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A comparative analysis of pupils' and teachers' public opinion on European citizenship and European identity in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic

Abstract. The European economic crisis, the migratory crisis and the Brexit in the UK are the main causes of the increasing negative moods of the European Union citizens. The research offers a comparative analysis of pupils' and teachers' viewpoints on European citizenship and European identity in selected two Visegrad Group countries. The research held in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic in the fourth quarter of 2017 on the research sample of 1,973 respondents shows that the Slovak pupils and their teachers have in most cases more positive attitudes towards European citizenship and European identity than Czech pupils and their teachers. The responding Slovak pupils are more proud of being citizens of the European Union, less skeptic of the EU's activities and believe in the future of the European Union.

On the other hand, the Czech pupils and teachers are more proud of the membership of the Czech Republic in the EU, as well as of the Czech activities in the European Union. In this context, the authors point out that a more intensive education relating to the European citizenship and Europeanism could increase positive attitudes towards European identity and membership in the European Union. The European dimension of education is still up to date not only in the old member states of the European Union but also in the new ones or future member states. Citizenship education unifies several social fields and disciplines including education to Europeanism, environmental, global, media, multicultural, personal and social education, and education relating to democracy and constitutionality.

Keywords: Citizenship; Education; Identity; Europeanism; Media; Czech Republic; Slovak Republic

JEL Classification: F50; F68; Z11

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Порівняльний аналіз громадської думки учнів і викладачів про європейське громадянство та європейську ідентичність у Чеській і Словацькій Республіках

Анотація. Європейська економічна криза, міграційна криза та вихід Великобританії зі складу країн-членів Європейського Союзу є основними причинами, що сприяють проявам скептицизму громадянами ЄС. Дана робота відображає результати порівняльного аналізу думок учнів і викладачів щодо питань, що стосуються європейського громадянства та європейської ідентичності в двох окремо взятих країнах Вишеградської групи. Дослідження, проведене в Чеській та Словацькій Республіках в четвертому кварталі 2017 року, в основу якого було покладено вибірку з 1973 респондентів, показує, що словацькі учні та викладачі більшою мірою схильні позитивно сприймати європейське громадянство та європейську ідентичність, ніж учні та викладачі в Чеській Республіці. Згідно з отриманими відповідями учні в Словаччині більшою мірою пишаються тим, що вони є громадянами Європейського Союзу, вони не виявляють особливого скептицизму щодо ініціатив Європейського Союзу та мають більшу впевненість у майбутньому цього утворення. Разом із тим учні та викладачі в Чеській Республіці більшою мірою пишаються чеською ідентичністю в складі Європейського Союзу та діяльністю Чеської Республіки як держави-члена ЄС. У цьому контексті, на думку авторів дослідження, інтенсифікація знань, що стосуються

європейського громадянства та європеїзму, могла б сприяти формуванню позитивного ставлення громадян до європейської ідентичності та членства в Європейському Союзі. Європейський вектор в освітньому процесі є актуальним не тільки для старих, але і для нових країн-членів, як, власне, і для країн-претендентів на вступ до Європейського Союзу. Громадянське виховання об'єднує цілий ряд соціальних сфер та співвідносних з ними освітніх дисциплін, включаючи ті, які мають безпосереднє відношення до європеїзму навколишнього середовища, загальної медійної, мультикультурної та професійної освіти, а також вивчення питань, що стосуються становлення демократії та конституціональності.

Ключові слова: громадянство; освіта; ідентичність; європеїзм; засоби масової інформації; Чеська Республіка; Словацька Республіка.

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Сравнительный анализ общественного мнения учащихся и преподавателей

касательно европейского гражданства и европейской идентичности в Чешской и Словацкой Республиках

Аннотация. Европейский экономический кризис, миграционный кризис и выход Великобритании из состава стран-членов Европейского Союза являются основными причинами, способствующими проявлению скептицизма гражданами ЕС. Данная работа отображает результаты сравнительного анализа мнений учащихся и преподавателей относительно вопросов, касающихся европейского гражданства и европейской идентичности в двух отдельно взятых странах Вышеградской группы. Исследование, проведенное в Чешской и Словацкой Республиках в четвертом квартале 2017 года на основании выборки из 1973 респондентов, показывает, что словацкие учащиеся и преподаватели в большей степени расположены воспринимать европейское гражданство и европейскую идентичность, нежели учащиеся и преподаватели в Чешской Республике. Согласно полученным ответам учащиеся в Словакии в большей степени гордятся тем, что они являются гражданами Европейского Союза, они не проявляют особого скептицизма по отношению к инициативам Европейского Союза и имеют большую уверенность в будущем данного образования. С другой стороны учащиеся и преподаватели в Чешской Республике больше гордятся чешской идентичностью в составе Европейского Союза и деятельностью Чешской Республики как государства-члена ЕС. В данном контексте, по мнению авторов исследования, интенсификация знаний, касающихся европейского гражданства и европеизма, могла бы способствовать формированию положительного отношения граждан к европейской идентичности и членству в Европейском Союзе. Европейский вектор в образовательном процессе является актуальным не только для старых, но и для новых стран-членов ЕС, как, собственно, и для стран-претендентов на вступление в Европейский Союз. Гражданское воспитание объединяет целый ряд социальных сфер и относящихся к ним образовательных дисциплин, включая те, которые имеют непосредственное отношение к европеизму, окружающей среде, общему медийному, мультикультурному, профессиональному и социальному образованию, а также изучению вопросов, касающихся становления демократии и конституциональности.

Ключевые слова: гражданство; образование; идентичность; европеизм; средства массовой информации; Чешская Республика; Словацкая Республика.

1. Introduction

The Czechs have always shared European civilisation and cultural values; they have been a substantial part of European history. It is therefore no surprise that since 1993, the accession to the EU has been perceived by a majority of the Czech population as a historic necessity, and full integration into the EU is supported by all parliamentary parties in the Czech Republic [1].

After 1993, the EU has become the Czech Republic's largest trading partner, with more than a 65% share of its foreign trade, and EU member states are now the largest investors in the country. The Czech Republic's proximity to the Union is clearly shown by the fact that the country shares the longest part of the border with EU member states.

The Czech Republic submitted its application for membership on 23 January 1996.

In 1995, the Europe Agreement establishing an association between the Czech Republic on the one part, and EC and their Member States on the other part (known also as the Association Agreement) entered into force.

The accession negotiations between the Czech Republic and EU opened in March 1998 and concluded in December 2002. The Treaty of Accession, which defines the conditions of the Czech Republic membership in the EU, was signed in Athens on 16 April 2003. On 1 May 2004, the Czech Republic became a full-fledged member of the EU.

Slovakia has been a full member of the European Union for twelve years. Its integration into European structures was conditional on major political and economic reforms.

The process of building closer relations between the Slovak Republic and the European Union began in October 1993 when the Association Agreement was signed. In 1995, after

the National Council of the Slovak Republic and parliaments of the EU member countries had ratified the Association Agreement, Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar submitted the application for EU membership. The following years were marked by concerns and objections from the European Commission. These mostly related to the instability of Slovak institutions and insufficient democracy [2].

However, the parliamentary elections held in 1998 marked a turning point. The EU welcomed the election results, and the first foreign visit of the new Prime Minister, Mikuláš Dzurinda, was to Brussels. During the negotiations with the European Commission, Slovakia was represented by Ján Figel, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

At the Helsinki summit in 1999, Slovakia was invited to accession negotiations, and European integration became a priority for the new Slovak government. The integration process was accompanied by a number of political and economic changes. Reforms focused on economic issues and on the stabilisation of democratic institutions. The Slovak Republic's negotiations on EU accession were concluded at the Copenhagen summit in 2002, which set the final date for Slovakia and nine other countries to join the EU.

In April 2003, the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs approved the accession of ten countries, including Slovakia, to the European Union in 2004. The ten candidate countries formally signed the Treaty of Accession to the EU in Athens on 16 April 2003. The Slovak Republic was represented by Rudolf Schuster, the President, and Mikuláš Dzurinda, the Prime Minister, who signed the Treaty. The Slovak Republic joined the European Union on 1 May 2004.

In the framework of our research study, we decided to realise the research focused on the opinion orientations

of primary and secondary school pupils and teachers regarding European citizenship and European identity in two selected countries of the Visegrad Group.

2. Methodology

Regarding the limited scope of the research study, the authors decided to focus the Visegrad Group research sample on pupils and their teachers at primary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. The selection of two Visegrad Group countries as research sample was made on a basis of the assumption that these countries have similar problems, as they existed in Czechoslovakia, their common state in 1918-1992, as well as due to the fact that the authors of the research come from these countries and know the local issues very well.

The main aim of this research was to conduct a comparative analysis of the current public opinion on European citizenship and European identity among pupils and their teachers at selected primary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic.

The secondary aim of the presented research was to analyse the current opinion of pupils and their teachers at selected primary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic on European citizenship and European identity.

The secondary aim of the research was also to analyse the current viewpoints on European citizenship and European identity among pupils and their teachers at selected primary and secondary schools in the Slovak Republic.

Another secondary aim of the presented research was to look for the opportunities to increase citizens' European Union identity.

Having further planning and research suggestions in mind, we preferred the concept of research questions to the definition of research problems. We identified one research question (RQ) that we developed in two other specific research questions (SRQ):

RQ1: What are the current views on European citizenship and European identity of pupils and their teachers at selected primary and secondary schools in the Slovak Republic?

SRQ1: *How do the requesting pupils and their teachers in the Slovak Republic identify with European citizenship?*

Explanation: We believe that more than half of the respondents will perceive the accession of Slovakia into the EU as positive. This statement is based on the results of the research realised by Alexander Dubcek University in Trenčín in 2014 on a sample of university graduates. «As the EU's greatest benefits, the respondents consider the abolition of border controls, the single euro currency, the drawing of money from the EU funds, free movement of goods and services, the possibility of studying at foreign universities, or the possibility of working abroad» [3].

SRQ2: *How satisfied are the responding pupils and their teachers at schools in the Slovak Republic with the activities of the European Union?*

Explanation: We expect that more than half of the respondents will be dissatisfied with the European Union's activities. As further revealed by the TnUAD research [3], the respondents consider rising of the prices as the most significant EU negativity.

RQ2: What are the current views on European citizenship and European identity of pupils and their teachers at selected primary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic?

SRQ1: *How do the requesting pupils and their teachers in the Czech Republic identify with European citizenship?*

Explanation: We expect that more than one half of respondents will perceive the accession of the Czech Republic into the EU as positive. This argument is based on the opinion orientation research of the pupils and teachers of Olomouc region, which was realised by Antonín Stanek in 2007. «It is important to know that teachers and pupils are satisfied with the Czech Republic becoming the EU member state. It is positive attitude that is a good starting point for deepening the European dimension and education to Europeanism within the framework of school teaching. It may also be a way to find out

about issues related to the problems that respondents see after one year of our EU accession» [4, 135].

SRQ2: *How satisfied are the requested pupils and their teachers at schools in the Czech Republic with the activities of the European Union?*

RQ3: What are the main similarities and differences of the opinion orientations on European citizenship and European identity of pupils and teachers at selected primary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic?

Explanation: We expect that the pupils and teachers at selected primary and secondary schools in the Slovak Republic will have a more positive attitude towards European citizenship and European identity than the responding pupils and teachers in the Czech Republic. The reason is that the Czech people have the strongest Eurosceptic attitudes of the Visegrad Group according to a recent survey of the Centre of Research on Public Opinion (CVVM) [5].

The questionnaire was used as the main research method for data collection. The questionnaire administration of was provided by 100 experienced interviewers personally in the field (50 in the Slovak Republic and 50 in the Czech Republic), with 100 percent return. The questionnaire consisted of 13 closed items which provided possibilities for quantitative processing. Two types of questions were used: dichotomous offer and simple selection [6].

The research was realised in the fourth quarter of 2017 on the research sample of 1973 respondents (1033 from the Czech Republic and 940 from the Slovak Republic). The research sample is more specified in the partial results for each analysed country.

3. Results

3.1. Education to citizenship and Europeanism in the Slovak Republic

The research consisted of 340 men and 598 women, with 2 respondents not mentioning their gender. Regarding the age of the researched population, 498 respondents were 17 years old or less, 309 respondents were 18-25 years old, 9 were between the age of 26-35, 24 were 36-45 years old, 21 were 46-55 years old, 9 aged 56-65, 1 aged 65 and more, and 69 respondents did not mention their age. From the research sample, 312 respondents had primary education, 388 finished secondary vocational schools, 277 graduated from grammar schools; there were not any conservatory graduates and 13 respondents had another education. The respondents from the research sample came from the region of Bratislava (32), Trnava (32), Nitra (31), Trenčín (681), Žilina (77), Banská Bystrica (4), Košice (0) and Prešov (81); two respondents did not answer where they come from.

More than one half (52%) of all respondents are either definitely or quite satisfied with the fact, that the Slovak Republic has become a member of the European Union. About one-third (32%) of the respondents are dissatisfied, with the remaining respondents unable to decide. For detailed information see Figure 1.

Almost the same results were found in the answers to the question of how satisfied the respondents are with the Slovak Republic membership in the European Union. More than one half of all the respondents (57%) are very or quite satisfied with the membership of the Slovak Republic in the

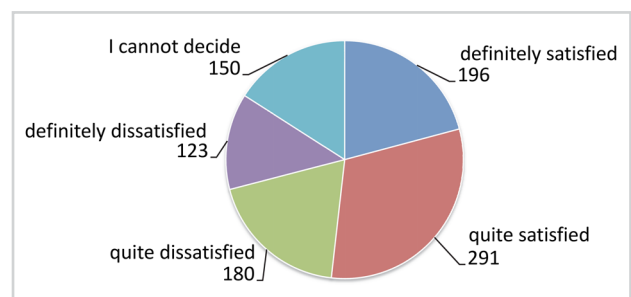


Fig. 1: How satisfied are you with the fact that the Slovak Republic has become a member of the European Union?

Source: Compiled by the authors

European Union. The number of the respondents who are quite dissatisfied (10%) and very dissatisfied (3%) decreased, while the respondents who are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (21%) increased. For more information see Figure 2.

Most of the Slovaks (45%) cannot decide whether the membership of the Slovak Republic in the European Union is a good or bad thing at present. 44% of the respondents consider that the Slovak membership in the EU is a good thing, while 12% of the respondents take the opposite view. For more information see Figure 3.

More than one half of the Slovaks (62%) often or sometimes perceive themselves not only as citizens of the Slovak Republic but also as citizens of the European Union. 25% of the respondents cannot identify with this claim. The remaining respondents are unable to decide (see Figure 4).

More than one half of the Slovaks (55%) are convinced that the European Union should either definitely or rather have a unified constitution that would be applied in all the member states. On the contrary, a unified constitution is inadmissible by 16% of the respondents. Almost one third of the respondents (29%) are unable to decide (see Figure 5).

More than one half of the Slovaks (54%) are either very proud or quite proud of being a citizen of the European Union. On the contrary, almost a third of the respondents (29%) either are not quite proud or not proud at all of being an EU citizen, while other respondents are unable to decide (see Figure 6).

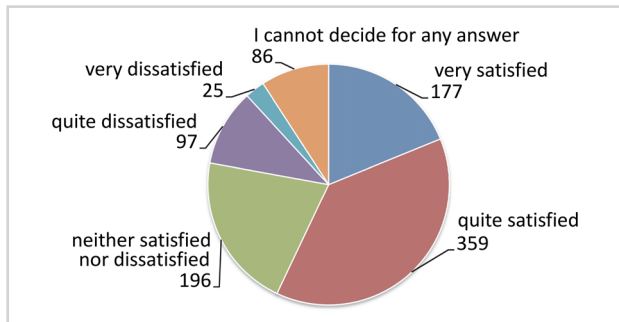


Fig. 2: How satisfied are you with the membership of the Slovak Republic in the European Union?
Source: Compiled by the authors

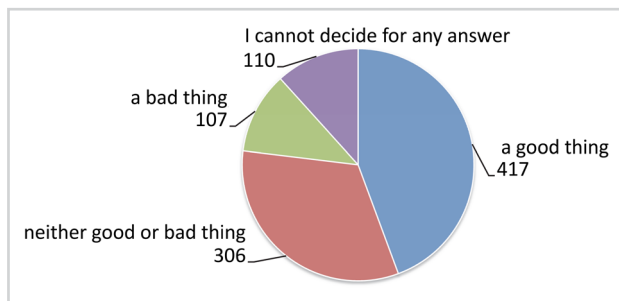


Fig. 3: How do you estimate the membership of the Slovak Republic in the European Union at present?
Source: Compiled by the authors

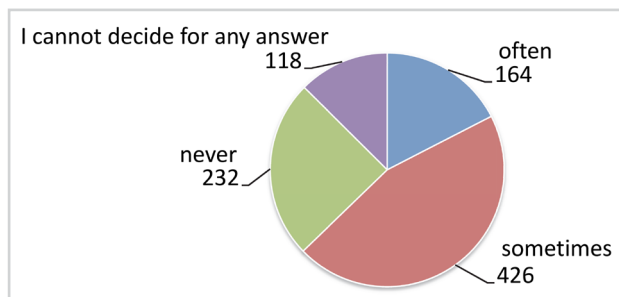


Fig. 4: Do you perceive yourself not only as a citizen of the Slovak Republic but also as a citizen of the European Union?
Source: Compiled by the authors

The Slovaks, however, do not trust the regulations, directives and other acts of the European Union. More than one half of the respondents (53%) either do not believe very much or do not believe at all that the decisions of the European Union will be in the interest of the Slovak Republic. More than one third of the respondents (36%) either believe or quite believe in the EU decisions (see Figure 7).

Even more Slovaks do not believe that the European Union acts in the interests of ordinary people. More than half of the respondents (56%) either do not believe very much, or do not believe at all that the decisions of the European Union will be in the interest of the people. A third of the respondents (35%) are of the opposite opinion. The remaining respondents are unable to decide (see Figure 8).

3.2. Analysis of education to citizenship and Europeanism in the Czech Republic

The research sample consisted of 562 men and 471 women. Regarding the age of the research sample, 609 respondents were 17 years old or less, 312 respondents were 18-25 years old, 41 were 26-35 years old, 16 aged 36-45, 19 aged 46-55, 6 aged 56-65, 3 aged 65 and more and 27 respondents do not answer to this question. 678 respondents had primary education; 121 respondents finished secondary vocational schools, 169 respondents graduated from grammar schools. None of the respondents were conservatory graduates; 23 respondents had other education and 42 were not educated.

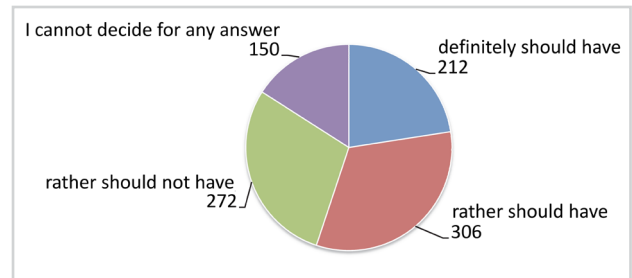


Fig. 5: Do you think that the European Union should have a unified constitution valid for all the member states?
Source: Compiled by the authors

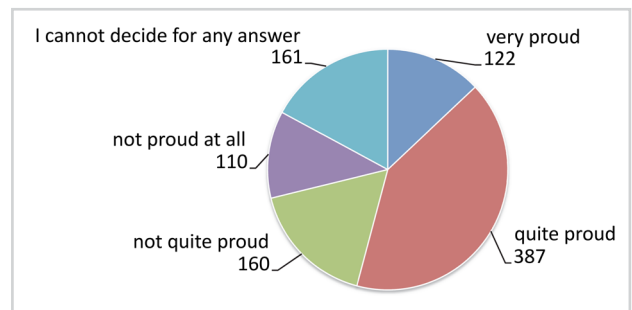


Fig. 6: Do you feel proud to be a citizen of the European Union?
Source: Compiled by the authors

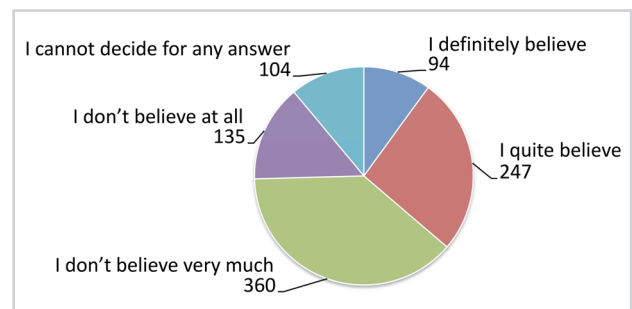


Fig. 7: How much do you believe that the decisions of the European Union will be in the interest of the Slovak Republic?
Source: Compiled by the authors

The respondents from the research sample came from Olomouc region (400), Pardubice region (210), South Moravian region (155), Zlín region (155), the region of Ústí nad Labem (35) and Moravian-Silesian region (30); 48 respondents did not specify the region they come from.

Almost three quarters (71%) of all respondents are either very or rather satisfied that the Czech Republic has become a member of the European Union. Less than a quarter (16%) of the respondents are either quite dissatisfied or definitely dissatisfied. The rest of the respondents are unable to decide (see Figure 9).

The number of those who are satisfied with the existence of the Czech Republic in the European Union is lower. Not even two thirds of the respondents (58%) are satisfied with the membership of the Czech Republic in the European Union. The number of the Czechs who are rather dissatisfied (11%) and very dissatisfied (4%) remained at the same level, while the number of the respondents who are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied increased (23%). The others either were unable to decide or did not answer at all (see Figure 10).

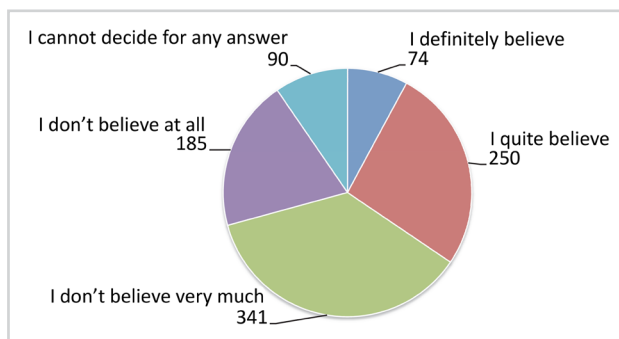


Fig. 8: How strongly do you believe that the decisions of the European Union will be made in the interests of people like you?
Source: Compiled by the authors

Most of the Czechs (49%) do not know whether the membership of the Czech Republic in the European Union is currently a good or bad thing. 42% of the respondents consider the EU membership as good, while 9% of the respondents are of the opposite opinion. For more information see Figure 11.

More than half of the Czechs (58%) either often or sometimes feel not only as citizens of the Czech Republic but also as citizens of the European Union. Almost a third of the respondents (30%) cannot identify with this claim; the rest of the respondents either were unable to decide or did not respond (see Figure 12).

Totally, 46% of the respondents cannot imagine that the EU would have a unified constitution. On the contrary, more than a third of the Czechs (36%) think that the European Union would either decide or rather have a uniform constitution that would be applied in all member states. The rest either were not able to decide or did not respond (see Figure 13).

More than a third of the Czechs (42%) are either very proud or quite proud of being a European Union citizen. However, almost a third of the respondents (36%) are either not

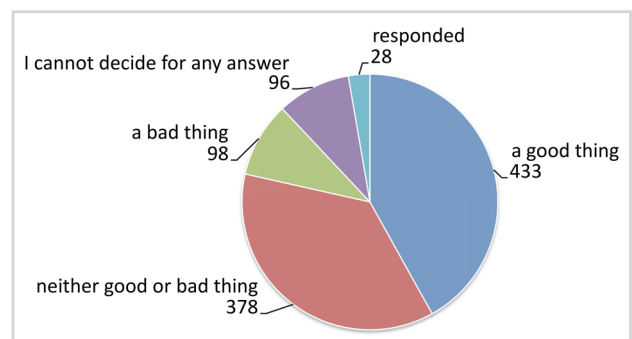


Fig. 11: How do you estimate the membership of the Czech Republic in the European Union at present?
Source: Compiled by the authors

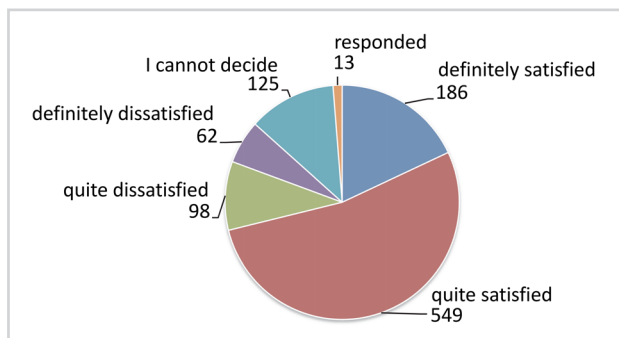


Fig. 9: How satisfied are you with the fact that the Czech Republic has become a member of the European Union?
Source: Compiled by the authors

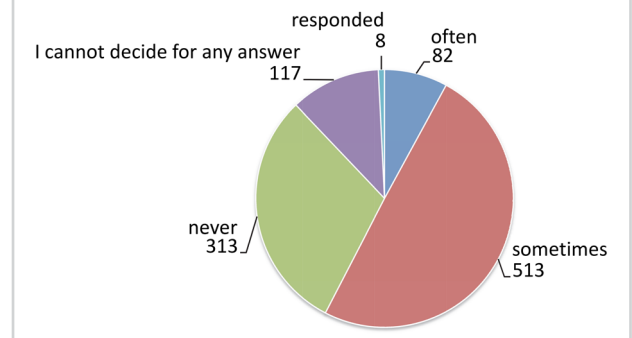


Fig. 12: Do you perceive yourself not only as a citizen of the Czech Republic but also as a citizen of the European Union?
Source: Compiled by the authors

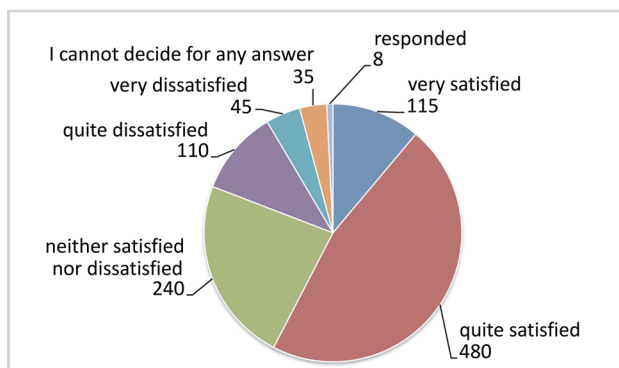


Fig. 10: How satisfied are you with the membership of the Czech Republic in the European Union?
Source: Compiled by the authors

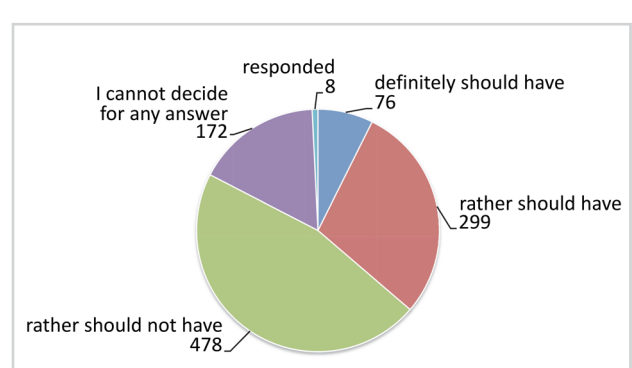


Fig. 13: Do you think that the European Union should have a unified constitution valid for all the member states?
Source: Compiled by the authors

too proud or not proud at all of being an EU citizen. The other respondents were not able to decide or did not respond (see Figure 14).

The results show that the Czechs do not trust the regulations, directives and other acts of the European Union. More than one half of the respondents (59%) either do not believe very much or do not believe at all that the decisions of the European Union will be in the interest of the Czech Republic. Not even one third of the respondents (29%) either believe or definitely believe in the decisions of the EU, while the others either were unable to decide or did not respond (see Figure 15).

Most of the Czechs do not believe that the European Union acts in the interests of ordinary people. More than one half of the respondents (62%) either do not believe very much or do not believe at all that the European Union decisions will be in the interest of the people. Less than a quarter of the respondents (23%) have the opposite view, while the remaining respondents were unable to decide for or did not respond (see Figure 16).

4. Discussion

Regarding the first research question, we supposed that more than half of the respondents would perceive the accession of Slovakia into the EU as positive, but not all the activities of the Slovak Republic in the EU would be considered as positive. The high identity of the Slovak pupils and their teachers with European citizenship was confirmed, since more than one half of all the respondents (52%) are satisfied with the Slovak Republic becoming a member of the European Union. More than one half of the respondents (54%) are also proud of being EU citizens, while more than one half of the respondents (62%) consider themselves not only to be citizens of the Slovak Republic but also as EU citizens. More than one half of the respondents (55%) think that the EU should have a unified constitution. The research did not confirm the clear dissatisfaction of the Slovaks with the Slovak Republic in the European Union. On the one hand, more than one half of the respondents (56%) do not believe that the European Union is in the interest of ordinary people, with more than one half of the respondents (53%) not trusting the European Union's regulations, directives and other acts. On the other hand, more than one half of the respondents (57%) are satisfied with the membership of the Slovak Republic in the European Union, and the Slovaks are also not sure whether the Slovak membership in the EU is good or bad thing.

Regarding the second research question, we expected that more than one half of the respondents would perceive the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU as positive, but not all the activities of the Czech Republic in the EU will be positively perceived. The high identity of the Czech pupils and their teachers with European citizenship was not confirmed. On the one hand, more than one half of all the respondents (71%) are satisfied with the fact that the Czech Republic has become a member of the European Union, and more than one half of the respondents (58%) often or sometimes feel not only as citizens of the Czech Republic, but also as citizens of the European Union. On the other hand, less than one half of the respondents (42%) are proud of being citizens of the European Union, while up to 46% of the respondents are not. The research did not confirm the clear dissatisfaction of the Czechs with activities of the Czech Republic in the European Union. More than one half of the pupils and their teachers (62%) do not believe that the European Union acts in the interest of ordinary people, while 59% of the respondents do not believe that the decisions of the European Union will be in the interest of the Czech Republic. However, 58% of the respondents are satisfied with the Czech Republic's activities in the European Union.

In the framework of the third research question, we assume that the pupils and teachers at selected primary and secondary schools in the Slovak Republic will be more positively orientated towards European citizenship and European identity than the responding pupils in the Czech Republic. In most of the researched items, there is stronger positive orientation towards European citizenship and European identity of the pupils and teachers at selected primary and secondary schools in the Slovak Republic than in the Czech Republic.

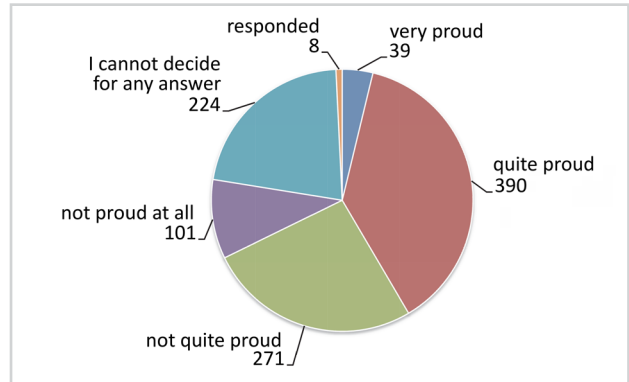


Fig. 14: **Do you feel proud to be a citizen of the European Union?**
Source: Compiled by the authors

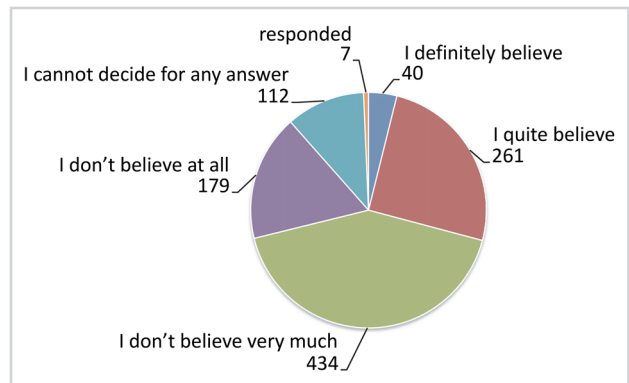


Fig. 15: **How much do you believe that the decisions of the European Union will be in the interest of the Czech Republic?**
Source: Compiled by the authors

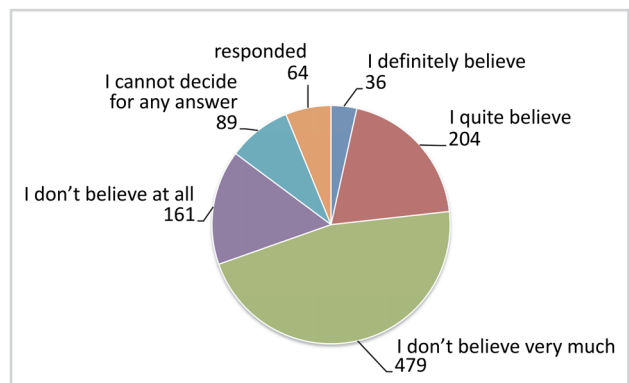


Fig. 16: **How much do you believe that the decisions of the European Union will be in the interest of people like you?**
Source: Compiled by the authors

The exception was the satisfaction with the fact that the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic had become member states of the European Union. The Czechs (71%) are more satisfied with the fact that the Czech Republic became a member of the European Union than the Slovaks (52%). It is also interesting that the Czech pupils and teachers are more satisfied with the Czech Republic's activities in the European Union than the responding Slovaks (57%).

We think there is still a need to work to raise the European Union citizens' identity. As Kredátus mentions [7, 5], the role of civic education is the formation of young people with the aim to keep the continuity of the traditional values of our society, all in accordance with the current integration processes in Europe and the world. According to Stanek [4, 80], the European dimension in school education does not have the ambition to constitute itself as a new teaching subject. Its aim is to provide

the professional community with sufficient incentives to initiate changes in the formal and hidden curriculum, thus ensuring the broadening of pupils' horizons and improving the whole system of education. «Education for democratic citizenship and human rights education are the foundations and linkage of peace and dialogue in Europe and the world of tomorrow. The issues of conflict management, respect for diversity, intercultural awareness and understanding of citizens' rights and obligations are fundamental topics for school institutions» [8, 75].

We believe that the Council of the European Union and the European Commission can contribute to greater confidence of the Slovaks and the Czechs by focusing on the issues that are EU citizens' priorities. We assume that a very important role is played by the representatives of the countries in the European institutions, including the members of the European Parliament, who should explain to the citizens of both the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic the position of the EU membership.

Also, it is necessary to mention the role of the mass media, which could raise awareness of the European politics. «The media are an inherent part of the life of individuals in society. Mass media play a key role in mediating social reality towards the recipients. They exchange information and knowledge in the society and they also disseminate values and standards» [9, 89].

The possibility of using media education in the case of citizenship education becomes a frequent topic. Staněk [4, 80] points out that when realising the European dimension, school has no privileged position but has to actively co-operate with other elements (families, peers, mass media, etc.) that influence pupils' development in parallel with school education. According to G. Cingelová [10, 60], media pedagogy becomes irreplaceable in education, recommending using films in Civics or Basis of Social Science teaching. I. Polakevičová [11] draws our attention to obstacles of controversial advertising application that has a tendency to divide society opinions, as well as open a new discussion aimed at redefining of ethics principles. According P. Szabo [12], media and political marketing are interconnected. The current situation proves the role of the media and the new media for the objectives of politicians.

5. Conclusions

The sociological research of the public opinion of the pupils and teachers at primary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic has produced the following results.

Slovak pupils and their teachers are satisfied with the membership of the Slovak Republic in the European Union; they are currently aware of their European citizenship which they are proud of and support the strengthening of the European Union's competencies for the future. However, the respondents are not sure whether the Slovak Republic's

activities in the European Union are good or bad for the citizens themselves. It is necessary to mention that the Slovaks have long been one of the countries with the highest satisfaction with the European Union membership. While confidence in the European institutions has been slowly declining in recent years, the Slovak Republic is still among those countries of average confidence in EU membership.

Although the Czech pupils and their teachers are satisfied with the Czech Republic being the member of the European Union, they are not fully identified with European citizenship and they cannot imagine strengthening EU competencies in the form of a unified constitution in the future. The Czech respondents do not have a clear view of the Czech Republic's action in the European Union as something good or bad for the citizens themselves. On the contrary, the Czech Republic, according to the CVVM survey, «has the highest number of Euro-sceptics from 28 EU member states in June; 39% of people would vote for Czexit, compared with only 9% in Poland» [13].

In most of the researched items, there is a more positive orientation towards European citizenship and European identity of the pupils and teachers at selected primary and secondary schools in the Slovak Republic than in the Czech Republic. The Slovak teachers and their pupils are more proud of being citizens of the European Union; they are less sceptical of the European Union's activities and believe more in the future of the European Union. On the other hand, the Czech teachers and their pupils are more proud of the Czech Republic's membership of the European Union, as well as of the country's activities in the European Union.

We believe that the decreasing confidence in the EU and its institutions seems to reflect the unfulfilled expectations of the Slovak and Czech citizens that the EU will bring them more prosperity and higher living standards.

Different results of the countries reflect different education for citizenship and Europeanism. In both countries, there are educational activities to strengthen identity with membership in the European Union. However, while in the Slovak Republic this education is realised as a separate compulsory subject under the name of Civic Education; in the Czech Republic, citizenship education is part of the education area known as Man and Society, together with History.

This research does not come with a comprehensive view of the analysis of public opinion of Slovaks and Czechs on European citizenship and European identity, as the research sample was aimed at pupils and their teachers at primary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. This topic offers several other processing options. One of them is the observation of the public opinion development tendencies of the Slovaks and Czechs after the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union.

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