a lot of Romanians and he did a lot there, he helped them, not us (14).

Fourthly, respondents **find the activities of district authorities very important**, especially the activity of the chairman of the Council of Suceava County in 2008-2012 and then senator elected from that county in 2012, Georghe Flutur. The senator enjoyed visible sympathy of local Poles, as from their responses we can see that he is favorably inclined to the interests of the Polish minority, he understands their needs and he is a trustworthy and reliable person.

The Governor (of the Province) did something. And he left something. And they go more for the person than for the party. (1) / You know, a greater councillor, in this province, for the whole province, also a lot depends on the man, on what kind of person he is. (2) / It's this party, this party, for themselves, and we really care who is in this province (2) / (...) and the higher too, who was in the province (2) / (...) was the senator, then a member of parliament, I think he was a senator until now, and now he is marshal of the province, his name is Flutur, he is from Gura Humorului, too, he was a forester (9) / (...) because he was a senator, the one who stood in the election, was the senator and wanted to be the marshal of the province, right, and he was respected by Poles. And most of us went to choose him, so that he could be the marshal, right (9) / (...) the province authority also helps, I know marshal office, here we call it Coniliur Judetiani (...) (10) / Flutur. That's him, he gave me such "utility", I don't know if I use the right word, this utility which opened the road to that village, well, politically, and not only this position, but when he wanted the second tenure, when the other one came from the party (...) and here he is again and he started work and he keeps his promises (12)

And fifthly, there is a clear **conviction that national minorities in Romania have common interests**, whereas the leading role in promoting minority rights is played by the Hungarians, the most populous minority (Nota bene they have their own party), and in the quality aspect – great significance is attributed to Klaus Werner Iohannis – the current president of Romania (since 2014), member of the German national minority, representative of the National Liberal Party. The promotion of the interests of the Polish national minority is therefore closely related to the concessions obtained by the Hungarians, which do not concern only them, but other minorities as well. On the other hand, the clear preference for Klaus Iohannis (instead of Victor Ponta from the Social Democratic Party) was not connected with his right political program, but with the conviction that a German at the post of the country president is a guarantee of order, rule of law and a fight with illegal connections in politics. In other words, the positive

stereotype of a German as a synonym of order and rule of law seems to be of essential significance.

There are about one and a half million Hungarians in Romania. Yes, yes. And they always win what they want, because there are so many of them, right. [And you get it in the package] And we get it in the package, right. Ha, ha. [OK, so they fight and you just follow them, simply?] Yes (1) / (...) we can say that Hungarians fight, there are many of them and they fight for their rights better and other minorities are almost on the same terms (...) and what they fight, what they win, is rather for all minorities (8) / (...) and now we wanted, we all wanted a change and therefore voted, I'm sorry for speaking Romanian, we voted for a German (...) Well, because everybody gets an impression that Germans are, that a German will manage differently, they are well organized, everything is organized differently, they are good managers, right. (...) We voted for this German because he is a good manager, well organized, well, I don't know (3). / (...) everybody, maybe not out of spite for Ponta, but probably everyone demanded some change. (2) / (...) they thought that maybe this will lead to some different mentality. (...) that is that will be different, he will not think like a Romanian, many people voted for him, he is Saxon, or German, or someone, so maybe he will think differently, maybe something (2) / (...) when there was no EU perspective, they agreed, as I said, these politicians, for such a formula of establishing the Parliament, they put it in the Constitution, it wasn't even changed in the Constitution, that every minority has the right to have its representative in the Parliament, yes, there were really evaluations, before joining the NATO, before accession to the European Union, evaluations on minorities, we always submitted reports, there were always interviews whether it is good or not good, whether someone presses us or not, there were such and there are still, on the Minority Charter, in Romania, so still the European Commission comes and checks these things, whether it functions well or not (5) / (...) so Poles voted for Iohannis, and why? Because he is not a Romanian, he is German, right, and what's the benefit of this? Well, maybe Germans will work differently, they have different mentality (10) / (...) for Iohannis (...) there were thefts when Ponta was in power, when he was prime minister, as they say, right, he would do everything to us, to the commune as they say (...) he visited us [Ponta] and promised, but fine words butter no parsnips, as they

say, they had money, this Gerwazy, Gerwazy had 26 billion and Ponta took this from us, he took the money (12) / (...), well, I don't know, I think it was a good idea to vote for a German (14).

Sixthly, a few respondents pointed at **the fact of the abuse of liberal and favorable to national minorities Romanian election law by registering the “pseudo-Polish” election list in Cluj-Napoca** (in central Transylvania, where there are only a few Poles). This was widely considered as an unfriendly move of the people who wanted to find their place in the Romanian politics by pretending to be representatives of the Polish national minority.

(...) we had, we had from Cluj-Napoca, there was one party. But they didn't manage, they didn't manage to get more votes, nobody even knew them. Who was it, but this name was, well it was so similar to the name of our Association, right (3) / In 2004 we had a very serious threat, a very serious threat for the Association of Poles in Romania, simply because one Romanian thought that by establishing the Association of Poles in Romania and the Cultural Association of Poles in Romania, they could just easily get to the parliament, that it would be so easy, right. Well we had some fights, there were small parties, which were established, they established the Cultural Association of Poles in Romania and they appeared as a minority and then there was a problem because if all members voted they would get to the parliament, without any problem. There were two Associations, not one and we Poles and there were Romanians. (...) And other nations, I remember that Croatians had this problem, Macedonians probably too (5) / It was very bad for us, for our Association of Poles in Romania, because in 2004 we couldn't remove this Association which was established in Cluj-Napoca, just because of one canny guy from that city and we would have more votes. And we had more votes and they lost. Then he was prosecuted, because almost all signatures were falsified. The act said that they had to have 20% of signatures of the population who declared that they are Polish, so they had to have here in Solonețu Nou, 20% of signatures, but they didn't have anything, nothing from Poiana Micului, nothing from Cacica, nothing from Pleșa, and 500 signatures from Cluj-Napoca. We sent it to the Prosecutor and they found out that there were so many signatures, that is there weren't people, they were falsified, this guy was even taken to court. He got some sentence (5) they established, there was such a possibility, a party similar to the Polish party, let's

say connected with Poland, and now it is impossible, because the legislation has changed, you must have at least five years of activity to take part in the election (8) / (...) well, he would have competition, he is seen recently, but these are competitors, it's not proper, I guess, because I don't know, some member of parliament, someone, wanted, within the Polish House, to stand in the election, from Transylvania, he wanted, but he wasn't Polish (9).

And finally, although **left-right division** has been rightly questioned in political science literature, if we assume that the The Social Democratic Party is the projection of a leftist party, whereas National Liberal Party is the rightist party, we can learn from our respondents that the older generation is inclined to cast their election votes for the left (which is supposed to guarantee that pensions will be paid regularly, especially in the situation where the ruling right party reduced pensions), whereas the younger generation favors the right parties more. Generally, the support for the right seems to be stronger, which is rather untypical for a national minority, usually oriented towards the left parties, as they call for protection of minority rights.

But it is simple here. I mean, the older go with the left, the younger with the right. (1) / In the left because they gave me pension, low, but they gave it and this is (1) (...) the youth support the right, because our province governor is from the right (...) and the governor did a lot for the province. (1) / Well, you know, like you, maybe more the right (2) / (...) here people are divided, but in my opinion the right is always in the first place (5) / (...) it depends on leaders, left or right, here in this area, in this local area, so it could be that someone from the right did some nice things for the Polish community (5) / (...) Once the government, the right one, but they took the pensions, they lowered them by 25%, well it was like that, from the whole administration, from the whole state budget sphere, people didn't forget it, and here we could see that people didn't vote for them, they went to vote for the left and the left had more votes (5) / (...) the right [why?] I don't know (12) / (...), well, right, I guess (13).

On the other hand, there were frequent voices claiming that all political options are worth nothing.

(...) this isn't in the whole country, not just here. In whole Romania there is such a mess that at all, you just don't know, for example the ideology, whether it is left or right. (1) /

(...) rather not, well, listen everybody talks politics, everybody is asking what is going on, how it is, where it is, maybe this one is better, and this one worse, well, such things, such, such, politics is everywhere, in the ditch, on the road, but generally not really (9)

Conclusions

Political activity of members of national and ethnic minorities is still perceived as a marginal issue in political science research on participation of parties and groups of interests in the political life of a country. This article made an attempt at presenting the political (especially electoral) activity of a relatively small group of Romanian citizens who declared Polish nationality, but a minority standing out from the Romanian ethnos and from other minority ethnos. The research findings, whose results are presented in this article are by no means an in-depth case study. In its assumption, the research is to contribute to further potential scientific explorations. From the conducted research we can see that the process of creating local political elites who receive the election support of the minority community is of particular interest. This aspect of research deserves a more in-depth analysis, not only through in-depth interviews, but also through the analysis of documents and press discourses.

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