

Journal
of **Global Politics**
and **Current Diplomacy**

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NO: 9, ISSUE: 1, 2021

Journal
of Global Politics
and Current Diplomacy

 [Center for
European Dialog
and Cultural Diplomacy]
DEDiC

Journal of Global Politics and Current Diplomacy

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ISSN 2344 – 6293 ISSN-L 2344 – 6293

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Work-life balance during the Covid-19 pandemic. The case of full remote employees in an IT company

Ștefan MAROȘAN*

Abstract. This paper examines work-life balance, but more specifically work-from-home policies and how they help to create a balance, or imbalance, when individuals turn to these policies. The research question and the objectives of this research, they were constructed in such a way that we can focus both on the aspects of the professional life of the respondents and on their private life before work at home and after it starts. This document is a qualitative research applying a series of 10 interviews to people working in an IT company in Cluj-Napoca (Romania); these people working from home either since the beginning of the health crisis or joining this company in 2020.

Keywords. COVID-19 pandemic, working from home, work-life balance, IT company, comparative media study

Introduction

IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT, THAT HAS CHANGED MANY ASPECTS of our social life, work also has a lot to "suffer". Certainly, nowadays we no longer relate to work in a classical way, but rather we see, feel, and understand work in a completely different way, due to the different global influences that have emerged through the development of new communication technologies. In Romania, until recently, the work was done as much as possible at the headquarters of the company for which the workers were employed, but due to the health crisis that broke out in early 2020, a very rapid change was needed in this regard, hence more and more companies were forced to send their employees home and later to ask them to work from home, using their own devices and Internet connection. Information technology, in this sense, has been essential for these companies that have relocated their activities to their employees at

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home to be able to survive. Mail correspondence, zoom and skype conferences, activity organizers through Google, online recruitment and online trainings are just some of the examples we can find in this context. All these online-performed processes were dependent on the existence of information technology.

This paper has chosen to examine the work-life balance, but more specifically work-from-home policies and how they help to create a balance, or an imbalance, when individuals resort to these policies. This article assumes that work-from-home policies can have beneficial effects on individuals, but when these policies are applied compulsorily for people employed in certain companies, these policies can affect the work-life balance.

The structure of this study is as follows: the first chapter tried to set out a series of definitions from the literature of the central concepts studied, namely work-life balance and work at home, then it provided a string of information on the role technology in telework processes will conclude this first chapter by presenting research on the chosen topic. The work continues with a series of methodological aspects: the present research is a qualitative one, and a number of 10 interviews were applied, followed by an analysis of these interviews in order to formulate answers to the research question and to the objectives of the research. The last part of the paper contains the research results; a main part containing the interpretation of the interviews, followed by some final remarks.

Regarding the research question and the objectives of this research, they were constructed in such a way that we can focus both on the aspects of the professional life of the respondents and on their private life before work at home and after it starts. The research question to which this article seeks an answer is: "How does work at home change the balance between work and private life?"; and the objectives of this research are structured in two directions: the first two objectives aim at identifying the factors that lead to creating a work-life balance through work at home and identifying the factors that lead to creating an imbalance between work and privacy through work at home.

The following objectives are oriented towards family life, namely to identify the positive and negative effects of working at home on married life and to identify the advantages and disadvantages of the elements related to raising children and changes resulting from work at home of one parent (in case families with children).

In order to obtain as concrete answers as possible to the research question and the objectives set, this article is based on a qualitative research by applying 10 interviews to people working in an IT company in Cluj-Napoca (Romania); these people working from home either since the beginning of the health crisis or joining this company in 2020.

Theoretical aspects

This first chapter presents three quite important elements when discussing work from home and the work-life balance. Thus, this first chapter begins with a series of theoretical elements regarding the concepts of work-life balance and work at home; then a series of information on the use of technology in telecommuting processes are presented; the chapter concludes with a string of studies on work at home and the effects it has on people employed in this type of work.

Work-life balance: working from home

Work and personal life are two essential aspects for any individual in contemporary society. In our personal life we have the opportunity to attend certain courses, to be part of various social groups and finally to start a family; on the other hand, work is a social binder, a formal organized environment in which individuals interact with each other and through a collective effort come to achieve the purpose and objective of the organization of which they are part.

Of course, when we spend about eight hours a day at work, the time we have left to devote to our personal lives is limited. In this way, both individuals and organizations must find a series of solutions to create a balance between work and private life, to avoid reaching situations of imbalance between the two elements of human life.

Numerous definitions of the concepts of work at home and work-life balance are presented in the literature.

Regarding the concept of work-life balance, we can see a categorization of these definitions into two broad categories: on the one hand in the first category there are definitions and theories explaining the work-life balance by reference to role and conflict between roles (Marks and MacDermin 1996; Clark 2000; Kalliath and Brough 2008; Grzywacz and Carlson 2007); on the other hand, the second category tries to explain the work-life balance by reference to the social, family and organizational environment in which the individual works and the role of the environment in relation to the other elements (Abendroth and Dulk 2011; Kirton and Greene 2010; Kelliher et al. 2018).

The importance of the roles played by individuals is theoretically one of the main ways to define the concept of work-life balance. In this sense, Marks and MacDermin (1996) discuss the concept of work-life balance as a complex process in which individuals need to focus all their attention in order to successfully cope with all the roles they have. At the same time, they focus on how individuals, in order to succeed in completing each role they hold, often resort to prioritizing roles for better management of the various situations that arise.

Marks and MacDermin (1996) also highlight two completely different ways in which individuals relate to the roles they hold: positive commitment to the roles they hold, in which individuals are fully involved in the roles they hold; and negative engagement in held roles, in which individuals are disinterested in how they relate to their roles. Kalliath and Brough (2008) depict work-life balance in a manner similar to that described by Marks and MacDermin. Kalliath and Brough (2008) argue that in order to achieve balance, individuals must invest equal effort in all the roles they play.

Another theorist who defines the concept of work-life balance in relation to roles is Clark (2000). He argues that as long as role conflict does not arise, work-life balance is achieved, so all individuals need to do is avoid role conflict and focus on how they can successfully fulfil all their roles

Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) claim that work-life balance involves "accomplishment of role-related expectations that are negotiated and shared between an individual and his or her role-related partners in the work and family domains." In this context, individuals need to be aware of the importance of the role they play in the various social settings in which they work (work and private life).

The social, organizational, legislative environment in which individuals act is another essential element when it comes to work-life balance because depending on the various influences that individuals feel from the outside environment, they manage, or not, to reach successfully work-life balance. Abendroth and Dulk (2011) argue that work-life balance can only be achieved when individuals receive support from those around them when they need it; thus, the balance is achieved when co-workers offer their help in the successful accomplishment of work tasks, and family and friends offer support in different moments of personal life. Another important element in creating the work-life balance is the involvement of the state through various social policies to help create this balance through: paid childcare, statutory leave or flexible work schedule.

Kirton and Greene (2010) define work-life balance as rather an obligation on companies to introduce a series of policies that facilitate the creation of balance outside the workplace; elements that encourage the idea of parenting and the responsibility of caring for dependents.

At the same time, there are certain definitions of the concept of work-life balance that place different emphasis on how this balance can be achieved. Kelliher et al (2018) argue that in order to achieve a real balance individuals need to make certain sacrifices, usually at work, to restrict certain aspects of professional life in order to have more time for privacy.

Regarding the concept of work at home, in the specialized literature there are a myriad of definitions of this concept. Baruch and Nicholson (1997) define work at home as the activity undertaken by an employee who carries out all or

at least a large part of the work at home, physically separated from the employer's place. At the same time, Van Sell and Jacobs (1994) argue that teleworkers are those employees of a company who use computer and telecommunications technology to work at home or in a place other than the organizational space.

Olson and Prims (1984) argue that the term telework refers to the replacement of telecommunications technology for physical travel to a central workplace, it is usually assumed that the person works from home. There is also a structuring in several categories of home workers, these being: home workers after working hours, home workers as self-employed, casual home workers and home workers for full-time employers (Olson and Prims, 1984). Thus, it is worth mentioning that this research focuses only on one category, namely home workers as a full-time employee.

Pearce (2009) believes that telework is a system that allows employees of a company to perform certain official tasks related to work from home or another alternative location that pleases the employee. In this sense, Bosch-Sijtsema and Sivunen (2013) argue that the concept of telecommuting involves employees of a company working for the same company regardless of geographical barriers but using information technology they contribute to achieve the common goal of an organization.

In defining the concept of telework, Tworoger et al. (2013) emphasize the idea of virtual teams. Telework involves a geographically dispersed work arrangement that is usually short-lived in which a company's employees use communications technology to work, so face-to-face interaction is lacking.

Other studies focus on the impact that working from home has on the quality of life. Shamir and Salomon (1985), following their research, concluded that working from home can only be beneficial in certain cases, for example people with a certain degree of disability who travel poorly and work in decentralized spaces, shared spaces can be much more useful for employees and for improving the quality of their work. Work from home does not always have the effects expected and desired by the employee, and sometimes by the employer.

In this context, it is useful to mention that working from home can involve both activities in which the use of technology is necessary and activities in which it is not necessary. For example, we can consider artists who create handmade products.

This paper is focused only on those activities in which information technology is needed in the work at home process. This study takes into account the case of Romania where the pandemic with Covid-19 imposed the first lockdown in March 2020, having a sudden impact on the activity of the companies and public and private institutions.

In Romania, there is a favourable legislative framework present through the Labour Code ([Law no. 53/2003](#)) and other legislative acts that favour the achievement of the balance between personal life and work. In this sense, we can talk about the provisions set out in the Labour Code in the following chapters: Chapter VIII, regarding the “Individual part-time work contract”, Chapter XI, regarding the “Work at home”, but also provisions set out in Art. 116, regarding the unequal work program and Art. 118, regarding the individualized work programs. It would be necessary to take a more analytical look at some of these legislative provisions. For example, working from home can be something that helps some employees to take care of children or dependents, but at the same time, we can also think about whether a person will do this work at home, for a long time, it will no longer be able to distinguish between professional and private life, so that an imbalance can be created between these elements.

According to the legal provisions of LAW No. 81/2018 of March 30, 2018, the concept of telework implies a “form of work organization through which the employee, regularly and voluntarily, fulfils his attributions specific to the position, occupation or trade he holds, in another place than the organized workplace by the employer, at least one day a month, using information and communication technology”.

The role of technology in telecommuting processes

In recent decades, information technology has blurred the boundaries between organizations and individuals working in these organizations, so the mere presence of individuals in a formal organizational environment is not the only way to highlight belonging to that organizational context, individuals forming and entering in contact with other co-workers and through information technology ([Bouwman et al. 2005](#)). At the same time, a new type of organization was formed, namely the virtual organization which is an independent organization in time, place and physical circumstances and is based entirely on the use of information technology in work processes. Between the activities undertaken by individuals and virtual organizations, a myriad of networks, communities, and project groups are formed that operate largely online and offline ([Bouwman et al. 2005](#)).

Regarding the topic of this study, Dutton et al. (2005) present in the paper coordinated by them a series of elements on how work has changed over time, as a result of the implications of the technological component. Specifically, it presents a global perspective on the implications of information technology at work and on increasing work performance. The changes began in the early twentieth century by transforming production using technology, and the first and most relevant example of this is Henry Ford (the inventor of the conveyor belt), who created mass

production. It also discusses how the introduction of technology in people's work makes their businesses more profitable and introduces the concept of "digital economy" as a new type of economy, one that started in the IT sector and spread rapidly in all other sectors of activity. However, all these new discoveries for the business environment do not come at no cost, it also shows how this digital age is accompanied by "spam, viruses and worms", which are based on terrorism in the intangible world. Therefore, any element of novelty meant to make our work easier also comes with its drawbacks.

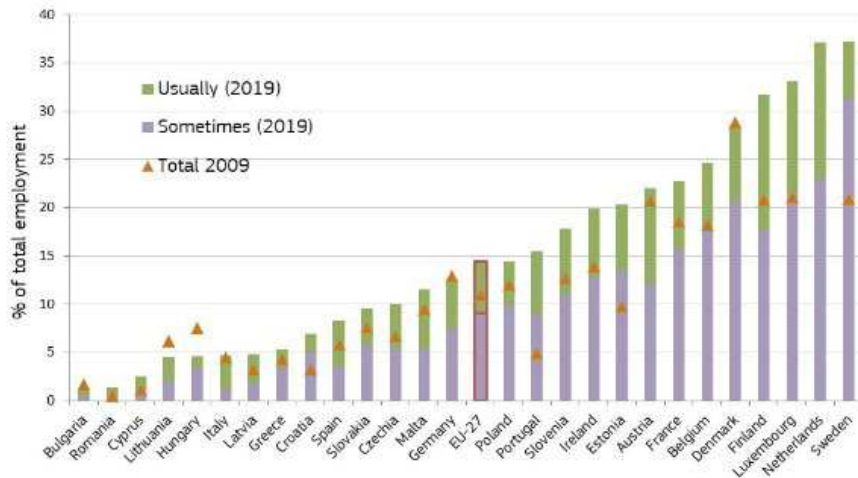
According to Eurofound (2015) data for 2015, of the total active population of the European Union, only 6% used communication technology to work from home. A series of studies provided by Eurostat (2020) show that in 2019, out of the total population of the 27 states included in the analysis, 14.3% of them work from home. However, the situation for each state is different. For example, in the top of this ranking are the Netherlands with 39.9% working from home, Sweden with 34.7%, and Finland with 31.7%. At the bottom of the ranking were Cyprus with 2.5%, Romania with 1.4% and Bulgaria with 1.1%. As can be seen from the data above, the use of communications technology in the work at home has gained ground in the last 5 years, thus reaching 6% of the active population in the European Union in 2015 who used information technology to work at home, in 2020 of the total active population in the EU reached a percentage of 14.3% people working from home and using ICT.

Between April 2020 and March 2021, Eurostat (2020) conducted a series of longitudinal research on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on labour processes. In terms of work from home, in the period June-July 2020 in countries such as Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, Portugal the percentage of those who worked from home exceeded 50-55%. At that time, Romania registered a total of 30.8% of employees who carried out their professional activity at home. The study was repeated between February and March 2021 and the results show that Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Finland still have percentages of 50% and more for people working from home. In the case of Romania, in February-March 2021 the percentage of people working from home decreased, reaching 27.1% which shows a decrease in the percentage of people working from home compared to June-July of the previous year.

Therefore, considering the above-mentioned data in the period 2019-2020, the percentage of people working from home in the states of the European Union has exploded. Of course, this sharp growth was largely influenced by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Reading the Romania's data, in 2019 the percentage of people working from home was 1.4% and in 2020 this percentage increased to 30.8% and experiencing a slight decrease in early 2021, thus reaching 27.1%.

Milasi et al. (2020) presents in his paper a number of issues regarding the work at home process among the countries of the European Union.

Figure 1: *Work at home in EU countries*



Milasi, S., González-Vázquez, I., & Fernández-Macías, E. Telework in the EU before and after the COVID-19: Where We Were, Where We Head to; Science for Policy Briefs; European Commission: 2020.

In the Figure 1, it can be seen to what extent the European Union states used work at home in 2019. It is observed how countries such as Sweden, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Finland, and Denmark occupy the leading places in this top, with over 30% of the total employed population working from home. On the other hand, at the bottom of the ranking are Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus, and Lithuania, countries where the percentage of employed people working from home does not exceed 5%.

In particular, the use of technology in work at home processes also has a number of advantages and disadvantages. Harpaz (2002) highlights several advantages and disadvantages of telework at the individual, organizational and societal levels. At the individual level, the advantages of teleworking depend on the degree of autonomy of the individual from work, he has control of his activities to a greater extent than in a formal organizational environment; flexibility of hours worked, the individual can decide when to work and how many hours to complete their activities; saving the time spent commuting to work; flexibility in the supervisory tasks of dependent family members. Regarding the disadvantages of working from home, it should mention: the lack of a sense of belonging to the work group; the feeling of isolation from the professional environment; no separation between the professional and the personal sphere; excessive availability syndrome.

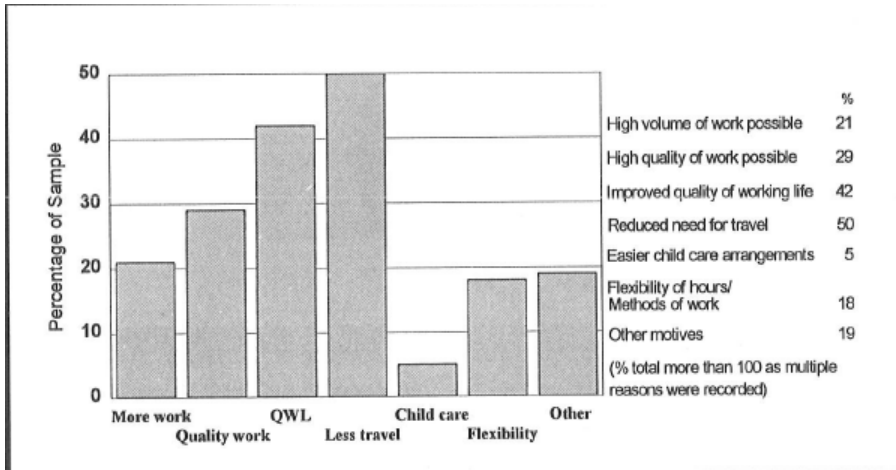
At the organizational level, there are also a number of advantages of teleworking: increased productivity due to a higher degree of autonomy, reduced absenteeism and delays at work; savings in direct costs; creating a positive organizational image. The disadvantages of teleworking in an organizational way are related to the cost involved in the transition to teleworking; changes in working method; investments in training and new methods of supervision.

At the level of society, the advantages are also present: reduction of environmental damage by reducing congestion in overcrowded urban areas; teleworking offers solutions for the population with special needs, so people with mobility difficulties can work from their own home; savings in infrastructure and energy. The major disadvantage from the societal perspective of telework is related to the idea of forming a separate company, so each individual who works for a long time from home creates a barrier between him and the organization (Harpaz, 2002).

Research on work at home

Within the specialized literature there are a string of studies that emphasize the advantages and disadvantages of the work at home process. Baruch and Nicholson (1997) present several elements regarding the reasons why employees prefer work from home:

Figure 2: Reasons for working at home



Source: Baruch, Y., & Nicholson, N. (1997). Home, sweet work: Requirements for effective home working. *Journal of general management*, 23(2), 15-30.

As can be seen in Figure 2, most respondents prefer to work from home since they no longer have to travel the route from home to work every day and vice versa. There is also an improvement in the quality of work, followed by the fact that they can work more from home. It is worth noticing the lowest percentage on the Figure 2, regarding childcare. Thus, families with children do not decide to work from home for a better supervision of childcare, but only for reasons related to the quality of work and the possibility of not traveling daily from home to work.

Fonor and Roloff (2010) argue in their research that work at home should not be thought of and seen as a way of social isolation, but rather should be perceived as a filter that allows the employee to avoid stress in the office and thus focus more on the tasks of the position. Therefore, working from home can give the employee the opportunity to avoid those stressful or fun situations at work, so there could be an increased satisfaction after teleworking.

Another research undertaken by Bloom and Berinato (2014) focuses on the idea of increasing productivity for certain jobs. In this case, the two authors studied a transport company, Ctrip, which decided to offer call centre employees the opportunity to work from home. The research results showed that employees who started working from home made 13.5% more calls than from the office, thus concluding that the decision to resort to teleworking was a beneficial one for the company and for employees in its call centre department.

A recent study conducted in 2020 by the market research agency Wisemetry Research highlighted several little-known elements regarding the way in which Romanian employees relate to their work from home. 37% of respondents say that since they work from home they work more, 35% of respondents say they work as much from home as from the office, and 28% of respondents say they work more at the office than at home. Regarding respondents who say that they work more at home than they did in the office, 47% say that the tasks are more numerous and all need to be solved, 42% of respondents say they want to prove to the employer that they can work just as efficiently and from home, 38% prefer to continue with a work pace as fast as the office, and 30% believe that they work more from home due to interruptions from family members or household chores, so they need to recover from these periods of interruptions that consume time related to work. Other reasons cited by respondents include cumbersome communication, technical problems, fear of repercussions on non-compliance and fear of losing a job (Wisemetry 2020).

Several recent studies have shown that the homework of IT workers brings them more satisfaction, but even companies can take advantage of it to reduce the cost of maintaining office space. Moreover, there are countries such as Germany where it has been suggested that a legislative framework be created

to stimulate work from home (Alpar & Osterbrink 2020). According to surveys conducted by Global Workplace Analytics (2020), 73% of employees surveyed say they are very efficient working from home, 70% say they are as efficient as before when working in the office, but are more satisfied with physical collaboration. Regarding the management component, 70% of managers are satisfied with the performance of employees but consider that management skills and remote collaboration need to be improved (Global Workplace Analytics 2020).

Research question, research objectives and methodology

This chapter will present the research question and the research objectives, after which the methodological approach was guided and how the sample has been built.

Research question and research objectives

The basis of this survey will be the following research question: "How does work at home change the work-life balance?". After conducting the interviews this study will highlight how work at home has or does not have a direct effect on the work-life balance, what are the factors that influence this relationship and what are the aspects that need to be considered when it is about work-life balance.

The objectives of the research are structured in two directions: the first two objectives aim at identifying the factors that lead to creating a work-life balance through work from home and identifying the factors that lead to creating an imbalance between work and privacy through work from home.

The following objectives are oriented towards family life, namely identifying the positive and negative effects of working at home within the couple's life and identifying the advantages and disadvantages of the elements related to raising children and changes resulting from work at home of one parent (in the case of families with children).

The proposed objectives are to describe the situation in which family life and professional life can coexist in a well-defined environment, namely one's own home. The first two objectives are focused on understanding professional life in relation to personal life, pursuing advantages and disadvantages felt by the respondent following the decision to work through telework. The next two goals, oriented towards family life, are focused on identifying the interferences felt in family life and how married life and the growth of children can change due to the decision of one parent to work from home.

Description of the organizational environment

The present research focused on a company that deals with the creation and maintenance of IT programs for several European countries. The company operates in Cluj-Napoca since 2015 and currently has a number of 57 employees, occupying various positions: billing operators, programmers, IT specialists, but also management positions: department directors and managers.

Before entering the lockdown, in March 2020, the activity within the company was carried out exclusively at its headquarters, as there were no situations in which employees had the opportunity to work from home. The employees' activity took place in open-space offices, and the management team had separate offices. The office building in which they operated has a conference room and a special space for lunch breaks. The work schedule was between 09:00 and 17:00. The presence of employees at work was recorded with the help of attendance cards in a software based on which it was possible to count the number of hours worked by each employee during a month.

As regards the specific requirements of each job, they remained unchanged with the changes following the switch to teleworking. Therefore, once the work from home started, the employees continued to work on the same projects as before the state of emergency. For this purpose, the company facilitated the access of employees to work equipment (laptop, telephone, printer, consumables) depending on the specifics of each job. Even if the requirements remained the same, what changed was the working conditions.

As a result, despite the facilities obtained for the continuation of work activities, the new work regime required the arrangement of a space for carrying out the professional activity in one's own home. This had an impact on the living space, which in many cases had to be shared with other family members who were either working or learning from home.

Attendance control was replaced, in these circumstances, by the appointment of supervisors who had the duty to manage the activity of groups to which they were subordinated. The employees were grouped in teams of 5-6 people each, and the task of the supervisors involved tracing the daily activities for each member of these groups. At the end of the work schedule, each employee was required to report to the supervisor the results obtained during that work day.

Sampling and method of data collection

This article is based on 10 interviews, 5 with women (W) and 5 with men (M). At the same time, out of these 10 people, 2 men who have a child and 2 women who have a child. Therefore, the sample consists of 2 women who have

a child, 3 women who do not have a child, 2 men who have a child, 3 men who do not have a child.

The present survey is a descriptive one, aiming to obtain information on how work at home can bring changes on the work-life balance and on the professional life of the interviewees and what are these changes that the interviewees feel.

Due to the pandemic social restrictions, it was not possible to conduct face-to-face interviews, hence all interviews were conducted using the Zoom Meeting platform and took place over a period of nine days, the duration of the interviews being between 30 and 55 minutes. It is a disadvantage that the interviews were conducted online and not face-to-face because if they could have been conducted at home with the respondents it could have been noticed the family context in which they live and if the work at home is perceived by them as a "invader" of the personal space through the presence of various tools used in carrying out this work (laptop, printer, files, documents, etc.).

The subjects chosen to take part in this survey started working at home at least 6 months before the start of the survey, so that they could more easily report the differences between office work and home work; and at the same time, their relationship to the way in which family life has undergone some changes since they started working from home.

At the same time, we chose to carry out this investigation the case of full-remote employees since they carry out their professional activity strictly from their own home, so they no longer have any contact with the physical environment of the organization in which they carried out their activity. In this context, their home has automatically become an office, so the barriers between personal and professional life are blurred precisely because the subjects no longer have an office at the company where they work and work only for the home.

The research tool used in data collection is the semi-structured interview guide, using this form to allow us to find out additional information about the subjects' lifestyles, how they relate to their work and their family life. The interview guide used in conducting this research consists of 20 open-ended questions, which are built under two interview topics: work and personal life. The topic of the job interview includes 11 questions with an emphasis on how the interviewees got to work at home, how they relate to this type of work and how it is carried out in relation to colleagues and supervisors. In the second topic of the interview, personal life, there are 9 questions focusing on how the family and couple relationship has changed following the decision of a family member to use telework and to what extent their private life has changed as a result of this decision.

The main advantage of using the semi-structured interview is a better understanding of the topics approached but also a reporting of the interviewees to

these topics through the lens of guiding the discussions and deepening them in order to obtain the necessary information. For example, people with dependent children have told in detail how there have been changes in their relationship with children since they started working from home and children taking online courses.

The unit of analysis in the survey is the individual. The survey intended to get some information about the changes that have taken place at the individual level following the decision to work from home; to find out how the interviewees related to work and family life in a different way when they were carrying out their professional activity at the company's headquarters. This survey tried to include in the sample people with different hierarchical positions, so in this respect managers or department directors, but also people employed in executive positions were interviewed. All these criteria help us to understand whether the work-life balance relationship is influenced to some extent by the respondent's position in the organization in which he works.

Research results

The following chapter intends to make the interpretation of the interviews; then to present a series of limitations of the present research; and last but not least, to offer a final part dedicated to the conclusions of this study.

Following these interviews, the survey emphasises to understand how the interviewees relate to work-related and privacy issues following the decision to work from home. At the same time, an eye was on the way in which the couple's life has changed following this decision, mentioning that all the participants in the survey were married. Another key aspect of the interviews was understanding how, for people with children, working from home was a major change in their care.

Work-related perceptions

For the first topic of the interview guide, namely work, there are several answers to help us understand how the interviewees perceive this process of work at home.

Regarding the reasons why the interviewees opted for work at home, they reported almost unanimously that this way of working was largely collective, so it was not an element related to the will of employees:

"In the case of our company, it was something like that ... mandatory, for the pandemic. I have been working from home since the

beginning of the pandemic and have remained so ever since; I can't say that I had a choice ... basically I have nothing to object to ". (M, 38, billing operator)

However, there was also a situation in which the interviewee reported that the decision to work from home belonged entirely to him:

"I was hired by this company at the beginning of August 2020, at that time the pandemic issue had calmed down a bit; I had the online interview and then I was asked if I want to work from home or from the office. I said I wanted it from home. Now you can work from the office with a maximum presence of 50% of the staff ". (F. 29, IT specialist)

As we have seen in the two situations described above, depending on when people joined this company, the decision to work from home is and remains the choice. Employees have the opportunity to choose where to work from August 2020, even if at the beginning of the health crisis telework was a collective decision of the company to send home all employees.

Regarding the changes generally felt by the interviewees after starting work at home, we could observe two major directions of manifestation of the changes. Some people mentioned that the changes felt were good:

"For me, the whole working-from-home thing scared me at first, but then I realized that I actually save about an hour and a half on the shuttle ... so I think that overall I had something to gain" (W, 34, specialist IT)

However, there were also people who could not easily adapt to a new style of work, as can be seen in the case below:

"I was sceptical about working from home from the beginning. I'm still sceptical, I don't think that work and family should be mixed in any way ... sometimes I'm disturbed by children or my wife, sometimes noises are heard from neighbours ..." (M, 41, network specialist)

As can be noticed in the lines above, the changes felt by the interviewees were manifested in two ways: on the one hand we have changes for the better, as in the case of the lady who no longer has to commute until work, and on the other hand we had persons who actually could not focus on the work they have to do due to the fact that they were bothered by certain family members or even neighbours.

The interviewees declared that there were certain things that have changed for the better since they started working from home from the perspective of professional life:

"I work for a smaller department. I didn't have the best super-performing software or equipment. Look, since this work from home, the company has been forced to invest money in software and equipment close to the latest generation to make our department as efficient as possible, so that we can carry out our work as required by our employees. So all the employees received new laptops with new software installed ... similar to what we used before, and that seems like a very good change for the better." (W, 26, PR specialist)

Moreover, another person related that:

"After we started working from home, we started to be more punctual and respect our deadlines, to respond very quickly to emails ... and I think that helped a lot. At first, that's what I was afraid of: the fact that we won't be punctual, and many colleagues will have the same attitude as at the office, to postpone things, but it seems that all the bad for the good in my case..." (M, 28, billing operator)

As we can see in the cases presented above, there are situations in which work from home has brought improvements in the way of working in the case of the company, from serious investments in equipment and software to greater employee accountability. All these elements were positively perceived by the interviewed people.

On the other hand, there are people who have pointed out a less pleasant side of working from home and who have had less pleasant experiences in this regard. In this position were two people aged 30 and 34, respectively, occupants of positions of call-centre operators:

"What I can say is clear: the network we work in was very crowded, I was disconnected from it about every ten minutes, and that's dead time ... it takes about 15 seconds to reconnect ... this thing with the network it took about 3 months ... until it was resolved I was full of stress. The problem is that while I'm on a call it's awkward to interrupt and then have to resonate with that person and apologize and all the formalities ..." (M, 30, call-centre operator)

A similar problem was reported by another interviewee who works for the same company:

"... at our call centre, the calls are recorded, and you receive feedback for them ... I had a problem with these recordings: they were not saved, and I had some problems with my supervisor ... if I was at the office it could be solved very quickly, but from home, where

I use a mobile phone, things are more different and sometimes difficult.” (W, 34, call-centre operator)

Consequently, we can see quite easily that some people have encountered specific problems with working from home, inconveniences that in the long run can cause serious problems, even job loss, even if the person who works from home is not to blame.

Regarding the reporting of work-from-home compared to office work, the employees unanimously pointed out that they are experiencing some quite significant changes:

“... we can't compare work from home with work from the office ... it's clear that you go there to work and that's it. When you are at home, it is clear that you feel other pressures on you: from the family, children who were also at home and sometimes needed my help, my husband went to work, he being a driver, I was left alone at home, where I also had to take care of my professional tasks ... but also my children.” (W, 34, call centre operator)

For the most part, the responses of the people regarding this office-home comparison focus on these small elements that come into play at home, whether we are talking about children who need help with lessons or the fact that you have to feed an animal or do cleaning or washing clothes. The interviewees stated that they felt distracted by all these elements, which became factors of stress and discomfort in working from home.

A singular element in the interviews was represented by an interviewee who reported that work in a formal organizational space and work at home are two elements that affected her in the long run:

“... I was happy at first to work from home and to have this experience, however after a few months I realized that not everything is as pink as it seems and even if I no longer have to commute to work and back home, however, I felt that I no longer belonged to the place ... that is, I felt excluded from certain aspects of the work. We at the office, until we started working from home, we used to do social evenings once a month, we all met at a restaurant and socialized differently ... but since we started working from home this has not happened. happened, I really feel isolated ... (W, 34, call centre operator)

As can be seen in the last paragraph above, the feeling of isolation is present to some extent. Thus, the interviewee declared that she feels the need to socialize with colleagues at work, and due to the pandemic and work at home this socialization, which usually happens during breaks or at various outings in

the city, can no longer be realized. As a result of this change, the person in question experienced a sense of alienation from the organizational environment in which they work.

As we highlighted in the paragraphs above, the decision to work from home was largely a collective decision, one meant to protect the lives of employees and those close to them. Certainly, after some time since the pandemic broke out and after the companies took certain sanitary measures in order to protect their employees, the latter had the opportunity to choose if they want to continue working from home or want to go back to office to some extent.

A topic discussed in interviews with these ten people aroused great interest in some. This topic focuses on the idea of communicating with colleagues and supervisors now vs. at the office. Some interviewees reported that since they started working from home, communication has raised major problems in the departments where they work:

"... in our department there was something unimaginable with communication, I sent urgent emails and received a reply on the second or even third day ... in certain situations, and if I had a contact number, I ended up calling the person to ask her to check what I sent her, because on the job I work on everything goes hand in hand ... I can't continue working if I haven't received approval from the managers that it's ok good. It was a very big meeting at the beginning of the year and the emphasis was on this punctuality in online communication ... so as not to be left behind with certain projects, of course ..." (M, 45, IT specialist)

Such problems related to poor communication management due to the lack of punctuality of some colleagues were found in most of the interviews conducted in this survey, but, as it could be seen in the paragraphs above, there were also situations in which, on the contrary, following the decision to work from home, the employees became very punctual and very serious about the communication process:

"I see communication much better now than it was when I was in the office, at least in terms of work and the emails that we have to solve quickly, as I said before, my colleagues have taken a lot of responsibility lately ... so in terms of communication I am much happier now than I was and how I communicated when I was in the office." (M, 28, billing operator)

Consequently, regarding the process of communication in the work process, two directions could be noticed in the answers of the respondents: on the one hand, those who consider communication a problem at the moment, in work from home. For these people it was much easier to be face to face with the

interlocutor and receive instant feedback, than to wait for an answer to an email; and on the other hand, there were cases, such as the last one presented, in other departments where the interviewees consider that working from home has made their co-workers very responsible, the latter becoming very punctual in terms of the communication process.

Regarding the conflict situations that arose at work since the interviewees started working from home, some people related that there were no such situations, but there were also 3 people who confessed certain conflict situations maintained due to work at home:

"I had some heated discussions on the phone with my manager. He accused me of actually disconnecting from the network because I didn't feel like working ... I told him that X and Y had the same problem as me and he didn't believe me. There was some tension between us for about two weeks, then it was confirmed from the technical department that, in fact, the platform is the problem and that's why I was disconnected ... he apologized, so ... out of moral obligation more. But still there were two weeks when he didn't call me at all to see how things were going, which he normally did somewhere in two or three days. (M, 30, call centre operator)

At the same time, conflict situations arose in another case due to a technical problem:

"I had a bad argument with a team leader from us who checks the calls. She insinuated that I did something with some calls ... which is very false. She said that I was not serious and that he would tell my boss about the incident with the calls that were not registered ... and she did that: she sent a report email to my boss, and she called me and I talked humanely with her. She understood and eventually those calls were recovered. To this day, I don't even talk to that team leader. She holds it high and loud that she is right, even if it has been proven that she is not right ..." (W, 34, call-centre operator)

As it can be seen in the two paragraphs above, conflicts occurred due to work processes or operations that were not performed properly, but for objective reasons to employees. Following more serious investigations, it was established that these problems and misunderstandings really took place without the fault of the employees.

On the other hand, certain conflicts at work have arisen due to improper relationships between some co-workers:

"I had that problem with answering emails. It was certainly a conflict: certain work tasks do not allow them to be postponed

indefinitely; then I passed on the problem I had. In the end it was solved ...” (M, 45, IT specialist)

Therefore, certain conflicts that may arise in working from home may be caused by certain technological problems that are not related to the employee, but it may also occur due to colleagues who are not very concerned about the work they do. Thus, the latter put some of their colleagues in difficulty.

Regarding the possibility of returning to work from the office, the interviewees stated that, since the summer of 2020, the company in which they work offers this possibility to physically return to work, but the number of employees physically present at the same time at the company's headquarters may not exceed 50% of the total staff:

“The decision was made within the company to be able to go to the office physically, and it is not mandatory to go daily, you can go 2 days to the office and 3 days home, or how you organize your program. Yeah ... you have to put yourself on a list at least a week before there is a record of the number of people who are present at the office ... so as not to exceed the number, respectively the percentage of 50%.” (W, 29, IT specialist)

The interviewees told me that despite the lifting of restrictions during the lockdown that allow the resumption of work in offices, they are reluctant to give up telework altogether. The reasons for this attitude are based on a fear of not meeting the virus and thus becoming a danger to their family members.

The last question addressed to the subjects in the first topic of the interview is focused on the work-life balance policies present at the level of the companies in which they operate. According to the participants in this survey, the company they work for supports such policies and is involved in achieving this work-life balance. Among these policies listed by the interviewees there are: short work schedule for Friday; additional days off; child raising premiums for children under 7 years of age.

As it is mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there were ten interviews attempting to capture different social profiles in them. Thus, the survey addressed both with people occupying executive positions: billing operators, programmers, IT specialists, call-centre operators, but also management positions: department directors and managers within a company based in Cluj-Napoca that deals with the production and maintenance of IT services.

Regarding the differences observed between the occupants of these different hierarchical positions, it could be observed an interesting aspect: people occupying executive positions and without managerial responsibilities do not encounter difficulties in creating a balance between work and private life, so the

idea of disruptive factors entering from one sphere to another is not as present as in the case of people who holds managerial or management positions.

"... at 09:00 everyone starts work, and at 17:00 we finished, we receive the daily report and that's it ... very rarely did I receive a call from work after this time, it's usually related with some misunderstandings about the daily report ... otherwise we are not bothered by anything else. " (M, 30, call centre operator)

The people holding a leadership position agreed that work often does not stop at 5pm as it should in a formal organizational space and as it does with people working under supervision. Often, people in managerial positions have to perform tasks that go beyond their work schedule.

"When we have an important project then we managers have to make sure that we collect all the data from the people in our team and it is clear that we have to check them in detail ... this can sometimes require us about two or even three overtime per day, for a maximum of two weeks [...] for this work we are paid extra, it is not unpaid work ... "(W, 40, manager)

According to managers, the work over the normal schedule is one that is often remunerated, they have reported that these events are quite exceptional, so they do not happen every day, only in periods when they have certain projects to complete.

Privacy-related perceptions

In the second topic of the interview, namely private life, the survey tried to obtain from the interviewees a series of information to help better understand how their personal life has changed after the decision of one of the family members to work from home.

Regarding the work from home, the interviewees stated that there have been several changes in the way this work is done from home:

"... you realize that now it's not that classic separation, you work until 5 and then you come home to clean or cook. I often wash clothes while I'm <at work> ... or I quickly make soup before my husband arrives from work. It is clear that sometimes I wake up that instead of doing my job reports, I start working from home ..." (W, 34, IT specialist).

As can be seen in the excerpt presented above, the interviewee reports that she no longer feels such a drastic delimitation between office-work and work from home, so she often finds herself doing chores around the house

instead of taking care of work tasks. Regarding the way the household chores are distributed, the people related that a change in the way these chores are distributed can be seen in this case as well:

“Since I work from home, I mostly take care of household chores, more than usual, I admit; my wife doesn't work from home, she's a pharmacist, so she has to be at work almost every day, she also works shifts ... and since I've been working from home, I've been more involved in household chores.” (M, 38, billing operator)

We noticed that in the case of the interviewees who work from home and their partners work normally, there is a change in the distribution of household chores. Thus, people who work from home now deal more with household chores than before, being in these cases helpful to their life partners. Regarding the desire for change on the part of the interviewees on the way the tasks are distributed, we noticed that there is no such desire to redistribute domestic work, they say that as long as they spend more time at home, it is normal they take care of household chores more than their partners who do not work from home. If both partners work from home, they must share the same workspace. In many cases, in order to facilitate optimal working conditions, but also to solve household chores, the partners agreed on a division of time to cover all daily tasks.

Regarding the issue of childcare, the people who have children reported that the responsibilities related to children remained largely divided equally in the couple, even if one parent works from home and the other parent doesn't work from home. However, people who work from home are more inclined to take more care of the child / children, so they automatically spend more time with them.

„... since I work from home, I spend more time with the little one, he now goes to physical school, but when he had online classes it is clear that I left the door open to his room to hear if he needs help or something ... and then after school to help him with homework and eat, then let's get out of the house a little ...” (W, 40, manager)

At the same time, we noticed a change in behaviour regarding the men who take care of the children:

„... I take care of the little ones more ... especially when they have online classes, and my wife is at work. I'm not good at cooking, but if there's something urgent I order food for the little ones; it is an additional responsibility certainly in the idea that before I started working from home I didn't have much time to take care of the little ones [...] we also do homework together, I help them with various ...” (M, 45, IT specialist).

Therefore, we have noticed a change in the way in which the interviewees who have children in care now relate from the time they work from home to the duties related to children. Thus, people who spend more time at home, people who work from home, tend to spend more time with children, especially in situations where children go to school online.

Regarding the couple's relationship, only one of the interviewees related that since he started working from home, the monotony of the couple has intervened, thus this couple ended up turning to a therapist to solve these problems:

"... I came to a point a few months after I started working from home where I had become very irascible, and nothing suited me. Mihai (husband) was very nice and always understood me. The idea is that it was a busy period at work immediately after the declaration of the state of emergency, everyone was upside down ... and these events loaded me too ... [...] I could not get out of at home, for fear of the virus, and then I spent almost four months alone in the house ... my husband was shopping ... [...] I went to a couples therapist, I did a few sessions online ... he helped me to I understand certain changes that happened to me, that's how we ended up saving our marriage ... otherwise I think we wouldn't have resisted." (W, 34, IT specialist)

As can be seen in the paragraph above, the interviewee encountered some serious problems in the couple as a result of the decision to work from home. The problems occurred because of a strong emotional load on the part of the professional, where she encountered certain difficulties as a result of declaring a state of emergency.

Regarding the ways of recreation, it can be noticed a predominance of ways of recreation at home or in very small circles:

"... you realize that until recently I used to go out with the kids to the mall, to the playgrounds, to various parties for children with pets, now that with this madness we can't do much of this ... we live in home, we look at the drawings together, we cook, we also went to the grandparents when we could ..." (M, 41, network specialist)

Thus, the interviewees relates that the recreational activities they participate in have changed a lot due to the various restrictions in place and also due to the fear of not getting sick; they are more recently resorting to home recreation methods.

The decision to work from home was one that, from the point of view of the interviewees, brought some changes in terms of work-life balance. Some

people have confessed that this decision to work from home has allowed them to spend more time with their children and take better care of their education:

"At least it was beneficial for me to start working from home, I managed to spend more time with Patrik (son) and I even felt that I am a better mother and that I am more involved in his education. He's still small and probably doesn't realize it, but I really did with him what he should have done in kindergarten ... I coloured, I read him stories ... and that in addition to the fact that I had work to do service." (W, 34, call centre operator)

From a different point of view, some people pointed out that working from home was not an element that would give them security in terms of achieving work-life balance.

"... it doesn't seem to me that I managed to balance work and private life, plus the fact that I was locked in the house for so long [...] I felt weird and I'm still not 100% used to the idea, I wake up at 7:30 and at 9:00 I start work, that is, I get out of bed and go to the office, in the same room; then I work until 17:00 and then I stay at home ... it's something too monotonous that goes beyond what I can understand ... this doesn't suit me, but I have no choice, to be honest ..." (M, 28, billing operator).

Therefore, in the interviews in this survey emphasised two directions of manifestation of the balance / imbalance between work and private life: on the one hand, there were people who confessed that the decision to work from home was a very beneficial one for the fact that in this way they were able to take more care of the dependent people; on the other hand, there were also people, such as the one in the last passage who claims that the decision to work from home was one that did not strike a balance between work and private life, but on the contrary, she feels compelled to work and live in the same place.

As for the changes in well-being since the interviewees started working from home, they related that they enjoy the long time spent with the family, they are satisfied that they no longer have to commute to work, and some of them reported feeling safer working from home. Thus, they cannot pose a danger to themselves or other family members from a medical point of view.

"I am just relieved that I don't have to commute every day. Traffic to work can be a misfortune in the morning. Especially since we moved to Floresti, it was more difficult with the shuttle, we drove and took the children to school in Cluj." (W, 34, IT specialist)

On the other hand, there are certain inconveniences regarding work from home and its implications in personal life. To a large extent, these

inconveniences are related to those elements of personal life that distract individuals and thus rob them of the time that should have been allocated to professional tasks: from childcare to various household chores. All of this can negatively affect the way individuals work from home.

"I was sceptical about working from home from the beginning, I am still sceptical. I don't think work and family should be mixed up in any way. I am sometimes disturbed by children or my wife, sometimes I hear noises from neighbours ..." (M, 41, network specialist)

In view of the different conceptualizations offered at the beginning of this paper, we can reach the following conclusions. According to Marks and MacDermid (1996); Clark (2000); Kalliath and Brough (2008); Grzywacz and Carlson (2007), the balance between work and private life can be achieved when individuals successfully fulfil all the roles they hold, thus preventing the emergence of role conflicts. Most of the interviewees pose the problem this way: in terms of their obligation to deal with all the roles they hold, to "break into several pieces" in order to be able to cope with all these roles. Obviously, not always this uniform observance of different roles can be achieved, so individuals who fail to divide their time properly end up feeling overloaded and thus the role conflict occurs:

"... what I dislike is that I don't have that clear work-home delimitation ... [...] I wake up at 7:30 and at 8:00 I start work, that is, I get out of bed and go to work office, in the same room; then I work until 4:30 pm and then I stay at home." (M, 28, billing operator)

On the other hand, according to Abendroth and Dulk (2011); Kirton and Greene (2010); Kelliher et al. (2018), the process of balancing work with private life through work at home must be achieved largely by reference to the environment (social, organizational, family) in which individuals act. Thus, the attempt to balance work and personal life must be achieved through a collective effort; it is not only necessary that individuals want this, so that they can successfully achieve all their social roles.

Regarding the idea of work-life imbalance, elements of professional life can be encountered combined with elements of private life such as phone calls after work or the need to answer emails after work, which can be an inconvenience for some people. These tasks that come after the end of the work schedule are perceived as disruptive and can have a negative impact on work-life balance, especially when individuals want to spend time with their life partner or children.

"... since I accepted the position of manager, I knew that I would have additional responsibilities. I assumed that. [...] I see it as a job beyond the work schedule. Sometimes I dislike this non-stop work schedule, which means being available to the company at any time.

At other times, I accept the idea that I hold a key position in the company and my idea or advice is needed even after the actual working time is over, in certain decisions that cannot be postponed until the next day." (M, 45, IT specialist)

Therefore, this idea of working overtime is a common one in the case of the people interviewed in this survey, the latter reporting that certain decisions cannot be postponed, so even if certain phone calls or emails have to be resolved after the program, it is an "Inconvenience that comes with the position occupied".

Final remarks

This paper provided a series of theoretical information on the concept of work at home and work-life balance. Thus, the article presented a string of definitions and studies that address the research topic. In the applied part of this research, this research caught the way in which work at home as well as the work-life balance policy is carried out in ten interviews with people who work from home since a period of time older than six months.

The whole methodological approach was aimed at obtaining an answer to the research question of this paper: "How does work at home change the balance between work and private life?". Thus, after conducting these interviews, this study can highlight an answer to this question: Work at home, as felt by the respondents, produces various effects in terms of the balance of work and life. private. Certainly, the relationship to work and to the elements related to privacy is not a classic one, as it would be when the two aspects of an individual's life take place in different environments, but the directions of manifestation of change are focused on two categories: on the one hand, working from home has a positive effect on work-life balance through the ability of the salaried employee to work and take care of household chores and dependent children at the same time; and on the other hand, we can say that working from home produces negative effects on the work of the individual through the various ways in which he can be distracted from the work he has to do for the company for which he is employed and focuses his attention on other elements; which are not necessarily related to professional life.

Thus, working from home is perceived by some people as beneficial in creating a balance between work and private life, precisely through this freedom that employees have over their time. As long as they manage to successfully fulfil their duties in professional life, they also have the opportunity to do various chores around the house, things that in a traditional work regime (at the company's office) would not be possible.

Paradoxically, for some people this very freedom they have is a problematic one, precisely because the latter cannot concentrate in two different directions at the same time, although they are also distracted by other things when they work for the home. Another drawback when it comes to working from home is related to monotony and the fact that people who work from home end up becoming tired after a while due to lack of movement to and from work. At the same time, some interviewees agreed that performing all tasks in a very limited space can bring an overload over time both physically and mentally.

In terms of married and family life, the participants in this survey are largely of the opinion that working from home has not brought significant changes in married life, but people with dependent children have stated that since they have begun to work from home time spent with the little ones and the support he provides to help them with their school-related tasks has obviously increased.

Depending on the hierarchical position occupied by the interviewees, the idea of balance, but more precisely imbalance, occurs more often. Thus, those people who occupy higher hierarchical positions often find themselves in a position that forces them to work even after the end of the work schedule, which does not happen in a formal organizational space.

Therefore, following this research, the main result of this survey is that working from home, as shown by the interviews, is a beneficial policy for achieving work-life balance. It should also be mentioned that in the case of the present research, work at home was an organizational policy not at all voluntary, but on the contrary, obligatory.

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Organizing a peace conference. Negotiation framework at the Paris conference (1919)

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Abstract¹: The Paris Conference (1919) was the first experiment by states on five continents to develop a multilateral negotiation framework in the aftermath of the First World War. The old diplomacy was trying to adapt to an international system with several actors, in which the principle of balance of power changed its logic, and the great pre-war actors left seats to others. What was blamed on the Conference was the negotiation procedure, which reflected the differences in rank of the participating states. This article presents the way in which this transformation of international politics has taken place. Without describing the Paris negotiation files, this paper will focus on how the framework for the negotiations that defined the Paris Conference was created.

Keywords: *Conference of Peace, International Negotiations, League of Nations, old diplomacy, open diplomacy*

The characteristics of a peace conference

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN A CONGRESS AND A CONFERENCE was emphasized by Coleman Phillipson and Ernest M. Satow. In essence, the differences are minor. Reviewing the definitions given by the end of the nineteenth century, Phillipson noted that a congress has a more solemn character, benefiting from greater political authority, while a conference has technical issues on its agenda (Phillipson 1916: 121). Satow noted that "the term *congress* has in the past been more frequently applied to assemblies of plenipotentiaries for the conclusions of peace" In the past, congresses were held in places considered neutral or "expressly neutralised for the purpose of the meeting." (Satow, 1932: 284) These congresses often had mediators. In the nineteenth century, congresses were held in the capital of one of

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¹ This article has been published firstly in: Mihai Alexandrescu (2019). Organizarea cadrului de negociere la Conferința de la Paris (1919). In M. Muresan and M. Trufan (edited by). *Multiculturalism în Transilvania după Conferința de Pace de la Paris*. Cluj-Napoca: 44-75.

the states involved, and the head of government or the minister of foreign affairs was the one who chaired them. Some authors before the nineteenth century saw in congress a kind of "court of conciliation." (Satow, 1932: 284)

In the case of the conference (the first taking place in London, in 1827), it took place in the capital of one of the states involved, the neutral space no longer being one of the characteristics of the meeting. The foreign minister of the host state also chaired the conference, and the other members were diplomatic representatives in that state. Satow notes that "[a]t the present day the term "conference" is habitually used to describe all international assemblages in which matters come under discussion with a view to settlement" (Satow, 1932: 285)

According to Phillipson (1916: 122), there is no clear line between conference and congress. The former term seems to replace the later one. International conferences between sovereign states can be divided into two major categories: (a) peacetime conferences aimed at maintaining peace through international agreements, such as the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907, and (b) conferences of peace, ending a war. (Potter, 1922: 336) The Paris Conference (1919) ended a generalized war, different from a classic one between two belligerents, as was the case with the Franco-Prussian War, concluded by the Congress of Berlin (1871). It could be seen that, as a result of such a general conflict, neutral states were included in the peace negotiations, given that the general agreement contained issues relevant to their interests. Previous cases in Westphalia (1648), Vienna (1815) and Paris (1856) confirmed this new trend. (Potter, 1922: 339; Phillipson, 1916: 120).

Usually, peace conferences are not as well organized as peacetime conferences. Potter believes that the former gather "diplomats in the narrowest sense of the word and the personal element plays a very great part in the negotiations." (Potter, 1922: 344)

A peace conference is preceded by the conclusion of "peace preliminaries" or "armistices" between the belligerents. Ideally, a peace conference should previously define its scope of negotiation in order to provide a clear basis for negotiation. (Seymour, 1928: 286) The plenipotentiary representatives participating in the conference shall form the delegation of that State. This team has a head and can also include technical advisors. Plenipotentiaries have full powers from the head of state or government they represent to negotiate and conclude the treaty. The names of the plenipotentiaries shall be communicated in advance to the Government of the State hosting the conference or congress. The discussions and documents of the conference were held in French and English. The predominance of the plenipotentiaries followed the alphabetical order of the states in French. The order, in the conference room, is from the right to the left of the president.

The chair of an international conference is the main representative of the host state, if he is also a participant in the meeting. The functions of the President

of the Conference may include: (a) the presentation in plenary of a speech opening the procedures / papers setting out the aims and objectives of the conference, (b) the nomination of members of the secretariat who have been previously approved by delegations, (c) conducting the proceedings of the conference, (d) declaring the closing of the conference. (Potter, 1922: 289-290)

An international conference may set up committees to discuss specific topics on the agenda, and a rapporteur shall be appointed to draw up and present a report to the plenary. The first meeting of the plenary assembly aims to organize the general framework of the conference: the election of the president, the secretary, the appointment of commissions, the establishment of working procedures. In general, plenary sessions are held to present, for approval, the reports prepared by the specialized committees. The results of all discussions are contained in a treaty, the text of which is then submitted to successive readings so that the agreed text can be eventually signed by the plenipotentiaries of the participating states.

During the conference, the secretariats prepare minutes recording the discussions in the committees and plenary sessions. These documents are signed by the plenipotentiaries participating in the discussions, usually at the meeting following the one recorded in the document and following a vote to accept their content. All original documents are to be kept by the government of the host state.

Awaiting the Paris Conference

Initially, the opening of the preliminary conference was expected to take place on December 17, 1918, Woodrow Wilson himself, the President of the United States, arrived in Paris on December 14 for this purpose. However, the meeting was postponed to January 1919, due to parliamentary elections in Great Britain, but also due to the desire of French Prime Minister, Georges Clemenceau, to temper the atmosphere in the National Assembly of France. While waiting for the Conference, Wilson attempted to prepare a negotiation environment as favourable as possible through public speeches meant to strengthen his prestige, but also through visits to Great Britain and Italy. Clemenceau was concerned with obtaining, through the Peace Conference, the necessary guarantees for the security of France, while the project of creating the League of Nations remained a luxury, which could even become dangerous. In this regard, Wilson began to focus on making the League of Nations the central topic of the Conference. (Seymour, 1928: 251-252)

It was not until January 12, 1919, that the Peace Conference was convened. Paris was filled with heads of state, diplomats, experts, journalists. By April 1, 1919, the total number of delegates from the participating states had reached 1037. (Temperley, 1920: 238-241) When he attended the Congress of Vienna (1815), Lord Castlereagh led a British delegation of 14 people. A century later, David Lloyd

George was at the head of a delegation of about 200 people, including officials and editors, occupying five hotels. (Temperley, 1920: 238-241) Even the delegations of the smaller states numbered 50-60 participants.

Each government has created its own technical team of experts in history, geography, and politics to prepare for participation in the peace negotiations. For example, a Commission of Historians and Publicists was set up in France. Each government department set up its own consulting teams, but the lack of cooperation between them led to an excessive accumulation of information that did not always seem to reflect reality. The chance of the French delegation to the Conference was that it had people with experience in international conferences, who were able to adapt the large amount of information provided by government experts to the dynamics of the negotiation. Suffice it to mention Léon Bourgeois who attended the two conferences in The Hague (1899, 1907) and Georges Clemenceau, who since 1871 was an active presence in the national and foreign policy of France.

The experts hired by the United States government were academics and lawyers, as well as journalists and businessmen. Their research focused on the geography, ethnography, and economic conditions of Europe and the Middle East that helped Woodrow Wilson establish the negotiation guidelines for the US delegation. In the United Kingdom, the Foreign Office was an organization designed to prepare plans, but also to develop geography, history, and economics textbooks about almost every part of the globe.

Such concerns, on a small scale, could be observed in the case of Italians, Yugoslavs, Czechoslovaks, or Romanians. However, unlike the French, American and British works, those written by experts from smaller states were motivated by the promotion of their own state interests. (Prothero, 1917)

Wilson's error

President Woodrow Wilson would have preferred to come to the peace negotiations as an arbitrator, and not as an American delegate with the same rights as the delegates of the other great powers. The main condition for this wish to become a reality would have been the organization of the conference in a neutral place. Colonel House, the US President's personal envoy to Europe at the end of the war, had confessed to him since November 14, 1918, that Georges Clemenceau would have preferred Wilson's absence from the Conference because "no head of state should attend." (Seymour, 1928: 212-213) Wilson's dramatic statement in his November 16, 1918 reply to his adviser was that "French and British leaders desire to exclude me from the Conference for fear I might there lead the weaker nations against them ..." (Seymour, 1928, 213)

After all, it was his personal presence at the Peace Conference that weakened his bargaining power. Wilson wanted to play a central role and directly influence the negotiation. In fact, he was making a fundamental mistake that every negotiation manual recommends being avoided. In the multilateral negotiations, the direct presence of leaders is not recommended. Through his presence and under the influence of his own personality, Wilson weakened the negotiating capacity of the United States delegation. With a dominant personality, unable to accept criticism or delegate tasks due to his suspicion and distrust of people, Wilson blocked his collaborators from being able to prepare negotiation files. The US President preferred to have personal meetings with the delegations of all States participating in the Conference to find out their views, despite the exhaustion of such an approach that could be taken by his advisers. (Lloyd George, 1938: 221-241)

Clemenceau's diplomatic flair led him to intuit in Wilson's presence at the negotiations a real opportunity to diminish the international prestige he had gained only by transmitting messages and principles from across the Atlantic. (Seymour, 1928) Lloyd George recalled the French leader's distrust: "Clemenceau followed his movements like an old watchdog keeping an eye on a strange and unwelcome dog who has visited the farmyard and whose intentions he is more than doubtful." (Lloyd George, 1938: 222-223)

House blamed Wilson for his inability to secure a favourable negotiating environment with the United States Senate when he decided to make up the US delegation in Paris. The President rejected the advice of his advisers to include in his delegation two members of the Republican Party, a gesture that would have secured a favourable vote in the Senate to ratify any treaty he was to negotiate in Paris. (Seymour, 1928, 226)

The end of 1918 was not at all conducive to Wilson's bargaining power at the forthcoming Conference. The US President's visit to London put him in front of a British prime minister reconfirmed in office following an election campaign based on slogans such as "Hang Kaizer!" or "Let Germany pay to the last pfenig!" In Paris, Clemenceau gave a speech to the Chamber of Deputies on December 29, 1918, in which he openly stated that he was attached to the balance of power as a principle of the old international system that favoured alliances between states. These were the means by which the French Prime Minister saw it possible to guarantee the security of France, and not the "noble candour" of President Wilson. In Washington, the by-elections gave Republicans a majority in the United States Senate. (Seymour 1928, 254-255)

Lloyd George, a decade after the publication of House's notes, noted in his own memoirs of the Peace Conference that President Wilson came to the European continent without a draft, but only a few statements. The former

British Prime Minister also wanted to explain that the League of Nations project was neither the idea nor the merit of the US President, who only tried, through the 14-Points Declaration, a mix between the Report of Lord Phillimore (Egerton, 1978: 37-38) and that of Bourgeois (Lloyd George, 1938: 604-642).

Supreme Council - master of negotiations

The negotiation procedure at the Peace Conference was decided within the Supreme Council, a structure created in the second half of the war, and which proved effective in achieving the Allied victory. (World Peace Foundation, 1918a)

Determined by the defeat suffered by Italy at Caporetto (November 1917), but also in the context in which the Bolshevik revolution permanently removed Russia from the Allies, leaving the Eastern Front uncovered, the Allies met at Rapallo in early November 1917, creating a Supreme Council. It was considered necessary for the Allied military forces to benefit from unitary political coordination. Although supported by political and military arguments by the British Prime Minister, the idea of a Supreme Council of War provoked, at that time, a political crisis in London, as British MPs feared that the new decision-making structure created by the Rapallo Agreement would restrict the freedom of decision of the British military state.

This Supreme Council, created by the Rapallo Agreement (November 1917), was known by various names: the Inter-Allied Council, the Inter-Allied Commission, the Inter-Allied Supreme Council. Although distinct from the Council, but guided by it, the Inter-Allied Conference also functioned. (Fenwick, 1919: 199-202) Its first meeting took place in Paris (Versailles) between November 29 and December 3, 1917. The high-level participation of 17 states* demonstrates not only the *de facto* recognition of this structure of negotiation and coordination, but also the availability of these international actors to participate in the construction of a new type of international cooperation. Within the Inter-Allied Conference, sub-councils and commissions (e.g. the naval council, the maritime transport council, the war procurement and finance council) were set up. This structure continued to operate in 1918.**

At the meeting of October 29-30, 1918, the Allied Powers agreed on the terms of the armistices to be concluded with Austria, Turkey, and Germany. By the fall of that year, French and British leaders had given little importance to the

* France, Great Britain, United States, Italy, Japan, Belgium, Serbia, Romania, Greece, Portugal, Montenegro, Brazil, Cuba, Russia, Siam, China, and Liberia (cf. World Peace Foundation (1918b): 370-372).

** January 30-February 2, 1918 (Paris), March 14-16, 1918 (London), May 1-2, 1918 (Paris, Versailles), June 3-4, 1918 (Versailles), July 2-5, 1918 (Versailles), October 30 -10 November 1918 (Versailles).

January 8, 1918 Speech, in which Wilson presented to the United States Congress the 14 conditions necessary for the organization of peace. Not even officially transmitted to Allied governments, this speech remained a rather journalistic topic for nine months. It was the German leaders who brought him to the centre of international diplomacy by recognizing him as the basis for negotiations on an armistice between the Central Powers and the Allied and Associated Powers.

From October 1918, Wilsonian principles were taken over, at a declarative level, by European diplomats. The initiative of the German government to seek American mediation for the peace negotiations, in the memorandum of October 3, 1918, sent to President Woodrow Wilson, made the United States a mediator, despite his quality as a belligerent. The White House leader understood his situation, which is why he turned the invitation to "mediate" into "good offices", facilitating only communication between Germany and the Allied Powers to conclude the armistice of November 11, 1918,.

At the October-November 1918 meeting of the Supreme Council, the French Prime Minister said that Versailles was the place where the peace conference should be held, in opposition to Geneva, which seemed to be the Anglo-American proposal arguing for a neutral place. However, Wilson preferred the welcoming atmosphere of Lausanne to Geneva, especially because of the large hotel that existed in that Swiss town, as well as other spaces where the delegations of the participating states could be accommodated ([Seymour, 1928: 217](#)). Finally, the US President agreed that Paris and Versailles would be the main scenes for the Conference, both for material and symbolic reasons. From a material point of view, a Conference in London or Washington would have involved additional costs and delays caused by waterways. Symbolically, Paris and Versailles were loaded with historical value, for the French it was a reminder of the Franco-Prussian War (1871), and for the Americans Paris was the place where the Treaty of their independence was signed (1783).

The euphoria created by the unexpectedly quick signing of the armistices made some discussions seem bizarre. When Colonel House asked Lloyd George and Clemenceau about the number of delegates in each country, the French prime minister replied that half of France wanted to be present, but the British prime minister felt more fortunate, as all Englishmen would have liked to attend the Conference. Obviously, in the face of such approaches, it was necessary to postpone the discussion on such a sensitive subject. When he returned, the three interlocutors agreed that the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and the United States should participate with five delegates each, while the other powers should send between one and three representatives, House considering that "smaller countries like Belgium, Serbia, and Greece have been quite contented to have one place each at the Versailles sittings..." ([Seymour 1928, 218](#))

Sketching a multilevel negotiating framework

In the Memorandum sent, on November 29, 1918, by the French Government to Robert Lansing, the American Secretary of State, it can be seen which were the principles that were to define the negotiation procedure. First, it was stated that the principles set out by Wilson in the 14-point Statement were too vague to be taken as a basis for negotiation ([Baker, 1922: 56-63](#)). The Great Powers were to have between three and five plenipotentiaries, the small powers - one or two, while the neutral states and those in formation one representative each. This limitation on the number of members in state delegations was motivated by a desire to avoid congestion and confusion during the conference. The decision-making method would have been majority voting, with each state receiving one vote, regardless of the size of the delegation.

"The great victorious powers alone will attend all its sessions, the small power being called only to sessions designated for their special affairs. [...] the enemy has no right to discuss the terms that will be imposed upon him by the victors." ([Baker, 1922: 58-59](#))

In the initial stage, prior to the Preliminary Conference, the French Memorandum spoke of the organization of a Congress, which was to have two sections: the negotiation of peace and the creation of the League of Nations. From the French point of view, the basis of the discussions in the future Congress was neither the four armistices concluded with Bulgaria, Turkey, Austria, and Germany, nor the 14 points in Wilson's Declaration of January 8, 1918, but a methodological arrangement of the main topics: resolving the war and organizing the League of Nations. ([Baker, 1922: 58-59](#))

At the meeting of the Supreme Council in London on December 2-3, 1918, Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Orlando made some preliminary decisions for which they also waited for Wilson's approval.* Among the resolutions adopted by the three European leaders, it worth mentioning here the following:

- Establishment of an Inter-Allied Commission to examine the amount that enemy states could pay for reparations. Belgium, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, the United States and Japan were to join the commission.
- The German Emperor and his principal collaborators shall be tried by an international court.
- An Inter-Allied Conference is to be held in Paris and Versailles before the peace preliminaries. In this, France Great Britain, Italy,

* Due to poor health, Colonel House did not attend the meeting in London, remaining in Paris.

Japan, and the United States had to have five delegates each, and the smaller allied powers should only be represented when issues of concern worry them.

- Marshal Foch was authorized to renew the armistice on December 10, 1918, for another month. (Seymour 1928, 247-249)

This draft negotiation outlines the characteristic lines of a multilevel structure, as opposed to a horizontal multilateral negotiation between actors with equal status. The format proposed by the Supreme Council in December 1918 subliminally sought to define future power relations in the international system by arguing for human sacrifice during the war.

Negotiating procedure at the Paris Conference

As a preliminary Conference of a Peace Congress attended by the delegations of the defeated states, the Paris Conference gradually turned into a real Peace Conference in which negotiations were held between the allied and associated powers during the war. Colonel House noted in his memoirs that in December 1918 an agreement was reached between the four powers for the Inter-Allied Preliminary Conference to take place in Paris, and for the Peace Conference with Germany to take place later in Versailles. (Seymour 1928, 247-249) For this reason, one of the decisions of the Supreme Council was that the Central Powers should not be invited. As a result, the conference began with a "Preliminary Inter-Allied Conference" on the conditions for peace with a view to drawing up a draft peace treaty to be approved by former enemy states. However, at the official opening of the plenary sessions on 18 January 1919, the President of France, Raymond Poincaré, spoke about the "Paris Conference" and the Rules to guide this assembly. 27 delegations from five continents participated, each with their own package of interests and pretensions.

After these states had succeeded in agreeing on the texts of the treaty with Germany, its representatives were convened, on 7 May 1919, at the same conference to present to them the Treaty on which they were to express their opinion.

The characteristic of this conference was that it did not include all the belligerents but included non-belligerent states. The principle of participation was the interest, not the wartime status. (Potter, 1922: 346) In this way, neutral states and autonomous colonies (referred to as "forming states") became members of the Conference at the invitation of the Powers of General Interest, and not as a right derived from belligerent status. Nevertheless, some of these invited states were signatories to the treaties resulting from the Conference. It is precisely by virtue of this result that P. B. Potter distances himself from E. M. Satow, stating that in Paris, in 1919, there was "a general world congress, not

merely a peace conference."([Potter, 1922: 346](#)). Westphalia (1648) and Vienna (1815) seemed to repeat themselves, this time on a larger scale, by including several continents: Europe, Asia, the Americas, Africa, and Australasia.

By Decision of the Supreme Council of 15 January 1919, the participants in the Conference were divided into four categories:

(a) "Powers of general interest", participating in all plenary sessions and all committees of the Conference: The United States of America, the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan.

(b) "Powers of special interest" participating in the sessions in which they discuss matters concerning them: Belgium, Brazil, the British Dominions and India, China, Cuba, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hijdas, Honduras, Liberia, Nicaragua, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Siam, Czechoslovakia.

(c) "Powers having broken off diplomatic relations with enemy powers", participating in the sessions in which issues concerning them will be discussed: Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay.

(d) "Neutral Powers and states in process of formation", which will be convened by the Powers of General Interest to be heard, orally or in writing, at sessions specifically devoted to the examination of matters directly concerning them. ([FRUS, III, 1969: 172](#))

The composition of the "Plenipotentiary Delegations" was as follows, according to the same Rules:

- Five representatives each for: the United States of America, the British Empire, France, Italy, and Japan.
- Three representatives each: Belgium, Brazil, and Serbia.
- Two representatives each: China, Greece, Hijdas, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Siam, and Czechoslovakia.
- One representative for: Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay.

As for the British and Indian Dominions, they were to be represented by two delegates each: Canada, Australia, South Africa, and India and one delegate for New Zealand. ([FRUS, III, 1969: 172](#))

The conditions for Russia's representation were to be set by the Inter-Ally Conference when the talks were to focus on Russia.

Each delegation of plenipotentiaries could be accompanied by accredited "Technical Delegates". The order of precedence followed the alphabetical order of the states after their names in French. ([FRUS, III, 1969: 173](#)) It should be noted that the minutes of the session of January 18, 1919 did not record any position contrary to the proposal of these methods of conducting the proceedings of the Conference.

From a procedural point of view, the highest forum of the Conference remained the Inter-Allied Supreme Council*, composed of the heads of state of the four great powers: France, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States of America. (*World Peace Foundation, 1918a: 345-348*) In the absence of military advisers, the Supreme Council of War met in the form of an Inter-Allied Council on January 12, 1919, in Paris to decide on the organization of the Peace Conference. After only the heads of state and foreign ministers of France, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States of America took part in the first day, on January 13, 1919, they were joined by two more representatives from Japan, so that this structure also called the Council of Ten.

In the early days, this Inter-Allied Council transmitted, through official communiqués, the decisions taken. This means of communication was preferred, instead of the free access of the press to the meetings of the Ten, motivating the divergences of opinions between them and the desire to obtain consensus on their decisions. The only forum in which access to the press was free remained the plenary sessions of the Conference. By decision of 15 January, the Council of Ten established that each delegation is considered a unit, regardless of the number of members it comprises. (*Fenwick, 1918: 203*)

At the plenary session of January 18, 1919, Georges Clemenceau, in his capacity as newly elected President of the Inter-Allied Conference in Paris, also known as the Peace Conference, distributed the "Rules of the Conference." (*FRUS, III, 1969: 172-176*) This document provided for the establishment of a Bureau of the Conference, which included: one President (G. Clemenceau, from France), four Vice-Presidents (Robert Lansing, from the United States of America; David Lloyd George, from the British Empire; Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, on behalf of Italy, Marquis Saionji, on behalf of Japan) and one Secretary-General (P. Dutasta, on behalf of France).

At the second plenary session, on 25 January 1919, committees were appointed to examine the main topics of the Conference (*FRUS, III, 1969: 203-207*). The following composition was established for the five commissions set up:

- 1) Commission of the League of Nations: United States of America, British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Belgium, Brazil, China, Portugal, and Serbia.
- 2) Commission on the Responsibility of the Authority of the War and the Enforcement of Penalties: United States of America, British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Belgium, Greece, Poland, Romania, and Serbia.
- 3) Commission on Reparation of Damage: United States of America, British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Belgium, Greece, Poland, Romania, and Serbia.

* Often referred to as the Supreme Council of War, when the political representatives of the Powers were joined by "military advisers."

- 4) Commission on International Legislation on Labor: United States of America, British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Belgium, Cuba, Poland, Czechoslovakia.
- 5) Commission on International Control of Ports, Waterways and Railways: United States of America, British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Belgium, China, Greece, Serbia and Uruguay. (FRUS, III, 1969: 203-207)

The presence of Belgium in all five commissions and of Serbia in four of them was decided at the meeting of 27 January 1919 of the representatives of the states with limited interests (Fenwick, 1919: 206). On the same day, the Council of Ten decided to set up two new committees: the Economic and Financial Committee and the Committee on Private and Maritime Law.

We can look at one of these seven committees to observe the decision-making mechanism of the Paris Conference. For example, the Economic Commission was made up of representatives of the Great Powers and those of a few more powerful powers, who joined the meetings from time to time. The activity of this commission was divided into sub-commissions such as: customs and navigation (led by the United States), trade treaties (led by Italy), pre-war debts, pre-war contracts, industrial property (patents, copy-right, etc.) (led by France), elimination of enemy goods. Each country sent its experts to these sub-commissions. Their conclusions were presented in the form of reports to the Economic Commission, which approved, amended, or rejected them. After analysis, the reports adopted by the Commission were subject to the approval of the Council of Ten or the Council of Four. (FRUS, III, 1969: 203-207)

As of March 20, 1919, the Inter-Allied Council decided to hold its meetings more restricted. As a result, only the heads of state of France, Great Britain, the United States of America, and Italy met. Representatives of Japan did not attend these meetings. The new structure created was known, in the press of the time, as the Council of Four. This new structure met almost twice a day between March 24 and June 28, 1919, totalling 175 meetings. The content of these meetings was often confidential. In the face of a lack of sources of information, the press became increasingly violent against the four leaders, while public opinion seemed increasingly confused. (Temperley, 1920: 264-266; FRUS V, VI) The working language remained English at the meetings of the four leaders, but as the Italian Prime Minister did not know this language, a translator was needed during the meetings. In time, the group of four became known as the Council of Three, as Vittorio Emanuele Orlando retired from the Conference in April 1919. (Financial Times, 1919)

From the minutes of these meetings, it can be seen that this is not a replacement for the Council of Ten, but rather a reorganization of the decision-making

mechanism, following Lloyd George's Fontainebleau Memorandum.* The Council of Ten continued to function in parallel with the Council of Four, and the Foreign Ministers of the five Great Powers continued to meet under the formula often referred to as the "Council of Five." They kept the original procedure of the Council of Ten, and the minutes had the same circulation, keeping a greater transparency on the discussions and decisions. (FRUS, IV, 1969: 515-866)

The explanations of the Great Powers

The plenary session of January 25, 1919 was one of the most tense in the Conference. The attacks of the small states were directed against the discretionary and authoritarian way of decision-making by the five great powers, through the Supreme Council. The minutes of this plenary session reveal to us the image of delegates who did not directly deny the lack of equality status among all participants, but their individual desire to be recognized as a party in various committees of the Conference. (FRUS, III, 1969: 1)

In the absence of unity of attitude on the part of states which were categorized as having "limited interests", the rebuking speech of the President of the Conference was sufficiently convincing for the whole assembly:

"Well, we have decided, as regards the Commissions, in the same way as we did to summon the present Conference. I make no mystery of it – there is a Conference of the Great Powers going on in the next room. [...] We have had dead, we have wounded in millions, and if we had not kept before us the great question of the League of Nations we might perhaps have been selfish enough to consult only each other. It was our right. We did not wish to do this, and we summoned all the nations interested. We summoned them, not to impose our will upon them, not to make them do what they do not wish, but to ask them for their help. [...] What crime have we committed? We have decided that, for our part, we would appoint two delegates each on the Commission on the League of Nations. [...] It is my duty to guide the Conference in its work in order to obtain a result. We have therefore decided to appoint two delegates each, and then -may I be pardoned for it – we have decided to ask you to appoint five delegates in common." (FRUS, 1969, III: 196-197)

The British Prime Minister repeated this theme in his memoirs. Among the topics of discussion in the Council of Ten at its meetings prior to the plenary session of 18 January 1918 were (a) the number and size of delegations and their

* Entitled „Some Considerations for the Peace Conference Before They Finally Draft Their Terms“, 25 March 1919.

classification, (b) the publicity of the Conference, and (c) the invitation of Russia to the Conference. He remained convinced that if all the powers allied and associated with the same number of plenipotentiaries and the same rights of representation in committees had participated, the Conference would have become "a debating society" and the work would have lasted at least a year. (Lloyd George, 1938: 215).

Open diplomacy seems to have been interpreted by contemporaries as the free access of the press to peace negotiations. The British Prime Minister emphasized that the publicity of decisions did not mean the publicity of discussions. Therefore, only the plenary sessions were open to the press, otherwise, the minutes were the ones that transmitted the decisions that were taken at the level of the Councils. (Lloyd George, 1938: 215)

Stages of the Peace Conference

Compared to previous conferences, the Paris Conference was the largest peace conference. The formal inauguration of the League of Nations (also called the League of Nations) on January 16, 1920, ended the Paris Conference, and treaties with Turkey (1920, 1923) and Hungary (1920) were concluded outside the Peace Conference. In historiography two trends can be observed in defining the chronology of the Conference:

- a) Restricted interpretation: The conference lasted from 12 January 1919 to 21 January 1920;
- b) Extended interpretation: The Conference ended on 10 August 1920, with the signing of the first Peace Treaty with Turkey.

In view of the long duration of the Inter-Allied Conference, Table 1 provides a representation of the number of meetings for each of its units.*

Table 1: Number of meetings in the Conference's units

Unit	Period	Meetings
Council of Ten	12.01.1919 – 17.06.1919	80
• Council of Four	20.03. 1919 – 28.06.1919	175
• Council of Five	27.03.1919 – 25.06.1919	28
Council of Heads of Delegation	01.07.1919 – 10.01.1920	130
Supreme Economic Council	17.02.1919 – 07.02.1920	32
Plenary sessions (preliminary)	18.01.1919 – 31.05.1919	8
Plenary sessions (negotiation)**	07.05.1919 – 27.11.1919	6

* This article considered the minutes of the Paris Conference: Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919. Washington: U.S. G.P.O, 1969, Vol. I-XII.

** Versailles (07.05.1919, 28.06.1919), Saint-Germain (02.06.1919, 10.09.1919), Paris (19.09.1919), Neuilly-sur-Seine (27.11.1919).

Considering the narrow interpretation of the chronology, we could observe some stages that characterized this process: the preliminary stage (November 11, 1918 - January 12, 1919), the stage of the Council of Ten (January 12, 1919 - March 25, 1919), the stage of the Council of Four March 20, 1919 - June 28, 1919) and the final stage (July 1, 1919 - January 20, 1920).

The preliminary stage (November 11, 1918 - January 12, 1919) had two phases:

- a) November 1918 - when preparations for a congress of delegations for the start of peace negotiations also included representatives of the Central Powers;
- b) December 1918 - together with the meetings in London, when there is a change of direction towards a Conference of the Allied and Associated Powers. (Marston, 1944)

From January to March 1919, only the meetings of the Council of Ten took place, which included the heads of government and foreign ministers of the United States, Great Britain, France, and Italy, as well as the ambassadors of Japan. During these meetings, several hearings were held by representatives of the other states claiming their international recognition. The discussions and decisions of this body were known through the minutes of the meetings, but also through the leaks of information in the press. (Temperley, 1920: 249-263; FRUS III: 469-1046; FRUS IV: 1-514).

By the end of March 1919, the Council of Ten had succeeded in deciding only the military clauses of peace, while public opinion became increasingly concerned about the political situation in Central Europe. France remained determined to demand the occupation of the Rhineland, while the United Kingdom and the United States only agreed to take temporary measures to guarantee Germany's payment of war reparations. As a result, British Prime Minister Lloyd George presented the Fontainebleau Memorandum warning of the dangers that harsh conditions for peace could pose for Germany and the need to change the way decisions are made. In this context, it was decided to set up smaller, often informal meetings, known as the Council of Four, of which Japan was no longer a member.

The Foreign Ministers of the five Great Powers continued to meet under the formula often referred to as the "Council of Five". They kept the original procedure of the Council of Ten, and the minutes had the same circulation, keeping a greater transparency on the discussions and decisions. (FRUS, IV: 515-866).

On May 7, 1919, the German delegation, led by Ulrich von Brockdorff-Rantzau, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the new Weimar Republic, saw the terms of the Peace Treaty prepared by the Inter-Allied Conference in Paris. The German delegates declared that these clauses were humiliating and violated the provisions of the Pre-Armistice Agreement of November 1918. After several rounds of negotiations, the Treaty with Germany was signed on June 28, 1919, at Versailles.

After 28 June 1919, the Allies continued to prepare the other peace treaties under the leadership of the Council of Heads of Delegation, which resulted in: (a) the Treaty with Austria (10 September 1919, signed at Saint-Germain) and (b) the Treaty with Bulgaria (November 27, 1919, signed at Neuilly-sur-Seine).

Final Remarks

In his 1920 article, Preston Slosson emphasized that the Paris Peace Conference "was not only the creator of the League of Nations; it *was* a League of Nations in being." (Slosson, 1920: 360) Slosson made a comparison of the structure and functions of the Inter-Allied Conference in Paris with the revolutionary constituent assemblies that functioned until the establishment of the permanent authorities. In this logic, the plenary sessions were similar to the unicameral people's assemblies; The Supreme Council was like a cabinet; the commissions were the equivalent of committees, to which was added the Secretariat. (Slosson, 1920: 361)

At the time, the Paris Conference was criticized for prolonging the work of the Conference, but this was the first peace conference to include such a large number of participants and to discuss such a wide range of topics. André Tardieu explains the absence of real preliminary work and its transformation into a peace conference through the pressing schedule of meetings, the departure of both Wilson and Lloyd George from Paris in mid-February 1919 and their return in late March, when a change in the decision-making procedure in the group of powers with general interests meant that the text of the treaty with Germany was ready in a few weeks, which led to the abandonment of some preliminaries. Another reason invoked by Tardieu was the pressure to demobilize the armies which could not be achieved in the absence of a peace treaty between the former belligerents. (Tardieu, 1921: 116-117)

As a negotiation environment, this conference was unbalanced and inconsistent. During this time, it changed its purpose from a preliminary Allied Conference to a proper peace conference to the exclusion of wartime enemy powers. Colonel House considered that the main mistake of the leaders meeting in Paris at the beginning of January 1919 was the lack of a coherent procedure for the Conference. He saw this failure as the lack of organizational capacity of leaders such as Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Wilson to support their leadership. (Seymour, 1928: 271) This criticism is transferred by the former British Prime Minister on the shoulders of Wilson, who was unable to understand the security needs of the old world and tried to impose, without an adaptation, principles for the implementation of which he did not offer any concrete project. (Lloyd George, 1938: 221-241)

The distribution of participants by category of members led to a sense of discrimination among states. At least these two major errors in the organization and communication of the Peace Conference became lessons for similar conferences that took place later in the twentieth century.

In addition to the shortcomings mentioned, the Paris Conference created a model of permanent negotiation in the form of panels and plenary sessions, which was taken over and refined by international institutions and organizations over the last century. Multilevel negotiation was taken as a negotiating procedure to streamline multilateral negotiations, not to undermine the bargaining power of the participating actors, as was the case in Paris in 1919.

Equally, errors in communication and reporting between participating delegations have steadily improved in the following decades. What remains to be remembered is the fact that this Peace Conference was the first to publicize the work of the plenary sessions and was the framework in which the old diplomacy began to give way to a new diplomacy.

Finally, the conduct of the Paris negotiations covered all three types of conflict specific to a multicultural negotiation: conflict of purpose, procedural conflict and interpersonal conflict. (Brett, 2007)

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Geopolitics of the Arctic: Through the Lens of State Securitization

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Abstract. Owing to its vast deposits of mineral resources and its potential as a new sea-route that would connect the East with the Far East, the Arctic region had often been the subject of immense interest and speculations for the past four to five decades. However, as time went by, the “Scramble for Arctic” had only intensified the geopolitical dynamics between Arctic Five countries, who are vying to establish a strong foothold in the region either by peaceful or strategic means. USA and Russia are the two prominent players in the area; not to mention Canada and the newly entrant China. Using the theory of state centrism, we analyse the propensity for a resource war in Arctic from a geopolitical standpoint.

Keywords: *the Arctic, Geopolitics, Cold War, Political Ecology, Environmental Degradation*

Introduction

FOR A LONG TIME, THE ARCTIC WAS SHROUDED IN MYSTERY as the cartographers and map-makers struggled to put together facts into figure regarding this colossal behemoth of ice. Even about a century ago, the potential for Arctic as the “treasure chest” of natural resources and a sea-route was unbelievable at best, despite the North Pole expedition by an American named Robert Peary Sr. in 1909. With the passage of time and the development of better navigation and surveillance technologies throughout the twentieth century, the Arctic region slowly became more and more familiar to geologists, zoologists, environmentalists, and other fields of scientific and social science research alike. But every positive intention might cause a negative backlash, and such was the case of the countries surrounding the Arctic who funded these scientific and geological expeditions only for their national

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interest. The maritime claims by the countries comprising the Arctic Five, namely Russia, Canada, the USA (Alaska), Norway, and Denmark (Greenland) is only the tip of the iceberg and it has often led to some of the most high-profile diplomatic posturing in recent years. (Erokhin et al., 2018) The significant among those are the probabilities for a new Cold War, this time in the literal sense given that there are several causes of the scramble for resources in the High North. Despite having all the potential for a full-blown conflict, the Arctic Oil Rush (a pun on California Gold Rush) had proved to be more of a gradual and cooperative gesture between the Arctic states in the unlikeliest of senses. (Shoumatoff, 2008) But it is worth considering that all the countries are secretly surveying the Arctic hydrocarbon 'treasures' with a high level of caution instead of outright mobilizing military forces to claim them. Even though it is as clear as broad daylight that there can be misuses of power according to the perspective of traditional security, the non-traditional security perspectives of the competition for resources is not at all a new phenomenon, but rather a paradigm shift from colonization of the African and Asian territories by European powers to the resource rich far North. It has resulted in a unique grey area between the traditional and non-traditional security perspectives.

Methodology and Objectives

This article is a qualitative one in nature based on secondary literatures of both scholarly and semi-scholarly. For data, this article is heavily relying on relevant books, news articles, blogs, case studies, and journals etc. regarding the Arctic, Non-Traditional Security and Security Studies.

The state securitization of the Arctic has been already established by the scholars previously. The aim of this article is to revitalize the concerns once again and document the present conditions. So evidently, we decided to apply the State Securitization theory. It is a vital component of the umbrella term non-traditional security for the purpose of explaining the geopolitics of the resource war in Arctic. Coincidentally, it is very useful for explaining the supposed military ventures of the USA and Russia in the Arctic, although none of it accounted to any major conflicts as of yet. In order to accomplish this task, the next section will describe the State Securitization as theoretical framework.

State Securitization

Even before the competition for resources in the Arctic became that a big deal as it is today, Osborn in 1948 correctly predicted how the scarcity of resources could lead to full-blown future wars. It was a belief that was later integrated into IR's academic sphere, some four to five decades later. Osborn assumed that diminishing productive lands and increasing population pressures

are the main reasons why there are discords between nations and the causes for the individual countries' aggressive mentality. Evidently, it was written during the genesis of the Cold War era. However, Osborn correctly predicted all the resource wars we are currently facing now, as seen in Africa and Asia in the twenty-first century.

Idea of State Securitization

When the Cold War was drawing towards the end during the 1980s, a fascinating article was published by a highly influential journal *Foreign Affairs*. The report was authored by none other than US diplomat Jessica Mathews, who reiterated that states should re-emphasize the newly-developed threats posed due to depletion of resources. Having served in the National Security Council of the US government in the past, Mathews expressed her opinions regarding the rational thinking of Osborn, Falk, and the Sprouts, but in a more state-centric tone of the Realist analysis. While addressing the foreign policy implications of the effects of depletion of resources on the political stability of lower states, Mathews reiterated that environmental problems that have transcended state boundaries like climate change, deforestation, and ozone depletion, must become agendas of state concerns since they are the primary cause of regional instability. (Mathews, 1989) Even though it didn't receive much acclaim like Mathews' article, legendary diplomat of the US George F. Kennan already argued in the same journal four years prior to the publication of Mathews article about how the world faced two-pronged "unprecedented and supreme dangers," the former being nuclear war and the latter being the deadly effect of modern industrialization and overpopulation on the world's natural resources.

Due to the seeds sown by the writings of Mathews and Kennan in the decade of 1980s, a new dimension of IR inquiry came into being into the Post-Cold War era, forecasting that the heightened competition for resources would inevitably lead to wars, especially in the Less Developed Countries (LDCs). US journalist Fred Kaplan and Canadian scholar Thomas Homer-Dixon were the fore-runners of this field of study. (Homer-Dixon, 1994; Kaplan, 1994; cited in Hough, 2015) According to Homer-Dixon, "violent conflicts in many parts of the world occurred due to 'environmental scarcities'." (Homer-Dixon, 1994 cited in Hough, 2015) When Homer-Dixon/Kaplan's thesis was in full throttle, excess competition for those most precious resources led to a similar but significant "water wars" literature, emphasizing dry regions such as the Middle East potentially use access to water as a weapon. (Starr, 1991; Bullock & Adel, 1999 cited in Hough, 2015)

In an empirical study by Columbia University, similar in style to Homer-Dixon's research, it was found that countries affected by the El Niño/Southern Oscillation extreme weather phenomenon between 1950 and 2005 were twice

as likely to experience major civil or international conflict (i.e., causing at least twenty-five fatalities) as those countries which were not affected. Cases highlighted in the study included the fact that El Niño struck Peru in 1982 in the same year as the Shining Path insurgency took off. Civil wars in Sudan had flared up in parallel with the emergence of extreme weather conditions. The study concluded that 'when crops fail, people may take up a gun simply to make a living.' (Hsiang et al., 2011 cited in Hough, 2015)

Even though it later became a trend to link any resource scarcity with war, a significant dimension of the resource war literature resurfaced with passing time related to climate change. According to Pearman and Dupont, subsequent impacts of global warming has increased the possibilities of conflict in five main ways: resource scarcity, more significant movements of refugees within and outside the state boundaries, increased tug of war for the remaining resource sources, the effects of diseases and natural disasters and vast tracts of lands being rendered uncultivable and uninhabitable due to either inundation or water scarcity. (Dupont & Pearman, 2006 cited in Hough 2015) An empirical study conducted by Columbia University, even though it was quite similar in style to research conducted by Homer-Dixon, showed that the countries most affected by the El Niño (a type of cyclone of the Southern Hemisphere) between the years 1950 and 2005 were two times in the risk of experiencing major civil or international wars (i.e., causing at least twenty-five fatalities) than the countries not hit by it. This proposition can best be explained by the rise of 'Sendro Luminoso' (Shining Path) insurgents in 1982 in Peru, at the same time when El Niño struck Peru. A similar situation was experienced in the Darfur region of Sudan, the premise being draught instead of a cyclone. This study established that people may take arms to earn their livelihoods whenever crops fail.

Even though the State Securitization theory is handy for explaining the Arctic realist dynamics, it is not particularly helpful to identify and understand the human-centric environmental degradation of the Arctic. Despite such a major drawback, State Securitization theory is very useful in explaining the patterns of change in the geopolitical arena of Arctic pertaining to the imminent resource war, new Cold War, resource nationalism, high-Arctic politics and the potential for an all-out USA-Russia clash with the involvement of China as the partner of Russia in its ambitious Arctic "One Belt One Road" project, which will be explained in detail in the next part.

Changing Dynamics in the Geopolitics of the Arctic

The world's geopolitical landscape is very dynamic; it is being constantly changed due to clashes or reconciliation of national interests between states. In particular, new debates and various opinions regarding the newly available natural resources, environmental problems, sea-trade routes, and corresponding national threats surrounding the Arctic have arisen for the last couple of years owing to the melting of the sea ice. Over the years, due to the conflicting nature of inter-state views, the Arctic territories have become a vital component in the policymaking of the Arctic states and actors.

The Arctic "Treasure Chest"

A team of U.S. Geological Survey scientists in May of 2008 had the arduous task of estimating the potential amount of gas and oil deposits in the Arctic and how it would contribute in the distant future. What they discovered was an astounding one, as the sum of the mean estimates of new resources suggested that the Arctic itself accounts for 1,669 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and 90 billion barrels of crude oil, and 44 billion barrels of liquefied natural gas liquids. All these alone constitute 22% of all the natural gas and oil deposits of the world. Moreover, it was estimated that 84% of these resources lie in offshore sediments. (Gauthier, 2011) Arctic ice shrinks to 40% of its original size in the summer season than it was some three decades ago. With global warming looming at large, the Arctic Sea will become completely free of ice during the summer season within the next two to three decades. The prediction regarding the melting of Arctic ice caps has also generated new dimensions for international trade. The rise of Asian consumer markets has raised substantial economic implications for potential maritime trade through the now frozen Arctic, reducing both the time and distance for transporting goods and services between the East and the West.

The potential gains expected to be found in the Arctic have made many offshore countries constituting the "Arctic Five" i.e. Russia, the USA, Canada, Norway, and Denmark (via Greenland), the region than ever before. However, one of the burning issues for the Arctic Five stakeholders is that much of the area falls under the United Nations Convention's jurisdiction *on the Law of the Sea* (UNCLOS III) of 1982. UNCLOS made a ruling that all countries have the right to gain access to the Arctic resources outside each of Arctic Five's exclusive economic zone (EEZ). (Czarny, 2015) Due to this ruling, many of the Arctic Five countries often work together to strengthen the legitimacy of their claim over the Arctic.

The New Arctic "Cold War"

It seems increasingly apparent that despite the ever-changing natural environment of the Arctic, the political and economic environment is not boiling as it was initially thought. Despite the way it was commented and reported upon, the USGS survey did not prove to be an epoch-changing discovery. Instead, the findings of the study were quite similar to the survey conducted in 2000. It could be said that it was one of USA's reply to the Russian robot flag-bearer's spectacle of 2007 in the Arctic, which put the Bush Administration at unease. According to Dodds, the Russian robot's North Pole flag planting exercise was really "an act of stagecraft rather than statecraft." (Dodds, 2010) Even Russia's Foreign Minister at that time, Sergei Lavrov, explained that it was indeed "a piece of exploratory showmanship comparable to the "Stars and Stripes" (the flag of the USA) being planted on the Moon in 1969". Despite the potential of a new Arctic "Cold War," it was widely overlooked that part of Russia's robotic exercise funds did come from Western Sponsors. (Baey, 2010 in Hough 2015)

In the last decade, NATO had undertaken major naval expeditions into the Barents region and organized large-scale exercises in the High North, near the North Pole. Many senior U.S. military officials and diplomats reiterated that the Russian activities that the Arctic constitute a significant threat, which requires a dynamic U.S. military response in the form of new capabilities and new deployments. (Goldstein, 2020) U.S.-Russian military tensions have been on the rise in nearly every geographic sphere over the last couple of years. Still, recently in 2020, Russia and China had embarked on a joint venture to extract natural resources in the Arctic, which the USA considers as a threat to its interests and the interests of its allies in the region. According to former U.S. Ambassador to Norway, Kenneth J. Brathwaite, the Chinese and Russians are everywhere in the Arctic, mostly the Chinese. Moreover, China's recent activity near the Norwegian northern coastal town of Kirkenes near the Arctic is particularly alarming. (Humpert, 2020) It is particularly aware of Norway's role in the region and the Arctic route for transporting goods in the European mainland.

Resource Nationalism

There had been a considerable rise of interest from the "super major" oil and lubricant companies over the years regarding the Arctic. However, it is not necessarily an indicator for a new type of "Black" Gold Rush. Instead, 'resource nationalism' had taken the front seat and therefore forced the super major oil and lubricants companies to look further into the Arctic owing to increased state sovereignty over the reserves of hydrocarbon resources. To look no further, the Russian government, in particular, had acquired a monopoly over the domestic

energy companies and foreign direct investment schemes as a result of centralization ever since Vladimir Putin succeeded Boris Yeltsin as the President of Russia in 1999. The expertise and equipment of super major companies are still required by the Russian government, as evidenced by the series of international cooperative ventures that were often at odds with Russia's nationalistic sentiments.

A thorough investigation conducted by the USGS warned that 'no economic considerations' were included in the ventures between Russia and super major companies; the deals were signed without any reference to development and exploration costs that would be crucial in many of the assessed areas.' (Bard et al., 2008) Of course, assessing energy opportunities is not merely about making estimates about the potential amounts of oil and gas under the Arctic icy and rocky terrain and then comparing those to other forecasts in the rest of the world. The costs of exploration, oil and gas extraction and transport are much different in the High North. The economic downturn the world has experienced in 2008 due to recession and in 2020 due to COVID-19 Pandemic has made such costs more critical. Most of the companies that had acquired licenses to drill for new oil or gas fields in the Arctic are still hesitant to start working. For example, the Shtokman LNG field project, a much-anticipated joint venture between Russian gas giants Gazprom, French energy company TOTAL and Norwegian company Statoil launched in 2007 in the Russian part of Barents Sea, has yet to commence operations due to the increasing risks posed in the project by the shareholders which have led to a series of postponements and finally, it was postponed indefinitely in May 2019. (Staalesen, 2019)

High Arctic Politics

Generally, foreign policy statements emphasize national interests and zero-sum characterizations of energy security since these are what foreign policy statements usually should convey and what most of us think of in the first place. Classical Realism, in most cases, often masks the intention of cordial, cooperative relations, and that is what is usually seen in this case with the "Arctic Five" countries. In some bizarre twist of events until 2020, the most challenging postures always came from neither Russia nor the USA, but from Canada. Still, this is more farfetched than reality. According to Grant in 2010, the claims of protecting the sovereignty in the Arctic by Canada is little more than "paper sovereignty," since no ice breakers were constructed and the Resolute Bay military base has not been established despite tough talks from Canada at that period. (Grant, 2010 cited in Hough, 2015) Moreover, the Canadian public's sentiments are much more sensitive about Canada's stake in the Arctic hinterlands than the rest of the world might think and appreciate. (MSGA, 2011) The Harper-MacKay

government won two terms in office from 2006-2015 using the "Arctic sentiments" of the Canadian people to their advantage. (Lackenbauer, 2013)

It might seem downright obvious that the Arctic cooperation at the inter-governmental level could be viewed as justifying a Liberal model of IR. Still, it is also possible to view this through the lenses of English School thinkers and Neo-Realist thinkers if one assumes that the world's two superpowers (USA and Russia) have come to accept the balance of power scenario, which in turn effectively consolidated their influence in the Arctic region by playing "benevolent" roles in the Arctic Council, even though it drastically lowers their manoeuvre but helps reinforce the status quo from the prying eyes of rising powers like China and the E.U. from a distance. But the recent Russo-Chinese partnership in the Arctic is another new topic for discussion as it could seriously alter the balance of power in the region to Russia's favour.

U.S. Air Force Arctic Strategy to counter China's Arctic One Belt One Road

In the recently published U.S. Air Force Arctic Strategy published by the U.S. Department of Air Force in July 2020 only elucidates the U.S.'s strong stance for protecting its assets and national interest the Arctic region owing to the impending excellent power competition between Russia-China and the USA. (Secretary of the US Air force, 2020) The Strategy explicitly mentions the U.S.'s resort to increasing its military presence in the area by investing heavily in missile warning and defences and command, control, and reconnaissance (C3ISR) for defending the homeland. It also mentioned the strategic uses of the military bases in Greenland and Alaska should the need arise. Strong alliances and partnerships among Arctic nations were heavily emphasized, followed by overcoming the Arctic environmental challenges by introducing new training regimes for the Air Force pilots. From this standpoint, it looks as if the USA hastily increased its military might just to counter the imminent threat posed by the Sino-Russian Cooperation.

The first factor is that China considers Russia an "indispensable partner" should the Chinese wish to gain entry in the Arctic as a "near-Arctic" stakeholder. From this statement, China desperately needs an Arctic state to vouch for its activities in the region. And judging from the standpoint of the ongoing U.S.-China trade war and great power competition, Moscow quickly becomes China's infallible partner due to Russia's capability, global influence, and geostrategic location as its status as an "Arctic Superpower." Russia possesses the longest coastline of the Arctic and complete control of the Northern Sea Routes (NSR), a vital link between East Asia and European mainland seaports.

In the second factor, both Russia and China's demands towards each other are symbiotic. For Russia, it needs financing from China to initiate development schemes in its undeveloped Far North, especially along the North Sea Route. China puts utmost priority in making its presence in the Arctic legitimate with the Russian support and has little to no commercial considerations of its money being spent in the Russian Far North. As seen in the symbiotic process, the goals of these two countries are mutually complementary as seen in Russia's insistence that China invests in its Far North development schemes and China's ambition that Russia supports its presence in the Arctic.

Third, the Sino-Russia cooperation in the Arctic has existed in the economic, research, governance, and navigation arenas, with the military domain as a more remote possibility. While Russia continues to enhance its military presence in the Arctic, from ports to airfields, China has pursued a lower profile in its Arctic activities, prioritizing scientific research (which can also provide valuable intelligence opportunities), governance, energy, and shipping over challenging security issues. This is not only because China does not wish to pose itself as a challenger to Russia's traditional military dominance in the Arctic, but also because Beijing does not yet have a functional military force that can operate in the Arctic today. And as long as China and Russia remain on friendly terms, the Arctic does not directly threaten China, with Russia functioning as its shield and protector. This has enabled China to stick to a non-threatening approach to the Arctic. It is more likely that China will continue to advance its soft power approaches to the Arctic through a Polar Silk Road — the Arctic version of the Belt and Road Initiative — and carefully watch and take note of Russia's dual-use and hybrid capability development.

We have explained the changing geopolitical landscape of the Arctic in regard to its wealth of hydro-carbon resources, a new possibility of Cold War between the USA and Russia, resource nationalism of Canada, geopolitical ambitions of the Arctic Five member states in regard to the realist paradigm as well as the recent Chinese ventures in the Arctic through Russia's authorization and that being a grave danger to USA's national interest. All the contending issues point down towards one thing, and it is that the geopolitics of the Arctic is very unstable at best or anarchic at worst. Russia has literally downplayed USA by involving China as its partner in the Arctic expedition for resources, something which the USA is trying to overcome by militarizing Alaska. Whether it is a steppingstone for another major conflict is an interesting topic for discussion. But nonetheless, the USA being involved in a trade-war with China gives Russia the vantage points over the Arctic. (TASS, 2018)

Final remarks

The new prospect of 'Arctic Cold War' is now revived due to the USA and Russia's geopolitical interests in the cold Arctic region are problematic for the global North Pole's regional stability and towards the human habitation and fauna that dwells there. Every year the icecap is melting gradually. These are mere estimates and facts that could harm low-lying countries like Bangladesh or Maldives, which precariously lies several meters nearer to the sea-level. As the global temperature is like to increase by another 2 degrees Celsius by 2050, the North-West Passage in Canadian Arctic and the North-East Passage will be further navigable, making trade and commerce easier and timelier between the West and the Far East. But the million-dollar question is now who will reap the most benefit?

China had set its eyes on the Arctic for quite sometimes now and has already collaborated with Russia on multiple ventures about surveillance and access to the Arctic Ocean. The USA is not comfortable or approves of something due to the ongoing US-China Trade War, which started in June 2019. In all, we may not see a full-blown military war for the Arctic. Still, we will surely see US-China high-political confrontations in several international organizations like the UN and the Arctic Five (Russia as China's ally).

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Examining The Role Of Education In Public Diplomacy

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ABSTRACT: Power is perceived as important aspect in the society today and is used in various ways. In some cases, such power is used in a form of a threat, stimuli, rewards and inducement. Power in the world of politics is perceived as a means to influence others' behavior either positively or negatively. Efforts are made to minimize tensions, opposing opinions, conflicts through the public diplomacy – this creates tolerance and international relations. Public diplomacy plays an important role in engaging and maintaining the country-to-country relationship, establishing a dialogue, and allowing negotiation to take place in a constructive manner. This study seeks to examine the role of education in public diplomacy. It considers the aims of the state, the fundamental values in the process of public diplomacy. the international student mobility as well as the exchange programs. It takes note of the importance diplomacy, cooperation, cultural factors, and economic interdependence as the basis for establishing an effective international relation. The study acknowledges the challenges and the measures put in place to ensure that communication takes place and public diplomacy is at the center of every foreign relations.

KEY WORDS: Diplomacy, Education, Power, International Mobility, Technology, Programs

Introduction

THE END OF THE COLD WAR IN THE 1990S CAUSED A DRASTIC CHANGE in the balance of power in the world. Such changes brought different dimensions to the concept of power in terms of social, cultural, economic and political aspects in the global sense. In parallel with this transformation, different states started to develop new strategies to increase their power. With the change of hegemony and conjuncture in the context of international relations since the 1990s, various methods and concepts such as human rights, universal norms and standards, constitutional rights, accountability, rule of law, and democracy have gained importance. For this reason, global powers and actors have

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focused their efforts to create public opinion by indirectly penetrating and influencing the feelings and thoughts of the masses (Nye, 2008).

In this period, globalization, the spread of communication technologies, rapid production and dissemination of information caused changes in the field of diplomacy. With the effect of globalization, individual states started to give importance to international activities among countries. In view of globalization, countries around the world have started to carry out joint studies and cooperation activities in the fields of science, education, culture and arts respectfully.

The Republic of Turkey's foreign policy has progressed periodically from different perspectives. Because these developments occurring in the international arena also observed changes in Turkey's foreign policy. These changes observed since the 2000s have accelerated with the beginning of the AK Party Government period. Turkey implemented a new foreign policy strategy the geography where tie with culture and history, religious affiliation or national/cultural proximity. Therefore, focused on establishing close relationships with the communities in different places began to conduct a foreign policy.

With the beginning of 2000, The AK Party government in Turkey has entered a new era. In this period, soft power strategies and international policies started. Diplomacy, cooperation, culture, factors such as economic interdependence with this approach has been particularly effective in shaping their policies towards Turkey's historical and geographical region in which there are historical ties.

During the Cold War Turkey's broken relations with the Turkik republics. It planned to be re-established with the dissolution of the Union. After a long time, it pursued a foreign policy focused on reinforcing the relations that were re-established with these countries. One of these policies is student exchange programs. These studies, which are more people-oriented, make a significant contribution to the perception that the implementing countries want to create in the long term.

The applications of student exchange program, which is an important part of public diplomacy examined. The student exchange program that Turkey is implementing for long years discussed as a public diplomacy tool. In this context, the concept of power, the use of soft power in Turkish foreign policy and the soft power potential of Turkish higher education are evaluated.

Theoretical Perspective

The emergence of new methods of anti-war and diplomatic action all over the world following the Second World War caused changes in the foreign policy objectives and instruments of the countries. At this point, the informal revolution

that has been influenced by technological developments has turned into a factor supporting the new diplomatic action in the international arena. In international politics, the concepts of public diplomacy, soft power, civil society and media have begun to take place more effectively. The importance of the new global level of individuals and the public is increasing day by day. Accordingly, the concept of diplomacy, which was previously defined as the relations of states with each other and the methods used, has changed. Knowledge, culture and communication have begun to become factors in international politics, and diplomacy has been aimed at influencing public opinion by using these elements.

Public Diplomacy defined

The United States, France and the United Kingdom are the leading states that attach importance to public diplomacy, and they are effectively implementing it. The United States of America is trying to adopt American culture to other societies through think tanks, big brands, and media. In the past, international problems have negotiated the official representatives of the state, and the interview has resulted in a positive or negative result, and the public has not played a decisive role in the political decision-making process. Today, the value of public diplomacy, defined as the activities of non-state civil actors, an act of influencing one nation's citizens and decision makers of other countries, has been understood, and now the classical diplomacy carried out in international relations has differed, individuals and societies have become part of the decision-making process.

With the development and widespread use of mass media, the public has become instantly aware of developments in the world, and nowadays, the legitimacy, politics and diplomacy have shifted to the media that perceive and widely perceive public opinion. This is because the legitimacy of an event in which the media constitutes a sense of righteousness has come to be accepted in almost certain correct form. The public diploma is considered to be one of the dominant elements of soft power defined as "the outcome of an individual's world politics after the Cold War, admiration of its values, exemplifying it, and reaching by observing the countries that are concerned with their wealth and opportunities". The soft power, which is also defined as having the politicians to have what they want by affecting individuals and social groups, is contributing to the implementation of public diplomacy activities. (Nye, 2008: 98)

Public diplomacy is bringing a new dimension to the process of international legitimacy for states' foreign policy and laying the groundwork

for their use of soft power instead of hard power. Governments are aiming to support the public on important issues such as economic policies, energy programs, strategic investments in the international arena. Public diplomacy is at this point in the process of managing agendas and perceptions in the international arena and in favor of decision makers. The concept of democracy, human rights and freedom together with the structure of the changing international system in the post-Cold War era have been fundamental values in the process of public diplomacy.

Technological Development

Today, the developments in the technology world and the changes taking place in people's perceptions of politics have gained importance of the functions of public diplomacy. The public diploma aiming at influencing the public opinion, which is composed of elements such as international institutions, governments, NGOs, foreign groups, people and the media, have become an effective and indispensable strategic communication tool of foreign policy over time.

Every state in the international system seeks more say in global politics and seek various ways to influence the world public opinion. In this context, having an effective public diplomacy strengthens the state. The main aim of states in this framework is to obtain a positive image of the individual with more detailed information about the country in question. Moreover, states have to establish communication channels between their own people and foreigners and earn their sympathies. This can be in the form of natural disasters, conflicts and wars, as well as projects based on education, technology and cultural fields to support social development. At this point, especially in recent years, the popularity and impact of student exchange programs are an important tool of public diplomacy. The aim of states to create sympathy and attraction on foreign nations is an important element that facilitates foreign policy maneuvers. For this reason, public diplomacy has become a matter of state particularly in terms of attracting foreign students to the country and supporting foreign policy decisions (Bevis and Lucas, 2007).

Exchange Programs

In public diplomacy, exchange programs in the field of international education are the way to develop an image of a country and shape its foreign policy within a positive framework. Persistent perceptions about countries can be created by direct contact between the people of different countries. In international exchange programs in the field of education, change of perception can be

achieved through the personal contacts placed by exchange students. Countries are part of the public diplomacy activities in the field of education, where the exchange programs they are implementing are informing, shaping, and attempting to orientate other countries' public interests in the direction of their own national interests. (De Lima, 2007: 239) International student circulation has been considered as an important means of public diplomacy as it promotes mutual understanding, business unity and solidarity among countries and cultures and contributes to global peace.

Exchange programs, also referred to as exchange diplomas, aim to create cultural interactions during the study period by sending citizens abroad and accepting arrivals from abroad and establishing an international level of perception. The changes are an ideal tool for public diplomacy's two-way communication approach. According to Nye, cultural exchange influences the elite, in this case, even one or two important relationships can be a great political influence (Nye, 2004). Aleksandr Yakolev, for example, was highly influenced by his work with the Political Scientist David Truman at the University of Colombia in 1958. As a result, Yakovlev became the head of an important institution, and influenced a member of the Politburo and the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev on liberalism. The Soviet student Oleg Kalugin, who is a senior officer in the KGB, looked back in 1997 and said, "The exchange programs were Trojan Horse for the Soviet Union. It played a big role in the collapse of the Soviet system. It has continued to infect more and more people over the years." (Nye, 2004)

International student Mobility

With the incentive and support of the countries, the increasing international student mobility shows the importance given to this topic. In addition to economic development, personal development, socialization and professional gain, the strategic importance of foreign student mobility, which is of great importance in cultural interaction, knowledge production, sharing and transfer of knowledge is increasing in the context of public diplomacy. Today, many developed countries use international higher education as an important instrument of public diplomacy. According to OECD data, in recent years there have been significant increases in the number of foreign students at the global level, and most foreign students go to OECD countries to study. International student exchange programs as part of public diplomacy activities are understood as communication processes, not a thought propaganda. Scholarships are carried out by government-sponsored organizations such as the British Council, DAAD and Alliance France.

In Turkey in the year 1992, to further develop the relations between Turkey Relatives Community, the Great Student Project was launched under the name of the Turkish Republic initially with 5 countries (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan), later including the 57 states or communities where a significant student exchange program formed. The aim of the program implemented by the Ministry of National Education is; to help meet the needs of trained manpower of the Turkish Community, to cultivate a friendly young generation within the Turkish world with a permanent brotherhood and build a bridge of friendship, to introduce the Turkish culture and Turkish situated countries in the World, and to form an umbrella with the relations of these countries (Özkan, 2013). Objectives of Turkey's large student projects are seen as clearly designed to be used as a public diplomacy tool given

According to Nye, there are three dimensions of public diplomacy; daily informants, strategic communications and the third dimension consisting of scholarships, exchange programs, internships, long-term relationships with people who can play an important role in the future of their countries over the years (Nye, 2004). Mutual student exchange programs are an important process in establishing long-term relationships, as the lifestyle and way of thinking of an individual country is most easily understood and accepted among young people. In this century, when knowledge and communication do not define boundaries, cultural interaction has been positively contributing to the preservation of hundreds of genuine old ties that have returned to their countries, and it is often seen that governments have not embraced atmospheric contrasts in their foreign policies. In the long-term student exchange program in this context it is likely to be returned as a gain in Turkey. Having covered more than 150 countries, student exchange programs in the community provides the opportunity to get to know Turkey and the Turkish people. Cultural erosion, especially in the Central Asian countries during the Soviet era, has become a well understood and important indicator for the policies developed for the region.

The student programs implemented within the scope of the public diploma foresees a two-way international student mobility. While the political, historical, cultural and social accumulations of the country are being conveyed to students from different countries through scholarship practices, it is equally contributed to sending the country's citizens to different countries within the scope of the program and introducing country values in those geographical areas. Many countries that successfully implement public diplomacy in the world are applying student exchange programs in two ways. Turkish Scholarships started new applications that our country still foresees as the one-way student mobility. In this context, it is shortcoming that international student mobility programs financed by our country are not pursued with a comprehensive strategy under a program.

Promotion, informing and brand building are the most important factors in terms of public diploma work. The promotion of Turkey's student exchange program is also important in applying more extensive and effective public diplomacy awareness of our country in terms of the work it will contribute positively to the realization of the program's success and in terms of promotion. Turkish Scholarships will be able to gain more of a branding element of soft power.

As a result, public diplomacy, one of the most important means of influencing and directing the international community today, is one of the most effective means of defending the interests of a country, providing legitimacy and creating public opinion. In the globalized world of communication, it is natural for every country to try to make the best use of this vehicle. Turkey: who cannot express themselves well, has misunderstandings and prejudices should not ignore this new field of diplomacy; soft power should utilize the resources they have.

International student work contributes greatly in informing different societies at the point of recognition and appreciation of the accumulation and values of the countries abroad. For this reason, in the field of public diplomacy, various activities are being carried out with the participation of public institutions and organizations as well as private sector and non-governmental organizations.

Final remarks

There is clear need therefore for each country to embrace conventional diplomacy through different means. Most powerful nations use diplomacy to accomplish foreign trade, influence policies, resolve conflict, maintain social security in order to create a better world. Undoubtedly some conflicts remain unresolved resulting into grudges, hostility, disagreements and more often lead to war. Public diplomacy is vitally important and, in most cases, it is used as tool to develop and evaluate international relations. Now and in the future, the key challenge for countries is to ensure that the role of education in public diplomacy is maintained. Many countries that have implemented public diplomacy have extended their activities. This has resulted into the increase of international student mobility, forming student exchange programs, creating a cultural interaction, broadening students' perspectives of the host country as well as removing visible barriers. To be successful in promoting public diplomacy and national interests, countries need to have strong and effective communication channels rather than relying on traditional form of communication.

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